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THE DIVINE PROGRAMME
OF THE
WORLD'S HISTORY

H. GRATTAN GUINNESS.

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Presented to

*with Christian love and esteem,
by Mr. and Mrs. H. Grattan Guinness,
on the occasion of
The International Conference on Missions,
Exeter Hall, June, 1888.*

THE DIVINE PROGRAMME

OF

THE WORLD'S HISTORY.

BY

MR. AND MRS.

H. GRATTAN GUINNESS,

AUTHORS OF

"The Approaching End of the Age," "Light for Last Days," "Romanism," etc.

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Prof. Kenneth B. Murdock

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P R E F A C E .

THE days in which we live have seen the growth of a godless materialism. Providence, by many, is denied. History, we are boldly taught, is but a blind evolution. The ages drift without an aim.

In the "sure word of prophecy" we have a Divinely provided safeguard against this false philosophy. Prophecy is history written in advance. It unfolds with unerring wisdom not merely the facts of the future, but their underlying plan. It demonstrates Providence. It reveals the glorious truth that the history of the world is none other than *the history of man's redemption*. The revolving ages fulfil the programme.

The present volume exhibits the testimony of Scripture prophecy *as a whole*. Selecting its chief elements, and arranging them in their natural order, it compares them with the events of the last six thousand years. In former works we have sought to set forth the *general principles* of prophetic interpretation, and also the fulfilment *in the last twenty-five*

centuries of things predicted by prophets and apostles. The scope of this volume is wider and its intention different. It embraces, though but in outline, the story of the world. And it treats exclusively of *fulfilled* prophecy. Its object is *evidential*. The Scriptures contain the Divine Programme of the world's history. Programme and history correspond.

We hope to follow this volume, when our practical missionary work permits, by one on the Last Prophecy in Scripture, viewing it from the double standpoint of history and typology.

It is our earnest desire that the present work may prove helpful to many. When the Rock of history is struck by the Rod of prophecy, there flow forth living waters. Such are ever needed, and refreshing. Evermore shines on the instructed mind the sacred truth—*God is in Christ*, reconciling the world; and *Christ is in history*, its Alpha and Omega, its beginning, its centre, and its end.

HARLEY HOUSE, BOW,

March, 1888.

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INTRODUCTION.

B

INTRODUCTION.

IT is an unquestionable fact, and one which has hardly received the consideration it deserves, that the volume which claims to be a supernatural revelation—the inspired word of God—clearly and boldly *commits itself even from its opening pages to A PROPHETIC PROGRAMME OF THE WORLD'S HISTORY*. It is daring enough to present on its forefront an orderly chart of the events of ages lying at the time far in the future—a distinct and detailed map of the untrodden shores and untraversed oceans of time, to inform men beforehand of the main outline of all that should befall their race.

The course thus taken in Scripture is a bold one. In assuming the possession of knowledge so entirely superhuman, the Bible necessarily exposes itself to the perpetual danger of being demonstrated to be erroneous in its predictions, and consequently false in its pretensions. A definite programme published at the beginning of any series of events, and professing to give their nature and order, must inevitably be either verified or falsified by the result. The things predicted either come to pass or fail to do so, and experience decides the worth of the programme. Would any spurious or pretended Divine revelation dare to risk its own future rejection by exposing itself to such a test as this? The Bible alone does so, and this fact is a strong *à priori* proof of its Divine origin. It is a book which presents itself to mankind saying: “I am from God, and in order that you may see that I am so I tell you beforehand things that are to happen on the earth; I sketch out to you the whole course

of future events, together with their order and their times. I reveal the end from the beginning. Prove me herewith ! Let every age as it rolls past bear its witness to my truth or to my falsehood. I am content to stand or fall by this test."

We propose to accept this virtual challenge, and to test the Bible in these pages in the very way in which God commanded that those who professed to be prophets of old should be tested. "When a prophet speaketh in the name of the Lord, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously : thou shalt not be afraid of him." If the Bible has foretold, as regards the past, things that have never been fulfilled, then it is not of God, and we need not reverence it in the slightest degree. But, on the other hand, "when the word of the prophet shall come to pass, then shall the prophet be known, that the Lord hath truly sent him." If the predictions of Scripture *have* been fulfilled, not once or twice, but in a thousand particulars ; if the programme *has* been acted out, exactly as given in advance, all through the past ages of history and up to our own day ; if not one point has *failed* to be fulfilled in its due season ;—then we are bound to believe that the book which contains it is inspired, and to reverence it as the very word of God.

Christ Himself submitted His claims to this test among others. "Now I have told you before it come to pass, that, when it is come to pass, ye might believe" (John xiv. 29). And Jehovah in the Old Testament challenges idolaters to demonstrate the worth of their idols in the same way. "Let them . . . show us what shall happen ; . . . or declare us things for to come" ; and again, "Show the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that ye are gods" (Isa. xli. 22, 23). A test thus recognised and applied by God Himself must needs be a good and sufficient one. If we can prove that the Bible stands this test, we demon-

strate its Divine origin, perhaps more clearly than in any other way.

Three thousand five hundred years of history have rolled away since the days of Moses, when its earliest books were published, and eighteen centuries have elapsed since its latest "Revelation" was given to John in Patmos. Apart therefore from the history of the earliest centuries, which it alone contains, the predictions of Scripture can now be compared with the events of at least thirty centuries recorded by profane historians, as well as with the events transpiring in our own day. What a magnificent opportunity is thus afforded of testing the true character of the book! How easy to prove its claim to inspiration false, if false it be! and if true and valid, what abundant evidence must exist of the fact! *If the general history of the world throughout all these ages has been foreseen and foretold*, then clearly the records which embody the revelation must in some way or other owe their authorship, not to saint or seer, to prophet, priest, or king merely, but to the only wise God, who alone knows the end from the beginning.

We live in days when inspiration is more than ever doubted and denied, and this not by Gentile professors of Christianity only, but by the Jews themselves. The very custodians both of the Old and of the New Testaments are now calling in question their Divine authority.¹

It is therefore more than ever incumbent on those who adhere to the faith once delivered to the saints, and still believe that all Scripture was given by inspiration of God, to give a reason for the hope that is in them—for their belief that though heaven and earth pass away, not one jot or tittle

¹ The following quotation from a work published recently in Boston, and entitled "Messianic Expectations and Modern Judaism," amply supports the statement as regards the rationalistic Jews: "I do not believe in a Divine authorship of any book whatsoever, be it called the Old or the New Testament. . . . The Jew of to-day is no longer the Jew of one thousand nine hundred years ago. . . ."

of the word of God can fail. "If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?" The present generation of Christian believers has had to withstand many a deadly onslaught from the hosts of unbelief, and has withstood them. But the rising generation will have a still harder conflict to endure, for faith is failing on every hand, and the treachery of unbelief has crept into the very citadel itself. The standard bearers are one by one deserting to the enemy; nor can we wonder that it is so, since this too was foretold as a feature of the days in which we live. Our Lord asked the question, "When the Son of man cometh, *shall He find faith on the earth?*" But all the more because of this state of things, and because we see the day approaching, must we exhort and encourage one another to "hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering," and earnestly seek its confirmation and support.

We have reached what is emphatically "a dark place" in the history of the Church. A lamp has however been put into our hands to illuminate the gloom—the lamp of fulfilled and ever-fulfilling prophecy—a light shining in a dark place, "whereunto we do well that we take heed." In the following pages we shall endeavour so to hold forth this lamp that its beams may fall on the path we are treading; and though they may be insufficient to remove all mystery or to lighten the darkness that shrouds the providential government of God, they will nevertheless give us light enough to perceive and avoid the dangers of the way. There are many things which a traveller journeying by night would like to see—the winding valley, the distant view, the mountain tops; and he will see them all clearly by-and-by, when the clouds have cleared away and the sun rises in the morning. But, in the meantime, the important thing for him is *to see his way* in the pitchy darkness, to see the path before him if only for a few steps at a time, so that he may avoid the pit-fall and the precipice, and distinguish between the road and

the by-path. This much at any rate his lantern enables him to do, and he values it accordingly, and although it be not bright as the sun, refuses to allow it to be extinguished. May Christian pilgrims similarly refuse to be robbed of that "sure word of prophecy" which is "a light unto their feet and a lamp unto their path"! and may the following pages help to enhance their sense of its inestimable value!

Before entering on our investigation, we must recall the fact that different historians regard history from different standpoints, and select from the mass of events those which have a bearing on their own special theme, passing by hosts of facts less directly related to it. In writing, for instance, the history of the Christian Church, Mosheim did not feel it needful or desirable to enter fully into the political or military history of the various nations in which the Christian Church from age to age took root. It was needful to glance more or less briefly at these subjects and similar ones in order to the exposition and comprehension of the main theme, but only as subordinate to it. So Gibbon, in tracing the decline and fall of the Roman empire, had to glance at the height from which it fell, and at the fragments into which it was broken by its fall; but the causes and the stages of the decline and fall *itself* being the theme of his work, all beyond is merely subsidiary. The question arises, From what standpoint does the Bible regard the world's history? Either in narratives of the past or in predictions of the future it tells the entire story, and much of it in both ways. It carries us right through from paradise lost to paradise regained, from the rise of the earliest empire—that of Nimrod, the mighty hunter—to the fall of the last form of the empire of Rome and the full establishment of the kingdom of God on earth—that kingdom which is to succeed all earthly monarchies and to subsist for ever. But Scripture tells this long story in brief compass, and omits much more than it records. What principle underlies its selection of facts? From what standpoint does it consider

the story? The purpose and plan of a book must be clearly grasped before it can be understood. We must not expect from a work information on any subjects which have no connexion *at all* with its theme, nor full information on such as have but a slender connexion with it. The Bible, like other histories, has a definite scope of its own, a well-defined purpose, and can only be properly appreciated when this purpose is recognised. An undiscerning critic, if ignorant of the title and scope of the work, might say of Mosheim's Church History, for example: "I cannot understand it or admire it at all. It ranges over a vast extent of history, but gives only the most partial and unsatisfactory views of very interesting and important points. It dwells with disproportionate fulness on some episodes of little moment; it wastes, for instance, whole chapters on the disputes of councils and the analysis of heresies, yet it fails to describe the decisive battles of history or to trace the careers of its heroes. It is a poor, unequal, disjointed account of the world's progress during the period." This judgment would be just, had Mosheim undertaken to write a general history. It is absurdly unjust in view of the fact that what he intended to write, and did write, was the history of the Church only.

For what view of history then are we to look in the Bible?—political? social? scientific? philosophic? ethnographic? military? Clearly none of these would either require or be worthy to become subjects of *Divine revelation*. No! If GOD condescends to become the historian of human affairs, the only possible standpoint from which they can be viewed is evidently the *religious* one; that is, He will present them *in their relation to Himself* as Creator and Redeemer of mankind. In other words, the Bible must be the history, first, of man's creation and fall, and, secondly, of his redemption and restoration.

Further, for religious purposes, that is, in order to human salvation, the first of these two sections—that describing the

creation and fall—would not require to be a full or detailed one. All that was needful was to reveal the great facts that God made man, and that He made him in His own image. How or when is irrelevant to the great argument and need not consequently be enlarged upon. Man as an intelligent, free, responsible being was created by God, not developed from mere matter; and he was therefore bound to love and obey his Maker. He failed to do so, and thus he fell. Further, his fall did not *introduce* moral evil into the universe, for it existed previously, and it was an enemy both to God and to man who tempted the latter to his ruin. How or whence this ensues, or from what period this moral evil dated, why it was suffered to exist at all,—these and other interesting questions on which mere curiosity would crave for light, being beyond the scope of a book which has the salvation of the lost race as its object, are passed by in silence; and man's creation and fall having been briefly recounted on the opening page, the whole of the rest of the volume is devoted to *the history of human redemption*. Events are selected for record solely in view of their relation to this all-important theme, and human affairs are viewed from the standpoint of their bearing on *it*. This is the key to the Bible as a book. It narrates the history of human sin and human redemption, carrying us steadily forward from the perfected and "good" condition of things in Eden at the close of the first creation to the still higher perfection of the new creation, to the "new heavens and the new earth," and the renewed and restored race of man, when "He that sitteth on the throne shall say, It is done! Behold, I make all things new."

He therefore who criticises the Bible because it does not contain what it does not profess to contain, and could not consistently contain, violates a fundamental canon of literature, and exposes his own folly, and not that of the book. Its nature, object, and scope require that it should be utterly

imperfect as a mere secular history of the events of ages, in order that it may be perfect as a sacred history of the redemption of mankind. Not a word does it contain, consequently, about Julius Cæsar, though Augustus Cæsar and the Roman emperor Claudius are alluded to; they *were* remotely connected with the Saviour and His apostles, but not so their great military predecessor. Both the historic and the geographic sphere of Scripture story are limited, and this very limitation is a feature of perfection. The book *keeps to its point*, and that point is *to reveal God to man and to bring man back to God*.

The work of human redemption has been carried on from age to age in ever-widening spheres, and will continue to be so until it embraces the world. It begins in the individual heart and extends to the life, and then, like the concentric rings produced by a stone thrown into water, it extends until it affects the extreme circumference of humanity.¹ Hence we

¹ The Rev. T. Whitelaw, in his "Introduction to the Book of Genesis" in the "Pulpit Commentary," well says of this book of origins: "While treating of the fortunes of the human race, the record, almost instantly on starting, confines its regards, in the earlier portion, to one particular section (the line of Seth), and, in the later, to one particular family (the children of Abraham, in the line of Isaac and Jacob), and deals with the other branches of the human family only in so far as they are needful to elucidate the story of the chosen seed. And, still further, it is noticeable that, in the elaboration of his plan, the author is always careful to keep the reader's eye fixed upon the special line whose fortunes he has set himself to trace, by dismissing at the outset of each section with a brief notice those collateral branches, that nothing may afterwards arise to divide the interest with the holy seed, and the narrative may flow on uninterruptedly in the recital of their story. 'The materials of the history,' writes Keil, 'are arranged and distributed according to the law of Divine selection: the families which branched off from the main line are noticed first of all; and when they have been removed from the general scope of the history, the course of the main line is more elaborately described, and the history itself is carried forward. According to this plan, which is strictly adhered to, the history of Cain and his family precedes that of Seth and his posterity; the genealogies of Japhet and Ham stand before that of Shem; the histories of Ishmael and Esau before those of Isaac and Jacob; and the death of Terah before the call and migration of

find in Scripture individual biographies, patriarchal and tribal stories, a national history, and prophetic histories of imperial dominion, all playing their part in the narrative, all linked together by one golden line—their common relation to a great redeeming work. Whatever be the sphere and whatever be the style—whether the history be anticipated in prophecy, or simply recorded in narrative—it is always the story of the redeeming work of God which is traced, and the salvation of men is always the end in view. Only as we bear in mind this self-evident truth shall we be able to estimate aright the selection and treatment of historic events in Scripture.

THE DIVINE PROGRAMME OF THE WORLD'S HISTORY CONSISTS OF SEVEN MAIN SECTIONS, CORRESPONDING WITH SEVEN GREAT EPOCHS OF FRESH COMMENCEMENT WHICH STAND OUT PROMINENTLY IN THE BIBLE STORY OF HUMANITY. CONNECTED WITH EACH OF THESE THERE HAS BEEN A FRESH DIVINE REVELATION, SKETCHING OUT

Abraham to Canaan'; and 'in this regularity of composition,' he further adds, 'the book of Genesis may be clearly seen to be the careful production of one single author, who looked at the historical development of the human race in the light of Divine revelation, and thus exhibited it as a complete and well-arranged introduction to the history of the Old Testament kingdom of God.' . . . Genesis was not designed to be a universal history of mankind. . . . As the opening volume of revelation in which the history of salvation was to be recorded, it was designed to exhibit the primeval condition of the human race, with its melancholy lapse into sin, which first of all rendered salvation necessary, and to disclose the initial movements of that Divine grace which ever since had been working for man's restoration, and of which the theocracy in Israel was only a specific manifestation. Thus, while the book of Genesis could not fail to be possessed of undying interest to every member of the Hebrew Church and nation, it is likewise a writing of transcendent value and paramount importance to every scion of the human race, containing as it does the only authentic information which has ever yet reached the world of the original dignity of mankind, and of the conditions under which it commenced its career on earth; the only satisfactory explanation which has ever yet been given of the estate of sin and misery in which, alas! it all too plainly finds itself to-day, and the only sufficient gospel of salvation that has ever yet been recommended to its attention and acceptance."

WITH MORE OR LESS FULNESS THE EVENTS DESTINED TO TRANSPIRE IN THE COURSE OF THE AGE THEN BEGINNING. THESE SEVEN GREAT EPOCHS ARE ASSOCIATED WITH SEVEN MEMORABLE NAMES: ADAM, NOAH, ABRAHAM, MOSES, DAVID, NEBUCHADNEZZAR, AND LAST, BUT NOT LEAST, OUR LORD AND SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST—THE SECOND ADAM, THE LORD FROM HEAVEN.

“God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son, whom He hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also He made the worlds.” The first six of these names are the names of men merely; the seventh is that of the glorious God-Man: it stands apart from all the rest—the stately procession closing with the majestic figure of the Redeemer Himself. ADAM was the father of the human race; NOAH, the father of the world that now is; ABRAHAM, the father of the Jewish people and the Arab races—and in another sense the father of the faithful, or believing people of God in all ages; MOSES, the founder and legislator of the Jewish nation; DAVID was the founder of Jewish monarchy, and the father of the royal line of Judah, destined yet to rule the world in the person of “David’s Son and David’s Lord, the Lion of the tribe of Judah”; NEBUCHADNEZZAR, the spring-head of Gentile monarchy—the head of gold in the fourfold image of it shown to Daniel; and lastly, OUR LORD AND SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST, the founder of the kingdom of God and the head of redeemed humanity, whose kingdom, established in a mystery eighteen hundred years ago, is yet to bear sway over all the earth in manifested power and glory. It is represented by the stone cut out without hands which smote on its feet the image of Gentile monarchy, ground it to powder, “became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth.”

Now it is undeniable that to and through each of these

FATHERS, or FOUNDERS, of a new order of things was given a FOREVIEW OF THE FUTURE, a more or less full and clear revelation of the events of the era at the opening of which he stood. Most of these seven prophetic outlines embrace the entire interval from their own date to the full accomplishment of the work of human redemption. But as each starts from a later chronological point than its predecessor, it covers a shorter interval. The New Testament predictions of the events of this Christian dispensation, for instance, necessarily cover an interval sixteen hundred years shorter than that covered by the Mosaic foreview. But the later charts give fuller details than the earlier ones; and thus, though the interval they cover be shorter, the later revelations are the longest and most complex. In the following chapters we take up these seven foreviews of the future, examining in each case, first, what is predicted, and secondly, what has happened.

It is not to be expected that our readers can derive from the perusal of this work the same sense of the overwhelming and unanswerable nature of the argument here developed as the writers obtained in its preparation, because a sample only can be presented of the mass of evidence which has been passed under review. Some of the following chapters would have had to be swelled to volumes to do full justice to their themes. Our world is so wide that few, if any, are acquainted with all its countries; and human history is so long and so complex that still fewer are familiar with all its facts. Memory may retain enough to attest the accuracy of general outlines, but when fresh research furnishes the mind with fresh material for comparison, the correspondence of a multitude of *particulars* is perceived in addition; and it is realized that, not only does the key open the lock, but that it fits it down to its most minute divisions—fits it as no key but one made to fit it could possibly do, fits it so as to reflect the highest credit on the skill of its designer and maker.

Peculiarities in the key which might have been thought to be defects were it alone considered, prove to be delicate perfections as soon as it is inserted in the lock. So portions of a prophecy which when considered alone seem perplexing, prove when compared with the history to be absolutely and accurately exact as predictions of the peculiar and complicated relations of certain powers or persons. All is seen to be perfection, and we are constrained to exclaim, "Oh the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out! Of Him, and through Him, and to Him are all things; to whom be glory for ever. Amen."

CHAPTER I.

THE ADAMIC PROGRAMME.

CHAPTER I.

THE ADAMIC FOREVIEW OF HUMAN HISTORY.

“And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed ; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel. Unto the woman He said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception ; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children ; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee. And unto Adam He said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it : cursed is the ground for thy sake ; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life ; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee ; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field ; in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground ; for out of it wast thou taken : for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.”

THE brief revelation given to Adam in Eden immediately after the fall threw light upon the character and course of human history as a whole, and foretold its grand result as viewed from a moral standpoint. Brief and few as the predictions are, they are all-embracing in their compass, and profound in their depths of meaning. They are *multum in parvo*—the entire history of mankind summed up in a few brief sentences. They differ widely from subsequent prophecy in character, as befits such primitive predictions. There is about them a combined simplicity and majesty, which stamp them as Divine. Their range is universal, so that all ages and all lands bear witness to their marvellous fulfilment.

They deal not with minor matters or temporary, passing experiences and changes, but with all the great permanent, essential facts and phenomena of human existence, including

conception, birth, food, labour, the relation of the sexes, the conditions of agriculture, the existence and variety of suffering, the phenomena of conscience, and the relation of men to the evil one, as well as with the awful though universal fact of death.

Wonderfully condensed and pregnant with latent meaning as they thus are on their human side, they are not less marvellous on their Divine side; that is, in what they reveal of God, and of His character and His purposes. If His creative words and works had revealed His wisdom, power, and goodness, these utterances with their fulness of moral majesty reveal as clearly His righteousness, His justice, and His grace. That to Adam, in the hour of his utter ruin, should have been given the assurance of the redemption of his race, is in itself a proof of the Divine mercy. At the gloomy crisis when man fell under the power of moral evil, the promise revealed the glorious goal of human history—final and complete victory over this evil. Man was not left in his self-inflicted ruin without an intimation that God had toward him purposes of redeeming grace. He was made to feel himself the subject both of judgment and of mercy, and thus was laid the foundation of all true religion in sinful beings—a consciousness of unworthiness, a sense of guilt, helplessness, and utter dependence on God, mingled with a hope based on Divine promises, and a faith built upon Divine predictions. Despair was forbidden as much as pride and self-dependence. On this dark page of human history—the first after man had passed out of his Maker's hands into his own—there fell the light of foretold redemption, like a gleam of sunshine gilding even the storm-clouds of judgment with beauty and glory.

These primitive predictions, it should be noted, were not equivocal, oracular, or but dimly comprehensible. On the contrary, they were singularly definite and simple, so that no one can misunderstand their plain meaning. If they were

in one point *mysterious*, the mystery lay not in what was revealed, but rather in that which was left unrevealed. The *mode* of redemption and restoration was not made plain; that was left a mystery which the fulfilment of the promise would alone entirely remove, but on which clearer and still clearer light was in subsequent ages to be granted. The glorious terminus only was revealed at first, not how or when it was to be reached. The scheme of Divine mercy was not fully explained, but it was made perfectly clear that such a scheme existed, and that the Almighty Creator and righteous Judge of man purposed to be also his Saviour and Redeemer.

The foreview of history given to the father of the human race after the fall consists of two contrasted portions.

1. THE PROMISE OF REDEMPTION.
2. THE PREDICTION OF THE PENAL CONSEQUENCES OF SIN.

We will consider them in this order, which is that in which Scripture presents them, and which is in itself an illustration of the truth that "mercy rejoices against judgment." The God against whom they had sinned hastened, if we may so say, to cheer and encourage the trembling criminals with the blessed hope of ultimate recovery and restoration, *before* He proceeded to utter the sentence of punishment, and declare to them the inevitable results of their fall.

The Eden prophecy of redemption predicts, first, a perpetual enmity and conflict between the serpent's brood and the woman's seed; and, secondly, the ultimate destruction of the tempter and destroyer himself, by a suffering yet victorious deliverer, who is mentioned as "the seed of the woman." "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." Not only would a fixed and inveterate enmity exist throughout the future history

of the race between man and the serpent—this was but a figure of the truth—but a similar and deeper antagonism would exist between the tempter and mankind. “Thy seed,” the seed or posterity of the serpent, must mean those among men who should imbibe the devil’s spirit, and be partakers of his character, subjects of his “power of darkness,” as contrasted with those who should be of an opposite character.¹ Enmity would exist between good men and bad, the conflict then commenced between man and his tempter would be continued in the history of the human race. But further and mainly, a *special* “seed,” a person, a great individual descendant of Eve should in due time arise in whom this conflict would culminate: “He shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.” The redemption of men should be accomplished through a man, and through a suffering man—one who would himself be bruised in the battle, not fatally crushed like his adversary, but yet not free from hurt. The serpent should in the end be completely destroyed, his *head* crushed by this “woman’s seed.”

Now we know who is styled by pre-eminence “the Seed,” who because men are partakers of flesh and blood “Himself likewise took part of the same; that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.” These words have always been held, and rightly held, to be *the first promise and prophecy of the Redeemer of mankind*—the Son of God, who by incarnation became “the woman’s Seed.” Nor can any question be fairly raised as to the fact that we have in these words the germ of the Messianic idea so largely unfolded subsequently in the Old Testament, and realized historically in the events of New Testament gospel story. What was that idea—interwoven with the histories, prophecies, laws, and ordinances of Israel, and pervading the Bible from

¹ Matt. xxiii. 33; 1 John iii. 10.

beginning to end? Was it not that there should arise, as the Deliverer of sinning and suffering humanity, ONE who should Himself suffer before He triumphed, one who should be a bleeding Victor, a conquering Victim, a self-sacrificing Saviour? The Anointed One, the Christ, was first "to suffer," and only then "to enter into His glory." The prophets testified beforehand "the sufferings of Christ and the glories that should follow." Nature itself taught that, "except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." The martyred Abel, the offered Isaac, the outcast Joseph exalted to be lord of Egypt and saviour of his brethren, Moses rescued from a watery grave to be king in Jeshurun, David despised in his father's house, hated and hunted by Saul, yet father of the royal line of Judah and founder of the kingdom of Israel,—all these and similar incidents presented continually the same ideal, each adding to it some new and special feature, until Isaiah was inspired to present the perfect portrait of the Divine yet human sufferer, who was to be the victorious Saviour of men. He was to be Jehovah's servant, humbled, marred in form and in visage, without beauty or comeliness, despised, rejected, sorrowful, burdened with grief, laden with transgressions not His own, wounded, bruised, stricken of God and afflicted, oppressed and ill-used, cut off prematurely and unjustly, numbered with transgressors, laid in a grave, made a sin-offering. And yet He was to be "exalted and extolled and very high," to have "a portion with the great" and to "divide the spoil with the strong," to justify many, to become an intercessor for transgressors, to sprinkle many nations, to be the arm or power of the Lord, and through Him all the ends of the earth should behold the salvation of God.¹ He was to be "cut off" in the midst of His days, yet He was, as "Messiah the Prince," to finish the transgression, and to make an end

¹ Isa. lii., liii.

of sins ; to make reconciliation for iniquity, and bring in everlasting righteousness ; to cause Jewish sacrifice and oblation to cease, and to confirm a covenant with many.¹ He was to be "a child born" to Israel, and yet "the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of peace."

Now though in the light of its own fulfilment and realization in the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ, this MESSIANIC IDEAL has become familiar to the mind of Christendom, what mystery must have overshadowed it, and what perplexities must have attended any attempt to give it even in imagination a definite embodiment *previously to the event* ! How impossible therefore that it could have been a mere human invention, whether of Moses or of Adam or of any one else ! Here, in the earliest prophecy of Scripture, a document dating back at least to the days of Moses, and possibly much further, we meet with the distinct germ and embryo of this strange, mysterious, peculiar Messianic ideal, predictions which subsequently shaped for ages *the expectations of a nation*, and the fulfilment of which in history has since shaped for ages more *the experience of a world*.

It is true that the Jews lost sight of one half of the ideal—the foretold sufferings of Messiah—and dwelt only in anticipation on His glories ; but this makes it only the more remarkable that the Scriptures of the prophets, which they read continually in their synagogues, should present so fully and so frequently a feature as to which the people were blinded. Whence did they get this ideal ? Whence did Moses get it ? Or if, as some think, Moses embodied in Genesis documents which even in his day belonged to a primitive antiquity, whence did the writers of those documents get this notion of the double bruising, the suffering Victor, the tried but triumphant Redeemer of mankind ? Place the date of the birth of this ideal where we will, it must have been in existence before the death of Moses, else we could not meet it in the Penta-

¹ Dan. ix. 24-27.

teuch. Now whether Moses found it in some ancient document or received it through Noahic tradition, or more directly by Divine inspiration, little matters to our present argument. The point of that argument lies in the fact that *fifteen centuries at any rate before the strange Messianic ideal was realized in an actual character, the essential features of it were foreseen, foreshadowed, and foretold.*

Who foresaw them? Certainly not Moses or the prophets by mere human intelligence, for they understood not their own predictions, but searched "what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when It testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glories that should follow." There is but one rational explanation of the early existence and long continuance of this Messianic ideal. It was the hope set before the lost and ruined human family, by their compassionate and omniscient Creator; "holy men of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." This primitive germ of a prophetic character, which afterwards occupied so ruling a position in the hearts and minds of men for ages before it was realized in history, and the actual appearance of which on the stage of human life, not only forms the greatest and most widely spread era of mundane chronology, but has proved by far the most influential event that ever happened in human experience—this first Messianic prediction *must* have come "by inspiration of God." From this first prophecy of the Redeemer right on to the last prediction of Christ prior to His advent, this leading feature of *triumph preceded by defeat*, glory introduced by suffering, redemption for man secured by self-sacrifice, is uniformly kept in view and gradually developed. So markedly is this the case, that after His resurrection Christ could reproach His incredulous disciples with being "slow of heart to believe all that the prophets had spoken," and "beginning at Moses and all the prophets" He could expound to them "in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself," putting to them the un-

answerable question, "Ought not the Christ (or the Messiah) to have *suffered* these things, and to enter into *His glory*?" He reminded them that not only had He Himself told them that suffering and death were to befall Him, but that it was predicted in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the Psalms, adding, "Thus it is written, and thus it behoved the Christ to *suffer*, and to *rise from the dead* the third day: and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations." The oak tree of Messianic prediction lies latent in the acorn of this Eden prophecy. Judaism and Christianity alike are the outcome of this ideal,—the one of the mere prediction of it, the other of the fulfilment of the prediction. These are facts that cannot be gainsaid. How are they to be explained? *Whence came the embryo if not from God?*

The only alternatives seem to be either frankly to admit the inspiration of the Eden promise, or else to deny, not only that it has ever been fulfilled, but that Messianic predictions as a whole have been so. This would be to assert that they were one and all—though so exactly answering to notorious and universally influential facts,—unmeaning Jewish speculations; and even then there would remain to be explained the difficulty that *the Jews who wrote and treasured these predictions did not understand them*, had not the true ideal before their minds, and when it was realized in history actually failed to perceive that a suffering Saviour was a fulfilment of their own prophecies, or a realization of their long-cherished hopes.

Now it must be freely granted that Messianic prophecy as a whole has not yet received its *full* accomplishment,—that only a part of it has done so. "The woman's seed" has not yet completely crushed the serpent's head, as is evident from his present tremendous and universal activity in our world, where the tempter is undeniably still alive and at large! He is still in our day what our Saviour called him in His day,

"the prince of this world," and what Paul called him, "the god of this world," "the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience."¹ Sin still reigns unto death. No one contends that the work of human redemption is as yet complete. It stands indeed to reason that it could no more be accomplished in a few centuries than was the work of creation. This Christian age, though fast nearing its close, has not yet run its course ; and according to Scripture, *another age*—the millennial—is to succeed the one in which we live before the old serpent will be fully destroyed, before redeemed humanity will rest and rejoice in the new heavens and new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.

But it may nevertheless be boldly asserted that the prophetic programme presented by inspiration at the beginning of the Adamic age has, even in this its first point, the promise of redemption, been *largely* fulfilled, and that the unfulfilled portion is so closely linked and indissolubly connected with the fulfilled, as to warrant the confident expectation that it also will in due season become matter of history instead of prophecy. In order to show this, we must consider a little more fully each of its three points: the COMING, SUFFERINGS, and TRIUMPHS of the woman's "Seed."

I. THE COMING OF THE SEED. It cannot be questioned that among all those born of woman *one individual* stands out solitary, supreme, pre-eminent ; that though there have been many heroes among men, He rises above them all high as the vault of heaven above the hills of earth. Rightly or wrongly He is this day believed in and beloved, esteemed to be Divine as well as human, obeyed as Lord, worshipped as God, and trusted as Saviour, by *over four hundred millions of mankind*—that is, by a third of the entire human family ; that He holds this place, not among the more ignorant, superstitious, and degraded nations of the earth, but on the contrary among the most advanced, intelligent, and highly cultured.

¹ John xiv. 30 ; 2 Cor. iv. 4 ; Eph. ii. 2.

And why? He holds it because He is believed to have sacrificed Himself for the salvation of men, to have died and to have risen from the dead, to be evermore the living, loving, almighty Saviour of the human race, who will yet return to earth and finish the work He has begun. Let all this be truth or error, it matters not to our present argument. We are not now defending the faith of Christians, but calling attention to the *fact of its existence* as a proof of the fulfilment of the Adamic programme. We point to the fact that a great Deliverer has, in the judgment of the most enlightened part of mankind, appeared among men in the person of one who was emphatically the woman's Seed—"born of a virgin"—one who Himself professed that He came into the world to save it, who engaged in a personal struggle with the tempter and defeated him, whose mission it was to destroy him and his works, who resisted his temptations, delivered his victims, exposed his delusions, endured his malice, and who finally yielded to his power of death that He might—by rising again—destroy both it and him.

" He hell in hell laid low,
Made sin He sin o'erthrew ;
Bowed to the grave, destroyed it so,
And death by dying slew."

It is over one thousand eight hundred years since this great Deliverer appeared, and each generation as it passes beholds His name becoming a greater and greater power in the earth. The influence of His life and death, of His words and example, increases year by year continually, and at the present rate of progress will soon fill the world. The greatest intellects of all ages have owned the unique excellence and felt the unequalled power of the character and teaching of Christ. Kepler, Bacon, Newton, Milton, Shakespeare, in our own land ; Goethe, Schelling, Hegel, Kant, in Germany, even the infidel Jew Spinoza, have left on record their hearty recognition of His matchless personality. Jean Paul Richter speaks of Him as " the holiest

among the mighty, and the mightiest among the holy, who lifted with His pierced hand empires off their hinges, turned the stream of centuries out of its channel, and still governs the ages."

In a word, we may say that all men, no matter what their faith or what their indifference and unbelief, who have considered carefully this subject, admit that the man Christ Jesus stands high above all. Napoleon's well-known testimony shows how profoundly the character and worth of Jesus of Nazareth impressed a leader among men, though himself the very opposite of Christlike, a destroyer and not a saviour of his fellows. "No man will accuse the first Napoleon of being either a pietist or weak-minded. He strode the world in his day like a colossus, a man of gigantic intellect, however worthless and depraved in moral sense. Conversing one day, at St. Helena, as his custom was, about the great men of antiquity, and comparing himself with them, he suddenly turned round to one of his suite and asked him, 'Can you tell me who Jesus Christ was?' The officer owned that he had not yet taken much thought of such things. 'Well, then,' said Napoleon, 'I will tell you.' He then compared Christ with himself and with the heroes of antiquity, and showed how Jesus far surpassed them. 'I think I understand somewhat of human nature,' he continued, 'and I tell you all these were men, and I am a man; but not one is like Him: Jesus Christ was more than man. Alexander, Cæsar, Charlemagne, and myself founded great empires; but upon what did the creations of our genius depend? Upon force. Jesus alone founded His empire upon love, and to this very day millions would die for Him.' 'The gospel is no mere book,' said he at another time, 'but a living creature, with a vigour, a power, which conquers all that opposes it. Here lies the Book of books upon the table (touching it reverently); I do not tire of reading it, and do so daily with equal pleasure. The soul, charmed with the beauty of the gospel, is no longer its own;

God possesses it entirely : He directs its thoughts and faculties ; it is His. What a proof of the divinity of Jesus Christ ! Yet in this absolute sovereignty He has but one aim—the spiritual perfection of the individual, the purification of his conscience, his union with what is true, the salvation of his soul. Men wonder at the conquests of Alexander : but here is a conqueror who draws men to Himself for their highest good ; who unites to Himself, incorporates into Himself, not a nation, but the whole human race.’ On another occasion Napoleon said : ‘ From first to last Jesus is the same ; always the same—majestic and simple, infinitely severe and infinitely gentle. Throughout a life passed under the public eye, He never gives occasion to find fault. The prudence of His conduct compels our admiration by its union of force and gentleness. Alike in speech and action, He is enlightened, consistent, and calm. Sublimity is said to be an attribute of divinity ; what name then shall we give Him in whose character were united every element of the sublime ? I know men ; and I tell you that *Jesus is not a man*. Everything in Him amazes me. His spirit outreaches mine, and His will confounds me. Comparison is impossible between Him and any other being in the world. He is truly *a being by Himself*. His ideas and His sentiments, the truth that He announces, His manner of convincing, are all beyond humanity and the natural order of things. His birth, and the story of His life ; the profoundness of His doctrine, which overturns all difficulties, and is their most complete solution ; His gospel ; the singularity of His mysterious being, His appearance, His empire, His progress through all centuries and kingdoms : all this is to me a prodigy, an unfathomable mystery. I see nothing here of man. Near as I may approach, closely as I may examine, all remains above my comprehension—great with the greatness that crushes me. It is in vain that I reflect—all remains unaccountable. I defy you to cite another life like that of Christ.’ ”

Account for the strange coincidence as we will, there is no denying either that the Divine programme foretold long before Mosaic times of the advent of a great Deliverer who should be the woman's seed, or that one answering to the prediction did actually appear in our world 1,800 years ago ; nor that this individual is now more widely regarded than ever before as the Saviour of mankind. His coming is admitted to have introduced into the world a new moral force, a force which is opposed to evil in all its forms. He appeared as the great antagonist of moral evil, and of its author. It is asserted of Him that "He was manifested to take away our sins," that He came "to destroy the works of the devil," and, more, to destroy him himself.¹ No candid mind can fail to see in *the advent* of Jesus Christ of Nazareth an *apparent* fulfilment of the promise given in Eden.

2. THE SUFFERINGS OF THE SEED. These were dimly intimated in the original prediction, but largely described, as we have seen, in later Messianic prophecies ; and we ask, Was *suffering* a conspicuous feature in the history of Jesus Christ of Nazareth ? The question scarcely needs a reply, for it is universally recognised that He was the Prince of sufferers. To no form of human suffering was the "Man of sorrows" a stranger, and all His sufferings came upon Him because He willed to be the Saviour of men. It was in His struggle with the serpent that He was bruised and crushed,—His heel or human nature bruised even to death ! "He bowed His head, and gave up the ghost." His incarnation itself involved the suffering of supremest self-denial. He emptied Himself of His Divine glory and became an "obedient servant." He suffered being tempted ; He had not where to lay His head. He was misunderstood and reproached, doubted and disbelieved, provoked and insulted, stricken, smitten, and afflicted. For His love He had hatred, from His friends faithless desertion, from His foes relentless malice. No sorrow was ever like

¹ 1 John iii. 5 and 8.

His sorrow ; He gave His back to the smiters, and His cheeks to them that plucked off the hair, He hid not His face from shame and spitting. Reproach broke His heart and filled Him with bitterness, and when He voluntarily assumed all the guilt of sinners and tasted death for every man, He had to endure the deepest of all sufferings, the sense of being forsaken of God. The woman's Seed was beyond all question the great sufferer. And He Himself spoke of His dying sufferings as inflicted by the great enemy of man ; "the prince of this world cometh," He said on the last night of His life, "and hath nothing in Me." "Now is your hour and the power of darkness," He said to His captors in Gethsemane. He recognised too that His own death was the destruction of His foe, that the two bruising synchronised. "Now shall the prince of this world be cast out";¹ and again He said in connexion with His own death, "the prince of this world is judged."²

The intensity of suffering can be estimated only in relation to the character of the sufferer ; for that which is acute suffering to one is none at all to others. We must not judge of the sufferings of Christ by our own standard, but learn from Himself what the experiences through which He passed when He became "the woman's Seed" cost Him. The Gospels give us the story of His outward life and of His teachings, but they say little of His feelings : it is from the prophetic book of Psalms mainly that we learn something of *them*. Who can study the 22nd, 40th, 69th, or similar psalms without feeling that *the depths of mental and spiritual anguish* were sounded by the Son of man. Sorely was He bruised by the serpent and his seed—scribes and Pharisees, Jews and Romans, traitors, executioners, and revilers ! Moreover, the hand of God was laid heavily on the willing Substitute ; as it is written, "the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all." If the advent of

¹ John xii. 31. ² John xvi. 11.

Christ answer to the first point of the Adamic prediction, assuredly His experiences in life and in death answer to the second. But it remains to consider—

3. THE TRIUMPHS OF THE SEED. The work of redemption being still in progress and avowedly incomplete, it is impossible to indicate under this last point anything more than *the incipient fulfilment* of the prophecy as to the destruction of the tempter of mankind by the woman's seed. Four thousand years rolled by before the great Deliverer appeared, eighteen hundred only have passed since His advent. Sufficient time has not elapsed to show the full results of His work. But the interval has been long enough for great effects to have resulted already, and above all for the general *tendency* of the results to have become apparent. Can we then point to any tangible, unquestionable victories won for mankind over moral evil and its author by "the seed of the woman"? Its main results are spiritual ones, and these are, of course, not cognisable by human sense—intangible, invisible. The cleansing of human consciences, the forgiveness of sins, reconciliation between God and men, the justification of sinners, the bestowal of eternal life,—all these great and supremely important changes are not of a kind to be adduced in evidence of the bruising of the serpent's head, because they *are not evident*, they cannot be seen or heard or handled by men; and while they may serve as evidence to those who are themselves conscious of being delivered from the kingdom of Satan and translated into the kingdom of Christ, yet they cannot be adduced in argument with unbelievers.

But if spiritual changes such as these take place in considerable numbers and over any large sphere, they must needs produce other changes in the world which *will be* of a visible, tangible nature, and which may consequently be cited as evidence of the ever-increasing victories of Christianity. For it must be borne in mind that just as it was through

his "seed," or human agents that the serpent bruised the heel of the Saviour, so it is *through His people* that Christ is at present triumphing over Satan. The first fatal blow He Himself delivered by His spotless life, atoning death, and glorious resurrection; and He will Himself give the last blow also, at His coming again in glory. Indeed, as Scripture puts it, He *has already* in a sense destroyed, not only the works of the devil, but their author. It is written, "He hath destroyed him that had the power of death, that is, the devil," as well as delivered many of his captives. The crisis of the long conflict is past, the victory has been won, though much of the fruits have yet to be reaped. So it may be said the power of France was crushed at Sedan, though a long period elapsed ere the full fruits of the conquest were enjoyed by Germany. Her hosts could not all at once close the campaign and rest on their laurels. Many a strong fortress still held out, many a weary siege had yet to be laid, many a soldier had yet to fall, and many a million had yet to be expended before France, disarmed and helpless, acknowledged her defeat and submitted to the conqueror's terms. No one questions that Sedan practically settled the ultimate result of the war, sending the dis-crowned monarch and his hosts into captivity, though it was some time before the transferred imperial crown was placed on the victor's brow at Versailles, and before the treasures of France were poured into the lap of Germany.

It is thus with the long conflict between the serpent and the woman's seed. The resurrection of the Lord Jesus practically won the day, though the full fruits of victory are not reaped yet. In Him, man, born of a woman, resisted Satan's temptations, fulfilled all righteousness, suffered the just for the unjust, tasted death for every man, broke its bonds and rose again from the dead, triumphant alike over the wiles, the malice, and the power of Satan. There is ample and unquestionable historic evidence of these facts,

and this virtually decided the struggle. The author of evil had met his match, and been wounded in a vital point. One member of the human family had vanquished him, and became thenceforth the champion and deliverer of His brethren. It was all over with the Philistines when Goliath was slain, though much remained to be done before they were finally driven from the land of Israel.

Since the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, the ultimate triumph of the seed of the woman has, in spite of all appearances to the contrary, been a settled question ; and the final issue becomes continually clearer in the light of the actual course of mundane events.

The victories of moral good over moral evil which have resulted from the influence whether of Judaism or of Christianity, whether direct or indirect, may all be fairly regarded as the achievements and initial triumphs of "the seed of the woman." In considering a few of the most notable of these, we must distinguish between results that have been and are the proper outcome of the doctrines and example of Christ—the fruits of *real* Christianity—and the results of the existence in the world of the great corrupt outward organization that bears His name—the professing Christian Church. This, alas! has too often completely misrepresented the religion of Christ, and acted in opposition to His laws and to His Spirit. It has cultivated bigotry and hatred, instigated religious wars and persecutions, opposed liberty of thought and action, established bloody courts of inquisition, upheld cruel and inhuman systems of slavery, sought for itself earthly power and wealth, and by its enactments and practices encouraged a host of terrible social evils and degrading popular superstitions. The mischief done by the so-called Christian Church must not be laid at the door of true Christianity. *Its* effects are to be traced by the changes which its doctrines have produced in the world through the influence exerted by its *true* professors. In all ages, even the darkest, there have

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been such consistent disciples of Christ, filled with His spirit and followers of His example, whose lives have been potent for good, and whose influence, though they may have themselves been martyred, has been mighty enough to shame men out of some of their evil deeds, and move them to a measure of self-reformation, even when it did not make of them true converts. A work was recently published¹ by an American writer which carefully traces the history of human progress under Christianity. The author is one who has had the opportunity of practically testing for thirty years on a large scale its power in diminishing poverty, misery, and crime; and of estimating the part *Christian ideas* had in the great effort of the United States to remove the giant evil of slavery. There can indeed be no question that they were the foundation of this greatest of modern reforms, and that they stimulated and supported the country through its long and costly struggle to deliver itself from this dread incubus. This author had also studied for many years the laws and history of the later Roman period and of the middle ages, and had been struck by the ever-recurring traces of the silent yet profound working of "the great reforming power of the world." He had also been engaged in examining and presenting in public writings the influence of the Christian faith in the more modern period on international law, arbitrations, and the relations of nations. This experience fitted him to do—what he has very cautiously and candidly done in the work alluded to—trace the progressive influence of Christianity in the earth. He writes:

"There are certain practices, principles, and ideas, now the richest inheritance of the race, that have been either implanted or stimulated or supported by Christianity. They are such as these: regard for the personality of the weakest and poorest; respect for women; the absolute duty of each member of the fortunate classes to raise up the unfor-

¹ "Gesta Christi." By C. Loring Brace. (Hodder & Stoughton.)

fortunate ; humanity to the child, the prisoner, the stranger, the needy, and even the brute ; the duty of personal purity and the sacredness of marriage ; the necessity of temperance ; the obligation of a more equitable division of the profits of labour, and of greater co-operation between employers and employed ; the right of every human being to have the utmost opportunity of developing his faculties, and of all persons to enjoy equal political and social privileges ; the principle that the injury of one nation is the injury of all, and the expediency and duty of unrestricted trade and intercourse between all countries ; and, finally and principally, a profound opposition to war, a determination to limit its evils when existing, and to prevent its arising by means of international arbitration."

Space forbids us to enlarge as we would fain do on this theme, but we may say in a sentence the world little knows how deeply it is indebted to Christianity and its parent Judaism ! Light, love, liberty, peace, preservation, progress, happiness, harmony, hope have all flowed to mankind from the advent of the woman's Seed. Take away from the human family the nations and peoples who have more or less fully come under the Redeemer's influence, and what remains ? Nothing but polytheism and idolatry, paganism and fetishism, despotism, slavery, degraded womanhood, female infanticide, intertribal wars, depopulated countries, and dwarfed, stunted races who have retrograded through vice almost to the level of the beasts. China is the only apparent exception ; and even there, alongside of an ancient and comparatively high civilization, idolatry, superstition, female oppression, judicial cruelties, and social miseries prevail. Mohammedan countries must be included among those which have, though very slightly, come under the Redeemer's influence, for their monotheism was derived both from Judaism and Christianity. The point we have to settle is, whether the Eden prediction of the triumph of the seed of the woman

seems likely, from what has already happened, to be ultimately fulfilled? Or, to put the question in another form, Are idolatries, cruelties, and degrading superstitions passing away before the liberating, ennobling doctrines of Christ? Are the more corrupt forms of the Christian faith itself giving place increasingly to purer and more beneficial ones? Is a constantly increasing section of the human race enjoying vast temporal and spiritual benefits traceable to the advent of Christ? The answer to these questions must be an affirmative one. In an ever-increasing ratio, the faith of Christ is spreading in the earth; the most marked increase in our days is in the purer Protestant forms of that faith; and everywhere civil, political, social, and religious elevation follow as a consequence.

Contrast the moral and social condition of Protestant England, Scotland, Germany, Sweden, Denmark, North America, Australia, New Zealand, with the condition of India, Burmah, Siam, China, Central Africa, Zululand, or with that of the American Indians. The more thoroughly the two groups are studied, the more apparent will it become that the contrast of condition between Christian and heathen countries is like that between night and day. Roman Catholic countries, which, though Christian in profession, have been moulded by a worldly and corrupt ecclesiastical system, rather than by the pure doctrine of Christ and the open Bible, occupy an *intermediate* position; as witness Ireland, Spain, Portugal, Italy, Mexico, Hayti, and the States of South America, where, instead of wealth, might, prosperity, progress, and peace, we see poverty, feebleness, disaster, retrogression, perpetual unrest, and constant wars.

The following statements are taken from a recently published pamphlet, entitled, "Political Issues of the Nineteenth Century, with Important Statistics drawn from the most Authentic Sources":

"The social progress of the last century has been signal. That progress has been chiefly a Protestant progress. The Catholic nations have

been comparatively torpid, and exhibit little movement, except when by tolerating a Protestant minority they have admitted an infusion from the reform.

"The general decay or comparative stagnation of Catholic countries is patent, but a prolonged insight shows more. It is evident the Catholic nations advance more slowly in proportion to their complete subjection to the religious influence of Catholicism, while, on the contrary, strong religious sentiment among Protestants seems favourable to rapid advance. Historians remark that the Reformation has given extraordinary force to every nation which embraced it, and that history cannot explain this force.

"Protestantism being founded on a book reciting covenants between God and every man, it claims that every man should read. Hence the necessity for education. Personal covenant implies individual liberty and individual intelligence. With the exercise of private judgment comes discovery. The conscience is reached by a higher sense of moral contract than in the adherents of a system subordinated to some fellow creature, who assumes solely to interpret obligation and regulate duty. The enthusiasm of Protestants has remodelled the most important States of Europe on a basis of deliberative assent and representative government. Catholic communities, when they aspire to imitate this conception, invariably fall into disorder, for Catholicism requires unthinking submission. In the States founded by Protestantism in America, liberty and industrial energy are concomitant with order. Wherever Protestantism prevails, there is more frankness, more affiance, more culture and morality. . . .

"This is the secret of the strength of Protestantism. It rends the ceremonies which have long enwrapped the Church, and gives to every member the breath of life. M. Renan says: 'The formation of new sects which Catholics bring, as a mark of weakness, against Protestants, proves, on the contrary, that the religious sentiment lives among the latter because it is creative. There is nothing more dead than that which is motionless.' Protestantism substitutes a Christian republic of genial intelligence for a pharisaic cabalism of hierarchs. The laity are no longer the proletaires of the clergy, and both escape the deteriorating immorality of the confessional. The estates and judgments of men are freed from *the figment and the exactions of a vice-Christ who conveyances the invisible world to others and the visible to himself*. It seems incumbent on the nineteenth century to examine the extent and nature of this evil before transferring the burden to the next. Let us dispassionately ascertain how much of it is traceable to Christianity, travestied with paganism, whether the intellectual nonage of nations is not prolonged by it only in a less degree than by the vitiated theisms of Asia. Judged by the gradual corruption of the Church from Lactantius to Luther, but for the Refor-

mation of the sixteenth century Christianity should by this time have sunk so low as to be unrecognisable, and Europe would know no more of the writings of Moses, Isaiah, Paul, or John, than do the votaries of Buddha, Siva, and Mahomet. The condition of the Jesuit-ruled portions of America and their painful history for three hundred years would raise a further question, Does *such* Christianity sink populations lower than it finds them?"

Mr. Gladstone, referring to these, the vital subjects of our day, writes : "There is a question which hitherto can scarcely be said to have been presented to the public mind, and which it seems high time to examine ; that question is,—whether experience has now supplied data sufficient for a trustworthy comparison of results in the several spheres of political liberty, social advancement, mental intelligence, and general morality between the Church of Rome on the one hand, and the religious communities cut off or separated from her on the other." He proceeds then to reason that Scriptural faith will prove efficient "against the ultramontane conspiracy," and urges the need of the purified form of Christianity. Macaulay, Ruskin, Dickens, Hallam, Hepworth Dixon, and J. A. Froude have touched the question frequently ; but Continental writers, Romanist and Protestant, have dilated upon it. Taine has recognised the Bible as "the secret of England's greatness." Agassiz says of the teaching of Romanist priests, that "as long as the people do not demand another sort of religious instruction they will continue in their downward course or not be able to improve." M. Geroult writes in the palmy days of the second empire (1866) : "The nations in which Papal religion prevails are doomed to IRREMEDIAL DECAY, the future of the world is all to the Reformed Church. What nations are at the head of civilization, and exercise a sovereign influence? The United States, Britain, and Prussia. Which, on the contrary, drag painfully along in the routine of the past without strength or grandeur? Spain, Rome, and Austria. As for France, she is indebted to a peculiar temperament and to the free spirit of inquiry with which she is long animated, not to have fallen to the rank of a fifth or sixth-rate power in Europe. But let her take care, the Catholicism to which she obstinately remains attached—why, it is not easy to say—will indubitably in the long run paralyse her forces." Professor Emile de Laveleye remarks : "The Catholic nations seem stricken with barrenness ; they cannot rest, because free and representative government is the logical outcome of Protestantism only. Catholic nations aspiring to this perpetually oscillate between despotism and anarchy. Christianity is favourable to liberty. Catholicism is its mortal enemy, so admits its infallible head—the pope. If France had not persecuted, strangled, and banished her children who had become Protestants, she might have developed the germs of liberty and self-government. The fact being that the chief of a state, be he king or president, cannot be

a true constitutional sovereign if he is a devotee, and confesses as an obedient penitent. He is governed by a confessor who is subject to the pope, the real sovereign. The constitutional system becomes a figment or a fraud, for it enslaves the country to the will of an unknown priest ; or else when the land refuses to bear the humiliating yoke, it produces a revolution. In Protestant lands the constitutional system flourishes naturally, being in its native soil ; while on Catholic soil, being an heretical import, it is undermined by the priests."

"Such is its fate in Ireland. The franchises bestowed by an heretical empire to ascertain the individual will of its subjects can effect that object in a Protestant population ; in Ireland it expresses nought but the collective will of Rome. Even the juryman must submit to the Church's interpretation of duty ; he is influenced, as M. de Laveleye says the monarch or the minister is influenced, through the confessional. He is abject before the priest, who is abject before the pope. Thus Vaticanism wields imperial sway in Ireland, and no proof can be given that demagoguism is not its puppet. The effort to govern Ireland on constitutional principles becomes a farce and even a fraud. . . . Would ultramontane success make Ireland happy? It has had its way in many lands, and shown that it perishes by its own corruption. Suppose Ireland made into another Spain or Mexico. Let the history of those countries be repeated. Let property so gravitate into the custody of the Roman Catholic Church, that even the banks became monkeries, and the trader and the property-owner must borrow through the prelaty. The inquisition in Mexico became the discounter as well as the torturer. The wealth of the insubordinate was extracted by the rack. Money could always be had through the prelates, and through them only. Did this bring prosperity to Mexico? A new administration every nine months attests the fearful unrest which Romanism brings to agonised nations. . . . The traveller in Ireland is pained and surprised to find within twelve hours of London a lawlessness, truculence, and degradation defying the philanthropy and statutes of an empire which girdles the globe with its benignity. On lands where the energy of Protestantism would by emigration disengage itself from impracticable resources, the Catholic remains in chronic inanity of mind and body, and priests enjoy munificent living among the victims of superstition and sorrow. . . . A moral map of Europe would show in darkening circles our approach to the former States of the Church. The remark of Edmund About on prosperity holds true of morality, that '*it is proportioned to the square of the distance which separates it from Rome.*'

"Niebuhr, speaking of the Papal capital in 1830, says: 'They are a nation of walking dead men. When that which is living disgusts, can the human heart find compensation from statues, painting, and architecture?

Intellect and knowledge, any idea which makes the heart throb, all generous activity seems banished, all hope, all aspiration, all effort, even all cheerfulness, for I have never seen a more cheerless nation.' Macaulay says, 'Under the rule of Rome, the loveliest provinces of Europe have been sunk in poverty, in political servitude, in intellectual torpor, and reduced to the lowest depths of degradation.' Mr. Gladstone ('Vaticanism') says: 'The education of the religious orders in its influence is adverse to freedom in the mind of the individual, freedom in the State, freedom in the family; all that nurtures freedom, all that guarantees it, is harassed, denounced, cabined, confined, attenuated, and starved. To secure these is the claim of civilization; to destroy them, and to establish the resistless domineering action of a central power, is the aim of Rome.' Sir Robert Kane, an Irish Roman Catholic, says, in every country where education has been in the hands of the religious orders of Catholicism, 'it had resulted in social decay and the political debasement of the people.' In Spain the adult illiteracy has attained the figure of seventy-five per cent. The condition of Spain, Ireland, Italy, Portugal, Sicily, rural France, and indeed of Southern Europe as contrasted with Northern, is instructive. In Northern we find education, municipal repose, rural sweetness, and contentment. In the South with or without education, there is municipal unrest, tumult, and licentiousness, in the rural districts, filth, ignorance, coarseness. The virtues of content and industry come PALPABLY FROM SPIRITUAL SOURCES. The manifestation of wisdom and goodness in a Divine Being, as conveyed in the evangelic message of the New Testament, has proved itself the firm support of authority and obligation. When Christianity was pure it tamed the Goth, and Hun, and Scandinavian, who were never tamed till the gospel reached them. The nations of the South who had the advantage of starting with the developed civilization of pagan Rome have retrograded."

Statistical tables are then given to show the demoralizing effect of the Papacy, and especially of the confessional, in the countries subjected to Catholic influence. We have not space to give these, but may mention that while, in 1853, in Protestant England murders, for instance, occur in the proportion of four to a million of the population, in Ireland there are nineteen to the million, in Austria thirty-six, and in Italy seventy-eight. In 1869 the report of the French police gives still more horrible figures for the Papal States and Italy. In the former the murders were one hundred and eighty-seven in the million, and in the latter one hundred and eleven.

And not only does Romanism fail to restrain crime, but it fails equally to restrain vice. The official records of the birth of illegitimate children in Protestant and Roman Catholic countries present a fearful contrast. While in the great cities of England such births vary from four to seven per cent., in Paris, Brussels, and Milan they are thirty to thirty-five per cent. ; and in Prague, Munich, Vienna, and Grätz they vary from forty-seven to sixty-five per cent. In the Pontifical States, before their annexation to Italy, not only was the death-rate from crimes of violence, as we have seen, enormous, but the corruption of society was appalling to contemplate. Nowhere else, probably, was the number of illegitimate births so great : it amounted to seventy-two per cent. Or, to contrast the cities : in London, for every hundred legitimate births there are four illegitimate, in Paris there are forty-eight, and in Rome a hundred and forty-three—though it has between seven and eight thousand clergy, monks, and nuns !

What has made these differences and shades of difference ? Divine revelation : first the law, and since the gospel. The Lord Jesus said to His disciples, "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." If mankind has been to any extent liberated from the tyranny of Satan, if foolish and degrading idolatries and ignorant superstitions have lost their hold on a considerable portion of our race, it is a result of the redeeming work of the woman's Seed. It is true that many influences—material, moral, and intellectual—have combined to effect the advance of the race in morality and humanity, and that it is not always easy to estimate the separate influence of the new moral power introduced into the world by the advent and death of Christ ; but all the most important ameliorations of the condition of mankind will be seen on careful investigation to be *gesta Christi*,—achievements of Christ.

To judge fairly of this fact, we must compare the condition

of the Roman earth before Christianity became the religion of the empire with its condition subsequently and with its condition now. The moral and social revolution connected with the abolition of heathenism was immense and universal. It is difficult for us at this date to realize the corruption which characterized the old Roman civilization, the gigantic obstacles which Christianity had to overthrow in the laws, customs, and habits of the people, as well as in their religion. Satan's power in the world has diminished indeed since the days when parents could legally kill their children, and husbands had the power of life and death over their wives ; when divorce was so frequent that Seneca speaks of illustrious and noble women who reckoned their years, not by the number of the consuls, but by that of their husbands, and mentions one man, Mœcenas, as having "married a thousand wives," and Tertullian says that divorce was the very purpose of the Roman marriage. He who is a murderer from the beginning had full sway in the days when Cæsar forced three hundred and twenty pairs of gladiators at once into the arena to destroy each other, or when Trajan kept up such bloody sports for one hundred and twenty-three days together and made 10,000 unhappy prisoners contend for life in the amphitheatre ; when human sacrifices were offered on great occasions to the gods, and noble and lovely children specially sought out as victims ; when parents exposed their female children without the slightest compunction if too poor to rear them, or if they seemed weakly, leaving them to die or be devoured, or rescued by others to be brought up as the lowest slaves ; when corruption of still worse and more unnatural kinds was so common that Tacitus mourned over the utter decadence of his people, and, believing no redemption possible, anticipated only final and general ruin. It was in such a world as this that the triumphs of "the Seed of the woman" began.

"The influence of the great Friend of humanity was especially seen

in the Roman empire in checking licentious and cruel sports, so common and so demoralizing among the classic races ; and in bringing on a new legislation of beneficence in favour of the outcast woman, the mutilated, the prisoner, and the slave. For the first time the stern and noble features of Roman law took on an unwonted expression of gentle humanity and sweet compassion under the power of Him who was the brother of the unfortunate and the sinful. The great followers of the Teacher of Galilee became known as the 'brothers of the slave,' and the Christian religion began its struggles of many centuries with those greatest of human evils, slavery and serfdom. It did not, indeed, succeed in abolishing them ; but the remarkable mitigations of the system in Roman law, and the constant drift towards a condition of liberty, and the increasing emancipation throughout the Roman empire, are plainly fruits of its principles. All these and similar steps of humane progress are the *gesta Christi*, and the direct effects of His personal influence on the world."

Dr. Cunningham Geikie, in his "Life and Words of Christ," after tracing the new principles and the fresh light brought into the world by the advent of Christ, says :

"It has already largely transformed society, and is destined to affect it for good, in ever-increasing measure, in all directions. The one grand doctrine of the brotherhood of man, as man, is in itself the pledge of infinite results. . . . Such an idea was unknown to antiquity, to the Jew, to the Greek, and to the Roman alike.

"It was left to Christ to proclaim the brotherhood of all nations by revealing God as their common Father in heaven, filled towards them with a father's love ; by His commission to preach the gospel to all ; by His inviting all, without distinction, to come to Him ; . . . by His equal sympathy with the slave, the beggar, and the ruler ; by the whole bearing and spirit of His life ; and, above all, by His picture of all nations gathered to judgment at the Great Day, with no distinction of race or rank, but simply as men.

"In this great principle of the essential equality of man and his responsibility to God, the germs lay hid of grand truths imperfectly realized even yet. . . .

"The slave, before Christ came, was a piece of property of less worth than land or cattle. An old Roman law enacted a penalty of death for him who killed a ploughing ox, but the murderer of a slave was called to no account whatever. Crassus, after the revolt of Spartacus, crucified 10,000 slaves at one time. Augustus, in violation of his word, delivered to their masters, for execution, 30,000 slaves who had fought for Sextus Pompeius.

"The great truth of man's universal brotherhood was the axe laid at the root of this detestable crime—the sum of all villainies. By first infusing kindness into the lot of the slave, then by slowly undermining slavery itself, each century has seen some advance, till at last the man owner is unknown in nearly every civilized country, and even Africa itself, the worst victim of slavery in these later ages, is being aided by Christian England to raise its slaves into freemen.

"Aggressive war is no less distinctly denounced by Christianity, which, in teaching the brotherhood of man, proclaims war a revolt, abhorrent to nature, of brothers against brothers. The voice of Christ, commanding peace on earth, has echoed through all the centuries since His day, and has been, at least, so far honoured that the horrors of war are greatly lessened, and that war itself—no longer the rule, but the exception—is much rarer in Christian nations than in former times."

The writer from whom we have before quoted says on this subject :

"Peace among all men and all nations is the ideal presented by Christ. And by one class of means or other, when at length His teachings have thoroughly permeated mankind, this ideal will be attained.

"Outside of the nominally Christian nations there is no international law. The Turks appear to have had little idea of it till instructed by European nations. The Koran's teachings tended in the very opposite direction, and made war the natural condition towards non-Mohammedan races, and treachery justifiable towards an 'infidel.' The Mohammedan peoples in the North of Africa lived in a constant state of hostility with all foreigners. The Chinese, with all their advancement in arts and sciences, seem never to have thought of any code of humanity and justice towards foreign nations.

"The Japanese have indeed recently made efforts to introduce the international law known to the Christian nations to their own people, and one proposed code at least has been translated.

"No Buddhist, so far as we are aware, has written on this topic, nor does a Buddhistic code of laws and customs between different peoples exist.

"Nor, as we have shown, does international law owe much to Greek culture or to Roman law. The first general tinge of humanity in the world's relations, mercy to the wounded and helpless, the softening the rugged face of war, the binding different nations in a certain bond (feeble though it be) of brotherhood, the disposition to refer injuries to arbitration rather than violence—these are the *gesta Christi*."

But we must turn now to the second part of the prophetic

programme given in Eden—the announcements of the penal consequences of sin.

Man having rebelled against the great and good Creator, in whose image he was made, and under whose law he was placed in paradise, the threatened penalty and the natural *results* of sin followed.

The announcement of these should be read not merely as a judicial sentence inflicting penalties, but much more as a sure and certain word of prophecy, foretelling what would be the natural and inevitable consequences of sin.

DEATH was predicted as the wages of sin: "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." We need not pause here to inquire what Adam's destiny and that of his race would have been if sin had not entered, nor to examine into the nature of that death which is the wages of sin. What we have to do is to observe how the prediction has been fulfilled—how, notwithstanding the redemption promised, Adam and all his seed have experienced the truth of the prophetic announcement, "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." How simple the words, but how awfully sad and solemn their fulfilment! The echo of that sentence uttered ages ago in Eden rolls back upon us in ever-multiplying funereal dirges from all lands and ages. Death, death, death, universal, all-devouring death! Enthroned king in paradise, death *reigned* from Adam to Moses, and has reigned ever since. Every biography ends like the patriarchal genealogies in Genesis v., with their ever-recurring strain, "and he died." Our globe is one great cemetery. Successive generations of men have passed away to the grave, as the successive crops of grass fall in turn beneath the mower's scythe. "We cannot hold mortality's strong hand; men must endure their going hence e'en as their coming hither." Two hundred generations of men have succeeded each other on earth since their Creator put into the hands of our first parents this programme of the experiences of their race. What these genera-

tions averaged it would be impossible to say ; the one now living is computed at 1,400 millions. Average them at even a quarter of that number ; then seventy thousand millions of times over has this prediction been accomplished ! Each day sees it fulfilled afresh in more than eighty thousand cases, for such is the present daily death-rate of the world's inhabitants.

With two interruptions only—the raptures of Enoch and Elijah—death held unbroken sway from the fall of the first Adam to the resurrection of the second. And though the resurrection of Christ has robbed death of its sting and the grave of its victory, yet even as to believers who already have eternal life in Him, “the *body* is nevertheless still subject to death because of sin.”¹ Christians are no exception to the universal law, “it is appointed unto men once to die.” The *last* enemy to be destroyed is death.

Nor must we, in considering the fulfilment of this prediction, leave out of sight the universality of sickness and suffering, of disease and decay, that form no inconsiderable part of this curse of death. “We that are in this body do groan being burdened,” and each groan is an evidence of sin and death ! From the cradle to the grave we carry in ourselves the seeds of death. Men are born dying as well as to die, and the sole hope of our race lies in the promise and prediction, that God will yet “swallow up death in victory.”

A second point in this Eden prophecy was that while awaiting death, man should suffer from the curse of excessive labour. All labour is not a curse. Adam in Eden while still unfallen had his appointed task to dress the garden and to keep it, and for fallen man with all his evil propensities and incessant exposure to Satanic temptation, the necessity of labour is a mercy. Without it earth would speedily become a pandemonium. But still it was as a punishment for human sin that the ground was cursed, and it was foretold that the earth ceasing to yield spontaneously suitable human food

¹ Rom. viii. 10.

would bring forth thorns and thistles, and would in order to make it productive demand human labour, amounting to *painful, incessant, wearisome toil*. "In the sweat of thy brow shalt thou eat bread."

To note the fulfilment of this prediction, we must not confine our attention to agricultural labour merely. Glance over the world again, look back over intervening centuries and abroad throughout all races of men! Has it not ever been so? Have not multitudes, yea, the masses of mankind, even now to endure weary, wasting toil, that they may live? Is not life to the great majority a hard battle for existence? We must not think of the few who form the exception, but of the many who fall under the rule. We must note how the races who refuse thus to toil (like the Red Indians, who prefer to live by the chase, or the Bushmen of the Kalihari, who depend on the natural produce of their country) die out by degrees and cease to be. We must note how even, with all their toil, millions of industrious Chinese, Hindus, and others are periodically carried off by famine. Millions of our fellow subjects in India do not know what it is to have more than one meal a day, and are rarely free from a painful feeling of hunger. We must consider the overwhelming labours imposed on millions more by slavery; the arduous, exhausting, and dangerous toil involved to still other millions in such operations as underground mining for coal and other minerals, navigating stormy seas as fishermen, or in pursuit of commerce. We must think of the life of drudgery and weariness led by multitudes of women and young children in factories of various kinds, of multitudes of poor sempstresses toiling all their lives for the barest subsistence; think of the thousands of men employed in the great cities of the world, as drivers of cabs, trains, omnibuses, and other public vehicles—men whose hands must grasp the reins for twelve or fourteen and even sixteen hours a day, and that for seven days a week! And even if we rise above the classes con-

demned to the lowest forms of labour, oh, how full of toil is this our world ! Rest and leisure for enjoyment are the rare exceptions, the stern, rarely relaxed rule is toil, labour in the sweat of the brow !

“ If little labour little are our gains,
Man's fortunes are according to his pains.”

So do men realize this, that multitudes die of over-work, over-wrought brains, or worn-out bodies. Some of this is doubtless self-inflicted and needless, but for all that, the curse of labour presses heavily on the race, and always has done so everywhere. There may be some lovely islet of the southern sea where no more of labour than is healthful and pleasant is needed to secure sustenance. But such spots are as much exceptions in the earth as men rich enough to afford idleness are exceptions in the race. It is a fact proved by carefully compiled statistics, that in the State of Massachusetts alone 72,700 lives were lost *in their prime*, in the manufacturing towns, in the course of the five years, 1865-1871,—the vast majority from excessive labour, which soon destroys women and young girls especially. What hundreds of thousands of such perish annually in England, and die premature deaths from the same cause ! Is not this a heavy penalty ? Does it not press painfully on the human family the world over to this day as predicted ? Was not the foreview of human history given to Adam correct in this particular ? Let the great mass of mankind—straightening their weary backs and wiping the sweat from their brows with stiffened, aching hands—reply.

But the heaviest burden of this Eden prophecy fell not on the man. It fell where the sin was greatest, on the first transgressor—woman. Hers was a double guilt, for she not only yielded to temptation, but became in her turn a tempter. She fell not alone, but drew her husband down with her. The natural, inevitable consequences were foretold, and them-

selves constituted to a large extent woman's peculiar curse, though there is superadded a Divine infliction of punishment. Given to be man's helpmeet and companion, woman became first his tempter and then *his slave*; for man, in becoming a sinner, became of course selfish. Might took the place of right, and the weaker vessel, instead of being honoured and cherished, was oppressed and degraded. "Thy desire will be to thy husband," or, as it is better rendered, "thou wilt be in subjection to thy husband, and he will rule (or tyrannise) over thee."

Has this prediction been verified in the history of the sex? Alas! alas! almost too terribly for description. The shameless, brutal, cruel degradation of woman by the stronger sex has been perhaps one of the very darkest results of the fall, and one of the plainest proofs of the ruin which sin has wrought in the nature of man. Save where Divine revelation has shed its beams of healing light, woman is to this day a slave, or a captive, or a victim. The Indian loads his wife like a beast of burden, with all his goods and chattels, drives her before him with her infant on her back as he would drive a brute, and walking unburdened by her side, flogs her when her strength fails. The Bantu chief in Central Africa dies; straightway a dozen of his living wives are forced into the great square pit which is to be his grave, to make a couch for the corpse, and be buried alive to keep the dead man company. How often, when the Hindu husband has died, has the wife been burned on his funeral pile as a compliment to his memory! One hundred millions of women and young girls—fellow-subjects of our own—are immured as prisoners to this day in the dark and loathsome zenanas of India, doomed to a wretched, cruel, dreary life-long captivity, and to an ignorance which degrades them into mere talking animals; and this by the laws and customs invented and established *by men*. They may never eat with their own husbands, or share any of his pleasures or pursuits,

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never walk abroad for exercise, or travel for health, instruction, or amusement. They are simply slaves, lifelong prisoners, defrauded of the first right of a human being, and worse off than any negro in the West Indies in days gone by. Such is the portion of woman in heathendom, and it is not much better among the hundred and twenty millions of Mohammedans. Woman is denied her just rights by the degrading custom of polygamy, denied education and culture, denied even the possession of a soul! Even the Jews in their daily ritual thank God that He has not made them women, and do not permit wives and mothers to worship God with their husbands and sons in the synagogues, but assign to them a separate gallery. Everywhere and in all ages, savage or civilized, man—black, white, red, yellow, or brown—has *tyrannised over and oppressed his weaker companion*, degraded her into his servant, regarded her as *property* to be bought and sold, and imposing on her his share of the curse—excessive toil—in addition to her own of excessive suffering in child-bearing and fatigue in child-rearing, has inflicted on her, in wanton wickedness, multitudes of other sufferings, both physical and mental.

Christianity, as we have seen, makes men new creatures in Christ, and does away with all this; and even where it is a mere profession instead of a reality, it still makes men ashamed of this undisguised brutality and selfishness, so that some *forms* of the degradation and oppression of the weaker sex have disappeared in Christendom. But we must not think they have ceased to be because we see them not! By very far the largest part of the sex are still—after six thousand years—victims to these terrible sufferings, so awfully wide and long continued has been the fulfilment of this part of the Adamic programme.¹

¹ Even in professing Christian countries there exist still many cruel and oppressive laws and customs, indicating that the original Divine ideal of the equality of the sexes is not even yet, after eighteen hundred

As to the remaining portion of the prediction, the more direct infliction of penal suffering, "in sorrow shalt thou bring forth children," it is needless to dwell on its mournful world-wide and still-continued fulfilment. The sufferings of childbirth are the severest known. They are used throughout Scripture as a similitude for the extremest and most distressing pain and danger. The fact that in all lands and ages large numbers of mothers actually die in them, and the fact that this process is merely a climax preceded and followed by a vast variety of related sufferings, so that the greater part of every woman's life is chequered at intervals by sickness and pain unknown to the other sex, leave no room to doubt the long-continued and universal realization in human experience of this part of the prediction.

It may of course be argued by unbelievers that phenomena so conspicuous as death and toil and female suffering could not but have been noted and pondered by Moses, and that their existence and universality in his day accounts for the "legend," or "myth," of the predictions in Genesis iii. To this we reply that it is vain to contend that the second part of the Adamic foreview of the future *may* have had a natural origin in the days of Moses, when it is perfectly clear, as we have shown, that the first part *cannot be similarly accounted for*. If a portion of the prophecy evinces supernatural fore-

years of Christianity, fully recognised. Only a year ago were the abominable laws which sanctioned the vilest form of female slavery abolished, and the same personal liberty secured to women as to men. And these laws are still in full operation in India, in our colonies, and in most of the countries of Europe—laws that condemn the young and feeble of one sex to assault and infamy, to degradation and imprisonment for the sake of securing to the other immunity from the natural penalties of vice ! It is only a year or two since the law of our land shielded tender, helpless female children from the worst form of brutal assault by men, and even now it gives no protection to girls after sixteen. Thus too wife-beating and wife-murder are lightly esteemed if men can plead intoxication as an excuse ; and the judges in cases of divorce may give the custody of children to a bad father, and refuse recognition to the mother's rights.

knowledge, it is safe to conclude that the whole is an inspired prediction.

To conclude. This first section of the Divine programme of the world's history is, as befits its early and primitive character, fundamental and moral. It has no ethnographic nor political features; it does not distinguish between one part of the human race and another; it alludes to no special occurrences of history, gives no order of events, and no indications of chronology. Later predictions do all this, but not so the grand primitive Genesis outline. The general course of providence under the government of a righteous and holy but merciful God, the consequences of Satanic temptation and human sin, and the existence of a Divine plan for the ultimate destruction of moral evil and for the redemption of the fallen race by means of a suffering yet triumphant member of it—these were the broad, fundamental, all-important particulars contained in it. It was not a detailed foreview of any one section, but a general programme of the whole. It covered all lands and all ages, stretching in its geographical sweep to the uttermost ends of the earth, and in its chronological range from the days of Eden to a still future time. The experience of every single descendant of Adam has harmonized with it, and the great central event of all history—the first advent of Christ—has already to a large extent fulfilled its promise, and many infallible signs indicate its perfect accomplishment in days to come.

Nothing of a similar character can be found in all the range of literature; it arches over the guilty and suffering human race like the grand vault of heaven, simple, abiding, all-embracing, vast, unutterably lofty, and illuminated by a glorious central sun—the promise of the Redeemer. Whence came it? Is this the manner of man?

CHAPTER II.
THE NOAHIC PROGRAMME.

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THE voice of prophecy was not altogether silent in the intervals between the seven successive commencements of human history of which we have spoken. From time to time it gave utterance to isolated predictions—such, for example, as that of Enoch about the coming of the Lord with ten thousands of His saints to judge the wicked—a very glorious prophecy, yet one which had in view exhortation and warning rather than definite prediction. It was no chart of future events, it did not foretell the course of human history, but only the moral aspects of its final issues. As such detached and hortatory prophecies do not form parts of the programme we have to consider, we do not pause to dwell on this utterance of “the seventh from Adam,” who was translated that he should not see death.

With the second father of the human family the *definitely predictive element* reappears. Not only was the approaching end of the antediluvian age made known to Noah—not only was he acquainted beforehand with the purpose of God to destroy by a flood the evil generation which had corrupted the earth—but he was informed also of the exact chronological distance of the deluge. It was not to overtake the world for a hundred and twenty years: thus far would the long-suffering of God wait, if men would perchance be warned and repent. This is the first *chronologic* prophecy in the Bible, and it indicated in advance the end of the antediluvian age. We shall see, as we proceed, that all the other

chronologic predictions of Scripture similarly throw their light forward to the *close* of the different ages to which they respectively belong.

Moved with fear—the fear born of faith—Noah prepared an ark to the saving of his house, and while doing so acted as “a preacher of righteousness” to the evil generation in whose midst his lot was cast. His knowledge of the approaching end of the age in which he lived did not make him idle, impracticable, speculative, or despairing; it roused him rather to preach with power and labour with diligence, and it separated him in spirit from the wickedness, the worldliness, and the unbelief of his age. None of the wicked understood, believed, or heeded his warning words. As decade after decade of the last century of the old world rolled away, its millions remained as full as ever of carnal confidence and unbelieving indifference. They were occupied exclusively with earth and its interests—agricultural, commercial, social—right up to the hour when Noah and his family entered into the ark. The Divine Hand that shut him in, opened at the same time the windows of heaven and broke up the fountains of the great deep; and though its approach had been revealed by God more than a century previously, and though His righteous servant had not failed to proclaim to men the counsel and purpose of the Almighty, “they knew not until the flood came and took them all away.”

When Noah and his family emerged into the new world, they were wiser than our first parents in paradise. Adam, gazing around him in Eden, may well have inwardly exclaimed as to God, “He can create”; but Noah, doing the same from Ararat, must surely have added, “He can destroy.”

Sorely must the second father of the human race have needed the light of promise and of prophecy at the solemn crisis when he and his stood amid the wreck of the old world—the sole survivors of a perished race. Events had

forced upon them a vivid realization of the solemn fact that the great Creator would actually destroy the works of His own hands, rather than permit the victory of moral evil. It was a terrible revelation, for did not they too belong to the sinful race? What was to be their future and that of their posterity? Must they anticipate a recurrence of the late awful catastrophe? Oh, how they needed the sure word of prophecy as a lamp to shine in the dark place where they stood! The wrath of God seemed to have recalled His gift of the earth to the sons of men. Dared they take possession of this new earth as Adam had done of the old? Evil might and probably would fill the world afresh, and what then was their tenure to be?

Never did trembling mariners launching on a stormy and unknown ocean more need the compass, pilot, and daylight, than did the prisoners of the ark when they first alighted on Ararat need the guidance of Divine promise. And hence, as might be expected, the grace that had saved speedily reassured their fearful hearts: God set His bow of promise in the cloud, and prophecy witnessed the reflection of her beams of light from the retiring waters. A covenant of mercy gave them a new charter of natural blessings, and a new grant of dominion in the earth. A second time was the human family commanded to multiply and replenish all its waste places. The word of promise soothed the fears of the rescued; no recurrence of a deluge was to be apprehended. Seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night, were not again to be interrupted in their natural sequence; and four thousand years have proved God's faithfulness to His promise. The Noahic covenant is our present lease of the earth. According to its terms, God legislates for the winds and waves, the sunbeams and the storm clouds, so as to secure to man the indispensable order of the seasons.¹

¹ "The great circle of the heavens apparently described by the sun

The promises and predictions that followed the flood were of a cheering and merciful nature, and exactly calculated to restore in the hearts of those who had witnessed the evil effects of the fall, and seen a guilty race whelmed in the darkness and death of the deluge, hope, courage, and confidence in God. No threats, no conditions were attached to the gracious covenant of which the rainbow is the beautiful and abiding token. It should be noted here that the *promise of redemption* was *not* renewed in the Noahic covenant, because nothing that had happened had in the slightest degree invalidated it. It stood as before ; and Noah and his family evinced their acquaintance with it by offering sacrifice. They doubtless prized it in the new earth as they had ever done in the old, for the dark background of judgment and perdition must have made more precious than ever the hope of redemption and deliverance.

every year (owing to our revolution round that body) is called *the ecliptic*. . . . The plane of the earth's equator, extended towards the stars, marks out the equator of the heavens, the plane of which is inclined to the ecliptic at an angle . . . known as *the obliquity of the ecliptic*. It is this inclination which gives rise to the vicissitudes of the seasons during our annual journey round the sun. . . . The obliquity of the ecliptic is now slowly decreasing at the rate of about 48" in 100 years. 'It will not always, however, be on the decrease ; for before it can have altered $1\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$, the cause which produces this diminution must act in a contrary direction, and thus tend to increase the obliquity. Consequently the change of obliquity is a phenomenon in which we are concerned only as astronomers, since it can never become sufficiently great to produce any sensible alteration of climate on the earth's surface. A consideration of this remarkable astronomical fact cannot but remind us of the promise made to man after the deluge, that "while the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease." That the perturbation of obliquity consisting merely of an oscillatory motion of the plane of the ecliptic will not permit of its inclination ever becoming very great or very small, is *an astronomical discovery* in perfect unison with the declaration made to Noah, and explains how effectually the Creator has ordained *the means* for carrying out His promise, though the way it was to be accomplished remained a hidden secret until *the great discoveries of modern science* placed it within human comprehension.'—(Chambers' "Hand-book of Descriptive Astronomy," p. 73.)

We must not pause to dwell at any length on these early Noahic predictions, the fulfilment of which has been a matter of experience to the human race for four thousand years. We must pass on rather to those given at a later point in the life of the patriarch Noah, which partake more of the nature of a *programme of the world's history*.

Just as it was subsequently granted to Jacob and to Moses to foresee and to foretell the future of the different tribes of Israel, so to Noah, the second father of the human race, it was given towards the close of his long life of nine hundred and fifty years, to foresee and foretell the future of *the races that should descend from him*, by whom the whole earth should in due time be overspread. We have no means of fixing the exact date of the very remarkable prophecy in which he does this.¹ Owing to its position as the first recorded incident after the flood, it is often taken for granted that it followed closely upon that event; but there is really no ground for this assumption. It is the *only* incident mentioned in the subsequent life of the patriarch; indeed, with the exception of the death of Noah, the only incident recorded between the flood and the building of Babel—a period of many centuries. Its place in the narrative is therefore *no guide to its actual date, nor to its position in the life of Noah*. If it occurred as early as is generally supposed, then Noah's grandson Canaan is mentioned before he was born, or had done good or evil; which is most unlikely. On the other hand, if it shortly preceded the event next following in the record—the death of Noah—then the parallel with the cases of Jacob and Moses is close, and an additional solemnity and importance attaches to the prediction.

Further, this memorable utterance of the great preacher of righteousness must never be regarded as the imprecation of a curse and the bestowal of blessings, much less as if the

¹ Gen. ix. 24-29.

words had been prompted by any angry or vindictive feeling on Noah's part against his youngest son. A thoughtless reading of the narrative might produce such an impression on the mind, but reflection will show it to be an unworthy and wholly groundless one. The words were, as their fulfilment proves, an inspired prophecy, not an imprecation; the future of each race is not so much *assigned* as *foretold*, and the good or bad destiny in each case is connected not so much with the moral character of Shem, Ham, and Japhet personally, as with that of their descendants in distant ages, all whose deeds lay even then naked and open before the eyes of the revealing Spirit of God. The incident in connection with which the prophecy was given was not in any sense the *cause* of the destinies declared, though it gave *occasion* to the utterance of the prediction. The prophet speaks of races, not of individuals, as Isaac spoke of the future of Jacob's and Esau's descendants, rather than of their own personal experience. The portion foreseen for each was not merited by the parents' conduct only or mainly, but by the character and conduct of their unborn posterity. Such oracles are far removed from the nature of private fortune-telling; they are utterances given by inspiration of God. As Bishop Newton well observes on this passage: "Noah was not prompted by wine or by resentment, for neither the one nor the other could infuse the knowledge of futurity or inspire him with the prescience of events which happened hundreds, nay thousands, of years afterwards. But God, willing to manifest His superintendence and government of the world, endued Noah with the spirit of prophecy, and enabled him in some measure to disclose the purposes of His providence towards the future races of mankind."

The points emphasized in Noah's foreview of human history are few but important. The predictions are brief and clearly expressed. There is no indistinctness about them, no vague wording which might apply equally well to

any course of events. Like the predictions in paradise, the sentences though simple contain a world of meaning, are all inclusive in their scope, and reach right on to the end. On the other hand, they differ from them widely in their subject-matter, dealing not with the moral issues, fundamental physical experiences, or final results of human history, but rather with the *great ethnological divisions of the race, with the distinctive fortunes of its three main sections, and with their relations to each other.*

The programme of Noah presents the future—not of the race of mankind as a whole—as did the Adamic foreview; nor that of individual kingdoms and nations—as do subsequent programmes—but that of *the three main races* into which mankind has been divided since the flood. The destiny foreseen for *each race* is sharply defined, and widely distinct from that foreseen for the other two. Thousands of years of human history have elapsed since this wonderful prophetic utterance: if therefore the prophecy has been falsified by the event, it will be futile to deny it; and if, on the other hand, it has been fulfilled, there can be no mistake about the fact, which must be capable of full demonstration.

In our Authorised Version the prediction runs thus:—

“And he said, Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren.

“And he said, Blessed be the Lord God of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant.

“God shall enlarge Japhet, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant.”¹

Now the first question which arises in considering this prediction is, Why is Canaan, the fourth son of Ham, mentioned instead of his father, whose gross misconduct, evincing his depraved moral character, afforded the occasion for the prophecy? There is some ground to think that we

¹ Gen. ix. 25, 26, 27.

have not here the true original reading of the passage, that a copyist's error has obscured it, and that the two words, "Ham abi" (Ham the father of), have been omitted. Some copies of the Septuagint and the Arabic Version give these words as the text. Their insertion would certainly give the passage far more internal consistency, as well as bring it into fuller harmony with other Scriptures. As it stands, it does not include all the posterity of Noah, but leaves entirely unmentioned nearly one-third of it—that of all the sons of Ham, with the exception of Canaan. Bishop Newton says, in speaking of this passage :—

"Hitherto we have explained the prophecy according to the present copies of our Bible ; but if we were to correct the text, *as we should that of any classic author in a like case*, the whole might be made easier and plainer. 'Ham, the father of Canaan.' is mentioned in the preceding part of the story ; and how then came the person of a sudden to be changed into Canaan ? The Arabic version in these three verses hath 'the father of Canaan,' instead of 'Canaan.' Some copies of the Septuagint likewise have Ham instead of Canaan, as if Canaan were a corruption of the text. Vatablus and others by 'Canaan' understand 'the father of Canaan,' which was expressed twice before. And if we regard the metre, this line, 'Cursed be Canaan,' is much shorter than the rest, *as if something was deficient*. May we not suppose therefore that the copyist by mistake wrote only 'Canaan,' instead of 'Ham the father of Canaan,' and that the whole passage was originally thus : 'And Ham the father of Canaan saw the nakedness of his father, and told his two brethren without. . . . And Noah awoke from his wine, and knew what his younger son had done unto him. And he said, Cursed be *Ham the father of Canaan* ; a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren. And he said, Blessed be the Lord God of Shem ; and *Ham the father of Canaan* shall be servant to them. God shall enlarge Japhet ; and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem ; and *Ham the father of Canaan* shall be servant to them.'

"By this reading all the three sons of Noah are included in the prophecy, whereas otherwise Ham, who was the offender, is excluded, or is only punished in one of his children. Ham is characterized as 'the father of Canaan' particularly, for the greater encouragement of the Israelites, who were going to invade the land of Canaan ; and when it is said, 'Cursed be Ham the father of Canaan ; a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren,' it is implied that his whole race was devoted to servitude, but *particularly* the Canaanites. Not that this

was to take effect immediately, but was to be fulfilled in process of time, when they should forfeit their liberties by their wickedness."¹

There is a possibility that Ham alone was mentioned in the original prophecy, and that the allusion to his being "the father of Canaan" was introduced by Moses in view of the approaching invasion of the land of Canaan by the Israelites, to encourage them hopefully to undertake the subjugation of its seven nations, by recalling the fact that it had long since been predicted that the descendants of Ham, including these wicked Canaanites, should be their servants. But that the prophecy spoke of the Canaanites exclusively is not likely, or even credible. As it correctly predicts the future of *all* the descendants of Ham, not that of those of his fourth son merely or mainly, it is most improbable that Canaan alone was mentioned.

It is true that in the parallel prophecy of Moses the name of Joseph does not occur, but those of his sons Ephraim and Manasseh do: so that the prophecy of Moses covered the entire posterity of Jacob. Moreover, it was Ham's misconduct, not Canaan's, that was the occasion—though not the cause—of the delivery of this oracle. How highly improbable then that his name should be omitted from it! The Jews have a tradition that it was the young Canaan who first saw his grandfather's exposed condition, and called his father to join him in ridiculing and mocking the aged patriarch. There is, however, nothing but traditional evidence for this story; and even if it were true, it would account only for a mention of both father and son, and not for the exclusive naming of the son, as in our text. Whichever view be taken as to the text, it makes however no difference as to the *fulfilment* of the prophecy. If the original prediction was worded as in our version, it has been abundantly fulfilled, as we shall show; and if Ham was mentioned as well as, or instead of, his son, it has been fulfilled still more

¹ "Newton on the Prophecies," p. ii.

conspicuously on a wider sphere and through a longer period. We lean to the view that all the three sons of Noah were mentioned, and that thus the future of the entire human race was outlined in this second programme of the world's history.

It contains several distinct points. *First*, it implies that each of Noah's sons would become the father of a race. This might have been otherwise, as one of them might, like Abel, have been cut off and have left no issue. *Secondly*, it states that the descendants of Ham were to be servants to their brethren. Servile subjection, including various forms of slavery, would be their specially characteristic portion, though there might, of course, be exceptions to the rule, which would only tend to prove its general prevalence; that the race would be servants of servants to their brethren is thrice over asserted. *Thirdly*, it states that a peculiarly sacred character would be connected with the descendants of Shem, that Jehovah would be in some special sense the Lord God of Shem. The passage must not be read as an invocation, as it sometimes is, as if it were "Blessed of Jehovah my God be Shem." It is an ascription of praise, "Blessed be Jehovah-Elohim of Shem!" implying that the one living and true God would be the God of Shem's descendants, or, as Luther puts it, that Shem should enjoy "a most abundant blessing, reaching its highest point in the promised seed." The name Shem means "renown"; and the prophecy shows that the exaltation and renown of his seed would depend rather on spiritual and religious advancement than on mere political prosperity. That it is the *race* of Shem, and not he himself personally, that is contemplated by the prophecy, is intimated in the plural pronoun, "Canaan shall be *their* servant," not his servant. Ham's descendants would be in tributary subjection to Shem's descendants. *Fourthly*, it is stated that the race of Japhet, Noah's eldest son, whose name means "the one that spreads abroad," should be the most

widely diffused and, as regards material blessings, the most prosperous of the three ; that God would greatly multiply it, and open to it vast spheres. The words have been rendered, "God will concede an ample space" to Japhet's posterity, or "make wide room" for them. So great was to be this enlargement of Japhet that his descendants would ultimately not only occupy all their own tents, or dwelling-places, but inhabit also some of those belonging to Shem ; and though it is not distinctly stated in the prediction, yet there is nothing in the words to exclude the thought—that the enlargement of Japhet may include vast *intellectual* as well as material development, and that his descendants were to dwell in the tents of Shem in this sense also, *i.e.* to enter into their spiritual and religious inheritance. Japhet's race, like Shem's, was also to hold in subjection Hamitic races.

Thus the patriarch, gazing down the dim vista of ages then unborn, and extending his view even to our own day, beheld with eyes opened by the revealing Spirit, the future of his threefold family. He who in retrospect could recall the history of the first human race, with its tragic close, was allowed in prospect to foresee the main outline of the fortunes of the second family of man—his own family. And what did he foresee? For the Semitic races *religious supremacy and sacred renown* ; for Japhet's posterity *vast enlargement and political supremacy* ; and for the descendants of Ham, the father of Canaan, *servile degradation*.¹

¹ We must not omit to note, in passing, the important practical lesson taught by the fact that the evil races for whom the doom of perpetual servitude is foreseen are *the descendants of a bad man*. A straw shows which way the stream runs ; the incident here recorded of Ham is trivial in one sense, yet it clearly shows what manner of man he was—destitute of the fear of God, without natural affection, gratitude, reverence, compassion, self-respect, or decency ; full of heartless levity, addicted to coarse amusement and brutal vulgarity ; in short, a bad son who could never make a good father. It is a solemn thought for parents that they cannot help transmitting to their offspring of the most distant generations, their own moral character as well as their own physical features,

Now it is evident that before we can trace the fulfilment of this prophecy, we must to some extent *divide the races* of mankind, both ancient and modern, into ethnic groups, distinguish the families of nations apart each from the other, ascertain which sprang from Shem, which from Ham, and which from Japhet. The question consequently arises, Are there in existence such materials as enable us to disentangle the complex ramifications of the genealogical tree of the human race during the last four thousand years, so as to arrive at satisfactory conclusions on this subject? If not, it must of course be impossible to demonstrate that the Noahic programme has been fulfilled.

The reply is, There *are*, in the good providence of God, ample materials in existence for this preliminary inquiry—a rich and ever-increasing abundance; and so well have these materials been utilised of late by scholars that the main questions connected with this difficult problem are practically set at rest. Many a minor point may still remain obscure. There are certain tribes and peoples, both of ancient and modern times, whose ethnic relations may be doubtful, but the outline is clearly ascertained, and details do not affect our argument. The sources of information are: the wonderful genealogical table in the tenth of Genesis, and other Bible notices on the subject; the statements and tables of profane historians and other ancient writers, such as Herodotus, Strabo, Josephus, etc.; the hieroglyphic and cuneiform inscriptions on monumental remains and other antiquities, brought to light and deciphered by modern archæological research in Egypt, Mesopotamia, and elsewhere; the ever-multiplying observations and investigations of modern explorers and travellers into the languages, laws, customs, traditions, and ethnic affinities of newly visited tribes and peoples; and last, but not least, the very important and interesting, though somewhat bewildering, young *science of language*, which though almost the youngest of the sciences,

is yet one which has already secured great acquisitions of knowledge, read some of the puzzling riddles of antiquity and ethnology, and, like all other true science, confirmed in a wonderful way the veracity of Scripture. We must gather and focus a few of the rays proceeding from these various sources on the point we have in hand.

The tenth chapter of Genesis—the most ancient genealogical table in existence—a wonderful and profoundly interesting document, is our first guide. It is a book in itself, the book of “the generations of the sons of Noah”; and short as it is, it contains more important matter than many a bulky volume. A careful study of it will show that the first five verses give us the names of the seven sons of Japhet and their descendants; the next, and by far the longest section (verses 6 to 21), mentions the four sons of Ham and the nations which sprang from them, including the Canaanites; while the third and closing section enumerates the five sons of Shem with their posterity, including that family descended from Eber, from which Abraham the Hebrew was ultimately called out. The great value of this ancient record in our present investigation is, that it links the three races of mankind with the geographical spheres which they originally occupied, and from which their first migrations took place.

“It is impossible to exaggerate the importance of this ethnological table. Whether regarded from a geographical, a political, or a theocratical standpoint, ‘this unparalleled list, the combined result of reflection and deep research,’ is ‘no less valuable as a historical document than as a lasting proof of the brilliant capacity of the Hebrew mind.’ Undoubtedly the earliest effort of the human intellect to exhibit in a tabulated form the geographical distribution of the human race, it bears unmistakable witness in its own structure to its high antiquity, occupying itself least with the Japhetic tribes which were furthest from the theocratic centre, and were latest in attaining to historic eminence, and enlarging with much greater minuteness of detail on those Hamitic nations, the Egyptian, Canaanite, and Arabian, which were soonest developed, and with which the Hebrews came most into contact in the

initial stages of their career. It describes the rise of states, and, consistently with all subsequent historical and archaeological testimony, gives the prominence to the Egyptian or Arabian Hamites, as the first founders of empires. It exhibits the separation of the Shemites from the other sons of Noah, and the budding forth of the line of promise in the family of Arphaxad. While thus useful to the geographer, the historian, the politician, it is specially serviceable to the theologian, as enabling him to trace the descent of the woman's seed, and to mark the fulfilments of Scripture prophecies concerning the nations of the earth. In the interpretation of the names which are here recorded, it is obviously impossible in every instance to arrive at certainty, in some cases the names of individuals being mentioned, while in others it is as conspicuously those of peoples."¹

From this table we learn :—

1. That the descendants of Japhet's seven sons peopled "the isles of the Gentiles," in which expression not islands only are included, but all those countries from which visitors would approach Palestine by sea—the coasts of the Mediterranean and the adjoining maritime provinces, the shores of the Black Sea, and of the Caspian, the Levant, Archipelago, and Adriatic.

2. That the four sons of Ham settled in the more southern portions of the then known world—in Southern Babylonia round the head of the Persian Gulf, in Southern Arabia, in Abyssinia, Ethiopia, Egypt, and other parts of Northern Africa; and especially that Nimrod, the first founder of imperialism, was descended from Cush, Ham's eldest son, as well as that the seven nations afterwards expelled by the Jews from the land of promise were the offspring of Canaan, his youngest son.

3. That the five sons of Shem were ancestors of the Syrians, Lydians, Elamites, Arabs, and Hebrews.

Now here we have, as we have said, three ethnic groups linked with three distinct sets of localities; the young nations are mentioned in connection with their respective habita-

¹ "The Pulpit Commentary," p. 156.

tions. In other words, the primary geographical distribution of the descendants of the sons of Noah is plainly indicated in this genealogical table of his posterity. Profane history, as far as it has anything at all clear to say on the subject, adds its confirmation to these statements, and modern discovery and research are producing every year fresh proof of their accuracy.

But Noah's predictions about his threefold posterity have less to do with their primitive settlements than with their permanent fortunes. The question we must therefore consider next is, whether it is possible clearly to connect these original nations and peoples, first, with their representatives in the ages of subsequent history, and secondly, with their descendants now living? This will evidently be no easy matter. Peoples, tribes, and nations flourish for a time and then fade from view, to reappear afterwards under other names in other connections, and possibly in distant spheres. Nation rises against nation, conquest leads to the subjection of one people to another, to the merging of many into one, or again to the breaking up of one into many. Such political changes have introduced great complexity into the mutual relations of the different peoples of the earth; so that in the course of ages the problem of their ethnic affinities becomes of necessity an exceedingly difficult one. Unless, however, it can to some extent be solved, it is evident that we can never discern the fulfilment of the Noahic programme.

We ask then, Have historians been able to do for the existing nations of the earth what Garter King-at-Arms and the College of Heraldry do for the representatives of ancient families—trace out their genealogies, establish their relationship by unquestionable evidence, exhibit their connections, and show, not only the line of their own descent, but that of the collateral branches of their families? The answer is, that, to a large extent, they have.

In the first century of our era, for instance, Josephus gives

a glance at the problem as it presented itself in his day, eighteen hundred years nearer to the dispersion of mankind than our own, and when consequently it must have been comparatively easy to trace back the genealogy of nations. He says:—

“Now they were the grand-children of Noah, in honour of whom names were imposed on the nations by those that first seized upon them. Japhet, the son of Noah, had seven sons. They inhabited so, that, beginning at the mountains Taurus and Amanus, they proceeded along Asia, as far as the river Tanais, and along Europe to Cadiz; and settling themselves on the lands they light upon, which none had inhabited before, they called the nations by their own names. For Gomer founded those whom the Greek now called Galatians (Gauls), but were then called Gomerites. Magog founded those that from him were named Magogites, but who are by the Greeks called Scythians. Now as to Javan and Madai, the sons of Japhet; from Madai came the Madeans, who are called Medes by the Greeks; but from *Javan*, Jonia (or Ionia) and *all the Grecians* are derived. Thobel founded the Thobelites, which are now called Iberes; and the Moscheni were founded by Mosoch; now they are Cappadocians. There is also a mark of their ancient denomination still to be shown; for there is even now among them a city called Mazaca, which may inform those that are able to understand, that so was the entire nation once called. Thiras also called those whom he ruled over Thiracians; but the Greeks changed the name into Thracians. And so many were the countries that had the children of Japhet for their inhabitants. Of the three sons of Gomer, Aschanaz founded the Aschanasians, who are now called by the Greeks Reginians. So did Riphath found the Ripheans, now called Paphlagonians; and Thruggramma the Thruggrammeans, who, as the Greeks resolved, were named Phrygians. Of the three sons of Javan also, the son of Japhet, Elisa gave name to the Eliseans, who were his subjects; they are now the Æolians. Tharsus to the Tharsians, for so was Cicilia of old called; the sign of which is this, that the noblest city which they have, and a metropolis also, is Tarsus, the Tau being by change put for the Theta. Cethimas possessed the island Cethima: it is now called Cyprus; and from that it is that all islands, and the greatest part of the sea-coasts, are named Cethim by the Hebrews; and one city there is in Cyprus that has been able to preserve its denomination; it is called Citius by those who use the language of the Greeks, and has not, by the use of that dialect, escaped the name of Cethim. And so many nations have the children and grand-children of Japhet possessed. Now when I have premised somewhat, which perhaps the Greeks do not know, I will return and explain what I have

omitted ; for such names are pronounced here after the manner of the Greeks, to please my readers ; for our own country language does not so pronounce them. . . .

“The children of HAM possessed the land from Syria and Amanus, and the mountains of Libanus ; seizing upon all that was on its sea-coasts, and as far as the ocean, and keeping it as their own. Some indeed of its names are utterly vanished away ; others of them being changed, and another sound given them, are hardly to be discovered ; yet a few there are which have kept their denominations entire ; for of the four sons of Ham, time has not at all hurt the name of Cush ; for the Ethiopians, over whom he reigned, are even at this day, both by themselves and by all men in Asia, called Cushites. The memory also of the Mesraites is preserved in their name ; for all we who inhabit the country (of Judea) call Egypt Mestre, and the Egyptians Mestreens. Phut also was the founder of Libya, and called the inhabitants Phutites, from himself. There is also a river in the country of the Moors which bears that name ; whence it is, that we may see the greatest part of the Grecian historians mention that river and the adjoining country by the appellation of Phut. But the name it has now, has been by change given it from one of the sons of Mestram, who was called Lybyos. We will inform you presently what has been the occasion why it has been called Africa also.

“Canaan, the fourth son of Ham, inhabited the country now called Judea, and called it from his own name Canaan. . . . Nimrod, the son of Cush, stayed and tyrannised at Babylon, as we have already informed you. Now all the children of Mesram, being eight in number, possessed the country from Gaza to Egypt, though it retained the name of one only, the Philistim, for the Greeks call part of that country Palestine. . . .

“The sons of Canaan were these ; Sidonius, who also built a city of the same name ; it is called by the Greeks, Sidon ; Amathus inhabited in Amathine, which is even now called Amathe by the inhabitants, although the Macedonians named it Epiphania, from one of his posterity ; Arudeus possessed the island Aradus ; Arucas possessed Arce, which is in Libanus. But for the seven others (Eucus), Cheteus, Jebuseus, Amorreus, Gergesus, Eudeus, Sineus, Samareus, we have nothing in the sacred books but their names, for the Hebrews overthrew their cities.

“Shem, the third son of Noah, had five sons, who inhabited the land that began at Euphrates, and reached to the Indian Ocean. For Elam left behind him the Elamites, the ancestors of the Persians : Ashur lived at the city of Nineve and named his subjects Assyrians, who became the most fortunate nation, beyond others. Arphaxad named the Arphaxadites, who are now called Chaldeans. Aram had the Aramites, which the Greeks call Syrians, as Laud founded the Laudites, which are now called Lydians.

Of the four sons of Aram, Uz founded Trachonitis and Damascus ; this country lies between Palestine and Celesyria. . . . Sala was the son of Arphaxad ; and his son was Heber, from whom they originally called the Jews, Hebrews. Heber begat Joctan and Phaleg : he was called Phaleg or Peleg because he was born at the dispersion of the nations to their several countries ; for Phaleg, among the Hebrews, signifies division. Now Joctan, one of the sons of Heber, had these sons. . . . And this shall suffice concerning the sons of Shem."

This statement of Josephus—and many similar ones might, if space permitted, be presented from both earlier and later historians—forms a link between the primitive state of things and the present. It gives us a glance at one of the countless stages by which the young nations enumerated in the tenth of Genesis have been gradually developed in the course of four thousand years into the world full of nations and peoples, civilized and savage, with which we are familiar.

The process has resembled that of organic growth. The Noahic acorn has become an immense and ancient oak, its three main stems having divided into numerous great branches extending in all directions, each giving rise in its turn to countless shoots and twigs bearing generation after generation of leaves.¹

Josephus modernizes in measure the archaic nomenclature of Genesis. "The isles of the Gentiles" are seen to include "Europe and Cadiz," Gomer becomes "the Galatians and the Gauls," "Javan" changes into the Ionians and the Grecians ; and instead of a list of names which convey to our modern minds only the most hazy ideas, we get Cappadocians and Thracians, Phrygians or Eolians, the island of Cyprus, the land of Palestine, Egypt, Judea, Persia, the Indian Ocean, the Lydians, the Chaldeans, and the Syrians. Here we see our way, and feel that there can be no insuperable difficulty in connecting the condition of things in

¹ Is it not destined to develop yet into a forest, and to fill many of the myriads of worlds belonging to our own galaxy, with the ransomed race of man ?

Josephus' day with that existing in our own. It might be difficult to recognise in old age a man known only in infancy, but not so if he had been seen at intervals through life. To the uninitiated it may seem that there must be a good deal of guess work and uncertainty in the identification of modern nations with primitive peoples, but the historian who has traced the whole process of development feels that he stands on *terra firma*, and his conclusions may be accepted with confidence. He begins with the main branches of the oak, and following one till it forks, he traces its divisions down to the latest shoot.

The student of language, on the other hand, adopts the opposite course, and approaches the problem the other way. He examines the languages of existing nations, and traces them backwards to their origin. He finds the latest shoots running into older twigs, these again into small branches, these in their turn to larger ones, and these finally into one or other of the three main stems of the old tree. When the results of historian and philologist agree, we may rest satisfied that they are substantially correct.

But there are multitudes of nations to-day in Central Africa, Asia, Western America, and elsewhere, who have no history, who have sunk so low that, like the arab children of our streets, they do not know where they were born, nor how old they are, nor to whom they belong, and scarcely can tell their own family name. In discovering the birth and parentage, the relationships and affinities of such nations, the science of language is especially helpful. Experience has proved that there is no basis for a classification of the innumerable nations and tribes into which mankind is now divided so broad and so certain as that of language.

“Physical resemblances, or diversities, are not found to present so ultimate a ground of classification as those of the human speech. The Word is the highest outward expression for the soul; and the properties of the immaterial part of man—his unconscious instincts, his hopes, his

passions, his imaginings, his tendency of thought, his general habit of nature, appearing in language and its forms—are transmitted more entirely from generation to generation, and are less liable to be changed by external influences than any features of the face or the body. It is well known that time and external circumstances, and the mingling with other stocks, can change to a considerable degree (how far, is not here in consideration) the colour, the hair, the shape of the skull, and the size of the body. Yet after many generations, when the physicist could scarcely, by external signs, recognise the bonds of common blood binding different peoples together, the student of language discerns the clearest and most irrefutable proofs of their common descent. What scholar doubts now the brotherhood of descent, at a remote period, between the Hindu and the Englishman? and yet how few physical ethnologists could discover it by any bodily feature. It is as if the more intangible properties of man's nature were those most acted upon by the principle of inheritance, and the last to be changed or destroyed by external physical influences."¹

Language then, alone or in connection with history, is the clue to the discernment, not of nationality, but of race—a far stronger and deeper bond than mere nationality. There is a mysterious, far-reaching influence connected with heredity and conveyed by blood, which associates a distant ancestor with his remotest posterity, and links together by common characteristics the families, tribes, and nations descended from him, marking them off at the same time from all others. It might have been supposed that the mixture of nations which has taken place all over the world during the last four thousand years, through emigrations, conquests, and colonization, would have so mingled languages that it would now be impossible to distinguish their original character. This is far from being the case. Such agencies have extensively *modified* language, but research shows that no tongue is ever entirely obliterated by another, and that the *primary* streams of language, even though they may meet in close contact, never merge into each other, as Norman and Saxon did in the formation of English. These were cognate tongues to begin with, spoken by different families of one race. But

¹ Brace's "Manual of Ethnology," p. 3.

where, as in Western Asia at present, three primary languages, belonging to three different races—Tartar, Arabic, and Persian—co-exist side by side, it is found that no such combination takes place; the three races remaining distinct in speech, as in appearance, character, and habits.

Now, at the furthest point to which history and tradition can conduct us in the past, we discover *three prominent families of nations* from whom have come down through the ages of history *three broad streams of language* covering the ancient continents, from which have branched out the almost innumerable rivulets of speech which now interlace with each other all the world over. They are THE HAMITIC, THE SEMITIC, and THE ARYAN, or INDO-EUROPEAN, families of language. These three, however, do not include all the languages of the world. There is no fourth *family*, but there is a fourth *group*—the Turanian languages. This large and widely scattered group is less distinctly defined, and its various branches are less distinctly related to each other than are those of the three families above named, though they have some common characteristics. It includes the nomad languages, those which are less settled and more changeable than any others, which have a remarkable facility in assuming new forms and producing rapidly diverging dialects of great irregularity. According to some authorities it includes also the Chinese language, which has been called the most infantile form of human speech, and which seems in some respects to antedate other forms even of Turanian language. But this is one of the unsettled problems of the science, other authorities classing Chinese as Hamitic. The group of so-called "Turanian" or barbarous tongues will probably be in due time, as a result of further investigation, to a large extent distributed among the three principal families—leaving a residuum of dialects which may be degenerate descendants of the mother tongue, from which all languages alike sprung. At present the Turanian group is considered by Professor

Max Müller to consist of the Tungusic, Mongolic, Turkic, Samoyedic, Finnic, and aboriginal Indian languages.¹

The ethnological connections of this Turanian group being extremely uncertain, it is evident that it can have no bearing on our present argument. We pass it by consequently, remarking merely that the existence of such a group of miscellaneous unclassified languages affords no presumption against the historical veracity of the statement in the tenth of Genesis, that the human race divided after the flood into three great branches. The genealogies there refer of course to descent by blood and not to linguistic connection. We know that tribes and nations often change their languages, though they cannot alter their ethnic connections. All Jews, for instance, are children of Abraham, no matter what language they may speak; and the negroes in America do not cease to be Africans because they talk English. In a word, language may or may not be a clue to the ancestry of a people. It needs to be considered in connection with history and geography; taken alone it may be valueless.

In the case of the Turanian nations, where history and geography afford little light, language is an insufficient guide to genealogical connection; while in the case of the three great families of language, their speech forms a principal clue to the relation of the different nations and peoples, leading us

¹ "Turanian speech is rather a stage than a form of language. It seems to be the earliest mould into which human discourse naturally and as it were spontaneously throws itself, being simpler, ruder, coarser, and far less elaborate than the later developments of Semitism and Aryanism. It does not, like those tongues, possess throughout its manifold ramifications a large common vocabulary, or even a community of inflections. Common words are exceedingly rare, and inflections, though formed on the same plan, are entirely unlike. . . . We are not justified in assuming the same original ethnic unity among the various nations whose language is of the Turanian type, which presses upon the mind as an absolute necessity when it examines the phenomena presented by the dialects of the Semitic or of the Aryan stock."—(Rawlinson's "Herodotus," vol. i. p. 645.)

to attribute a common descent to some that are now far separated socially and geographically, though their earliest ancestors dwelt under the same roof tree.

The conclusions of ethnologists do not contradict the genealogical table of Genesis x., but confirm it. It asserts that there were three original races. The science of language asserts that there are still three distinct families of nations, but it adds that there are also a number of nations whose ethnic relations cannot be traced out from either historic or linguistic clues. What more natural than that such should be the case after the lapse of four thousand years, and especially with regard to the less important and more uncivilized and remote branches of the human race? New dialects, not to say new languages, spring up even now as a result of isolation and barbarism among peoples who have no literature and hold no public assemblies.

But if the Turanian *group* throws no light on our subject, the three *families* of language throw not a little, and we will now proceed briefly to consider them in their order.

THE SEMITIC FAMILY.

The Semitic family is divided into three main branches—the Aramaic, the Hebraic, and the Arabic. The Aramaic includes Syriac and Chaldee. The former is still spoken in a corrupt form by the Nestorians and other Christians in Kurdistan and Armenia; and the latter was the language adopted by the Jews in Babylon. After the captivity, Syriac became vernacular in Palestine; it was the language spoken by our Lord and His disciples, and was the speech of common life over all the territory extending from the Mediterranean to Mesopotamia. The Hebraic includes the Biblical Hebrew, the language in which the Samaritan Pentateuch was written, and the language of the Carthaginian and Phœnician inscriptions. It was the language of the later Canaanites, though

not of the original seven nations of Canaan. The Arabic branch includes the Amharic tongue, the Gees language of Abyssinia, and the ancient Himyaritic inscriptions in Arabia. It includes also the languages spoken along the north of Africa from Egypt and Ethiopia to the Atlantic Ocean.

"Of all the families of man, the Semitic has preserved the most distinct and homogeneous mental characteristics.

"Always, in all its branches, tenacious of the past, conservative, not inclined to change or reform, sensual and strong of passion, yet deeply reverent and religious in temperament, capable of the most sublime acts, either of heroism or fanaticism, it was, from the first, a fit medium for some of the grandest truths and principles which can inspire the human soul. Its very peculiarities—its tenacity and sensuousness and reverence—adapted it to feel and retain and convey Divine inspirations. The Semitic mind was never capable of artistic effort, but has made its great contributions to human knowledge in the invention of the alphabet, and in the exact sciences. In poetry, it has given to the world the most sublime lyrics which human language can present ; though in the drama, it has produced only as it were the type or introduction, and in the epic it has contributed nothing. The Semitic races have never shown themselves skilled in colonization—even the Phœnician colonies formed no permanent States—and they seemed almost as little capable of organizing enduring governments. Individuality has been too strong with them for permanent associated effort.

"In one of their earliest branches—the Phœnicians—and in the modern Jew, they have manifested a wonderful capacity for traffic and commerce. In the primeval ages, probably no one influence tended so much to unite and civilize mankind as the Semitic commerce and ingenuity under the Phœnicians. The sensuousness and the religious reverence of the race—so vividly shown in the Bible history—united in the heathen Semites, the tribes of Syria and Asia Minor, to produce a mythology debasing and corrupt beyond what the human imagination has anywhere else brought forth ; a mythology which, transplanted to Greece and refined by the Grecian sense of beauty, has poured through all ages a flood of sensual and licentious imaginations, corrupting art and literature almost to the present day.

"Three of the great religions of history—Mohammedanism, Judaism, and Christianity—have come forth from the Semitic races, and through future time it will be their glory that with all their former vices, and their subsequent degradation, one of their humblest tribes was fitted to receive and was appointed to convey the purest oracles of God to all succeeding generations."

The influence of the Semites reasserted itself very strongly in the Middle Ages. Under the rule of the Aryan Romans and Byzantines they had been subject and inferior tribes ; but—

“ With the tenacity peculiar to the race, they had still retained, under all the conquests, their national characteristics, and after centuries of submission and quiet they rose again at the call of religious fanaticism, with the same fire and passion which they had shown as Jews, under the Maccabees or against Titus. The foundations for their remarkable conquests were laid by the constant emigration of Arab tribes to Persia and various countries of Asia, whose population became thus gradually much mingled with Semitic elements.

“ In 622 Mohammed proclaimed the Semitic doctrine of the unity of God and the peculiar tenets of the Islam faith. Within twenty years vast countries of Europe and Asia were overrun and conquered by his fiery disciples. Syria was subdued from 632 to 638 ; Persia from 632 to 640 ; Egypt in 638 ; Cyprus and Rhodes in 649.

“ Within a century the Semitic Moslems had conquered Asia from Mount Taurus to the Himalaya and the Indus, and from the Indian Ocean to Mount Caucasus and the Iaxertes on the north ; they held the north of Africa, and after defeating the Teutonic Goths in Spain, took possession of most of that country. They had even invaded France, and seemed about overrunning all Europe, when they were defeated at Tours, in 732, by Charles the Hammer. . . . Since this brilliant period of conquest, the Semitic family of nations has never again attained to a leading place among the races of men.

“ Even as in the ancient days of Semitic glory in Assyria, this race again distinguished itself in the exact sciences and in architecture. Geometry, astronomy, anatomy, and chemistry, all witnessed a revival under the new Arabian civilization ; and the Moorish architecture, a product of the sensuous Semitic mind, under the more graceful influences of Byzantine taste, covered Spain with its gorgeous and fantastic structures.

“ This family of the human race is distinguished by the peculiar character of the language which it spoke. Those languages, in fact, constitute a group clearly separated from the other leading forms of human speech. The great peculiarity of the group lies in the very structure of its roots, which consist mostly of three consonants, while those of the Aryan and Turanian groups have only one or two. Out of these tri-literal roots the mass of their words were coined by merely varying the vowels, and in some cases by adding a syllable ; on the other hand, words formed by composition are almost unknown. The verb has but two tenses, the noun but two genders, and the relations of cases are not, in general, expressed by inflected forms. In the structure of the sentence, the Semitic

dialects present little more than a process of addition ; words and propositions are placed side by side, and are not subject to the involution and subordination of clauses, so striking in many of the Indo-European tongues.

“In short, these languages have a kind of poetic power, and express passion and feeling with great intensity ; but they are lacking in logical precision, deficient in analytical terms, and imperfectly adapted to embody the grandest results of human thought.”¹

The Semitic territory in antiquity included Syria, Phœnicia, Palestine, Mesopotamia, Chaldea, Assyria, Susiána, and the immense deserts of Arabia. The Semites had less tendency to spread abroad in the earth than either of the other great families.

It was not till the thirteenth century before Christ that they began to become prominent ; and though at that time their political importance was not great, they soon rose to be the principal *commercial and manufacturing* people in the world.

¹ “Long before recorded history, perhaps even before the full formation of their distinctive language, that family of mankind from which the Semitic tribes have come, poured forth its hordes from Asia over the northern portion of Africa. Of these, one vigorous tribe, with the tenacity of the Semitic stock, have held possession of the valleys of the Atlas under all the successive waves of conquest which have passed over Northern Africa. The colonies and conquests of the Phœnicians, the Romans, the Byzantines, the Vandals, and the Arabs, have not destroyed or absorbed this tough and warlike people. Pressed farther to the south by the fierce attacks of the Arabs, in the first half of the eleventh century, they could not be driven from the desert ; and they hold, now, a larger extent of territory than is occupied by any other race on African soil.” From the Atlantic Ocean, on the west, their tribes extend to the borders of Egypt on the east, and from the Atlas chain on the north over the oases of the Great Desert.

Their traders form the great media of commerce between the Soudan and the Mediterranean coast, “while their wild and nomad hordes are the special obstacle and danger to the traveller. They are known under the name of Libyans in the most ancient history ; their distinguishing features are beheld even on the pictures of Egyptian monuments, and, on the other hand, the most warlike and distinguished of modern military corps is formed originally of their soldiers, the *Zouaves*.

“The name by which this race is best known is BERBER, a word much disputed, but whose origin may be naturally traced to the Roman name of these people, Barbari.”—(Brace’s “Manual of Ethnology,” p. 171.)

They planted commercial stations around the whole length of the Mediterranean, which it took at that time seventy or eighty days to traverse. Their ships brought tin from England, and the luxuries of India from the mouths of the Indus. They had a chain of commercial stations into the interior of Asia, and traded between points as far separated from each other as Babylon and Cadiz, Italy and India, Arabia and Armenia. During the same period they established the *old Assyrian empire on the Upper Tigris*, an empire which lasted over six and a half centuries, and held a vast extent of country in subjection, from Suza in Persia to Lower Egypt. The turning point in the history of this empire was the destruction of Sennacherib's host by pestilence, B.C. 691. It gradually declined after that event, and its great city, Nineveh, fell before an *Aryan* king, Cyaxares the Mede, in B.C. 625. The second Babylonian empire lasted scarcely a century, and the MEDO-PERSIAN empire which followed was *the opening of the Aryan period of history*. Cyrus the Persian belonged to the Aryan race; and when his empire fell, the ruling power in the world passed from Asia to Europe.

"What is especially remarkable of the Semitic family is its concentration, and the small size of the district which it covers compared with the space occupied by the other two. Deducting the scattered colonies of the Phœnicians, mere points upon the earth's surface, and the thin strip of territory running into Asia Minor from Upper Syria, the Semitic races in the time of Herodotus are contained within a parallelogram 1,600 miles long from the parallel of Aleppo to the south of Arabia, and on an average about 800 miles broad. Within this tract, less than a thirteenth part of the Asiatic continent, the entire Semitic family was then, and, with one exception, has ever since been comprised.

"Once in the world's history, and once only, did a great ethnic movement proceed from this race and country. Under the stimulus of religious fanaticism, the Arabs in the seventh century of our era burst from the retirement of the desert, and within a hundred years extended themselves as the ruling nation from the confines of India to Spain. But this effort was the fruit of a violent excitement which could not but be temporary, and the development was one beyond the power of the nation to sustain. Arabian influence sank almost as rapidly as it had risen, yield-

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ing on the one side before European, on the other before Tartar attacks, and, except in Egypt and Northern Africa, maintaining no permanent footing in the countries so rapidly overrun. Apart from this single occasion, the Semitic race has given no evidence of ability to spread itself either by migration or by conquest. In the Old World, indeed, commercial enterprise led one Semitic people to aim at a wide extension of its influence over the shores of the known seas ; but the colonies sent out by this people obtained no lasting hold upon the countries where they were settled, and after a longer or a shorter existence they died away almost without leaving a trace. Semitism has a certain kind of vitality—a tenacity of life—exhibited most remarkably in the case of the Jews, yet not confined to them, but seen also in other instances, as in the continued existence of the Chaldeans in Mesopotamia, and of the Berbers on the North African coast.

“ It has not, however, any power of vigorous growth and enlargement, such as that promised to Japhet, and possessed to a considerable extent even by the Turanian family. It is strong to resist, weak to attack, powerful to maintain itself in being notwithstanding the paucity of its numbers, but rarely exhibiting, and never for any length of time capable of sustaining, an aggressive action upon other races. With this physical and material weakness is combined a wonderful capacity for affecting the spiritual condition of our species, by the projection into the fermenting mass of human thought, of new and strange ideas, especially those of the most abstract kind. Semitic races have influenced, far more than any others, the history of the world’s mental progress, and the principal intellectual revelations which have taken place are traceable in the main to them.”¹

THE ARYAN FAMILY.

The great Indo-Aryan, or Japhetic family, is so extensive and so varied that we shall best convey a fair idea of it by presenting Professor Max Müller’s own table of its principal members.

¹ Rawlinson’s “Herodotus,” vol. i. p. 661.

GENEALOGICAL TABLE OF THE ARYAN FAMILY OF LANGUAGES.

<i>Living Languages.</i>	<i>Dead Languages.</i>	<i>Classes.</i>	
Dialects of India	Prâkit and Pâli	} Indic	} Southern Division.
„ the Gipsies	„		
„ Persia	Parsi-“ Pehlevi ”	} Iranic	
„ Afghanistan	„		
„ Kurdistan	„		
„ Armenia	Old Armenian		
„ Ossethi	„	} Keltic	} Northern Division.
„ Wales	„		
„ Brittany	„		
„ —	Cornish	} Italic	
„ Scotland	„		
„ Ireland	„		
„ the Isle of Man	„	} Illyric	
„ Portugal	„		
„ Spain	„		
„ Provence	Langue d'Oc	} Hellenic	
„ France	Langue d'Oil		
„ Italy	„	} Windic	
„ Wallachia	„		
„ the Grisons	„		
„ Albania	Doric-Æolic		
„ Greece	Attic-Ionic	} Teutonic	
„ Lithuania	„		
„ —	Old Prussian		
„ Kurland and Livonia	„		
„ Bulgaria	Old Slavonic	} Old Norse	
„ Russia	„		
„ Illyria	„		
„ Poland	„		
„ Bohemia	Old Bohemian		
„ Lusatia	Polabian		
„ Germany	Old German		
„ —	Gothic		
„ England	Anglo-Saxon		
„ Holland	Old Dutch		
„ Frisland	Old Frisian		
„ North of Germany	Old Saxon		
„ Denmark	} Old Norse		
„ Sweden			
„ Norway			
„ Iceland			

It will be seen at a glance that this family of languages comprises most of the ancient and modern languages of Europe, including Greek and Latin and all the Slavonic and Teutonic dialects ; in fact, with a few exceptions—the Finn, the Lapp, the Hungarian, and the Crimean languages—all. It comprises also the Indian languages derived from the ancient Sanskrit, though not the Tamil and Telugu tongues, nor the languages of the aboriginal tribes in India, which are Turanian.¹

The Parsee, the Persian, and the Armenian languages are also Aryan. Though differing so widely among themselves, all these forms of speech, belonging to various and widely scattered nations and peoples, have retained enough of the original language from which all alike sprang to demonstrate their common origin.

“One of the greatest discoveries of modern time, as affecting the question of races, is that conclusion from comparison of languages, which has defined what is called the Aryan or Indo-European family of nations.

“By a simple examination of the roots and structure of various languages, and their comparison especially with those of the Sanskrit, it has been ascertained, on evidence clear and unassailable, that certain nations, the most widely separated

¹ The aboriginal races of India belong to the Turanian type, though the Hindu—the leading race—is Aryan. The difference is very marked between the hill-tribes, as they are called, and the Aryans of the plains. The former are despised and outlawed by the Hindus, own no property, seldom cultivate the land, and have institutions and customs wholly different from those of the Hindus. They do not observe caste ; their widows are allowed to marry again ; they eat flesh and have no objection to the shedding of blood ; they indulge freely in intoxicating drinks, do not venerate the Brahmans, and bury their dead instead of burning them. All these things establish decisively that they are of a different origin, and the difference in their language confirms that conclusion. There are a great variety of races among them, but they all differ as widely as possible from the Aryan Hindus, among whom they have dwelt for ages.

and the most diverse in physical characteristics, *have a common origin*. The blonde Norwegian and the dark-eyed Spaniard, the mercurial Kelt and the steady Anglo-Saxon, the Slavonic Russian and the lively Frenchman, the practical Anglo-American and the dreamy Hindu, the German and the Persian, the Greek and the Roman, are proved to be all emigrants from one home, and to have spoken once a common tongue.

"We can see also, in the words they have all preserved, how far their common forefathers had progressed in thought and in civilization, before the remarkable causes arose which scattered them in various tribes over the face of the earth.

"The words which all, or nearly all, their descendants have in common are those which convey the simplest ideas of existence and action; those which describe the nearest family relations, such as *father* and *mother*, *son* and *daughter*; those for domestic animals, such as *dog*, *pig*, *sow*, *boar*, *goose*, and *duck*; those for the simplest articles of food, for certain metals, for the great luminaries of the sky, and 'the objects of religious worship, derived from these great phenomena;' and words of feeling, like *heart* and *tears*.

"Language shows conclusively that the Aryan tribes had passed beyond the lowest barbaric stage before they separated. There is no certain evidence that they were agricultural, but they were probably nomadic or occupied with the care of flocks; they had built houses and worked in metals; they had constructed boats and fastened animals to vehicles for domestic labour, and were acquainted with the art of sewing if not of weaving. Words present to us as clearly as a historical record that even in that distant antiquity, certain great features, common to Indo-European nations, whether for good or evil, still existed.

"The relation of husband and wife, the position of the sexes, the absence of caste, and the priestly authority of the father, were characteristics of our earliest ancestors. It is

an additional evidence of their early peaceful life, that the words which are different in the many branches of their descendants are, with a few exceptions, the names of wild animals, and those for the instruments of war. The common *parent tongue* of our ancestors has perished, but in the various languages of their descendants—whether Sanskrit, Latin, Greek, Keltic, or English—we see *traces of the primeval tongue*.

“The centre from which these various races first migrated is hid in the mists of a distant antiquity ; but both language and the traditions of two races designate *the high plateau of Asia* lying east of the Caspian, as their common home. . . . From the Indian Aryans have come the great people of the Brahmanic Hindus ; and from the Iran or Persic Aryans descended the Persians, the Medes, the Carmanians, the Bactrians, the Sogdians, the Hyrcanians, the Sargartians, and others of minor importance. . . . However early may have been the original dispersion of the Aryan tribes, *the historical appearance* of this powerful family is comparatively late. The Turanian, the Hamitic, and the Semitic peoples, had successively erected powerful empires, ere the vigorous Aryan family came forward upon the field of history. Since that period, with the exception of the Assyrian empire, and the Semitic conquests under Mohammed, and occasional Turanian invasions, *the Aryan races have held the dominion of the world* ; bearing with them Art and Law, and Science and Civilization ; exercising the singular philosophic and intellectual power of this family ; manifesting especially to the world the principle of public spirit (or individual sacrifice for the good of a community) ; and becoming the universal instruments through which the Semitic conceptions of Deity, and the Semitic inspirations of Christianity, have been spread through all nations.

“Their two great streams of population—the European and the Asiatic Aryans, the practical races and the medita-

tive races—after unknown ages of separation, modified by incomprehensible and countless influences of climate and of nature, as apparently diverse as any two branches of the human family, have, during the past two centuries, met again in the valleys of India, and the last few years have witnessed what is perhaps the final prostration of the Asiatic Aryan beneath the ingenuity and vigour of the European Aryan.”¹

THE HAMITIC FAMILY.

It is difficult to define the elements of the Hamitic family, as the most varied opinions exist among philologists on the question. Dr. Edkins, of the London Missionary Society, thinks that even Chinese is a Cushite, or Hamitic, language, and that the migration which peopled the Celestial empire was connected with the age and race of Nimrod. It is impossible to decide that many of the so-called Turanian languages are *not* Hamitic; but it is easy to prove that certain languages *are so*, and a consideration of these is sufficient for our present purpose.

The unquestionably Hamitic nations include Egypt, Babylonia, Ancient Syria and Palestine, and other parts of Africa.

1. EGYPT. There is abundant proof that the most ancient organized state of which we have any knowledge—Egypt—was peopled by the descendants of Mizraim, the son of Ham. The present Arabic name of Egypt is Misr; and the Hebrew Mizraim, which is dual in form and signifies the two Misrs, or Egypts, indicates the upper and lower sections of the long valley of the Nile. We learn from the tenth of Genesis that the early Egyptians were closely related to the primitive inhabitants of Canaan, who were descended from Mizraim's brother Cush. Herodotus, Diodorus, and other Greek writers are agreed that settled government was established in Egypt

¹ Brace's "Manual of Ethnology," pp. 38-42.

under monarchical institutions at an earlier date than in any other country. Some writers carry back the origin of Egypt into a fabulous antiquity, but historians of repute are agreed that it dates from a time anterior to B.C. 2000; in other words, that it goes back to a time soon after the Noahic deluge. Hamitic speech seems to have developed first in Egypt, and to have spread thence to other Hamitic races who were then perhaps dwellers in that land, by whom it was carried in two distinct lines to other parts of the earth—in one line it passed to Ethiopia, Southern Arabia, Babylonia, Susiāna, and the adjoining coast; and in another line to Philistia, Tyre, Sidon, and the country of the Hittites.

In Scripture Egypt is frequently mentioned as “the land of Ham.” “He smote all the firstborn in Egypt; the chief of their strength in the tabernacles of Ham.”¹ “Israel also came into Egypt; and Jacob sojourned in the land of Ham.”² “They forgot God their Saviour, which had done great things in Egypt; wondrous works in the land of Ham, and terrible things by the Red Sea.”³

2. BABYLONIA. The earliest or one of the earliest empires established in the great Mesopotamian valley was undoubtedly a Cushite or Hamitic one. Nimrod was the founder of a dynasty which reigned in Babylonia for some centuries; but whether his empire was the earliest founded in that region—whether it rose soon after the flood, as is commonly supposed, or nearer to the days of Moses—is as yet an undecided question. On account of its mention in the genealogical table in the tenth of Genesis, it is generally assigned to the earliest post-diluvian antiquity. But it should be noted that Nimrod is there introduced in a parenthetical way. He is not mentioned among the sons of Cush in verse 7, but separately and subsequently. It is not asserted that he built Babel or Babylon, but only that it became his first seat

¹ Ps. lxxviii. 51.

² Ps. cv. 23.

³ Ps. cvi. 21, 22.

of empire, and that from Babylon he went forth to Asshur and built a new capital for himself—Nineveh. It is further asserted that his renown was proverbial apparently in the days when the Pentateuch was published, as if his exploits were fresh in the minds of men as late as the days of Moses, a thousand years after the flood. Several things are implied in these statements :—That Babylonia and the country to the north of it in the great valley between the Tigris and the Euphrates, “the land of Shinar,” was originally inhabited and governed by “Asshur,” or by Assyrians, *i.e.* by descendants of Shem. That after a considerable lapse of time—sufficient for many great cities to have arisen beside Babylon itself—Nimrod, a Hamite and a descendant of Cush, invaded and conquered the country, taking Babylon and the other places mentioned first, and gradually extending his dominion northward and eastward, till he reached the magnificent site on the Tigris which tempted him to erect a new capital to his empire—Nineveh, the remains of which are with us to this day.

The words “Cush begat Nimrod” need not necessarily mean that the latter was the great-grandson of Noah, for very numerous parallel expressions elsewhere, both in Scripture and in various oriental works, prove distinctly that the words convey nothing more than that Nimrod was by descent a Cushite. No information of his chronological distance from his ancestor, nor of the number of generations which intervened between them, is given in the passage. That his empire did not belong to the earliest post-diluvian antiquity is implied in Genesis xiv., where we have an enumeration of the monarchs reigning in Abraham’s time in the great valley between the Tigris and the Euphrates. The kings of Shinar and Elam are specially mentioned, and yet there is not the least allusion to Nimrod as reigning at Babylon, or to the existence of such a city as Nineveh, indicating that the latter was not built, nor the kingdom of Nimrod established in the

days of Abraham. The rulers of the entire district seem to have been involved, more or less, in the great war of the "four kings with five," and the occupants of Babylon at the time were descendants of Shem, as is evident from their names. Hence it would seem as if Nimrod and his Cushite dynasty cannot at that time have come into existence. Now cuneiform monuments speak distinctly, like Genesis x., of a Cushite dynasty conquering Babylonia, spreading to the north, and erecting Nineveh on the Tigris. But they place this event about the sixteenth or seventeenth century before Christ, and state that by these conquests one original Chaldean empire was overthrown. Traces of Nimrod's empire—*i.e.* of a Hamite dynasty—having ruled in Mesopotamia were found by Layard among the ruins of Nimrud, carved ivories bearing a strong resemblance to similar antiquities found in Egypt, and even monuments with distinctly Egyptian physiognomies. Cush and Mizraim, the founders of the Egyptian kingdom, were brothers. Berosus, the Chaldean priest, of whose history of his people considerable fragments exist, also throws light on the subject. He states that the fifth dynasty which ruled in Babylon consisted of "nine Arabian kings," who reigned 245 years. Now as Arabia was originally peopled by the Cushites, this dynasty may well be that of Nimrod. Further, some very ancient Babylonian writings, discovered in an Arabic translation, and investigated by Professor Chwolson, of St. Petersburg, mention a foreign dynasty founded in Babylonia by one called Nemroda, or Nimrod, as actually ruling in the days when the author wrote. His book has no date, but its internal evidence shows that it belongs to a period long prior to the second Babylonian empire founded by Nabonassar, and subsequent to the early Chaldean monarchy.

On these and other grounds the existence of the Cushite empire of Nimrod is, by many careful scholars, now considered to be proved, independently of the statement in the

tenth of Genesis ; but they hold it to have intervened between the old Chaldean monarchy and the rise of the Semitic Assyrians to supreme power in Western Asia. Even as late as the century of Nebuchadnezzar, 600 B.C., the Hamitic race is shown by the monuments to have formed a large element in the population of Babylonia.

Thus, while altering our preconceived opinion as to its precise chronological position, profane history and archaeological discovery alike agree in maintaining what Scripture asserts : (1) That Babylon was founded very soon after the flood ; (2) that Mesopotamia was at first occupied by descendants of Shem ; (3) that Nimrod, a Cushite invader, conquered the country, and then extending his empire northward, built Nineveh, and founded a dynasty which ruled over the neighbouring nations for a considerable period of time before the later Assyrian dynasty arose. Further explorations of the mounds on the Tigris and Euphrates will probably in years to come make still clearer our present conceptions of the exact nature of these events, and help us more accurately to determine the dates of these early political revolutions.

"The close connection between Egypt and Babylonia is in any case unquestionable. Ancient classical tradition and recent linguistic research agree in establishing a close connection between the early inhabitants of the lower Mesopotamian plain and the people which under the various names of Cushites, Ethiopians, and Abyssinians, had long been settled upon the Nile. . . . Names which are modifications of Cush have always hung about the lower Mesopotamian region, indicating its primitive connection with the Cush upon the Nile. Even now ancient Susiâna is known as Khuzistan, or the land of the Cushites. Standing alone, these might be weak arguments ; but Sir Henry Rawlinson, the first translator of primitive Babylonian documents, declares the vocabulary employed to be '*decidedly Cushite or Ethiopian*,' and states that he was able to interpret the inscriptions chiefly by the aid which was furnished to him from published works on the Galla or Abyssinian and the Mahra or South Arabian dialects." ¹

¹ Rawlinson's "Egypt and Babylon," p. 8.

THE EMPIRE OF THE HITTITES.

Nor was it in Egypt and in Babylonia only that the Hamites rose to supremacy in early post-diluvian times. A third great empire arose among them before any of the descendants of Shem or Japhet became prominent on the stage of the world's history. And this third empire was not merely Hamitic, it was also distinctly Canaanitish ; so that whatever reading we adopt of the text of Noah's prophecy—whether we read "Ham the father of Canaan," or "Canaan" alone—the history of this empire is in point.

The Bible notices of the races who occupied the land promised to Abraham include a variety of nations under the general name Canaanites. Among these the Hittites appear frequently as first and mightiest, as having widespread dominions and great power. They are called "the children of Heth," the second son of Canaan. In the Bible we first meet with them at Hebron, on the high-road from Egypt to Jerusalem, where they seem to have been recognised as the rightful owners of the place, from whom Abraham, regarded as a prince among them, purchased a burying ground. The Hittites were not only a commercial people, as we see by this money transaction, but they were also the proprietors of the land. This is the earliest transfer of land on record, and they were Hittites who made out these earliest title deeds. It seems that they subsequently secured sufficient foothold in Egypt to found the city called Zoan ; as we are told in a parenthetical sentence, that Hebron was built seven years before Zoan in Egypt.

Esau married several Hittite wives, who were a bitterness of spirit to Isaac and Rebecca. When Joshua took possession of Canaan, the command to destroy the Hittites was definitely given ; and the limits of the land were defined in the words, "From the wilderness and Lebanon even unto the great river, the river Euphrates, *all the land of the Hittites,*

and unto the great sea toward the going down of the sun, shall be your coast." In the various confederacies formed against the Israelites by the nations of Canaan, the Hittites are frequently mentioned; and in the great and decisive battle of Lake Merom their chariots and horses are alluded to. Though their power was crushed on the conquest of Canaan, many of them were spared and continued to dwell in the land (Jud. iii. 5). David had Hittite warriors in his army; and Bathsheba, the mother of Solomon and ancestress of our Lord, was the wife of Uriah the Hittite. Solomon also had Hittite wives. At the time of David's extensive empire, Kadesh, the southern capital of the Hittites, was included in it (2 Sam. viii.), for he sent Joab there to number the people.¹ Some of them, however, continued to enjoy an independent existence, for in 1 Kings x. 29 we read that the kings of the Hittites had horses and chariots brought up for them out of Egypt. In 2 Kings we read that the Syrians fled panic-stricken from the siege of Samaria, on imagining that the king of Israel had hired against them "the kings of the Hittites."

In all these passages there is implied, if not plainly stated, the existence of a wide-spread Hittite power from the days of Abraham to those of David.

Historical critics, however, asserted that there were no traces of any such empire in classic history, and pronounced the Bible notices of it to be unhistoric and unworthy of credence. Professor Newman and the Rev. I. K. Cheyne entirely rejected the Scripture account, and asserted that it was not, in spite of its great antiquity, of equal value as historic evidence with the hieroglyphic inscriptions of Egypt. Remarkable recent discoveries prove *the Bible to be right and the critics to be wrong*, and establish by a surprising

¹ The word "Tahtim-hodshi" (2 Sam. xxiv. 6), which is simply transliterated from the Hebrew in the Authorised Version, is translated in the Septuagint "Gilead, and *the land of the Hittites of Kadesh*."

amount of evidence the existence for about a thousand years of a great and mighty Hittite empire, which was able to dispute supremacy in the earth with the most powerful Pharaohs of Egypt for many centuries, and to extort from one of them at last a treaty of peace, which was sealed by a matrimonial alliance—a marriage from which it seems probable that the foster-mother of Moses was born. It is about ten years since Dr. Wright first obtained casts of some very ancient inscriptions from Hamath in Northern Syria, and called public attention to them as Hittite remains. Many similar ones have since been discovered in the same script elsewhere by other explorers, in Asia Minor, on the shores of the Euxine Archipelago and Levant, on the borders of Egypt, and on the banks of the Euphrates. These inscriptions have been deciphered by Professor Sayce, who has devoted his life to the study of such questions, and who says: "We may now consider the Hittite origin of the peculiar system of writing first noticed by modern travellers on the site of Hamath, to be among the ascertained facts of science;"¹ and Dr. Isaac Taylor, in his learned book, "The Alphabet," refers to those hieroglyphics and sculptures "as in the unmistakable style of Hittite art."²

The cumulative evidence resulting from the decipherment of these very ancient historical remains proves that the empire of the Hittites was wider and their power even greater than is implied in the Scripture notices. "That their empire extended," says Dr. Isaac Taylor, "as far as the Euxine and the Egean, is shown by hieroglyphics scattered over Asia Minor, more especially in Lydia, Lycaonia, Cappadocia, and Cilicia." "Scholars are only just beginning to realize the vast extent of the dominions of the Hittites, and their important place in primitive history. Till the rise of Assyria, they were the most powerful nation

¹ "Transactions of the Soc. Bib. Arch.," vol. vii. part ii. p. 246.

² Vol. ii. p. 120.

in North-western Asia. Dr. Schliemann's discoveries at Troy, and the Hittite monuments scattered over Asia, as far west as the neighbourhood of Smyrna, prove the extent of their empire to the west; while to the south, at a time prior to the exodus of the Hebrews, their dominion extended as far as Hebron; and if Mariette is right in his belief that one of the Hyksôs dynasties was Hittite, they must have established their rule over Egypt itself."¹

"In the inscriptions at Karnak, referring to the victories of Thothmes III., there is a long list of towns in the land of the Hittites. Of these Brugsch says: 'It is clear that this list exhibits in their oldest orthography the greater number of these towns which are afterwards mentioned so frequently in the records of wars, in Assyrian history, in the cuneiform inscriptions which have been deciphered. They are the old allied cities of those "Kheta," of unknown origin, who long before the rise of Nineveh and Babylon played the same part as at a later period the Assyrians undertook with success.'² . . . As at Megiddo in Palestine, so at Kadesh on the Orontes, the king of the Hittites had under his command all the surrounding peoples, either as subjects or allies, and it is clear that the mighty host was brought into the field by a voice of command that had to be obeyed."³

Dr. Isaac Taylor says, speaking of the monuments: "They are those of a people who have been identified with the Hittites of the Old Testament, the Kheta of the Egyptian monuments, the Khattai of the Assyrian records, and the Keteioi of Homer.

"They were one of the most powerful peoples of the primeval world, their empire extending from the frontier of Egypt to the shores of the Egean, and, like the Baby-

¹ "The Alphabet," by Dr. Isaac Taylor, vol. ii. p. 121.

² Brugsch's "Egypt under the Pharaohs," vol. iii. p. 7.

³ Wright's "The Empire of the Hittites," pp. 52, 53.

Ionians and the Egyptians, they possessed a culture, an art, and a script peculiar to themselves, and plainly of indigenous origin."¹

Perhaps, however, the most striking indication of the might of this ancient empire is afforded by its relations to Egypt. After tracing these by means of the monumental records of Egypt itself, Dr. Wright says: "We thus see the Hittite kings the rivals of the Pharaohs in peace and war from the twelfth to the twentieth dynasty. The shock of Egyptian invasion exhausted itself against the frontier cities of Kadesh and Carchemish, but the mighty empire of the Hittite extended beyond, on the broad plains and islands of Asia Minor, and so there were always fresh Hittite armies, and abundance of Hittite wealth, to enable the Hittite empire to withstand the might of Egypt for a thousand years."²

If we ask how far back can the existence of this Hittite empire be traced, Professor Sayce replies: "Already in the astrological tables of Sargon of Agané, in the nineteenth century B.C.,³ the Hittites are regarded as a formidable power."⁴

THE ASSYRIAN INSCRIPTIONS record the struggles of Tiglath-Pileser, Assur-Nasir-Pal, and other Assyrian monarchs with these same "Kheta," or Hittites. Shalmaneser conducted thirty campaigns against them, according to his own account on two important monuments, one of which is known as the Black Obelisk of Nimrud, and the other as the Monolith of Kurkh; but still the warlike sons of Heth renewed the conflict, nor was it until the days of Sargon that they were finally subdued at Carchemish, their Eastern capital. This important event is narrated in one

¹ "The Alphabet," vol. ii. p. 120.

² "Empire of the Hittites," p. 35.

³ Mr. Theophilus G. Pinches, of the British Museum, considers that the composition of these tablets cannot be later than 2000 B.C.

⁴ "Transactions of the Soc. Bib. Arch.," vol. vii. part ii. p. 261.

of Sargon's numerous annals, translated by Dr. Julius Oppert: "In the fifth year of my reign, Pisiri of Carchemish sinned against the great gods, and sent against Mita the Moschian messenger, hostile to Assyria. He took hostages. I lifted my hands to Assur, my lord. I made him leave the town. I sent away the holy vases out of his dwelling. I made them throw him into chains of iron. I took away the gold, the silver, and treasures of his palace. The Circasian rebels who were with him, and their properties, I transplanted to Assyria. I took among them fifty cars, two hundred riders, three thousand men on foot, and I augmented the part of my kingdom. I made the Assyrians to dwell in Circesium, and I placed them under the domination of Assur my lord." ¹

If now we inquire what was the moral character of these people, and what their religion, we shall perceive that they shared with Egypt and Babylon the moral degradation which fitted them to exchange dominion and rule for a servile position, that their moral decadence involved their perishing and passing away from the stage of history. The rites with which their goddesses were honoured should hardly be called religion. The priestesses were mere ritualists, and the business of their service was attention to ceremonies without any reference to morality. Their impure worship seems to have been mingled with the primitive nature-worship; and in the name Kadesh, the capital of the Hittites, we see one of the numerous shrines where Hittite girls were devoted to wickedness in the name of religion. The worship of these deities took many repulsive forms. Devotees surrendered their children to Baal in the flames, and the children's screams were drowned by trumpet and drum; and the rites of Astarte were equally vile, though accompanied by the cooing of doves and clouds of incense.² Their idol-gods were

¹ "Records of the Past," vol. vii. p. 30.

² Wright's "Empire of the Hittites," pp. 75, 76.

innumerable. Treaties and agreements were placed under the sanction of gods and goddesses just as in Egypt, and the catalogues of deities whose names are affixed to such documents are very long.

The Hittite empire passed away after an existence of about 1000 years. It disappears from the stage of history subsequently to the battle of Carchemish, and leaves scarcely a trace behind, so that its ever having existed at all was eventually called in question. But its records happily withstood the ravages of time, though the power to read them was lost. The key to their decipherment now recovered, the old empire emerges from the oblivion of ages, a recuscitated witness to the historical accuracy of the Old Testament. And though the Hittite monuments leave unrevealed much which we would fain learn, yet they bring clearly to our knowledge an important early development of the posterity of the youngest son of Noah, and the Hittites must henceforth take their place alongside of the Egyptians, Babylonians, and Canaanites. All four rose to early eminence in the earth; the moral and religious character of three of them is sufficiently evidenced by their still existing remains, and that of the fourth is plainly stated in Scripture.

THE TURANIAN RACES.

We have now indicated the three leading groups of nations connected with the three sons of Noah as they appear in ancient and modern times. A very large number of nations which have existed and exist still in the earth are, however, as we have said, *not* included in any of these groups—the Turanian races, the Chinese, and most of the nations who speak the hundreds of African languages. No certain knowledge of the racial connections of these nations and peoples has as yet been attained. Ethnographers and linguists differ among themselves on the question at present. Science is therefore silent, or ventures only to make suggestions; it cannot announce any conclusions. But from this very fact it is clear that the nations we have omitted are not those who have made history. Had they exerted any great influence in the world, their genealogy would not have been thus

obscured, nor the family connections of their language lost. Great peoples preserve their archives just as noble families preserve their genealogies, and can trace back their family tree to its founder. It is only the most illiterate who can scarcely tell the names of their great-grandfathers, and only as to the less influential and degenerate peoples of the earth can any doubt exist as to their true ancestry. This will be seen at once by a glance at the names of the Turanian group of languages. There are few among them known generally at all, and fewer still known to fame. The family embraces the greater portion of the Asiatic peoples—the Tartars, Mongols, Thibetians, Tamulians, and aboriginal Indian peoples, as well as in Europe such nations as the Finns and the Lapps; and it is possible that the Malay inhabitants of the Eastern Archipelago and the Central African nations also belong to it, but it is by no means certain. None of them have in any obvious or notorious way shared in the *distinctive* fortunes of either Shem or Japhet; none of them have attained any great religious supremacy, or exercised any marked spiritual influence in the earth like the Semites; nor have any of them secured vast extension or enlargement like the sons of Japhet. If we could, as we doubtless shall be able to do in due time, connect them by means of their languages with their parent stock, it would in no way affect our conclusions as to the fulfilment of Noah's wonderful prophecy; for just as a family of great musicians may have some unmusical members, or a family of painters some who have no talent for art, so a great family of nations, characterized as a whole, and in its leading members by certain peculiarities, may have inferior members wholly destitute of such distinctive features. Such characteristics as these nations *do* possess, associate them rather with the Hamitic races than with either of the other two, and the special destiny of Ham's descendants attaches very clearly to some of them. So markedly have servitude and slavery been the portion of the coloured race

of the Dark Continent, that it is difficult *not* to believe that they are descendants of the youngest son of Noah. It has indeed generally been assumed that they are so,—as, for instance, by Dr. Keith in his admirable unanswered and unanswerable “Evidence of Prophecy;”¹ but it must be admitted in the light of modern linguistic discovery that this is *an assumption which it is as impossible to prove as to disprove.*²

Language does not as yet indicate the connection, but on the other hand it gives no counter-indication. In the case of the Central African races, history cannot enable us to decide their origin any more than language, for Central Africa may be said to have no history. Geography, however, points distinctly to a Hamitic source for all the populations of Africa. South-western Asia was the cradle of the human race, and the nature of the case requires, consequently, that Africa should have been entered from its north-eastern quarter—not across the Isthmus of Suez only, but also from the shores of the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean to the south of it. The early Hamitic Chaldeans had ships, and were great traders by sea to these regions, as we know. Now as

¹ “Evidence of the Truth of the Christian Religion derived from the Literal Fulfilment of Prophecy,” by Dr. Alexander Keith, p. 513, 37th edition.

² We have consulted on this point Robert Cust, Esq., the well-known writer on languages, and our inquiry referred especially to the large family of dialects known as the Bantu languages of Central Africa, which extend from the east to the west of the continent, and from the south of the Soudan to the borders of Cape Colony, embracing thus nearly the southern half of Africa, and including hundreds of large tribes and nations—all the languages spoken on the Congo and its great tributaries, the Zulu and Kaffre tongues with their sub-divisions, though not the Hottentot. As regards these languages, Mr. Cust says: “The Bantu family is quite distinct and separate from any other linguistic family; it has no affinity whatsoever to any, either in structure or vocabulary. How it came into existence is a secret reserved for the next century. We have not a tittle of evidence to hang a theory upon. It will be safe to say nothing, because we know nothing; nor can I for a moment admit that the Berber, Galla, Agau, etc., are Semitic tongues in any sense—they are Hamitic.”

Ethiopia, Nubia, and Egypt were unquestionably peopled by Hamites, we have no reason to doubt that it was the same with the rest of the continent. Conquest, commerce, and colonization have, in the course of ages, introduced many other elements—Arabs, Moors, Greeks, Romans, English, French, Portuguese, and Dutch. But in considering the dark races as one and all descended from Ham, we take the most probable, and therefore the most scientific, ground. As long as no whit of evidence can be adduced for an opposite theory, we are justified in assuming from geographical probabilities, and from the marvellous and long-continued social degradation of the people, that the condition of the population of the Dark Continent illustrates and fulfils the brief but pregnant foreview of Noah as to the posterity of his youngest son.

Four men and four women were saved in the ark; who were the latter? We know the names and characters of the men, but Scripture gives no particulars of the women. Noah's wife was doubtless a godly woman, and so, in all probability, the wives of Shem and Japhet. Ham's unfilial and impious character suggests the question as to the sort of wife such a man would have been likely to choose. Can the foreseen character of his posterity, which was to blight them with the doom of servitude in the earth, be traceable to the mother's character as well as to that of the father? We must remember that Noah was five hundred years old when he begat Shem, Ham, and Japhet, and six hundred years old at the time of the flood, so that the young men had lived for a century in the midst of that ungodly antediluvian race, one of whose specially recorded sins was the contraction of unequal marriages. Ham, though actually one of the godly family, may, like others, have taken to himself a wife of Cainite origin (as Esau afterwards intermarried with the daughters of Heth and Canaan). If so—and there is nothing in Scripture to forbid the thought, and much, on the other hand, to suggest it—may there not lie in this fact an explana-

tion of more difficulties than one? Not only would it account for the character of the family of Noah's youngest son, as evidenced afterwards in their conduct, but it may furnish an explanation of the remarkable physical differences which existed in the very earliest ages between the Hamites and the rest of mankind.

REVIEW OF THE FACTS.

We have now indicated the three groups of nations descended respectively from the three sons of Noah, including *all* those whose ancestry can be undoubtedly ascertained. We have consequently before us the facts on which must be based any valid reply to the question, Has the second section of the Divine programme of the world's history been fulfilled?

We recall first the dark foreview which it gives of the descendants of HAM, and we inquire, Does the state of the Hamitic peoples of this day justify it? We look round the world, we see many ruling races, foremost among which is the Anglo-Saxon, girdling the globe with its empires, and holding in subjection men of all creeds and colours. We see Europe and America in the forefront of civilization and power—Asia enormously behindhand, and Africa almost immeasurably in the rear.

Europe and America call Japhet father; and even India, if we except its degraded aboriginal hill-tribes, is Aryan or Japhetic. China and the Turanian races of Asia cannot be adduced in evidence at all, as their ancestry is uncertain; the Jews and the Arabs are Shemites, and there remains only poor, dark, degraded Africa to tell us the present condition of the descendants of Ham. The distinguishing feature of Africa is slavery. The low type of its populations morally and intellectually is such that liberty and independence, to say nothing of rule and dominion over others, is to them impossible. To tyrants at home, and to slave-raiders from

afar, they submit without a thought of struggling for their liberties. Disunion and mutual distrust reign among neighbouring tribes, and forbid their uniting for mutual defence. Public spirit is wholly wanting; the bracing and elevating influence of true religion is replaced by degrading superstition, and hence despotic tyranny and cruel devil-worship reign unopposed. The woman is slave to the man, the subject to the chief, the petty tyrant to the great tyrant, and the negro races as a whole to the white races. In America, until recently, millions of Africa's sable sons served the children of Japhet as bond-slaves. In Egypt, the Hamitic races have for ages served the Semitic; the degradation of the land is indeed wonderful, and especially so when contrasted with its early glory.

It is long since *its* days of dominion passed away for ever. Nebuchadnezzar, a Semitic monarch, was its first conqueror; and Ezekiel, the prophet of the Captivity, announced its fate from that time forth in a very distinct and detailed way. "It shall be a base kingdom; it shall be the *basest of the kingdoms*; neither shall it exalt itself any more above the nations." "I will diminish them," said God, "that they shall no more rule over the nations. . . . The sword shall come upon Egypt, and great pain shall be in Ethiopia, when the slain shall fall in Egypt, and they shall take away her multitude, and her foundations shall be broken down." "They also that uphold Egypt shall fall. . . . I will also destroy the idols, and I will cause their images to cease out of Noph; and there shall *be no more a prince of the land of Egypt*: and I will put a fear in the land of Egypt. . . . The pomp of her strength shall cease in her, . . . a cloud shall cover her, and her daughters shall go into captivity." ¹

When the Persian power succeeded the Babylonian, Cambyses—a Median, and therefore Aryan or Japhetic monarch—conquered Egypt, and treated the people with barbarous

¹ Ezek. xxix., xxx.

cruelty. As Isaiah had predicted, they were given over "into the hand of a cruel lord, and a fierce king ruled over them." The Persians oppressed them so severely that they were driven again and again to revolt, but each time they were subdued with fresh cruelties. When the Persian empire fell, Alexander the Great—a Grecian, and therefore another Aryan or Japhetic conqueror—became their master, and left the city of Alexandria as a memento of his dominion in the land. After his death Egypt fell to the share of his general, Ptolemy, whose successors governed it for many generations, the first few fairly well ; but, as Strabo asserts, "all after the third very ill, being corrupted by luxury." This dynasty, after reigning 294 years, ended in the suicide of the infamous Cleopatra. Octavius Cæsar then reduced Egypt to a Roman province (30 B.C.), and for 670 years it was governed by prefects sent from Rome, or—after the division of the empire—from Constantinople. Then succeeded the Saracen dominion, when Omar conquered Egypt, and burned the invaluable Alexandrian library of 400,000 volumes, sinking the already base kingdom lower than ever before, by leaving it a prey to ignorance and superstition. For six centuries this Saracenic rule lasted ; and then a dynasty of *actual slaves* ruled Egypt for 267 years.¹ THE MAMELUKS were Circassian or Turkish slaves bought young and trained to military service by the Sultans of Egypt, who grew insolent at last, slew their sovereign, and usurped the government of the country. Here then were the once proud Egyptians become servants of servants indeed ! The rule of the Mameluks was a succession of "wars, battles, injuries, and rapines." Twenty-four Turkish and twenty-three Circassian sultans succeeded each other, the last being hanged before one of the gates of Cairo by Selim, the Turkish emperor, who put an end to the Mameluk government, and annexed Egypt to the Ottoman empire, to which nominally it still belongs.

¹ Until A.D. 1517.

Thus, for twenty-five long centuries, the Egyptian descendants of Ham have been in subjection to successive forms of Semitic and Aryan rule ; never once independent, never ruled even by a native viceroy, never able to throw off the yoke, much less to impose their authority on others, they have continued a kingdom, but have been, and are, "the basest of the kingdoms." "A servant of servants will he be unto his brethren," said Noah ; and such is Egypt to this day. Look where we will the world over, nowhere can we see Hamitic races in a position of supremacy.

But it was not always thus. The earliest empires of antiquity were Hamitic. Nimrod conquered Semitic peoples ; Egypt held Israel in bondage. In chronological order, supremacy in the earth fell *first* to the Hamites, then to the Shemites or Semitic nations, and lastly, up to the present time, to the descendants of Japhet.

Now, here a remarkable and most interesting fact claims our attention, and is in itself a strong argument for the inspiration of this Noahic prophecy. So far from there being any sign of its fulfilment in the days of Moses, or even at the latest date to which sceptical criticism assigns the authorship of the Pentateuch, *appearances were all entirely the other way*. No human foresight would have anticipated degradation and servile subjection for the Hamitic races in those early ages. Things looked as if nothing could have well been more mistaken than the prediction. All the greatest empires of the earliest antiquity were Hamitic : the mighty and long-continued kingdom of Egypt ; the great empire of Nimrod, of whose gigantic and magnificent cities and temples we have ocular evidence in our own day ; all the seven nations of Canaan ; and above all, this mighty, warlike, extensive, and long-lasting empire of the Hittites—all were Hamitic. Wherever the eye turned, the posterity of the youngest son of Noah would in those early ages have been observed to be in the ascendant. While Abraham

was still nothing but a sheik of a pastoral tribe wandering over the quiet uplands of Palestine, the Hamitic Pharaoh surrounded by his princes was already reigning in state in Egypt; and centuries later, when Abraham's posterity were groaning under cruel bondage in the land of Ham, its proud monarch refused to liberate his oppressed captives. Even when a first instalment of fulfilment occurred in the conquest of the Canaanites by the Israelites under Joshua, the mighty empire of the Hittites remained, and continued to hold by far the larger part of the territory promised to the seed of Abraham. Just as Cain, who was cursed from the earth which had opened her mouth to receive his brother's blood from his hand, went out from the presence of the Lord, and with his descendants built cities, invented arts, cultivated music, grew rich and great and wicked, so with the descendants of Noah's youngest son. Their doom of degradation did not overtake them all at once. God's great judgments linger; they are slow, but sure. The nations of Canaan were not expelled until their iniquity was full; the Hamites generally did not sink into servile subjection to their brethren until they had proved their utter unfitness to be the leading races of the world. A thousand years is with the Lord only as one day. The Lord was not slack concerning His promise of supremacy to Shem and Japhet, but He was in no haste to vindicate His own truth and faithfulness. The two great branches of the Hamitic family—the African and the Asiatic—were both permitted to rise into eminence in the earliest ages of history: "For the last three thousand years the world has been mainly indebted for its advancement to the Semitic and Indo-European races, but it was otherwise in the first ages. Egypt and Babylon, Mizraim and Nimrod—both descendants of Ham—led the way and acted as the pioneers of mankind in the various untrodden fields of art, literature, and science. Alphabetic writing, astronomy, history, chronology, architecture, plastic

art, sculpture, navigation, agriculture, textile industry, seem all of them to have had their origin in one or other of these two countries.”¹

Is this strange? No, but it is in harmony with the course of Divine providence revealed to us throughout Scripture: “That was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural, and afterward that which is spiritual.” “Many that are first shall be last, and the last shall be first.” These sons of Ham had ample time and a wide sphere allowed them in which to show forth what was in them, in which to display the character that was subsequently to bring down upon them the degradation predicted. God never inflicts undeserved judgments; He waits until men fill up the measure of their iniquity. Had servitude overtaken the Hamites from the first, it might have seemed an arbitrary and unjust infliction—a thing of which the providential government of God affords no instance. He renders to every man according to his works. What a man sows, *that* he also reaps; and what is true of individuals, is true also of nations and of races. Egypt and Babylon, the Canaanites and the Hittites, one and all fell into the lowest depths of idolatry, and into the vilest forms of sensualism, cruelty, and sin; they perished in their own corruption, and were the victims of their own iniquities. They deserved the degradation that in after ages overtook them, and sank not into servitude ere they had proved themselves unworthy of supremacy. The Hamitic races have left us—what? The inheritance of great and influential religions, like the Semites? Descendants who form the leading nations of the earth to-day, like the Japhetites? A rich and precious literature moulding still the minds of men? No; none of these. They have left us—the pyramids of Egypt, the monstrous carvings of Memphis and Thebes, the masses of masonry buried in the mounds of Nimrud; boastful, vainglorious inscriptions by the hundred,

¹ Rawlinson's “Ancient Monarchies,” vol. i. p. 60.

with bas-relief presentations, all too vivid, of their horrible cruelties, their devastating wars, and their degrading superstitions. We know what their religion and their morals must have been from these, as well as from the assertions of history. Nineveh, Babylon, and Egypt were, besides all of them, enemies and oppressors of Israel. Ezekiel's description of the idolatry, the pride, and the wickedness of Egypt present an awfully dark picture of the nation.

They are described by contemporary historians as a luxurious, unwarlike, vicious, and faithless people. "Such men are evidently born not to command, but to obey; they are altogether unworthy of liberty, and slavery is the fittest for them, as they are fittest for slavery." For "righteousness exalteth a nation; but sin is a reproach to any people." Where now are the Hamite races? What thrones do they occupy? what sceptres do they wield? what influence do they exert in the earth? They have disappeared from the stage of history as rulers, leaders, actors, almost as completely as if they had never been. They continue to *exist*, but as degraded and enslaved peoples; living witnesses of the truth of God, almost as great a miracle as the Jews themselves.

And next we inquire, What about the religious supremacy of Shem? Has God in any peculiar sense been the God of His descendants, and have they held Hamitic races in subjection?

The answer to this question is the simple but all-comprehensive statement that *Shem was the father of Abraham*. As we shall see more fully in a later section, all the true religion in the world comes to it through Abraham, and thus through Shem. The only three religions on earth which have any knowledge at all of the one living and true God are Semitic. Judaism, Christianity, and Mohammedanism (which, defective and even blasphemous as it is, is yet infinitely nearer the truth than any form of idol-worship or "fetish")—all three flow from Abraham, the Hebrew, as their human fountain-

head ; and thus from the second son of Noah—Shem. God has been the Lord God of Shem in an altogether peculiar and distinctive sense. The Saviour of the world descended from this son of Noah. Revealed religion has flowed through Semitic channels. This is a fact that none can deny, and a fact that must have been foreseen, and that well deserved to be foretold. We do not dwell further on it here, as it must come under consideration in our next chapter in another connection. Every psalm of David, and every Christian hymn and sacred song of later days, every authentic narrative of the earliest ages of humanity, the sublime law of Sinai, and the beatitudes and parables of Christ, the visions of prophecy, the teachings of apostles, the testimony of the martyrs, the missions of modern Christianity—all that has lifted our world from ruin and misery and darkness and death, all that has purified and ennobled it and opened to it a door of hope for the future—all has come to it through Shem.

It is true that the bud of Judaism, when it blossomed into the flower of Christianity, exhaled its heavenly perfume far and wide, and knew no distinction of races. The sons of Japhet and the sons of Ham shared in the great salvation. It was to the Jew first and also to the Gentile, but the point is that *it came through Shem*. Religious supremacy belonged to his line. No fact in human history is clearer than this. The prediction has been fully accomplished, and the future will exhibit this even more clearly than the present ; for the unspeakable blessings of the ages to come all flow to our race through Christ, who, as Son of man, is the offspring of Shem.

And it is equally clear that the prediction as to Japhet has been and is abundantly accomplished. Not only were the Medo-Persian, Grecian, and Roman empires, which ruled the world in their day, Japhetic, or Aryan (meaning, in Sanskrit, lordly, or of good family), but so are the vast majority of the

nations of modern Europe Teutonic, Slavonic, and Keltic alike, with all their colonies throughout the world, as well as the United States of America, and some of the leading nations of Asia, including India, Armenia, and Persia. When we remember what the dominion of Greece and Rome *were*, and what the dominion of the Teutonic race now is, to say nothing of the vast power of Russia and the Slavonic nations, there can be no question as to the superior *dominion* which has fallen to this branch of the human family. The British empire alone exceeds the old Roman empire both in area and in population. For industrial and commercial development and for wealth it has no equal in the world, and never had even in bygone ages. No previous kingdom ever extended its dominions into all parts of the world. And yet it represents only half the Anglo-Saxon race, and that race is only one out of a multitude of Japhetic kingdoms. Some 300 millions of mankind are under the government of Great Britain ; and if we add to this the sixty millions governed by the United States, we may say a third of the human family is under the dominion of the Anglo-Saxons alone ! The Germans and French rule another 150 millions, and the Russians 100 millions more. The Spaniards, Portuguese, Italians, and other European nations rule about another 100 millions ; so that probably *half* the human race is even now under the government of the sons of Japhet, and that in all parts of the world. Here is indeed enlargement and dominion on a vast and long-enduring scale !

The HAMITIC races lost all rule and empire twenty-five centuries ago ; they now count for nothing among the powers of the world. The SEMITIC races were never greatly enlarged—never great conquerors, save for a short period in the Saracenic era. They have ruled the world by another weapon than the sword ; they rule it still, and will rule it for ever—*religiously*. The Japhetic races are, and have for over 2,000 years been, supreme among the children of men. The round

globe itself is the only measure of their enlargement. They influence even China and Japan and the vast expanses of Central Asia and Central Africa. The North Pole and the South alike are visited by them. They girdle the globe with submarine cables, cross its continents with their railways, and its oceans with their steam-ships, carry their commerce to its most distant shores, and force the unwilling heathen into friendly intercourse. Moreover, they dwell in the tents of Shem both spiritually and physically; they share by faith the blessings of Abraham's covenant, and they occupy and influence lands once occupied by Semitic peoples.

Is not all this fulfilled prophecy on the grandest of scales? The entire ethnological development of the posterity of Noah foreseen and foretold when as yet the patriarch himself still lived! Did he *guess* how all this prolonged future would turn out? Was it by chance he assigned these widely different destinies to the descendants of his three sons? How came he to make no mistake? If Moses puts these words into his lips, why did he delineate a future absolutely contrary to every indication of his times? Why did he not make Noah assign supremacy to *Ham*, seeing, as he did, Hamitic empires all around him? Why did he not assign enlargement to Shem, and, as he knew little of Japhet, put the servitude down to his account? It would have seemed to human foresight a much more likely outline of the future. But no. Moses had nothing to do with the prophecy save as an editor. Noah had nothing to do with it save as an utterer. God Himself was and must have been its Author; and the second father of the human race was and must have been one of the "holy men of old," who "spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

CHAPTER III.
THE ABRAHAMIC PROGRAMME.

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TRAVELLING recently from Baden to Switzerland, as we emerged from the beautiful Black Forest and approached Schaffhausen, we crossed a small stream which we looked at, at first, without any special interest. It re-appeared, however, again and again ; and as we ran for some time along its banks, one of our party, looking at the guide-book, exclaimed, " Why, this is the Danube ! " The Danube ? We looked at the little stream with new interest. The mind's eye followed it at once from this its upland cradle amid the mountains, close to the sources of the northward and westward flowing Rhine ; from this its spring in a watershed more than 3,000 feet in height, down through Wurtemberg and Bavaria, past Passau and Lintz and the castle where Cœur de Lion fretted in his captivity, past Vienna, Presburg, and Buda-Pesth, through Hungary on to Belgrade, till we seemed to see its broad waters rolling between Bulgaria and Wallachia, through Bessarabia and Russia, and the great delta at the end of its course of 1,400 miles. Bavarian, Hungarian, Austrian, and Turkish in turn, we remembered how for ages this great river had been one of the northern boundaries of the old Roman empire—the great moat that guarded it from the invasion of barbarian hordes. We recalled how it forms now a highway for European commerce—an international barrier whose navigation has been the subject of treaties between rival empires, and whose banks have been the scene of memorable

historic battles. Small and unimportant as seemed the little stream dashing over its rocky bed beside the railway, all that we knew of its after course made it most interesting in our eyes. When sailing on the Danube years previously through the "Iron Gates," which it has cut in the Carpathian mountains, we had marvelled at the might of the current which had worn for itself so stupendous a gorge, gazed with interest at the Cossack villages and Turkish towns studding its banks, and spent day after day on its broad bosom as it rolled majestically through the rich pasture lands of Moldavia and Wallachia into the Black Sea. How could the infancy of such a stream fail to interest us?

With similar feelings an historian and Bible student ponders *the biography of Abraham in the Book of Genesis*. The brief story consists of slight and simple memorials of the quiet life led by a Semitic patriarch four thousand years ago. It tells us how he wandered over the pastures of Chaldea and Syria, growing rich in flocks and herds and in retainers, but living in tents with his wife and children; how he worshipped God in spirit and in truth, though in utter simplicity, without temple, ritual, or image; a man of child-like obedience and strong faith, not without faults and frailties, but yet loved and respected in his day. He had none of the legislative power of Moses, nor of the poetical pathos of David, much less of the far-sighted wisdom of Daniel. But there was about him a benignity, a faith, an obedience, a courtesy, a piety, and especially a paternal dignity, which are peculiarly his own; while the age in which he lived, the lands in which he wandered, and the simple tent-life of his pilgrimage, throw over the story "the light as of an early Eastern morning, and the freshness as of a breeze from the wilderness."

Why has this old oriental biography so profound an interest still in this busy nineteenth century to men and women all the world over, not to those who profess and call themselves Christians only, but also to Jews and Arabs and

all the followers of the False Prophet? Strange! that out of the hundreds of such ancient Eastern sheiks of wandering pastoral tribes, the name of *one* should still be a household word, honoured alike by Moslem, Jew, and Christian throughout the world. Yet so it is. In mosque and synagogue and Christian church alike, in the East and in the West, in the North and in the South, the patriarch Abraham is still esteemed as "the friend of God" or as the Father of the Faithful. He never occupied a throne nor wielded a sceptre; he never made a discovery nor produced an invention; he never published a volume nor framed a code of laws; he never conquered a country nor enslaved his neighbours, like the Pharaohs and the Nimrods of those early times; he reared no huge monuments to immortalize his name, nor carved on the rocks the story of his exploits: yet he lives in the loving memory of mankind while multitudes of those who did all these things are forgotten. He is held in filial respect and affection by myriads of men, who to Egypt's greatest kings and Chaldea's mightiest monarchs accord but an unsympathetic and disapproving wonder. What has ennobled and distinguished this ancient patriarch? The answer is, He believed and obeyed the God who had chosen him to be the channel of the world's redemption,—and *to him was communicated the third section of the Divine programme of the world's history.*

In order to the right appreciation of the importance of this programme and of the real character and career of Abraham, we must, before considering it, recall for a moment the state of the world at the time when it was given, and the general course of human history during the interval between the deluge and the call of Abraham. It was a long one of several centuries; it witnessed the second development of the human race through the stages of its childhood, youth, and early maturity. These centuries have until lately been considered prehistoric, but they cannot in the future be so

regarded. The figures of the patriarch and his family no longer loom out dimly from a thick mist of historic obscurity suggestive of doubt as to their actual reality. The days are past in which the story of Abraham, told in the thirteen chapters of the Book of Genesis, can be called in question or treated by any well-informed person as unauthentic or legendary. The old isolation of the Pentateuch has passed away never to return. Formerly it presented almost all we knew about the earliest times and the pristine experiences of mankind. It stood alone, unconfirmed, and sceptics found no barriers in the way of treating it as "unhistorical" (a euphemism for "fabulous"); but all that is utterly altered now. Modern explorations and discoveries in archæology enable us to confirm almost every detail of the narrative, and to perceive its perfect and most striking harmony with the period to which it belongs. The geographical, historical, and social allusions in the story are very numerous; and the similar incidents recorded in contemporary documents enable us mentally to reproduce the days of Abraham with wonderful exactitude and vivid reality.

We can now, in the light of its own records, study and understand the ancient and idolatrous civilization from which the patriarch was originally called out, and that with which he subsequently came in contact in Egypt. The evil and corrupt state of society in which he mixed becomes clear to us, as do the characters and exploits of his great contemporaries both in Chaldea and Egypt. The length and the direction of his various journeyings, the true nature of his momentous emigration, the size and peculiarities of the cities with which he was connected, and a hundred other particulars of his life which before seemed comparatively vague—all stand out now real and life-like, supplying the true background to the Biblical portrait of the patriarch.¹ It is impor-

¹ The works of Sir Henry Rawlinson and Professor Rawlinson, of Dr. Birch, the late George Smith and others connected with the British

tant that this should be realized, for it strengthens the foundations of our argument. The promises and predictions we have to consider were, as we hold, given to Abraham two thousand years before Christ, as we have them embodied in the books of Moses. But is the story that they were so given *authentic*? Any argument derived from fulfilment clearly depends on this previous inquiry; that is, on the *date* of the predictions and on the *general trustworthiness* of the narratives in which they are embodied.

Some "Studies on the Times of Abraham" have lately been published by a member of the Society of Biblical Archæology, who devoted five years to the work of elucidating the relation between *three chapters only* of Abraham's story and the results of recent research. The investigation of even this small portion of the narrative makes a volume. It is illustrated with photo-tint cuts of buildings, idols, statues, engraved seals and cylinders, portraits of various carved heads of Egyptian, Chaldean, Hittite, and Arab heroes, and of hieroglyphic inscriptions, and enriched by full references to the original oriental sources from which the facts are drawn,—enabling even readers who are unlearned in archæological lore to judge for themselves as to the nature and value of the light thrown on the life of Abraham by existing monuments, and inscriptions of antiquity. These studies have profoundly impressed their author with the close connection between facts in the Bible biography and facts of the times as learned from other sources.

The story of Lot's rescue, for instance, given in the fourteenth chapter of Genesis, mentions some fifty facts of geography, history, and chronology; it gives the names of

Museum, of Professor Sayce, Lieutenant Conder, Captain Warren, Layard, Lenormant, and many more; "The Records of the Past" (Bagster), "The Inscriptions of Western Asia," published by the Trustees of the British Museum, the "Transactions" of the Society of Biblical Archæology, and many similar works, conspire to throw a flood of light on the environment of the patriarch and the history of his times.

fourteen kings, chiefs, and other individuals living at the time; of *eight* different tribes and peoples, and of no less than *twenty-three* different places. It has, moreover, three notes of chronology, and several statements of number. Now most of these become possible points of contact with ancient contemporary records, or else with existing facts as to present names, sites, and distances. We do not pause to remark on the *a priori* evidence of truth and authenticity offered by the very existence of such a narrative so full of statements which if false would be easily proved so. But we ask, Is this remarkable narrative of the first great organized military expedition recorded in history—a narrative which bristles thus with biographical, historical, local, and chronological notices—confirmed or contradicted by comparison with extraneous authorities? *It is most amply confirmed.* "All that is hitherto known tallies in the most remarkable manner with the firm, strong outline in the Book of Genesis of facts which, as M. Lenormant justly pronounces, have 'a historic character the most striking;' and when we estimate at its true value the decisive interposition of Abraham in his only recorded act of warfare, we do not wonder at the honourable acknowledgment of the sons of Kheth, 'A prince of God art thou among us.'"¹

This expedition against the king of Elam and his confederates seems to have been a far more important affair than one would have judged from the fifteenth of Genesis, though the native inscriptions of Babylonia and Assyria amply confirm the main and most surprising facts contained in that story. Canon Rawlinson says:—

"A certain amount of light is thrown on the narrative contained in Genesis xiv. by the inscriptions of Babylonia and Assyria. We learn from that narrative that in the time of Abraham (about B.C. 2100–1900) an important monarchy was established in Elam, under a king named

¹ Tomkins' "Studies on the Times of Abraham" p. 203 (Bagster: 15, Paternoster Row).

Chedor-laomer (more properly Kedor-Lagomer), to whom Babylonia and other adjacent countries were subject, and who was powerful enough to carry his arms into Syria, and to exercise dominion for the space of twelve years over the more eastern parts of Palestine. The position of Elam is well marked by the Greek and Roman geographers, who place it between Persia proper and Babylonia, to the east of the Lower Tigris. In classical times and in oriental history as made known to us by the classical writers, the country appears as insignificant; it is never independent, and though it has a line of native kings, they at no time show themselves of much importance, even among vassal princes. Till recently the passage of Genesis stood alone in representing Elam as a great kingdom, one capable of exercising for a time the chief authority in Western Asia, of establishing her supremacy over Babylonia, and making expeditions to the distance of a thousand miles from her proper frontier. But the later Assyrian inscriptions have now shown that from the time of Sargon (B.C. 722) to nearly the close of the empire, Elam was the second power in Western Asia, that she sturdily maintained her independence, and long resisted the utmost efforts of Assyria to bring her into subjection. . . .

"Documents, probably fourteen hundred years older, found in Babylonia itself, establish the fact that at least one king of the country held his crown as a fief under an Elamitic monarch, who had placed and maintained him on the throne. Kudur-Mabuk, whose probable date is about B.C. 2100, and who is distinctly called 'king of Elam,' established his son, Ardu-Sin, in Babylonia, and names him with himself in his inscriptions, invoking the blessing of the gods upon him. Similarly Ardu-Sin mentions and invokes blessings on his father, 'Kudur-Mabuk, lord of Elam.' It is further remarkable that this same 'Kudur-Mabuk, lord of Elam,' calls himself also 'lord of Syria,' thereby implying that his dominion reached from the mountains of Luristan on the one side to the Mediterranean upon the other, which is exactly what Scripture implies of Chedor-laomer.

"The native inscriptions of Babylonia and Assyria tell us, therefore, three things concerning this early period; namely—first, that there was a powerful dynasty established in Elam about B.C. 2300–2000; secondly, that this dynasty exercised authority over Babylon; and thirdly, that it had carried its arms into Syria; thus confirming three of the main and most surprising facts contained in the narrative of Genesis xiv."¹

The Bible, and especially the Book of Genesis, passes rapidly over long intervals of time during which no special advance was made in the work which it is written to record—the redemption of the human race. It presents only one

¹ Canon Rawlinson, "The Bible Educator," vols. i. and ii. pp. 67, 68.

incident and two genealogical tables as bridging over the interval between the death of Noah and the call of Abram. The story of Babel is narrated and the subsequent dispersion of mankind, and "the generations of the sons of Noah in their nations," which we have considered in our last section, follows. The generations of Shem—that is, of *the* son of Noah in whose race the knowledge of God was to be preserved, and in which deliverance for a ruined race was destined to arise—are given very fully, "the generations of Terah," the father of Abraham, coming last. These are all comprised in the tenth and eleventh chapters of the Book of Genesis, from which we may also gather some passing indications of the state of things in the early post-diluvian earth, though it would have been beside the purpose of the book to deal with facts having only a remote connection with its main subject. From later scriptures we may glean a few other particulars as to this period, while from classical authors, and especially from the most ancient oriental sacred classics, some of the earliest hymns and prayers of which go back nearly to Noah's days—such as the Zend Avestas of Persia, the Brâhminic Vedas of India, the She-king of China, and The Book of the Dead, or funeral ritual, of ancient Egypt—and, above all, from the monumental remains and inscriptions still extant and deciphered by modern research, we can, as we have seen, to a great extent fill up the outline.

Combining the rays of light proceeding from these different sources, we learn that during the early centuries after the flood a very rapid development of the race had taken place, leading to extensive colonization of even distant regions; that the earth had been already in the days of Peleg divided into nations, and that the international strifes which have characterized all subsequent time had at once arisen; wars and fightings had become common; and though the wide world lay open before the young human race, and though their utmost fruitfulness and multiplication could not

have replenished it, they nevertheless fought for territory and for supremacy, displaying the same lust of conquest and of power that all subsequent nations have done. Hence there arose empires, with all their concomitant slavery, cruelty and pride, inordinate pomp and luxury on the part of some, with cruel toil, suffering, and oppression on the part of others. The original unity of speech and of religious faith which had prevailed in the family and immediate descendants of Noah, and of which distinct traces abound in all the most ancient writings of every land, was gradually lost in these altered circumstances, and a great variety of idolatries sprung up in the earth, especially the worship of the host of heaven. The primitive monotheistic faith—the worship of one invisible God, the maker and judge of all—lingered on in certain families and in a few spiritual oases, but the desert waste of an idolatrous world was evermore encroaching even on these, and threatening towards the close of the period to swallow them up.

It is not easy for us to conceive the condition of the world four thousand years ago, when neither the Christian Church nor the Jewish nation were in existence, when men possessed neither the Old Testament nor the New, when tradition and conscience were the only sources of religion, and when the fathers of the race—who had known something of the antediluvian world, been eye-witnesses of the deluge, and recipients of the gracious revelations that followed it—had passed away. No line of special witnesses for God had as yet been selected or invested with responsibility for the maintenance of the true faith. The family of Shem retained apparently more of piety and morality than the descendants of his two brothers, but even Shem's posterity had for the most part lapsed into creature worship. The adoration of the sun and moon were common, as also the worship of Jupiter and Saturn, Mercury and Venus, and idolatry was fast spreading in the earth.

Egypt had already become mighty and grossly idolatrous; the Hittite power had developed into an extensive empire, and together with the Hamitic races occupying Southern Babylonia and Palestine, had also sunk into unblushing polytheism. Traditions of the creation and fall of man, of the flood, and of Babel, existed in all lands, and were recorded on monuments and tablets, on papyri and mummy cases, which we can still read and study after four thousand years. But they were all more or less distorted and corrupted. Gleams of the light of revelation were retained in different lands, and backed by the teaching of nature and by conscience—the voice of God in the soul of man—they saved *some* from the almost universal apostasy of deifying the heavenly bodies, the elements, and the passions, together with men and animals, reptiles and vegetables, and even stocks and stones.

This corruption had not in Abraham's day become as universal as the wickedness of man before the flood, when one righteous man alone remained on earth, for there were such men as Melchizedek here and there—true priests of God. Yet even in the elect line of Shem, and in the chosen family of Terah, idolatry prevailed. As the Lord said to Joshua, "Your fathers dwelt on the other side of the flood (or Euphrates) in old time, and they served other gods; and I took your father Abraham from the other side of the flood, and led him throughout all the land of Canaan."

Terah's home, UR of the CHALDEES, was the name both of a city and of a country. The former is now identified with Mugheir, which stands about six miles from the Euphrates on its right bank. In Abraham's day it was a large, busy maritime place on the Persian Gulf, the capital and the port of Southern Babylonia. The beautiful region around was the natural home of the wheat plant, which would produce two and even three hundred-fold in the soil of which classic writers speak as the richest in all Asia.

Shady palm groves embowered the country laden with their golden clusters; and Professor Rawlinson says that the region was amongst the most productive on the face of the earth, yielding spontaneously some of the best gifts of God to man, and capable under careful management of being made one continuous garden. Sir Henry Rawlinson supposes that the Garden of Eden was in this neighbourhood. The situation of the ruins *now* was not the situation of the ancient city, for the alluvium brought down by the Tigris and Euphrates encroaches very rapidly on the Persian Gulf. Geologists consider that the increase of the land in that direction has been at the rate of a mile in thirty years on an average all through the historic period, so that the ruins which now stand considerably *inland* mark the site of a city which was a seaport town in Abraham's days.

The patriarch was, it would seem, a citizen of no mean city. Ur was the residence of a great monarch called Uruk, remains of whose immense idolatrous temple are still in existence, as also the ruins of his palace. The walls which once defended his city are traceable as low sandy mounds surrounding an oval space some two miles in extent, in the midst of which the temple mound still rises seventy feet above the plain. Several of the Assyrian and Babylonian monuments allude to this country of UR. Contracts between citizens, transfers of land duly attested by witnesses and preserved in duplicate, astronomical and political records as well as royal inscriptions relating to this place and kingdom, exist in abundance; its traffic by land and its commerce by ships are described, and its monarch, Uruk, must have had ample resources to have been able to erect the buildings he describes, the ruins of which still attest the truth of his accounts. The people were—as in all seaport towns—a mixture of various races and nationalities. The merchants of Ur traded with countries in Arabia and on the African coast, the Chaldeans themselves being a Cushite or Hamitic

people, though Semitic tribes had also descended into their country. Terah's ancestor Arphaxad seems to have dwelt on the borders of Armenia, where a district of country bore his name ; but some of his posterity had migrated southward, and Terah, at the time of Abraham's birth, was resident either in the country or the city of Ur.

The one fact which is more prominent than any other in all the inscriptions of the period is the *rank polytheism and idolatry* which prevailed. The heavenly bodies were worshipped, and the great gods Ra and Bel or Belus, with their respective wives, together with Vul and Shamas and Sau, and especially Hurki, or the moon-god, who was esteemed the leading protector of the land, Merodach, Nergal, Ishtar, Nebo, and a host of other deities too numerous to mention. They attributed to their gods the caprice and the evil notions of which they were conscious in themselves, and a base and degrading superstition had replaced the Noahic faith in the justice and mercy of God, and the ante-diluvian hope of a mighty coming deliverer. Most of the Chaldean literature which has been deciphered consists of formula for warding off disease and sorcery, charms for bewitching people or for exorcising evil influences, treatises on omens and divinations, and records of business transactions. Long hymns for ritual worship and prayers both for public and private use show that the popular religion was of a base and sensual type, and that it must have had the effect of degrading rather than of elevating its adherents.

Yet many fundamental truths were still retained in the minds of men, and the Akkadian and Semitic records alike prove that a consciousness of sin and of its guilt, a fear of death and of future punishment, an appreciation of righteousness and a yearning after holiness, found constant expression, together with allusions to the flood as a great proof of God's justice, to the fall of men and angels and the existence of a tempter, a belief in a future life and judgment to come, an

observance of the Sabbath, and, above all, a recognition of the value of vicarious sacrifice. The nearer we draw to the days of Noah, the clearer do all such allusions become. They had even some notions of resurrection, though these latter were hazy. All the truth they retained was, however, smothered by corruption, superstition, and error.

Whatever Abraham's after life, we must picture his earlier years therefore as spent in a renowned and much-venerated city, where was the then magnificent temple of a popular faith, the seat of a flourishing commerce, and which was moreover a garrison town, the frontier walled fortress of the empire on the western side of the Euphrates. It seems to have been also a sacred burial city, where the dead in innumerable multitudes were gathered round the walls, as at the present day around the sacred cities of the Mohammedans and Jews.

It used to be a matter of vague conjecture as to whether Abraham was acquainted with the art of writing, but, as we have seen, modern research has shown that it was in familiar use in his native place. In the daily transactions of business, in loan and sale contracts, and indeed in all important transactions, duplicate memoranda on terra-cotta tablets or on papyrus were preserved. Multitudes of these exist, and such multitudes more have perished that immense heaps of fine powder-like dust are composed of their remains. Libraries and stores of records were common, so that Terah's family registers were doubtless preserved in this permanent form, and Abraham himself may very probably have left similar memorials of his own life, to be subsequently utilised by Moses. Abraham was doubtless trained in military exercises, as is proved by his ability and promptness in undertaking the expedition for the rescue of Lot; and he was probably accustomed to river navigation on the great Euphrates, as well as to seafaring customs and to the sight of foreigners "brought in the ships of Ur" to his native

town. So great a mixture of races prevailed in the country that he was equally well acquainted with Semitic, Hamitic and Japhetic tribes. Indeed, these names are found in cuneiform texts as *ethnic expressions*, and are identified in meaning (according to Professor Sayce and Mr. Boscawen) with the different hues of complexion—yellow, black, and fair respectively. Abraham was therefore no mere wandering Arab sheik, but familiar with all sorts and conditions of men, and with various phases of human society.

It was no easy thing for one accustomed to the life of Ur to forsake home and country and break up his family and social ties. "He was born and grew up in his father's house: a man of rank surrounded by all the conditions and influences of civilized life; in the centre of the world's interests and rivalries; the hive which had thrown off the strong swarms of ASSUR, of CANAAN, and it may be, before that, of MIZRAIM; a land thick with conflicting powers, where his own kindred the sons of Shem *had* been in the ascendant, but were now for a while once more thrust down by the Cushite lords of Susa."¹

What moved the patriarch to obey so readily the call of God? "The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham," said Stephen, "when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Charran." A revelation—in what form or style we know not—of God, the God of glory: that was the motive power with Abraham, as with Saul of Tarsus in later days. The first command to leave his country and kindred was not accompanied by the promise of Canaan. The patriarch had to go forth not knowing whither he went—in simple obedience; and from that day to the day when, at God's command, he offered up his son, his only son, accounting that God was able to raise him up even from the dead, the same strong faith *in* and implicit obedience *to* God characterized the father of the faithful. When, later on, Jehovah made a

¹ Tomkins' "Times of Abraham," p. 49.

covenant with him to which the mark of circumcision was attached, Abraham lost not a day in assuming that mark himself, and requiring Ishmael and all his house to do the same. When Jehovah desired him to offer his only son, he rose up early in the morning to start on the mournful expedition. Obedience became a habit with him, and faith was strengthened by long trial.

Providential circumstances seem to have facilitated the original removal of Abraham from Ur of the Chaldees. Many movements of Semitic tribes and families westward were then taking place. His father Terah, for some reason not assigned, resolved about this time to emigrate with his family. Whether the premature death of his son Haran was the cause of this removal (as Josephus asserts), or whether his son Abraham's influence had recalled the aged father to the faith of his ancestors and made him anxious to free his family from the degrading idolatrous usages around them—whatever the impulse, Terah and his tribe, as well as Abraham, forsook Chaldea, and journeying slowly some six hundred miles up the stream of the Euphrates, reached the district and town of KHARRAN, or Padan-Aram, where the emigrants and their flocks halted for some years, and where Terah ended his days. This was an important commercial town on a rich alluvial plain in Northern Babylonia, a station on the high-road from Syria to Palestine. It is well known in secular history as a busy and important town of ancient date, the key of the highway from east to west. Its name, which is still attached to the spot (Kharran, "a road"), as also the mention of the place in Ezekiel xxvii. 23, implied this; and it was dedicated to the same moon-god worshipped in Ur. There is an inscription in the British Museum (K 2701) mentioning this temple. Nahor and his wife Milcah, who had at first been left behind, joined the family party again at Kharran, where they prospered greatly and increased in number and grew rich. But the place was an outpost of the

old Chaldean rule, and full of, and surrounded by, the very idolatries that had prevailed in Ur, and it was consequently no suitable home for the chosen race. It was not the land which God had promised to show Abram; and when, after fifteen years, Terah died at the age of two hundred and five, Abraham, relieved of filial duties, was once more free to pursue his pilgrim path. It was then that a second and more definite call came to Abraham, and this time a glorious promise was attached to it (Gen. xii. 1, 2): "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto the land that I will show thee: and I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: and I will bless them that bless thee, and him that cursed thee will I curse: and in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed."

From time to time in the life of the patriarch and in those of his son and grandson, additional particulars were added to this promise, as we shall see; details were filled in, the predictions were enriched and defined in their scope; but here is the third programme of the world's history *in outline*. A childless man was to become the father of a great and blessed nation; the nation was to possess a land which would be indicated later on, and the whole human family were to be blessed through it. For many a year already Abram had pondered in his heart the first revelation of the God of glory granted to him in his own home. It had moulded his life and his hopes, sanctified his spirit, and separated him from an idolatrous world. Hence this command finds him prompt to obey, and with all the souls he had gotten in Haran, and great wealth in flocks and herds, to separate himself from his brother Nahor, and plunge into the wide wilderness which divided Haran from Canaan. The expression, "the souls he had gotten in Haran," may imply that his large household had learned the true religion from their master. Many Jewish and Christian commentators take them to

signify that he had converted them to the worship of Jehovah, and taught them his own faith. He rejoiced doubtless to sever himself and his dependants from the idolatries of Babylonia, and he went forth to the unknown west leaning on the promised guidance of God. "They went forth to go into the land of Canaan, and into the land of Canaan they came."

The pilgrim party must have been, like those still often to be seen in the East following some Arab sheik, furnished with large numbers of the black goats'-hair tents for encampment so familiar to oriental travellers. If Abraham's retainers numbered over twelve hundred, as is with good ground supposed, judging from the number of his well-trained servants, it was rather the emigration of a tribe than that of a family. The route taken seems to have led them to Damascus, for there are local traditions distinctly indicative of a prolonged visit of Abraham to the neighbourhood of that great and ancient city. A secretary of Herod the Great, Nicolaus of Damascus, says: "Abraham ruled at Damascus. He was a foreigner, who had come with an army out of the land beyond Babylon, called the land of the Chaldees." And he adds that he migrated to Canaan, and that his name is well known even to this day in Damascus; a village in the suburbs being pointed out which is still called the house of Abraham, and a well also being named from him.¹ We know that the steward of his house was one Eliezer of Damascus; but the narrative proves that he cannot have remained long in the city, even if he did visit it. Crossing the land of Bashan and the Jordan River, he descended into Palestine probably near the plain of Esdraelon, and passing through it made his first encampment at Sychem. There between Ebal and Gerizim, in one of the loveliest valleys in Palestine, was his first home in the land of promise; and before we

¹ Josephus' "Antiquities," Book I. chap. vii.

follow him we must ask, What was the condition of the country and who were its inhabitants at this time?

We are told that the Canaanite was then in the land, or, as it might be better rendered, was already in the land. Various tribes of the children of Ham had at this time settled in the country, though their number was not as yet great, and they seemed to have had no inclination to oppose the residence of so mighty a "prince" as Abraham. Four hundred years later these Hamitic tribes had grown up into the seven nations of Canaan whose gross corruptions led to their extermination. In Abraham's day the Amorites and the Hittites were chief among them. Both of these are largely mentioned in the Egyptian records, and a head of one of the Amorite kings may be seen in the British Museum. It was here at Sychem that Abraham received a definite gift of this very country to his posterity, the *second* promise from God, "*Unto thy seed will I give this land.*" He believed the promise and built an altar to the name of the Lord who appeared unto him. His obedience to the Divine call in forsaking Chaldea was rewarded by this gift of the land of Canaan. But the promise must have tested his faith, for its accomplishment *seemed* impossible. It was given to a childless man, and it related to a country already in the possession of others. But he staggered not at the promise of God either on this occasion or on any subsequent one: he was strong in faith giving glory to God, and being fully persuaded that what He had promised He was able also to perform.

Journeying still towards the south of Canaan, Abraham was led at last by the stress of famine to a brief and unhappy tarriance in Egypt, where he came in contact with another phase of the high civilization then existing among the sons of Ham, accompanied as usual by gross idolatry and polytheism. How long his sojourn in Egypt lasted is not recorded, probably only a few months. Josephus says that he went there not merely to share the plenty of the land, but to

examine into the state of religion, and ascertain whether the Egyptian priests had any true light ; to endeavour also to teach them the truth, if, as he expected, he found them ignorant of it ; that he convinced many of the superiority of his own faith, and gained the reputation of a learned philosopher. But we have no confirmatory testimony for these statements, and look upon his sojourn in Egypt as a period of failure in faith, and a time of leaning to his own understanding—one illustration of the fact that Egypt and its antitype have always been scenes of temptation to the people of God. The patriarch speedily returned to the place where his tent had been in the beginning, between Bethel and Ai, and it was here that when trouble arose with Lot he showed his noble forbearance and unworldly generosity, by giving his nephew the choice of the land, and accepting for himself the inferior portion. It was on the occasion of this separation, when his own act had broken the link between himself and the last of his kindred, that the Lord appeared the *third* time to Abraham.

“And the Lord said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward : for all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever. And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth : so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered. Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it ; for I will give it unto thee” (Gen. xiii. 14-17).

Yet again a fourth time was the promise renewed to the patriarch after his rescue of Lot and the inhabitants of Sodom from Chedor-laomer, king of Elam, and his confederates. “After these things the word of the Lord came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram : I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward.” But Abram, unable to see

in his childless condition how the promises of God could be fulfilled, sadly pleaded: "Lord God, what wilt Thou give me, seeing I go childless, and the steward of my house is this Eliezer of Damascus? Behold, to me Thou hast given no seed: and, lo, one born in my house is mine heir." God had pity on his perplexity, and "Behold, the word of the Lord came unto him, saying, This Eliezer of Damascus shall not be thine heir; but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir. And He brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and He said unto him, So shall thy seed be. And he believed in the Lord; and He counted it to him for righteousness. And He said unto him, I am the Lord that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give thee this land to inherit it" (Gen. xv. 4-7).

In connection with this promise the announcement was also made that Abraham's seed would be a stranger in a land not their own. "And He said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years; and also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance. And thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age. But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again: for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full" (Gen. xv. 13-16).

This prediction was full of contrasted elements, calculated some to sadden and some to rejoice the heart of Abraham. His posterity was to suffer, to be brought into bondage, to endure hardness, not to possess the promised land at once, but only after a long course of discipline. On the other hand, they *were* to possess it, they *were* to inherit the land on which their father merely pitched his tent. Why might they not take possession of it at once, and without the preliminary

suffering? They would not be numerous enough to people the land, for one thing, not warlike enough to drive out its inhabitants; moreover, and this was the reason assigned, *the iniquity of the Amorites was not yet full*. That of the Canaanites settled in the plains of Jericho among whom Lot had rashly elected to reside, was almost full; their cities were a very hotbed of corruption. But the moral condition of Aner and Eschol and the sons of Heth, or Hittites, at Hebron, seems to have been at that time widely different, and for four hundred years they were to be still spared and tested. The cup of iniquity was filling—not yet full.

It should be noted that the limits assigned to the promised land are here broadly stated as from the Nile to the Euphrates, “from the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates.” This large and important territory was the one bestowed by God on Abraham, and is still the entailed inheritance of his seed, “For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance.”

Passing by for the present the incidents connected with the birth of Ishmael, we come to the *fifth* and principal revelation of God to Abraham, that recorded in the seventeenth chapter of Genesis. It was on this occasion that the solemn COVENANT which is mentioned eleven times over in the chapter was made. This happened thirteen years after the birth of Ishmael, the natural but not the promised seed of the patriarch. Abraham was ninety years old and nine when this covenant—sealed and attested by the ordinance of circumcision—was made with him. We read—

“And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the Lord appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God; walk before Me, and be thou perfect. And I will make My covenant between Me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly. And Abram fell on his face: and God talked with him, saying, As for Me, behold, My covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations.

Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham ; for a father of many nations have I made thee. And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee. And I will establish My covenant between Me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee. And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession ; and I will be their God " (Gen. xvii. 1-8).

The ordinance of circumcision is then given in detail, and Sarah is included in the covenant, her name being altered in token of it, and it is revealed that *she* was to be the mother of the promised seed.

" And I will bless her, and give thee a son also of her : yea, I will bless her, and she shall be a mother of nations ; kings of people shall be of her. . . . And God said, Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed ; and thou shalt call his name Isaac : and I will establish My covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him. And as for Ishmael, I have heard thee : Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly ; twelve princes shall he beget, and I will make him a great nation. But My covenant will I establish with Isaac, which Sarah shall bear unto thee at this set time in the next year " (Gen. xvii. 16, 19-21).

In this last clause a chronological element is added to the promise, and the time of its fulfilment is specified. A promise as to Ishmael was uttered on this occasion, which had in substance been previously given to Hagar. He was to be blessed, to be multiplied exceedingly, to beget twelve princes and to become a great nation. It had previously been stated that he would be a wild man, his hand against every man and every man's hand against him, and that he would dwell in the presence of all his brethren.

Once again, shortly after this time, on the occasion of the visit of the angels to Abraham on the plains of Mamre and the revelation of the coming destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, the promise was for a *sixth* time renewed, with an intimation that the first instalment of its fulfilment was close at hand, the all-essential birth of the promised seed.

"Is anything too hard for the Lord? At the time appointed I will return unto thee, according to the time of life, and *Sarah shall have a son.*"

And again, after the birth of the long-promised seed, there was a further intimation given that Ishmael was not to be heir with Isaac, but that the child of Abraham and Sarah was to be *the* seed in whom the promises were to be fulfilled (Gen. xxi. 12).

And then last, not least, came the glorious prediction, *confirmed with an oath*, which was given in connection with Abraham's great trial, the commanded sacrifice of his son.

"Abraham's faith had stood all former tests. It had been strong enough to break the ties that bound him to country, home, and kindred. It had patiently endured the many and long delays in the fulfilling of the promises. It had risen above all the obstacles, physical and moral, that stood in the way of their accomplishment. It had accepted Isaac and given up Ishmael. Would it stand the last demand, to give up to God the best loved thing on earth; to do what appeared not only alien to God's own character, but contrary to His own word and promise? For herein lay the peculiarity and severity of the trial as a test of faith. The command and the promise were in conflict. If he obeyed the command, he frustrated the promise; if he kept by the promise, he must break the command. But one way of reconciling them could be even fancied, and, dim though it was, the quick eye of faith discerned it. 'He accounted that God was able to raise up Isaac from the dead.' In obedience to the Divine command, Isaac was forthwith unbound. The ram caught in the thicket was substituted in his stead. The fire was kindled and the sacrifice completed. The father and son are preparing to return, when once again the voice from above is heard pronouncing the solemn words: 'By Myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, that in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; and in thy seed shall all the families of the

earth be blessed ; because thou hast obeyed My voice.' In His intercourse with the patriarchs, God never swore by Himself but in this one case. The uniqueness and importance of the oath appears from its being quoted afterwards upon important occasions by Abraham himself, by Joseph, by Moses, by Zacharias, by Stephen, and by the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, as well as from its being frequently referred to by God Himself. Its utterance was *the last* that fell from the lips of God upon the ear of Abraham."¹

Though not given to the patriarch personally, but to his descendants, we must regard the promises to Isaac and to Jacob as all parts of the Abrahamic programme. It was because of the promise that he should inherit the land that the command was given to Isaac: "Go not down into Egypt ; dwell in the land which I shall tell thee of: sojourn in this land, and I will be with thee, and I will bless thee ; for unto thee and unto thy seed I will give all these countries, and I will perform the oath which I swore unto Abraham thy father ; and I will make thy seed to multiply as the stars of heaven, and I will give unto thy seed all these countries ; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed."

So to Jacob at Bethel when, as an exile journeying from Beersheba toward Haran, he was granted the vision of the ladder connecting heaven and earth, the promise was again repeated, and certain additional features added : "Thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth ; thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south : and in thee and thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. . . . I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of." Haran was not to be his home ; Canaan was BETH-EL—the House of God—and God was his God ; God would give him that land, and a posterity countless as the dust of the earth ; mankind was to be blessed in his seed. The vastness of this programme was all the more striking because the faith of Jacob was unable to take it in. At a later period in his life, when his name was

¹ Rev. W. Hanna : "The Bible Educator," vol. i. p. 86.

changed to Israel, his faith was probably better able to grasp the promise, which now had other features added to it. "And God said unto him, Thy name is Jacob: thy name shall not be called any more Jacob, but Israel shall be thy name: and he called his name Israel. And God said unto him, I am God Almighty: be fruitful and multiply; a nation and a company of nations shall be of thee, and kings shall come out of thy loins; and the land which I gave Abraham and Isaac, to thee I will give it, and to thy seed after thee will I give the land."

Still further was the promise expanded in this patriarch's dying prophecy, and especially in the particulars mentioned as regards Judah. "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be." The sceptre of the earth was yet to belong to the "lion of the tribe of Judah," who should also be the lawgiver, and yet at the same time, Shiloh, the peaceable, the Prince of peace.¹

Combining now into one view all these predictions and covenant promises, given at intervals during a period of about forty years to the "father of the faithful," and confirmed subsequently to his descendants, Isaac and Jacob, we ask, What is the main outline contained in this Abrahamic programme of the world's then future history? What did it foretell?

¹ Taking a wider view of the Abrahamic programme as comprising all the prophetic utterances of the patriarchal age, it would include those given to and through Isaac, Rebecca, and Jacob. Space forbids our dwelling on these, remarkable as they are. Divine foreknowledge was evinced, specially in the anticipations of the contrasted characters and fortunes of the posterity of the twin brothers Jacob and Esau. The passages of Scripture in which the subsequent history of "Esau, which is Edom," is given, and in which the mutual relations of the Edomites and Israelites at different periods are sketched, well repay a careful study. They will mostly be found under the head "Edom, Edomites" in Bagster's index, or in a concordance.

Omitting the less salient points, the main features are three in number.

I. Abraham's posterity was to be greatly multiplied and highly distinguished; kings were to proceed from him, he was to be the father of MANY NATIONS, and especially of one GREAT NATION, which, after a period of exile, affliction, and bondage spent elsewhere, was to inherit, as their inalienable possession, the land of Canaan.

II. That the descendants of his son ISHMAEL were also to become a great and enduring nation, and one of a most peculiar character, unlike the rest of his seed, and especially that Ishmael should be the father of TWELVE PRINCES; and—

III. Lastly and mainly, that through his true "seed"—which was to be called in Isaac—"all the families of the earth," "ALL NATIONS," were to be blessed.

The name of the patriarch changed from Abram—which means exalted father—to Abraham—which means father of a multitude—condenses this prophecy into a word. He was to become *the father* of one nation, many nations, and the channel of blessing to *all* nations. It was a wonderful revelation, and one apparently impossible of fulfilment. The recipient of the predictions was a childless and aged man. Nations do not as a rule spring from individuals, much less many nations from a single father; and Abraham should always be remembered, not as a *founder* of nations, but essentially and especially *a father*. As Adam was the father of the whole human race, and Noah the father of that portion of it which peopled the world that now is, so Abraham is the *father*, not only of the Jewish people, of the 'Arabs, Midianites, and other "children of the East," or "Saracens," but also the father of the faithful or believing people of God in all ages.

"How is the fact to be explained," asks Max Müller, "that the three greatest religions in the world, in which the unity of

the Deity forms the keynote, are of Semitic origin? Mahometanism, no doubt, is a Semitic religion, and its very core is monotheism. But did Mahomet invent monotheism? Did he invent even a new name of God? Not at all. And how is it with Christianity? Did Christ come to preach faith in a new God? Did He or His disciples invent a new name of God? No. Christ came, not to destroy, but to fulfil, and the God whom He preached was *the God of Abraham*. And who is *the God* of Jeremiah, of Elijah, and of Moses? We answer again: *The God of Abraham*. Thus the faith in the One Living God . . . is traced back to one man; to Him 'in whom all the families of the earth shall be blessed.' And if from our earliest childhood we have looked upon Abraham, the Friend of God, with love and veneration, his venerable figure will assume still more majestic proportions, when we see in him the Life-spring of that faith which was to unite all the nations of the earth, and the author of that blessing which was to come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ. And if we are asked how this one Abraham passed, through the denial of all other gods, to the knowledge of the one God, we are content to answer that it was by a *special Divine revelation, granted to that one man, and handed down by him to Jews, Christians, and Mahometans, to all who believe in the God of Abraham*. We want to know more of that man than we do; but even with the little we know of him, he stands before us as a figure, second only to One in the whole history of the world."¹

We must now inquire into the *fulfilment* of the predictions of the Abrahamic programme.

I. When we ask, first, *Did* the seed of Abraham, through Isaac and Jacob, become a great nation and possess the land of Canaan? and secondly, Does that nation still exist? the former of these questions may be answered by an appeal to the state of the Jewish nation in the days of Solomon, who

¹ Max Müller: "Selected Essays," vol. ii. p. 435.

spoke of his subjects as "a great people that cannot be numbered nor counted for multitude." During his reign, we read : "Judah and Israel were many, as the sand which is by the sea in multitude, eating and drinking, and making merry. And Solomon reigned over all kingdoms from the river unto the land of the Philistines, and unto the border of Egypt : they brought presents, and served Solomon all the days of his life. . . . And he had peace on all sides round about him. And Judah and Israel dwelt safely, every man under his vine and under his fig tree, from Dan even to Beersheba, all the days of Solomon. . . . And there came of all people to hear the wisdom of Solomon."¹

And if we inquire, secondly, Does this nation still exist ? lo ! we are confronted with the standing miracle embodied in the word "Israel." The twelve sons of Jacob (unlike Esau and Jacob, who founded two ; or Moab and Ammon, or Isaac and Ishmael) did not found twelve nations, but *one*. After a lapse of four thousand years *that nation exists still*—the only one on earth which can trace back its ancestry to a single individual at such a distance chronologically. Though now without a land and without a king, the authentic national history of the Jews, attested by ancient documents still extant, goes back farther than that of any other people. They have for 3,500 years been a nation and yet *a family* still, owning one father and one mother, bearing to each other the strong family likeness observable between brothers and sisters, using still the old family names, cherishing as their very heart's blood the old family traditions, living among all nations yet belonging to none, retaining even among Aryan and Hamitic peoples the peculiar and refined Semitic type,—distinct in character, in religion, in worship, in language, in customs, in memories, in hopes—distinct from all other, alike only among themselves. There they are, living

¹ Kings iv. 20, 21, 24, 25, 34.

still among us, confronting every nation upon earth with a present fulfilment of predictions which are four thousand years old. They speak all Gentile languages, and dwell in all Gentile lands, yet sharply defined lines separate them from the rest of the Gentile world ; and so broad and deep is the distinction, that the division of the human race into Jews and Gentiles puts Israel alone on the one side, and all the earth besides on the other. The Jews are the oldest of nations, and yet they exist in full vigour still, after their early contemporaries—Hittites, Amorites, Egyptians, Chaldeans, Assyrians and Babylonians, Medians, Persians and Grecians, as well as their later contemporaries—Seleucidæ, Ptolemies, and Cæsars, have all long since passed away.

Century after century, millenary after millenary have rolled by, since the programme we are considering was first divinely announced, and *all those ages unanimously attest its fulfilment*. It is some four thousand years since the birth of the promised seed, three thousand five hundred since the exodus and the birth of the Jewish *nation*, and eighteen hundred years since the Jewish dispersion ; and yet, though they have been the most sorely afflicted people known to history, they are still preserved ; and now, in this nineteenth century, they are again obtaining, through their wonderful financial skill and immense money resources, such power in the civilized world, that emperors, kings, princes, and presidents are forced to treat them with consideration and respect, and are even in many lands afraid of them. Though so long scattered in all countries, and destitute of a government of their own, they are none the less *one* people still. The Universal Israelite Alliance binds the scattered Jews all the world over into one body ; the Hebrew Bible, the synagogue ritual, the fasts and feasts of the Jewish calendar, the ordinance of circumcision, the seventh day Sabbath rest,—these and other distinctive observances make the Jews, dwell where they may, *one people*. As a nation, they are absolutely unique in character ; and though

their national independence lasted but for a short part of their long history, though they have never been very numerous, and though they have always been despised and disliked by other nations, they have nevertheless as a people exerted more decided and widespread influence on the world than any other that ever existed. And "what conceivable explanation is there of the history of the Jews, with their inextinguishable vitality, and the fulfilment again and again of their unquenchable hopes, except the truth that God had chosen them, and that God was with them? They had no righteousness, but were a stiff-necked people. They had no splendid territory, but a strip of barren, narrow, ill-watered land. They had no grand genealogy—a Syrian ready to perish was their father. They were not powerful enough of themselves even to conquer their own small land. They were not united; Ephraim envied Judah, and Judah vexed Ephraim. They were not free, but became the prey of nation after nation. They were not a maritime people, for their strip of sea-coast was mostly harbourless, and not their own. They had no commercial industry like Venice or Holland, no art like Greece, no arms like Rome, no colonies like England, no philosophy like Germany. They were constantly starting aside like a broken bow. Yet no power has ever been able to crush, no persecution to destroy them. They have influenced, taught, pervaded mankind. Their sacred book is the sacred book of humanity, their religious ideas are becoming more and more the religious ideas of the race. What explains it all, and alone explains it? Nothing but the truth that 'God showed His word unto Jacob, His statutes and ordinances unto Israel. He hath not dealt so with any nation.'"

The history of the Jewish nation is familiar to all, and we shall have to consider certain phases of it in connection with more advanced and complex programmes later on. We need not, therefore, dwell on it much in this place, where the fact of

its past and present *existence* and of its *relation* to the patriarch Abraham is the main point before us. We must, however, allude to one prediction frequently reiterated in the programme before passing on. The posterity of the patriarch was to be greatly multiplied—"as the sand of the seashore and as the stars of heaven." Seven times over, to Abraham, again to Isaac and again to Jacob, was this promise repeated as something distinct from the mere development of his seed into a nation. It was characterized by a special fecundity, and was, under the blessing of God, to increase with unusual rapidity. This has been throughout their history, and still is, a remarkable characteristic of the Jewish race. Had it not been so, they must long since have become extinct. So severe have been the bondages and servitudes they have undergone, so cruel and unnatural the edicts issued from time to time against them ever since Pharaoh's command that their male children should be drowned in the Nile, so terrible have been the wars waged against them and the massacres inflicted on them, so unhealthy the conditions in which they were compelled to exist all through the Middle Ages, that it is only by a miracle they have survived at all. But their vitality is unquestionably greater than that of Gentiles; and the rapid increase which in Egypt, even under most unfavourable conditions, alarmed Pharaoh and his people, is *habitual* with them. They always tend to outgrow the nations among whom they dwell in number. After the return of fifty thousand only from Babylon (Ezra ii. 64), they had multiplied to millions by the time of Christ, in spite of the Maccabæan persecutions. When Titus destroyed Jerusalem, it is recorded that over a million were assembled in the city. Though now for eighteen hundred years an exiled nation and exposed to terrible persecutions, yet they have again multiplied to eight millions. "The more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and grew," is the testimony borne about them in Egypt, and which might be borne about them still. Births

occur among them in a greater proportion than among the Gentiles, and they have besides an unusually low average of mortality.¹

The Jews in America, within the last forty-two years, have increased in number from 50,000 in a population of 20,000,000 to 500,000 in the present population. This is a most remarkable fact. It means that while the general population has *trebled* in the period, the Israelites have increased *tenfold*—far more rapidly than any other race. Their advance in wealth and power during the same time has been proportionate to their increase in numbers. They are recognised as the most influential members on all New York commercial exchanges, on several of which they occupy the position of chairman or treasurer. They negotiate the most important government loans and railway operations. They have almost absorbed the import trade in diamonds, watches, and jewellery, so that many of the oldest Gentile firms have been swept out of existence.

But one fact which is obvious to all in New York speaks more as to their growth in power and influence than many figures. The rich and important street of Broadway—the central part of New York, lying between Canal Street and Union Square—which used formerly to be occupied by mag-

¹ "According to the *Civilstands-Register* of Frankfort, for the period between the years 1846 and 1858, while the fourth part of all children born among the Christian population had passed away before the age of six years and eleven months, the fourth part of all Jews born were not gone until twenty-eight years and three months; *half* of all Christians born had died before reaching thirty-six years and six months, while half of the Jews survived the age of *fifty-three*; of Christians born, three-fourths had passed away before reaching the age of sixty, while of the Jews one-fourth were still living at seventy-one! Again, according to the church and synagogue records of the Prussian monarchy for the eighteen years from 1823 to 1841, the average of deaths annually among the Gentile population was one in every thirty-four, but among the Jews only *one in forty-six*. Twenty per cent. of the Jews reached seventy years, as against only twelve per cent. of the Christians."—(Kellogg: "The Jews, Prediction and Fulfilment," p. 181.)

nificent shops, has of late undergone a complete change. The retail trade has gone to the up-town thoroughfares, and of the four hundred buildings in the district almost all are occupied by wholesale Jewish firms. Out of twelve hundred such firms one thousand are Jewish.

We noted, when considering the Noahic programme, the prediction that religious supremacy would run in the race of Shem. The call of his descendant Abraham and the selection of his seed to be the special custodians of the knowledge of the true God, and thus in the highest sense a blessing to all nations, confirmed this previous prediction ; but the fact that such a call and such a remarkable providential training as that given to the patriarchs was needful to the preservation of true religion in the earth, even in the race of Shem, is most suggestive, and its bearings must in passing be indicated. Modern infidelity has among its other theories started one which is virtually an endeavour to account for the widespread and beneficial influence of the faith of Abraham *apart from any supernatural influence*. It is argued by Renan and others that the Shemites, or Semitic races, have "a natural genius" for and tendency to monotheism, and that therefore the bud of Judaism, with its flower of Christianity, grew naturally on this stock. No assertion could well be more contrary to fact, nor could any theory be more utterly baseless. As in the case of many other rationalistic schemes, history must be blotted out or ignored before it can be received. We have already mentioned that with the earliest dawn of monumental records *gross* idolatry is found already prevailing, not only among the Hamitic, but equally among the Semitic peoples of Babylonia, Mesopotamia, Elam, Chaldea, and Egypt.¹ If there was any difference, the Shemites would seem almost

¹ "Among the deities they worshipped were Moloch, Nisroch, Rimmon, Necho, Dagon, Ashtaroth, Baal-Chemosh, Milcom, Adrammelech, . . . Nergal, the sun, the moon, the planets, and all the host of heaven."—(Max Müller: "Chips from a German Workshop," vol. i. p. 345.)

to have exceeded. Professor Ebrard, in his "Apologetik," has a section which gives ample proof of this. He says :—

"Those Euphrates-Semites must have been given over to a spirit of confusion out of the abyss, as they declared everything which the conscience forbids and condemns as infamous and horrible to be precisely that which belonged to the service of the Godhead." And again: "It was no gradual declension from a purer knowledge of God to a knowledge less clear, as with the Persians, Indians, Greeks, and Egyptians. The rise of this religion—the primitive Semitic heathenism—presupposes a wilful repetition of the original fall, a fall out of a state of simple sinfulness into a diabolic and demoniac hardness of heart, *an accursed revolt against both God and the conscience.*"

Even Jews, when their faith is undermined by rationalism, take the ground that they arrived "intuitively in a prehistoric age at" the sublime conception of "the unity of the creative force"—in other words, at a knowledge of the one living and true God—"by the genius of the race."¹ So far from this, we see that Terah and his family had fallen into idolatry, and that the Semitic people who were their contemporaries were distinguished, as Professor Zöckler says, by "a natural inclination to a gross, sensual, idolatrous superstition, and a strong tendency to polytheism, instead of the monotheistic instinct which is claimed for them." History moreover shows us that the Jews themselves, in spite of all the numerous Divine interventions recorded in their annals, in violation of their own covenant and in defiance of their own law, and even in face of the living voices of the prophets, were so strongly and so persistently inclined to idolatry that, right down to the day of the captivity of the land, they persisted in returning at intervals to debasing, licentious, and cruel idolatry, to the obscene worship of "the queen of heaven"

¹ See article on "The Jewish Problem" in the *Century Magazine* for February, 1883, p. 609.

or the unnatural sacrifices to Moloch. Nothing can be more certain than that during the whole thirteen hundred years from the call of Abram to the Babylonian captivity, the Israelites themselves were constantly falling back into the idolatry from which they had been rescued, and that it was only by frequently renewed Divine intervention, by the severest providential chastenings, and by the earnest remonstrances of inspired prophets, that the Jews were at last cured of the inveterate Semitic tendency to polytheism. Of their ultimate national testimony against idolatry, no explanation which is purely natural can be accepted, or made to fit with the acknowledged facts of the case. *The Divine choice of Abraham's seed to be a peculiar people*, to be the medium of conveying to the world the knowledge of the true God, is the only account which can honestly be given of the monotheism of the Jewish people amid the gross polytheism of the Gentiles.

II. As to the *second* point of the prediction—the fortunes of Ishmael and his descendants—three points especially were stated :—

1. That God would make him a great nation.
2. That there should be a marked antagonism between it and other nations ; that, in contrast to the seed of Isaac, which should be a blessing to the world, the seed of Ishmael would be a foe to all other peoples, and other peoples to it.
3. That Ishmael should “dwell in the presence of his brethren,” or continue to enjoy an independent existence in spite of the constant opposition of neighbouring nations.

Though not the promised seed, Ishmael was a son of Abraham and a descendant of Shem, and was to inherit to some extent the blessing of his forefathers. His mother Hagar, however, was an Egyptian, a descendant of Cush, and therefore a Hamite, and she is an early illustration of the fulfilment of the Noahic prediction about the servitude of the

descendants of Ham to their brethren. She was a bond-woman or slave in the family of Abraham, and her child was consequently a slave also ; he was the offspring, not of faith and Divine power, but of nature. He was, however, his father's firstborn, and shared in Abraham's affection and prayers. He was promised a part in the blessing of multiplication and increase common to all Abraham's seed, and that he should partake to some extent of the distinction of Abraham's children ; but his lot was in *other* respects to be markedly contrasted to theirs.

He was to be the father of twelve princes, and ultimately to "become"—not beget—a great nation. To his mother it had been predicted that while the posterity of her son should not be numbered for multitude, he would always be a wild man, his hand against every man and every man's hand against him. Yet he was to continue to "dwell in the presence of his brethren." This portrait of the unborn race is drawn with such a bold individuality of touch that the race itself must be easy of recognition. The expression employed in the original to characterize Ishmael's seed is stronger than that in our version. He was to be "a wild ass of a man,"—the race would be a wild, lawless, independent one, impatient of restraint, inclined to run free in the wilderness, and to live by plunder and robbery, "his hand against every man," leading to the natural result that every man's hand would be against him. Ishmael's seed, unlike Israel, would not be a blessing in the earth, but rather a woe to mankind, ever warring and warred against, yet inextinguishable as the Jews themselves, and continuing to the end a distinct people.

Has this remarkable prediction been falsified by the course of history, or has it been, on the other hand, strikingly fulfilled? *The Arabs are almost as much a living miracle as the Jews themselves.* To the letter, and in the most wonderful manner, and for thousands of years in succession, this part of the programme has been realized on the stage of history.

Did Ishmael beget twelve princes? 1 Chronicles i. 29 gives the answer: "The firstborn of Ishmael, Nebajoth; then Kedar, and Adbeel, and Mibsam, Mishma, and Dumah, Massa, Hadad, and Tema, Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah. These are the sons of Ishmael."

Did these sons become princes? Genesis xxv. 16 gives the answer: "These are the sons of Ishmael, and these are their names, by their towns, and by their castles; *twelve princes* according to their nations." It is added that they occupied the country "between Havilah and Shur;" that is, districts in Arabia between Egypt and Assyria.¹ Nebajoth ("heights"), the eldest son of Ishmael, was the father of the Nebathians, a people of Northern Arabia who lived by merchandise and rapine, according to Diodorus. Kedar ("black skin") was the father of the Cedrie, characterized as good bowmen, dwelling between Arabia Petrea and Babylon. Dumah ("silence") dwelt on the edge of the Assyrian desert. Hadad was father of the Arabs of Yemen; Tema of the tribes on the Persian Gulf; and so on.

Archæology has identified the early history of most of these twelve tribes. The expression "towns and castles" would be better translated by "unwalled encampments and fortified keeps." They were nomadic tribes, and lived to a

¹ The Arabian peninsula had been originally peopled by the descendants of Joktan, the son of Heber, of the posterity of Shem, and certain Cushite (Hamitic) races had also settled there. No histories but only certain fabulous traditions of these "old Arab" races are available. The "pure Arabs" are Joktan's descendants, and the "mixed Arabs" are the children of Ishmael. Mohammed traced his own descent from the marriage of Ishmael with Modad, a daughter of the king of Hejaz. The Arabs regard this branch of their pedigree as the most important, and boast as much as the Jews that they are "children of Abraham." The Nabathean Arabs, under a race of native princes, long preserved a distinct name as a nation, and maintained their independence against the hosts of Egypt and Ethiopia, of the Jews, the Assyrians, the Greeks, and the Romans, all of whom in turn tried in vain to subdue them. (See Chrichton's "Arabia and its People.")

large extent by rapine, though possessed of abundant flocks and addicted to some extent to merchandise. They are often alluded to in later scriptures. "The mighty men of Kedar" and the "glory of Kedar" are expressions used by Isaiah, and Ezekiel speaks of "the princes of Kedar." Strabo and other ancient writers distinctly connect the origin of the Arabian "Pylachs," or heads of tribes, with Hagar and Ishmael. Psalm lxxxiii. 6 speaks of "the tabernacles of the Ishmaelites and the Hagarenes," or descendants of Hagar. The promise of rapid multiplication was conspicuously fulfilled, for already in the days of Jacob we read of a company of Ishmaelites, coming from Gilead, trading with camels to Egypt, where they carried spicery, balm, and myrrh.¹ The posterity of Abraham by his concubine Keturah, especially through his sons Medan and Midian, fraternized and united to some extent with the sons of Ishmael, so that in this passage the names of Ishmaelites and Midianites are used interchangeably.² The Idumæans and Amalekites, or descendants of Isaac's son Esau, also mingled with the Ishmaelites, and were comprised under the common name "the children of the East." In the days of Gideon these Ishmaelites were so numerous that they are described as "lying in the valley, like grasshoppers for multitude, their camels without number, as the sand by the seaside for multitude" (Jud. vii. 12). Mention is made of the hosts of the "children of the East," and of *one hundred and twenty thousand of their warriors falling in one battle*. These "children of the East" were all, as Josephus distinctly says, regarded as Ishmaelites, though Arabs descended from the younger sons of Abraham were numbered among them, as well as the Edomites.

The subsequent history of the Arab tribes and peoples is most remarkable. They have retained their freedom from the first day until now. Neither the Egyptians nor any

¹ See Gen. xxxvii. 27-36.

² See also Jud. viii. 12 and 24.

of the four great empires were ever able to subdue them. At one time they themselves subdued the larger part of the then known world, but never have they been subdued to any other power. Sesostris, the great king of Egypt, was obliged to erect a wall to secure Egypt from the incursions of the Arabs, whom he had endeavoured in vain to conquer. They remained enemies to the Egyptians rather than subjects, in spite of all his efforts, and assisted the Assyrians in overturning the kingdom, lending their aid freely and independently. When the Persian Cyrus and his followers became the great conquerors of the East, they never could subdue Ishmael's descendants. Herodotus says: "The Arabs were never reduced by the Persians to the condition of subjects, but were considered by them as friends, and opened to them a passage into Egypt, which without the assistance and permission of the Arabs would have been utterly impracticable." All other countries paid tribute to the Persians, but the Arabian territories were free. When Alexander the Great overturned the Persian empire and conquered Asia, the Arabs alone refused to make submission or send ambassadors to acknowledge the victor; they simply took no notice of him. This so angered Alexander that he was meditating a terrible expedition against them, the preparations for which showed what he thought of their prowess, when death put a stop to all his schemes and saved the Arabians from his onslaught.

Diodorus Siculus mentions that Antigonos, one of Alexander's successors, made two attempts to subjugate the Arabians, both of which were defeated; and he adds: "Neither the Assyrians formerly nor the kings of the Medes and Persians, nor yet of the Macedonians, were able to subdue them; nay, though they led many and great forces against them, yet they could not accomplish their attempts." They sometimes joined the Assyrians and sometimes the Egyptians, sometimes helped the Jews, and at others plun-

dered them ; but throughout their history they always acted as a free and independent people, who cared neither for the favour nor for the opposition of any other nation.

But the Romans surely reduced them to subjection ? No ; not even they ! Pompey, though he conquered three-quarters of the world, failed to subdue Arabia. He obtained some victories there, but was obliged to retire before he had gained any solid footing, and directly he was gone the Arabs undertook reprisals into the Roman provinces. One of the generals of Augustus penetrated farther into the country, firmly resolved to subdue it ; but a strange and unaccountable sickness broke out among his troops, so that after two years he was glad to escape with the small remainder of his army. Trajan tried and failed to subdue Arabia, and the historian Dion gives a strange account of his reason for raising the siege of the city of the Hagarenes : " His soldiers were repelled by lightnings, thunderings, hail and whirlwinds, and other prodigies ; they were *constantly* so repelled, as often as they renewed their assaults. At the same time great swarms of flies infested his camp, and he was at last forced to retire with disgrace into his own dominions." Eighty years later the Emperor Severus twice besieged the same city with a numerous army and a formidable train of military engines, but he had no better success than Trajan. No subsequent Roman emperor attempted the task, and the Arabs continued their incursions into Syria and their depredations in other Roman provinces with absolute impunity.

Then came the most remarkable phase of Arabian history, the time when Ishmael beyond all doubt became " a great nation "—so great as to make the world tremble. After the rise of Mohammed in Arabia, in A.D. 622, and the establishment of his monotheistic faith in place of the idolatry which was at that time beginning to prevail among the Arabians, they, under the better known name of Saracens, emerging from their desert home, conquered with the most amazing rapidity

a vast extent both of Asiatic and European territory. They overran in the course of a few years more countries and subdued more nations than the Romans did in the course of *centuries*, and then for three hundred years they were not only free and independent of all other kingdoms, but they were themselves masters of the most important part of the earth. Their dominion extended from the walls of China to the Atlantic Ocean, and from the Sahara to the Pyrenees; and in the exercise of this wide rule they exhibited still their characteristic peculiarities. Nowhere did they reign as conquerers accepted and welcomed by other peoples, but always as tyrants who exacted either conversion to their faith and confession of their false creed, or tribute and slavery. They were a "woe" to the corrupt Christian countries they overran. After this period, when the flood of their invasion subsided and they were once more confined within the limits of Arabia, they still maintained their independence. Tartars, Mamelukes, and Turks alike failed to subjugate them. The rest of Asia might fall under Napoleon-like conquerors, but they remained free, and as usual employed their liberty for the injury of their neighbours. The Turks even in the height of their power were obliged to pay them a tribute for the protection of the pilgrims to Mecca, and do so still. No traveller in the East has failed to be struck with the marvellous coincidences still observable between the Bedaween of the desert and the Scripture predictions as to the children of Ishmael.

It should be borne in mind that those predictions were given before Hagar's child was born, and when no human wisdom could possibly have foreseen either his character or that of his descendants. It should be remembered also that a similar identity of characteristics extending over thousands of years cannot be traced in the history of any other nation if we except the Jews. The modern Italians are not what the old Romans were, and the English of to-day are utterly

unlike the Britons of a thousand years ago. As a rule, men and manners change with the lapse of ages, but the Arabians maintain still in our nineteenth century the family and national characteristics predicted four thousand years ago. Nor can this be accounted for by the fact that they dwell in Arabia, isolated to some extent from the rest of mankind. They have trafficked with the neighbouring nations from the earliest days. When they overran the earth by their conquests, they possessed most of the learning that was then in the world, and did some service to mankind in extending and diffusing it; but they remained *then*, and remain *still*, the same fierce, intractable people, like their father Ishmael, and unlike all other nations. Ishmael was circumcised at thirteen, and they still observe the Abrahamic ordinance at the same age; they still live in tents as he did, still trade with Egypt as he did, and exist in clans and tribes and in a state of warfare and antagonism with all their brethren precisely as foretold. *How*, apart from Divine inspiration, can these things have been foreseen? and how, apart from the providential power of God, can such a nation have been maintained in such a condition for four thousand years? Is not this the finger of God?

III. The third point of the Abrahamic programme was that "*all* the nations of the earth," and even "all the families" of the earth, should be blessed through Abraham's seed. Has this prediction been fulfilled?

For answer let us glance at the world of A.D. 1888. We will divide all its nations and families into two parts, including in the one all those which have directly or indirectly been brought under the influence of his seed, and on the other hand all those which have not. The prophecy, it must be remembered, is only partially fulfilled at present. Successive ages as they have rolled away have been evermore fulfilling it, but not until "the dispensation of the fulness of times" will it be wholly accomplished. But the fulfilment has

already gone quite far enough to afford the most ample proof of the inspiration of the prophetic programme.

How are we to decide which of earth's nations have been influenced by Abraham's seed, and which have not? The question is easily answered. *All the monotheism in the world is distinctly traceable to Abraham.* Wherever we find a nation or a family which worships the one living and true God, there we find a nation and a family which has been blessed through the patriarch and his seed. Hence not Jews only, but all professing Christian nations and the entire Mohammedan world as well, must form our first group of nations; while the second will consist of all those professing polytheistic, pantheistic, and other forms of religion, as well as those which have none; including thus *all* idolaters, and all the fetish and devil worshippers of every kind. All the theistic religions that have ever existed are distinctly and *historically connected with the Old and New Testaments*: the ancient forms with the *Jewish* Scriptures, and the more modern ones with the *Christian* writings of later date. Hence we may say that, but for the influence of Abraham's seed, the world this day would have been without any true knowledge of the existence and moral government of one personal God, creator and judge of all. The influence which this knowledge has had on the development of the human race is the measure of the beneficial influence exerted among the families of the earth through the seed of Abraham. We will therefore call the two groups into which we proceed to divide the nations of the earth, the Abrahamic and the non-Abrahamic respectively.

In the Abrahamic group we should have some 600 millions of the human race who are monotheists, and in the second a rather larger number, about 800 millions, who have no knowledge of Abraham nor of his God, but are still polytheists and, like the old Chaldeans from whose midst he was called out, idolaters. Now, in the first place, is it not a very wonderful fact that nearly half the human race have actually already

been influenced by Abraham's seed and Abraham's faith—that 600 millions of mankind know his name and revere his character, and hold sacred the cave of Machpelah at Hebron where rest his remains? But what of the *blessedness* of this half of humanity compared with that of the larger half which has not yet come under the influence of Abraham and his seed? By *blessedness* we at present mean only the evident outward manifestations of happiness, prosperity, and hopeful prospects for the future; that mental illumination and physical well-being which we include in the one comprehensive expression, *progressive civilization*. Which of the two halves of humanity is in these senses the most "blessed"? In the monotheistic or Abrahamic group we should have the English, Scotch and Irish, the Norwegians, Swedes and Danes, the Dutch, Belgian and French, the Spaniards, Portuguese and Italians, the Swiss, Austrians and Greeks, the Germans, Poles and Russians; the hundred millions of similar races in America, Africa and Australia, and seven millions of Christianized negroes in the United States and those in the West Indies, the eight millions of Jews scattered throughout the world; the Eastern Christians of the Armenian, Nestorian, Maronite and Coptic Churches of Syria and Egypt, and in addition to these the entire Mohammedan world numbering 170 millions, and including Arabs, Sikhs, Persians, Turks, Egyptians, Moors and Berbers, extending from India and Arabia to the Atlantic; together with all the converts from heathenism gathered in of late years through missionary efforts.

In the other group, the non-Abrahamic or polytheistic group, we should have such families and nations as the Japanese and Chinese, including the black hairy Ainos of the former, and the wild Shan and Miautse tribes of the latter; the dark Buddhistic Mongols, Thibetians, and Tartars, the wild and cruel Calmucs and Kurds, the superstitious and caste-ridden Tamils, Telegus and Bengalis, the Singhalese,

Burmans and Siamese, the wretched and degraded Gonds, Bhils and Santhals of India; the Malays and Papuans, the blood-thirsty Dyaks of Borneo and the animal-like native Australians; the (heathen) Malagasy, the fierce Zulus and naked Kaffirs, the warlike Griquas and Matabele, the Hottentots and Namaquas, the monkey-like Bushmen of the Kalihari desert, who have lost almost the semblance of humanity; the countless Bantu tribes and nations of Central Africa, with their cannibalism, slavery, and cruel intertribal warfare; the Ashanti and Fanti nations of West Africa; Dinka, Monbutto and other heathen nations of the Soudan; the Somali, Gallas and Masai of East Africa; together with the some sixteen millions of degraded and fast dying out American Indians, the Patagonians and the Terra del Fuegians, the cannibals of the Pacific Islands, and the Maori of New Zealand.

We say nothing of the past or of the future, but these two lists recall roughly *the world of the nineteenth century*. Can any one hesitate for a single moment in deciding as to *which* of these two groups of the nations of the earth is the "blessed" or happy one? There are degrees of light in the first, and degrees of darkness in the second; but, taken *as groups*, is not the progress and prosperity of the world found in the first? Does not the future lie with it, ay, and with the most enlightened section of it too? Which are the foremost and most rapidly advancing races of mankind? Not those which profess the faith of Islam, monotheistic though it be; but those which profess the faith of Abraham's great seed, which is Christ. The Christian nations take the lead this day in the world, and especially those which hold the purest forms of Christianity. Foremost among all the races of the human family stand the Protestant Saxons, German and English, the two mightiest nations of Europe, and the latter, with its American representative, the dominant power in the Western world.

Surely then the most superficial and cursory glance at the present condition of the human race affords a proof of the fulfilment of the Abrahamic programme, the strength and conclusiveness of which cannot be over-estimated—a demonstration of its Divine inspiration which no candid mind can fail to perceive. The announcement of a future event whose occurrence could not possibly be foreseen by any natural human sagacity must be an inspired prophecy. In this case it cannot be for a moment questioned that the Abrahamic programme was promulgated several thousand years before any such fulfilment could be perceived. Even the most extravagant critics cannot postdate the Pentateuch more than a few centuries, and it was at least *twenty-three hundred years* before this fulfilment which we have indicated became even dimly visible, much longer before it became clear, while it has only been *conspicuous* within the last three centuries. Yet *now* none can deny or even question it. The contrast in freedom, independence, power, wealth, light and leading, peace and prosperity, between the two groups we have presented is startling; but this present condition of the world could by no human sagacity have been foreseen four, or even three, thousand years ago. It could not possibly have been anticipated by man. The correspondence between prediction and fulfilment is close, the scale of the fulfilment is gigantic, the interval since the prophecy was published enormous. For ages Israel treasured the prediction, but saw no signs of its accomplishment. Abraham was the father of their nation, and of the Arab nations, but there was no sign of all nations being blessed through him. Even when Christ came, the state of the Roman world, as contrasted with their own condition, showed that no blessing had yet flowed to mankind through Abraham's seed. The Israelites had the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the law, and the service of God, and the promises; the fathers and the prophets belonged to them; the Scriptures were their sacred

books; and they felt that they, and they only, were the children of promise and counted for the seed. As to the rest of mankind, they were aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world, afar off from Him, walking in the vanity of their minds, having the understanding darkened, and being alienated from the life of God through ignorance and blindness of heart. But now we may boldly say, there is not a blessed nation on earth whose blessing has not come to it through Abraham's seed, and every passing year makes this strange fact only more apparent.

This view, however, is but a superficial one; we must go deeper. In His promise to the patriarch, "God," says Paul, "*preached before the gospel* unto Abraham, saying, In thee and in thy seed shall all nations be blessed. . . . He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is CHRIST." *The great promise to Abraham was the promise of Christ.* It was a second and more emphatic repetition of the hope held out in Eden, that the salvation of a sin-ruined race should be wrought out by the woman's seed. That seed, it was now revealed, was to be Abraham's seed, and He would not only crush the serpent's head, but bring blessing to the wide world. What blessing? Not merely the outward blessing to which we have alluded, but the deepest and richest of all blessings—"Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin" (Rom. iv. 7, 8).

The great blessing of the Abrahamic covenant was spiritual not temporal, and it promised to man all that is included in that fathomless word SALVATION. How far Abraham understood this we know not, nor is it important to our argument to decide. "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day," said Christ, "and he saw it and was glad."

How did he see it? Was it in the strangely typical action to which he himself was constrained in the providence of God—the offering up of his well-beloved son? One can hardly refrain from the conviction that he must have seen in that sacred scene on Mount Moriah more than met the eye! But whether Abraham understood or no, He who made the promises to Abraham, and “because He could swear by no greater, swore by Himself”—*He* understood the profound and comprehensive nature of the prediction, that Israel should be the universal centre of blessing to mankind, that salvation should be of the Jews, that humanity at large—the whole race, Jew and Gentile alike—should through Abraham be blessed for ever, blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly things in Christ. The Christian Church is in a sense Abraham’s seed, as it is written: “If ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.” Who shall estimate the blessing which that Church, in spite of all its failures, has been to the world—the blessing that it is this day? Who can express what the gift of Christ has done for the Gentiles? How has He illuminated, emancipated, elevated, sanctified, transformed? The results of His mission include justification by faith, and the gift of the Holy Spirit—a gift not visible to the world save in its effects, the lives and the deeds of the justified and indwelt Church of God. These are sufficiently visible. The Church is a city set on a hill; *the* light of the world, which owes all its blessing instrumentally to her.

The great and all-important series of events which date from the incarnation, embracing the existence and all the effects of the Christian Church in the world, and all the unknown yet revealed and glorious future lying before redeemed humanity—all is foretold in embryo in this brief, simple sentence of the Abraham programme. Repeatedly and plainly it is predicted that Abraham’s seed was to be the salvation of mankind. Can there be any doubt as to the

meaning of the prediction, and has it not been in process of fulfilment for the last two thousand years, at any rate? Does not every year make this fulfilment more evident? Eternal ages alone will unfold its full meaning, but do not we see already millions of mankind enjoying the promised blessing, and rejoicing in their spiritual relation to Abraham even more than the Jews glory in their natural descent from him? Has not the bud already opened into a blossom, and is not that blossom an earnest of the glory and beauty of the ancient stem when it shall be covered with such blossoms, when not *half* the world shall be *partially* blessed through Christ, but the *whole* world *perfectly* and for evermore?

How easily this prophecy might have failed of fulfilment in one or all of its particulars! The Jews might have become merged with the Egyptians, and never have escaped from the land of their bondage. They might have perished in the wilderness, or, more likely still, have become a mere tribe of uninfluential Bedaween. Still more likely, they might have failed in their attempt to conquer Canaan, or have been permanently corrupted by the gross polytheisms of their neighbours, into which they were so prone to fall. Or again, judging from the first four thousand years of human history, how utterly improbable an event was it that the Jewish nation, when it had lost all independence and even a ruler of its own—when it had become a mere province of the Roman empire—should become the centre of a movement which should revolutionize civilized society, and give birth to One who in less than three centuries should be recognised and worshipped as a *Divine* being by the entire Roman world, and then by degrees win the adoration and obedience of half the human race, as Christ, the son of Abraham, has done at this day. How very easily all this might not have been as it has been,—nay, how *exceedingly* improbable that the fact should have been what it is, and thus have fulfilled the ancient prediction.

Look again at the case of Ishmael's seed. How perfectly natural it would have been that they should have shared the fate of all other nations, and been subjugated by the four great empires which subdued all else, in succession. How easily it might have happened that they should have remained always what they were for ages, and what they have long since become again—utterly unimportant in the world's history. What strange and unlikely episodes those wonderful Saracenic conquests, and that widespread Saracenic empire, those centuries in which Ishmael became indeed “a great nation”!

And it must be noted that none of these great events could have been brought about by any human *intention* to fulfil the Abrahamic programme. Even supposing the Jews had set their hearts on its fulfilment, and been as anxious as they were careless about it and even opposed to it (as witness their indignant refusal to believe in the call of the Gentiles), had they wished to bring all nations into their covenant with Jehovah, what could *they* have done? How could *they* have overthrown the pantheon of the Roman mythology, they who had just been themselves utterly overthrown by Roman power? It has been by no effort of the Jewish nation that Christ has become the acknowledged Saviour of the world and supreme King of humanity! As a nation they rejected and slew Him, and they have hated and spurned His name ever since. As to the Gentiles who received Him, they most assuredly did not do so because of any knowledge they had of the Abrahamic programme! They were for the most part in total ignorance both of it and of the Scriptures which contained it. These facts are so wide in their scope, so ancient in their duration, so enduring in their character, that there is no accounting for them at all by any theory save the true one, that He who foresaw the end from the beginning was the author of that section of the programme of the world's history given to Abraham.

To conclude; we challenge the infidel to blot out, if he can, the name of ABRAHAM, with the promise and the prophecy it contains, from the pages of the Pentateuch and of the entire Bible. If he cannot do that, we challenge him to blot out the four thousand years of Jewish, Arabian, and Gentile history which have fulfilled that prophecy, and made good that promise. If he can do neither the one nor the other—if it be beyond his power either to obliterate the name or to alter the history—let him confess with all honesty that the history was anticipated, that what has happened was foreseen and foretold; or, in other words, that there is here *an unquestionable miracle of foreknowledge*, and a proof of inspiration so conclusive that it cannot be gainsaid.

“I AM JEHOVAH: THAT IS MY NAME: AND MY GLORY WILL I NOT GIVE TO ANOTHER, NEITHER MY PRAISE TO GRAVEN IMAGES. BEHOLD, THE FORMER THINGS ARE COME TO PASS, AND NEW THINGS DO I DECLARE: BEFORE THEY SPRING FORTH I TELL YOU OF THEM” (Isa. xlii. 8, 9). “KNOWN UNTO GOD ARE ALL HIS WORKS FROM THE BEGINNING OF THE WORLD” (Acts xv. 18).

CHAPTER IV.
THE MOSAIC PROGRAMME.

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N EARLY five centuries had passed since the days of Abraham when the next great crisis in the history of redemption occurred. It is associated with the name of Moses, one who is more notable as a founder than as a father. His "seed," his own personal descendants, were of small account. The programme of the future given through him relates, not, as in the case of Abraham, to his own posterity, but to the people of Israel to whom by birth (though not by education) he belonged—the people whom he was commissioned by God to constitute and train into a nation, and to lead to the borders of their promised inheritance. It was when he had done this, when his long and marvellous life had reached its close, when he was just about to commit to Joshua the leadership of the people who were destined to become the world's benefactors, that he was inspired to foretell their future—in that *fourth* section of the Divine programme of the world's history which we have now to consider.

In order to its right appreciation, we must briefly review the interval which had elapsed since the age of the patriarchs treated in our last chapter. We must endeavour to realize the character of the times in which Moses' lot was cast, and recall the main features of the romantic, heroic, and most extraordinary life which he himself lived—a life unmatched among those of the sons of men for the sublimity of its incidents, the striking contrasts of its experiences, and the everlasting importance of its results.

As regards the interval since the days of Abraham, the remark made as to the days of the patriarch himself, that it is not now a *terra incognita* to historians, is even more appropriate to this period. Authentic monumental and documentary evidence takes us back to B.C. 2200 or 2300 at least, and possibly even further; so that we can now supplement and illustrate the Biblical narrative, fill in the *lacunæ* which it leaves, and obtain from independent sources contemporary information as to the world's condition during those early ages. It has given its own account of itself in the monumental records which it has left, and that account often throws interesting sidelights on Bible history. Though Scripture confines itself mainly to the story of the chosen people, yet Israel at this period came in contact with a variety of other nations—with Amalekites, Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, and Canaanites, and above all Egyptians—among whom they dwelt for centuries, and their sojourn among whom had important results of various kinds. The better we know Israel's surroundings in Egypt, the better we understand their subsequent conduct in the wilderness and in Canaan; and the more we appreciate Egypt's own condition, the more we perceive the power and wisdom of God in the Exodus.

When Jacob first responded to Pharaoh's invitation, and went down with his family to Egypt, the seed of Abraham had already multiplied considerably. Seventy sons, or male descendants of Jacob, are named, and there were doubtless a similar number of daughters. But the whole party was much larger, and numbered probably some thousands; so that it was a tribe rather than a family which in Joseph's day took up their abode in the land of Goshen. The covenant with Abraham included his entire household, which, as we have seen, was very numerous. Jacob's was probably quite as large, and his twelve sons being all married men with families, would also be at the heads of separate households.

The entire migration consequently must have numbered several thousand persons. That such a large party should receive a hearty welcome and liberal grants of land in a strange country would be surprising, and can be accounted for only by the popularity and power which Joseph had deservedly attained. After his death, the political position of the country secured them continued royal favour and protection for one or two centuries. We learn from the monuments that about this period Lower Egypt was conquered by the strange dynasty known as the Hyksôs, or shepherd-kings, a cruel, semi-barbarous, nomadic Asiatic race of rulers, which invaded and subjugated the land of Zoan, destroyed its cities and temples, massacred all the males of adult age, and reduced to slavery the women and children. Manetho gives a terrible, but perhaps exaggerated, account of their cruelty and barbarism ; but the period of their occupation of the Delta (which is of uncertain length) was undoubtedly one of misery and confusion in the once mighty and united empire of Egypt. Native Pharaohs continued to govern the upper country from Thebes during the Hyksôs period,—indeed, there is reason to think that several dynasties ruled sections of Egypt at this period ; in any case, it was a time of great confusion.

The monumental remains of the dynasty of foreign rulers are very curious. They represent them with countenances wholly unlike the rest of the Pharaohs.¹ This dynasty was

¹ "The visage, sooth to say, is singularly plebeian, and as unlike as possible in its type to the pleasant, ingenuous look of the earliest European-like Egyptians of the pyramid age, or the stately calmness or the attractive kindliness of the courtly twelfth dynasty. The noses are pitifully marred, the cheek-bones are high and prominent, the upper lips long and drawn downwards, the mouth sad, heavy, and anxious, the lower lip projecting beyond the chin, which is poor and ignoble, the eyes small but not near together ; the whole aspect severe, but not without a sorrowful earnestness and force. . . .

"Four sphinxes belonging to this dynasty, of unique type, were uncovered at San, sculptured with great vigour, though in a style of art

intensely hated by the Egyptians, who never lost the memory of their cruel tyrannies, and loaded them with the most ignominious epithets. Lower Egypt was probably in subjection to these detested foreigners during the greater part of Israel's tarryance in Goshen. Before it was over, the Hyksôs conquerors had been expelled and the native dynasties restored, so that the Pharaoh of the Exodus was a true Egyptian. As the Egyptians were never reconciled to the rule of the shepherd-kings (though the latter quickly imbibed and adopted the civilization of their subjects, just as the Manchu Tartar emperors imbibed the Chinese civilization after they had conquered China), the antipathy between them and their people kept the Hyksôs monarchs in constant fear of revolution, and the presence of such an Asiatic pastoral tribe as that of the Israelites in the land of Goshen would be welcome and regarded as an advantage. *They* were sure to be friendly subjects, on whose sympathy dependence might be placed. There were two kingdoms in Egypt in those days. The grand days of the old twelfth dynasty, in which Abraham visited the land, rich and peaceful, and under one of the later kings of which Joseph acted as beneficent regent,

different from the Egyptian. The heads are surrounded with a hairy fringe, from out of which look the stern features of these Hyksôs monarchs, as full of gnarled strength as the great sphinx of Gizeh is instinct with superhuman serenity. . . . The brows are knit with anxious care, the full but small eyes seem to know no kindly light ; the nose, of fine profile curve, yet broad and squared in form, has its strongly chiselled nostrils depressed in accordance with the saddened lines of the lower cheek. The lips are thick and prominent, but not with the unmeaning fulness of the negro ; quite the opposite. The curve is fine, the 'cupid's bow' perfect which defines so boldly the upper outline ; the channelled and curved upper lip has even an expression of proud sensitiveness, and there is more of sorrow than of fierceness in the down-drawn angles of the mouth.

"I stand astonished," says Dr. Ebers, 'before these outlandish features, which in their rough earnestness form the sharpest contrast to the smiling heads of the Egyptian Colossi.'"—("Life and Times of Abraham," pp. 135-139.)

had passed away. The empire was divided; aliens were in possession of the Delta. The native monarchs, who continued to rule in the upper country, had not for some centuries the power to drive the invaders out, but were indeed seriously threatened by them at times even in their own dominions. Meanwhile, Israel was multiplying and prospering peacefully under the to *them* friendly government, occupying the whole fertile district of Goshen, none making them afraid.

But the Hyksôs dynasty came to an end in the reign of Apepi (or Aphobis). In his later years this monarch attacked the native king of Thebes, engaging in a war in which he was completely defeated. He was pursued by Aahmes (or Amosis), the first king of the eighteenth dynasty, to Lower Egypt, and ultimately expelled from the country with the greater part, though apparently not all, of his people. (There is a tribe still dwelling around Lake Menzaleh, supposed from their countenance and from other indications to be descendants of the Hyksôs.) His *protégés* the Israelites do not seem to have been called to engage in the war; their quiet pastoral pursuits probably disinclined them to take up arms; and thus not having made themselves obnoxious to the conquerors, they did not suffer either extermination or expulsion. The victorious Theban monarch left them in quiet possession of their pastures in Goshen. "But he was emphatically 'a new king'; of him it might be said, 'he arose up over' Egypt; he was, in the true sense of the word, like the Norman William, a conqueror. The name of Joseph, whether as a minister of the ejected dynasty or of one more ancient than that, would probably be unknown to him. Nor can there be any reasonable doubt as to the feelings with which a king in his position must have regarded the Israelites. They were there as the subjects, apparently the favoured subjects, of the expelled dynasty, under whom they retained undisturbed possession of the richest district of

Egypt, commanding the eastern approach to the very heart of the land. The first point that would naturally strike him would be their number (Exod. i. 9), which, after the expulsion of his enemies, would bear an alarming proportion to the native population of the Delta. A prudent man under such circumstances would not be likely to provoke rebellion by proceeding to extremities, but nothing is more probable than that he should do just what Moses tells us the new king actually did—deal with them craftily, prevent their increase, utilise their labour, and cut off all communication with foreigners. The most advantageous employment which would suggest itself would of course be the construction of strongly fortified depositories of provisions and arms near the eastern frontier." This, we learn, was precisely the work to which the Israelites were set, and the ruins of the very treasure-cities and fortresses which they erected under the lash of the taskmaster have recently been discovered. Pithom, in Egyptian Pa-achtum, was built just about this time, and the name means "the fortress of the foreigners or sojourners." It is also well known that during the latter part of his reign, Aahmes was occupied in building and repairing the cities of Northern Egypt. In an inscription lately deciphered, dated in his twenty-second year, certain "Fenchu" are stated to be employed in the transport of blocks of limestone from the quarries of Rufu (the Troja of Strabo) to Memphis and other cities. These Fenchu are unquestionably aliens, either mercenaries or forced labourers. According to Brugsch, the name means "bearers of the shepherd's staff"; and he describes their occupation as precisely corresponding to that of the Israelites.

Their rapid multiplication would in any case have caused the land of Goshen to be too narrow for the Israelites after a time, and they would be forced to scatter among the great towns and cities where they could get employment, and to hire themselves out as labourers in the flourishing country.

The very rapidity of their increase must have caused a certain difficulty in obtaining subsistence, and have driven them to engage in uncongenial occupations and to accept low wages ; so that, even before their heaviest affliction began, their position in Egypt must have become a painful and humiliating one. The Egyptians would dislike them because of their connection with the shepherd-kings, and would treat them probably somewhat as the poor fellaheen are now treated by the Turks—with contempt and injustice, if not with cruelty. As in spite of their hard fate they continued to multiply, the political problem began to look serious. Egypt's dangers always came from the north-east at that time. On all her other borders she was safe, but the Isthmus of Suez was a weak point. Invasions of the Hittites were especially feared, and it was evident in such a case that the Israelites would be likely to throw in their lot with the enemy, or else endeavour in the confusion of war to escape from Egypt altogether. It would be in their power to welcome Hittite invaders to the land of Goshen, and so to give them a position from which they could threaten the important cities of Tanis, Heliopolis, Bubastis, and Memphis. It was natural under these circumstances that the stern and selfish monarch should adopt the course he did—deprive the Israelites of freedom, and impress them into the royal service as forced labourers or slaves, especially as he had at the time an unlimited need of such for the erection of his new fortifications.

Then commenced the most severe sufferings of the period of oppression. To the heavy and unhealthy task of brick-making a portion of the people were assigned ; others to agricultural work, or, as it is called, "service in the field," and this service was made more severe than it need have been, on purpose to break down the people both morally and physically, one great object of the king being to diminish the numbers of the Israelites in the interests of his own safety. Hence we read :—

“And the Egyptians made the children of Israel to serve with rigour: and they made their lives bitter with hard bondage in mortar, and in brick, and in all manner of service in the field: all their service, wherein they made them serve, was with rigour” (Exod. i. 13, 14).

The traveller in Egypt is familiar with the sight of naked peasants working in a burning sun throughout the day, lifting buckets of water from the level of the river for the irrigation of the fields. They seem like mere substitutes for machines; and when this sort of work is done under the lash of the taskmaster, it is easy to conceive the misery inflicted. “It fills the mind with horror to think of the thousands of prisoners of war, or forced labourers and workmen, who must have died under the blows of the drivers, or under the weight of privations and toil too great for human endurance, in raising these innumerable creations.”

Men preferred death to the horrors of slavery. The monuments give us ample evidence of the terrible tyrannies and cruelties by means of which canals were dug, towns were built, and colossal structures erected. War was often undertaken for the mere object of procuring slaves, as still in Central Africa. Even the native population had to suffer, much more the Israelites.¹

¹ “A letter of the period is still extant, which tells how the tax-collector arrives (in his barge) at the wharf of the district, to receive the government share of the crops. His men, armed with clubs, are with him, and his negroes, with batons of palmwood, cry out, ‘Where’s your wheat?’ and there is no way of checking their exactions. If they are not satisfied, they seize the poor wretch, throw him on the ground, bind him, drag him off to the canal at hand, and throw him in, head first, the neighbours running off to take care of their own grain, and leaving the poor creature to his fate. His wife is bound, and she and his children carried off.”

Egypt in all ages has been marked by the oppression of its toiling thousands, and that oppression was probably never more severe than in the days of the Pharaohs who succeeded the shepherd-kings. All the

The over-ruling providence of God, however, caused the Israelites to multiply, in spite even of severe oppression. "The more the Egyptians afflicted them, the more they multiplied and grew, and the Egyptians were grieved because of the people of Israel."¹ Pharaoh then attempted infanticide on a large scale—at first by a crafty endeavour to corrupt the midwives who attended the Jewish mothers; and when this failed, he openly issued a proclamation commanding the drowning in the Nile of the male children, and probably represented it as a sacrifice required by the Nile god. It is not likely that this edict was ever rigorously enforced, but it led to the remarkable incident by which Moses became the son of Pharaoh's daughter.

The court seems to have been residing at the time at Memphis, which was built on the Nile, near the site of the modern Cairo. The child Moses, who according to tradition was singularly beautiful, would, as he grew up there, be surrounded by every luxury. From his character in after-life we cannot doubt, however, that his own mother's influence continued long after the period when as an infant he was placed in her care. Intercourse with her and with his family connections among the Hebrews would naturally be very influential in the formation of his character, and it is to it

details of Hebrew slavery are illustrated by the monuments, and the account in Exodus is strikingly confirmed by existing inscriptions.

"An old writing on the back of a papyrus, apparently of the date of Seti, the founder of the Nineteenth Dynasty, brings vividly before us a picture of the brick-making, which was part of the labours of the Hebrews. 'Twelve masons,' says the writer, 'besides men who are brick-moulders in their towns, have been brought here to work at house-building. *Let them make their number of bricks each day.* They are not to relax their tasks at the new house. It is thus I obey the command given me by my master.' These twelve masons and these brick-makers, thus taken from their own towns to build this house, at a fixed rate of task-work daily, may not have been Hebrews, but their case illustrates exactly the details of Hebrew slavery given in Exodus."—(Geikie's "Hours with the Bible," p. 83.)

¹ Exod. i. 12.

probably that we must attribute the fact that he grew up a worshipper of the true God instead of an idolater. From his mother's lips he learned the traditions of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and his earliest and strongest bias would be towards monotheism. He would also thus early have been brought into sympathy with his own people. Had he become wholly Egyptianized in Pharaoh's court, he would never have won their confidence as he did at a later period.

As a growing lad he would have every possible educational advantage. We are told that he was "learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians," and that wisdom was very considerable at the period, even according to modern notions. The library at Thebes, over whose gate was inscribed, "For the healing of the soul," contained, it is said, twenty thousand books. The principal scene of Moses' education, according to tradition, was the Temple of the Sun at Heliopolis, then the chief university of Egypt.

"Shady cloisters opened into lecture rooms for the students, and quiet houses for the professors and priests, in their many grades and offices; there being room for all in the corridors of the huge pile. Outside these, but still within the precincts, were the cottages of the temple servants, keepers of the sacred beasts, gate-keepers, litter-bearers, water-carriers, washermen, washerwomen, and cooks; and the rooms of the *pastophoroi* who prepared the incense and perfumes. The library and writing chambers had their host of scribes, who all lived in the temple buildings, and there were besides also, as members of this huge population, the officials of the counting-house, troops of singers, and last of all, the noisy multitude of the great temple school—the Eton or Harrow of the time—from which Moses would pass upwards to the lectures of the various faculties of the university."¹

Poetry, astronomy, law, medicine, the philosophy of

¹ Geikie, p. 103.

symbols, composition, trigonometry, mensuration, geometry—all were studied by the highly civilized Egyptians of the period. Astronomy had been cultivated to a considerable extent. Egyptian astronomers were acquainted with the obliquity of the ecliptic, and had determined an exact meridian line. Their knowledge was rather practical than theoretical, however—the result of observation, and not of science, or mathematical inquiry. The practice of law was also taught at Heliopolis, together with medicine. His university course completed, the question came to Moses which must come to every young man sooner or later—the question on which the future of his race hung, What was he going to do with his life? He did not all at once come to the decision which has immortalized him as one of the heroes of faith in the eleventh of Hebrews. He did not “refuse to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter” at three or four and twenty, not indeed until he was forty years of age. How were the intervening years spent? In his position as a “Royal Highness” and a member of Pharaoh’s court, his choice was necessarily limited. Official life, which absorbed an immense number of the upper classes in Egypt, would have been trying to one who was known to belong to the despised Hebrew race; priestly life he could not of course contemplate; literature would have been unsuited to a man of his activity; and ordinary professional or mercantile occupations would have been below his dignity. Tradition is probably right in its assertion that he selected the profession of arms and became a soldier. The Pharaohs were all practical soldiers, and many of them great warriors. Stephen speaks of Moses as having been not only learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, but “mighty in words *and deeds*.”¹ How could he have been the latter save in the career of arms, and by distinguishing himself in war? How could he have marshalled the hosts of Israel as we know he did, without

¹ Acts vii. 22.

some military experience? The probability is that he spent many years in acquiring and exercising the military profession.

Josephus gives a full account of his subsequent conduct as *leader* of an expedition into Ethiopia, which was victorious and successful, and from which he returned with an established reputation. Such success would raise him high in the opinion of Egypt and of Pharaoh, and give him the opportunity, had he wished to embrace it, of securing official appointments which would be practical sinecures, and enable him to lead an easy and honoured life.

It would be at this crisis in his life that Moses had to take *the great decision*. Amid all his personal success and prosperity, he seems never to have forgotten that he was a Hebrew, and he seems moreover to have firmly and heartily believed what he had learned from his mother and his Hebrew friends, rather than what he had learned at Heliopolis and heard in the court circle to which he belonged. His faith showed itself by works. The Hebrews were the people of Jehovah, and they were suffering affliction; he had the honour of being one of the chosen seed of Abraham, and he had influence and power at court. Could he not help them? Might he not devote his life to alleviating their burdens? Any representations he might make would surely meet with attention! He would look into their condition, investigate their grievances, inspect the various districts in which they lived and worked, and try to be of use to his nation. He took this course; "he went out unto his brethren, and looked on their burdens."¹ In doing this, the misery of which he had *heard* no doubt from his family before—the misery which he had perhaps *seen* at a distance, the slavery which he may have contemplated in statistics on paper—became to him for the first time a terrible *reality*. He witnessed the oppression of his brethren, he heard their groans, he saw

¹ Exod. ii. 11.

their tears, he watched the cruel oppressions to which they were subjected, he noted the lash of the taskmaster and the blood of the Hebrews; the iron entered his soul, and his faith, humanity, and piety all prompted him to a momentous and noble resolution. He "refused" to be called any longer the son of Pharaoh's daughter, and chose rather "to suffer affliction with the people of God."

"As an Egyptian, it was evident that he could do nothing. If he remained an Egyptian, if he clung to his court life, if he maintained his position as the adopted son of a princess, he must be content to resign the hope of being ever his brethren's deliverer (Acts vii. 25), or of in any way ameliorating their life. The alternative was for him to cast in his lot with them, to make himself one of them, to ingratiate himself with them, so that they should accept him as their leader, and then, when occasion offered, to put himself at their head, and break the Egyptian yoke from off their shoulders.

"The time had arrived, as it arrives to most of us in the course of our careers on earth, to make the great decision—for God and conscience, or against them. On the one side were all the temptations that the world and the flesh can offer: first, 'the treasures of Egypt' (Heb. xi. 26), not the mere gold and silver that would naturally fall to his lot, if he lived on as prince in the royal palace, but the luxury, the culture, the enjoyments of the court, dainty fare, and grand banquets, and the charms of music, painting, and statuary, and sports and hunting parties, fishing and fowling, the chase of the lion and the antelope, and soft sofas and luxurious couches, and rich apparel, and chain and collars,—proofs of the king's goodwill, and all the outward signs which mark off those on whom society smiles from the crowd of those who are of small account; and, secondly, beyond all these, 'the pleasures of sin for a season' (Heb. xi. 25), the seductive charms of a court circle not over-strict in its

morals, the feasts that turned into orgies, the sacred rites that ended in debauchery,—all these spread their tempting array before the lower nature of the prince, now in manhood's full vigour, and drew him towards the life of ease, of pleasure, of softness. On the other side were conscience, and honour, and natural affection, and patriotism, and that keen longing for the higher and the nobler life which is an essential part of all great natures, and makes itself felt in crises with an irresistible force. The path of self-sacrifice will always attract the heroic portion of humanity, and the choice of such men will always be 'the choice of Hercules.' 'To scorn delights and live laborious days,' is the instinctive resolve of every strong and noble character. . . . He quitted the palace, gave up whatever offices he held, returned probably to his father's house, and therein once more took up his abode, so making it clear to all that he renounced his Egyptian citizenship, and would henceforth only be known as one of the outcast Hebrews, one of the oppressed, down-trodden nation which had for above forty years been suffering the bitterest and most cruel persecution."¹

We may not linger on the incident of the rash and injudicious attempt to which the sight of injustice to one of his brethren aroused Moses. Oppression maketh a wise man mad, and it was in a fit of such temporary madness that he committed the homicide which led to his forty years' exile in Midian. The evil was overruled for good; for that training in Midian was a most essential part of his preparation for the great task that lay before him.

"No region more favourable to the attainments of a lofty conception of the Almighty could have been found. Nature, by the want of water and the poverty of vegetation, is intensely simple, presenting no variety to dissipate and confuse the mind. The grand, sublimely silent mountain world around, with its bold, abrupt masses of granite, greenstone

¹ Rawlinson's "Moses: His Life and Times," pp. 56, 57.

and porphyry, fills the spirit with a solemn earnestness which the wide horizon from most peaks and the wonderful purity of the air tend to heighten. . . . In a city there is no solitude: each is part of a great whole on which he acts, and by which he is himself affected. But the lonely wanderer in a district like Sinai is absolutely isolated from his fellows, and must fill up the void by his own identity. The present retires into the background, and the spirit, waked to intensity of life, finds no limits to its thoughts. In a lofty spiritual nature like that of Moses, the solemn stillness of the mountains and the boundless sweep of the daily and nightly heavens would efface the thought of man, and fill the soul with the majesty of God. As he meditated on the possible deliverance of his people, the lonely vastness would raise him above anxious contrasts of their weakness compared with the power of Egypt, which might have paralysed resolution and bidden hope despair. What was man, whose days were a handbreadth, and whose foundation was in the dust, before the mighty Creator of heaven and earth—the Rock of Israel? . . . His wanderings would make him acquainted with every valley, plain, gorge, hill, and mountain of the whole region; with its population, whether native or that of the Egyptian mines; with every spring and well, and with all the resources of every kind offered by any spot; an education of supreme importance towards fitting him to guide his race, when rescued from Egypt, to the safe shelter and holy sanctuaries of this predestined scene of their long encampment. Still more, in those calm years every problem to be solved in the organization of a people would rise successively in his mind and find its solution; and, above all, his own soul must have been disciplined and purified, by isolation from the world, and closer and more continual communion with God.”¹

Whether, during his forty years in Midian, Moses ever con-

¹ Geikie, pp. 111–114.

templated returning to Egypt as Israel's deliverer, we know not. It seems likely, yet there is no intimation of the fact ; and the call of God, when it came to him, took him apparently by surprise, and found him unprepared and almost unwilling for the work of confronting Pharaoh, and demanding Israel's liberation. Yet he must often have pondered over their miserable position, and probably also over the Abrahamic predictions and prophecies ; and the quiet years of his exile must have been in some respects irksome ones to the active, richly endowed, and highly educated man, accustomed to the court and the camp, and the busy life and refined society of Egypt. An old Egyptian story of a somewhat similar character, that of Saneha, exists still, which ended very differently from that of Moses. This fugitive received hospitality from the chief of Edom, who gave him his daughter to wife. But though Saneha prospered greatly in his exile, and children were born to him, yet he could find no rest away from Egypt. He was miserable. An irresistible longing to return to his native land possessed him, and at last he manages so to do, and is restored to his place in Pharaoh's court.¹

The fact that Moses was the Divinely selected deliverer of Israel shows that he not only had the faith and natural and acquired talents which fitted him for the great work which he accomplished, but that God saw that he had also the *heart* for it—the deep, tender sympathy and compassion which would be needed to save *such* a people from such a position, and the self-sacrificing devotedness which would make him willing to risk his life for their sakes. Though modestly and even reprehensibly reluctant to undertake the great task, Moses was not *unwilling*. The gracious God of Israel saw that only his hope and courage needed strengthening, and promise after promise of eventual success was

¹ This story is assigned to the twelfth or thirteenth dynasty. See 'Records of the Past,' vol. vi. pp. 135-150.

given for the purpose. He was assured that the time was come for the fulfilment of the Abrahamic covenant,¹ as to the deliverance of his people from Egyptian bondage, and that he was privileged to be chosen as the instrument by whose means the Almighty would effect the long-predicted purpose.

“Come now therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth My people the children of Israel out of Egypt.”²

Miracle-working power was committed to him as a credential of his Divine commission, and, thus endowed, he returned to the Nile valley, whence forty years before he had fled for his life.

And now he was to enter on an enterprise so gigantic that it may well have appalled him! What was it? To require and compel a proud, selfish, self-willed, and mighty autocrat—one leading passion of whose life was to be the greatest of Egyptian *builders*—to surrender for ever the hundreds of thousands of slaves by whose forced labours only could the great works he had in hand be completed; it was to induce, moreover, a poor, degraded, spirit-broken horde of slaves to rise and seek, at the risk of their lives, liberty and independence; to lead them with their wives and little ones, their flocks and herds, to forsake the rich and fertile land in which they had dwelt for centuries, and exchange it for a wandering life in the wilderness; and this at the bidding of the God they had well-nigh forgotten, and for the sake of a faith they had forsaken; it was to lead these quiet pastoral people, who had never learned the art of war, to the conquest of Canaan; to recover them from the ignorance and idolatry into which they had sunk to a knowledge of Jehovah, and to train and fit them to take their place as a nation selected to be His witnesses in the world. In order to all this, Moses himself had, in the first place, to break up the home associations of

¹ Gen. xv. 13-16. ² Exod. iii. 10.

forty years, and to return to a land where his life was forfeited. Nothing less than a Divine revelation,—nothing less than the burning bush, and the words which fell upon his ear from amid its sacred flames,—could have nerved the shepherd of Midian to address himself bravely to the task set before him, and to adhere to it with dauntless resolution for forty long years. It was no youthful enthusiasm which sustained this servant of God. He was already eighty years of age when he entered on his life-work.

On his return journey to Egypt he is met by his brother Aaron, from whom he had for forty years been parted. Had they corresponded from time to time through the caravans constantly passing from Sinai to Egypt and back? Had Aaron been seeking to revive Israel's faith in Jehovah, to keep in mind the Abrahamic covenant, and to impress on the minds of the people that the time of the promise drew near? It seems likely—at any rate, he had no difficulty in putting himself in communication with the people. A kind of tribal organization under elders still existed among the Hebrews, even at the lowest point of their social degradation. "Moses and Aaron went and gathered together all the elders of the children of Israel;" and the people believed when they heard that Jehovah had visited Israel, and bowed the head and worshipped.

Then commenced the memorable struggle between the slaves and their oppressors, between the idol-worshipping king and the servants of the true God, ending in the first great national emancipation on record, and in such a vindication of the might and majesty of Jehovah as has never been forgotten from that day to this. It afforded also a lesson of the care of God for His people, and His power to deliver them, which could not be equalled, and which is referred to in all the after-pages of their history. We must not here retrace the thrilling and tragic episodes of the ever-memorable Exodus, but we may say that the Bible account

of it is so full of local colouring and of harmonies with the time at which it occurred, that its exactitude and truthfulness are self-evident.

The Pharaohs, accustomed themselves to be worshipped and regarded as of superhuman power, were likely to resent commands issued as by a superior. But the miracles which accompanied the mission of Moses left their rebellion without excuse. Scripture lays the scene of the plagues in Zoan : "Marvellous things did He in the sight of their fathers, in the land of Egypt, in the field of Zoan. . . . He wrought His signs in Egypt, His wonders in the field of Zoan." Those plagues had a double object : to manifest to Pharaoh and all Egypt the superiority of the true God over all their false deities, His absolute and almighty *power* ; and to teach Israel not this only, but the covenant relation which Jehovah graciously sustained to *them*, the reality of His merciful interference on their behalf, and His *present* purpose to deliver them and lead them to their long-promised inheritance. The plagues were very specially directed against *the idolatry of Egypt*. The first—turning the Nile to blood—was conspicuously so, for eminent among the idols of the land of Ham was its one all-important river. A long and elaborate hymn (as old as the days of Moses) is still preserved, in which this god was praised in the chant. It was the great OSIRIS of Egypt, and the turning of its waters to blood was a public manifestation of the utter folly of the national creature-worship.¹

¹ The first and last verses are as follows :—

"Hail to thee, O Nile !
Thou who hast revealed thyself to this land,
Coming in peace, to give life to Egypt !
Hidden god ! who bringest what is dark to light,
As is always thy delight !

* * * * *

O Nile, hymns are sung to thee on the harp ;
Offerings are made to thee ; oxen are slain to thee ;
Great festivals are kept for thee ; fowls are sacrificed to thee ;

The frog similarly was regarded as a sacred symbol, and formed the head of the great god Ptah. The cow and the ox were, of course, specially sacred—the Apis and Mnevis of Egyptian idolatry. They were, in fact, the chief of the gods; and when the murrain fell on the cattle, the priests must have beheld with consternation their primary deities laid low; and when at last the darkness that might be felt overshadowed the land for three days, the *supreme* Sun-god of Egypt seemed to be struck out by the God of Israel. But all availed not to bow the stubborn will of Pharaoh; his land might be destroyed, and yet the monarch would not yield to his Maker; and thus there came at last the dread catastrophe—the death by pestilence of the firstborn. “From the firstborn of Pharaoh that sat on his throne” (that is, who reigned with him) “unto the firstborn of the captive that was in the dungeon, and all the firstborn of cattle” (including the deified beasts of the temples). The connection of the plague of darkness with the pestilence that followed is remarkable, as something similar has not unfrequently happened in Egypt. The plague at times follows a severe blast of the Chamsin, or sand-storm, which may produce absolute darkness such as that described. Ten thousand men died in one day in 1696. In 1714 it was reckoned three hundred thousand died of the plague in Constantinople. In 2 Samuel xxiv. we read that seventy thousand died of it in Palestine in three days. “Uhlemann strikingly reminds us that all the plagues are connected with the natural peculiarities and phenomena of Egypt, and that they show the narrator’s intimate knowledge of the country. ‘The Almighty hand of God,’ he continues, ‘shows itself, hence, not so much

Incense ascends unto heaven :
 Oxen, bulls, fowls, are burned !
 Mortals, extol him ! and ye cycle of gods !
 His Son (the Pharaoh) is made Lord of all,
 To enlighten all Egypt.
 Shine forth, shine forth, O Nile, shine forth !”

in the wonders themselves, as in their wide reach, their intensity, and the swift succession in which they came, at the Divine command—for, individually, they are *specially characteristic of Egypt, in a certain degree, at all times.*'"¹

That the death of the firstborn *was* occasioned by the plague seems evident from the words in the Psalm, "He gave their life over to the *pestilence*, and smote all the first-born in Egypt, the chief of their strength in the tabernacles of Ham."

"The direct and indirect effects of the plagues were, in fact, equally necessary, humanly speaking, for the accomplishment of that event.

"In the first place, it must be remarked that the delay occasioned by Pharaoh's repeated refusals to listen to the commands afforded ample time for preparation. Two full months elapsed between the first and second interview of Moses with the king (see notes on v. 7, and vii. 17). During that time the people, uprooted for the first time from the district in which they had been settled for centuries, were dispersed throughout Egypt, subjected to severe suffering, and impelled to exertions of a kind differing altogether from their ordinary habits, whether as herdsmen or bondsmen. This was the first, and a most important step in their training for a migratory life in the desert.

"Towards the end of June, at the beginning of the rise of the annual inundation, the first series of plagues began. The Nile was stricken. Egypt was visited in the centre both of its physical existence and of its national superstitions. Pharaoh did not give way, and no intimation as yet was made to the people that permission for their departure would be extorted; but the intervention of their Lord was now certain; the people, on their return wearied and exhausted from the search for stubble, had an interval of suspense. Three months appear to have intervened between this and

¹ Geikie, p. 163.

the next plague. There must have been a movement among all the families of Israel ; as they recapitulated their wrongs and hardships, the sufferings of their officers, and their own position of hopeless antagonism to their oppressors, it is impossible that they should not have looked about them, calculated their numbers and resources, and meditated upon the measures which, under the guidance of a leader of ability and experience, might enable them to effect their escape from Egypt. Five months might not be too much, but were certainly sufficient, to bring the people so far into a state of preparation for departure.

"The plague of frogs followed. It will be shown that it coincided in time with the greatest extension of the inundation in September. Pharaoh then gave the first indication of yielding ; the permission extorted from him, though soon recalled, was not therefore ineffectual. On the one hand, native worship in one of its oldest and strangest forms was attacked ; on the other hand, Moses was not likely to lose any time in transmitting instructions to the people. The first steps may have been then taken towards an orderly marshalling of the people.

"The third plague differed from the preceding in one important point. There was no previous warning. It must have followed soon after that of frogs, early in October. It marks the close of the first series of inflictions, none of them causing great suffering, but quite sufficient on the one hand to make the Egyptians conscious of danger, and to confirm in the Israelites a hope of no remote deliverance.

"The second series of plagues was far more severe ; it began with swarms of poisonous insects, probably immediately after the subsidence of the inundation. It is a season of great importance to Egypt. From that season to the following June the land is uncovered ; cultivation begins ; a great festival (called Chabsta) marks the period for ploughing. At that time there was the first separation between

Goshen and the rest of Egypt. The impression upon Pharaoh was far deeper than before, and then, in November, the people once more received instructions for departure. There was occasion for a rehearsal, so to speak, of the measures requisite for the proper organization of the tribes and families of Israel.

“The cattle plague broke out in December, or at the latest in January. It was thoroughly Egyptian both in season and in character. The exemption of the Israelites was probably attributed by Pharaoh to natural causes; but the care then bestowed by the Israelites upon their cattle, the separation from all sources of contagion, must have materially advanced their preparation for departure.

“Then came the plagues of boils, severe but ineffectual, serving however to make the Egyptians understand that continuance in opposition would be visited on their persons. With this plague the second series ended. It appears to have lasted about three months.

“The hailstorms followed, just when they now occur in Egypt—from the middle of February to the early weeks of March. The time was now drawing near. The Egyptians for the first time show that they are seriously impressed. There was a division among them; many feared the word of the Lord, and took the precautions which, also for the first time, Moses then indicated. This plague drew from Pharaoh the first confession of guilt; and now for the third time, between one and two months before the Exodus, the Israelites receive permission to depart, when formal instructions for preparation were of course given by Moses. The people now felt also for the first time that they might look for support or sympathy among the very servants of Pharaoh.

“The plague of locusts, when the leaves were green, towards the middle of March, was preceded by another warning, the last but one. The conquest over the spirit of Egypt was now complete. All but the king gave way; see x. 7.

Though not so common in Egypt as in adjoining countries the plague occurs there at intervals, and is peculiarly dreaded. Pharaoh once more gives permission to depart ; once more the people are put in an attitude of expectation.

"The ninth plague concludes the third series. Like the third and the sixth, each closing a series, it was preceded by no warning. It was peculiarly Egyptian. Though causing comparatively but little suffering, it was felt most deeply as a menace and precursor of destruction. It took place most probably a very few days before the last and crowning plague, a plague distinct in character from all others, the first and the only one which brought death home to the Egyptians, and accomplished the deliverance of Israel.

"We have thus throughout the characteristics of local colouring, of adaptation to the circumstances of the Israelites, and of repeated announcements followed by repeated postponements, which enabled and indeed compelled the Israelites to complete that organization of their nation, without which their departure might have been, as it has been often represented, a mere disorderly flight."¹

The Exodus may be regarded as the commencement of the national history of Israel. From that point onwards they were a free and independent people. They had passed from Africa back into their own Asia, and they had emerged from the slavery of centuries into independence and liberty. The taint of slavery could not be removed in that generation, and it was not until the next had attained maturity that the conquest of Canaan was attempted. But the old life had passed away, and to Moses was committed the difficult task of training, educating, and organizing into a nation this band of fugitive slaves, who—unlikely as it looked at the time—were yet to be an independent nation for five hundred years under their own kings, and a separate people for 3,500 years, even to this day—the chosen people of God, destined to be

¹ "Speaker's Commentary," vol. i. pp. 241-243.

the channel of the world's redemption. Their long sojourn in Egypt had not been in vain. Not only had they been protected from foes while still a mere tribe and too weak to resist the nations of Canaan, but they had acquired many of the arts of civilization, and when they entered the desert were far more advanced in knowledge and skill than when they first descended into Egypt. They had acquired the knowledge of writing and engraving, and of preparing papyri and skins for documents. The construction of the tabernacle in the wilderness indicates how many of the arts of Egypt they had brought with them—carpentry, metal working, gem engraving and setting, weaving, embroidering, smelting of gold, preparation and dyeing of leather, the making of incense and oil for lights, and many other operations, which had been acquired from their intercourse with the Egyptians, highly skilled as they were in all the arts of life. The wisdom that Moses had gained, his experience of legislation, of the administration of justice, of civil organization and of military matters, were also fruits of the bondage in Egypt; so that one lesson which may be learned from that bitter experience is that contained in the lines—

“ His purposes will ripen fast,
 Unfolding every hour ;
 The bud may have a bitter taste,
 But sweet will be the flower.
 “ Judge not the Lord by feeble sense,
 But trust Him for His grace ;
 Behind a frowning providence
 He hides a smiling face.”

To the wilderness episodes of the song of triumph, the waters of Marah, the wells of Elim, the manna, the water from the smitten rock, the struggle with Amalek, the advice of Jethro as to the organization of Israel, we must not allude,¹

¹ Yet we cannot refrain from citing some lines of a translation of the Sinaitic inscriptions, first made by the Rev. Charles Foster, and recently

but only linger for a moment on the sublime transactions of Sinai ere we pass to the prophetic programme given by Moses.

Israel had learned in measure to know the Lord by all that had happened in Egypt, but only to a slight extent. They had seen His power and experienced His mercy, but their subsequent conduct had shown how slight and superficial was the impression that had been made. God was now to be more fully revealed to them, His will made known, His law given to them. The covenant of promise made with their father Abraham was to be supplemented by a covenant of

authoritatively confirmed by a French savant, M. Lottin de Laval, who carefully investigated the subject for months on the spot, under the auspices of the French Government, and who entertains no doubt that these inscriptions are *of the period of the wilderness wanderings*. Twenty-two letters of the demotic Egyptian alphabet are constantly recurring in these inscriptions, with only a few variant letters. They are cut in hard granite, with tools made for the purpose, on surfaces which had been previously smoothed with much labour, high up on the rocks, so that the workmen must have employed ladders or scaffolding, and been numerous and skilful. These records have been preserved perfectly in the dry atmosphere of Arabia and the wild solitudes of Sinai, unseen and unknown by civilized man for thousands of years, to add another and a most interesting chapter to the testimony of the rocks in this nineteenth century. We quote only a few sentences :—

“The wind blowing, the sea dividing into parts, they pass over. The Hebrews flee through the sea ; the sea is turned into dry land. The waters permitted and dismissed to flow, burst rushing unawares upon the astonished men, congregated from all quarters, banded together to slay treacherously, being lifted up with pride. The leader divideth asunder the sea, its waves roaring. The people enter and pass through the midst of the waters. Moses causeth the people to haste like a fleet-winged she-ostrich, crying aloud ; the cloud shining bright, a mighty army propelled into the Red Sea is gathered into one ; they go jumping and skipping. Journeying through the open channel, taking flight from the face of the enemy. The surge of the sea is divided. The people flee, the tribes descend into the deep. The people enter the waters. The people enter and penetrate through the midst. The people are filled with stupor and perturbation. Jehovah is their keeper and companion.’ Again the inscribed rocks tell of the destruction of the Egyptian army : ‘Their enemies weep for the dead, the virgins are wailing. The sea flowing down overwhelmed them. The waters were let loose to flow again. The

law, to which the nation as such was to be a party. Most sublime and awe-inspiring was the *theophany*, or manifestation of God, which took place on this great occasion, though no *form* which could be made an excuse for the idolatry of graven images, to which men were so desperately prone, was seen. God came down upon Sinai; His glory was visible, His words were audible.

"And mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire: and the smoke thereof

people depart fugitive. A mighty army is submerged in the deep sea, the only way of escape for the congregated people.'

"Pilgrims fugitive through the sea find a place of refuge at Sidr. Lighting upon plain ground, they proceed on their pilgrimage full of terror.' Then we track them by the imperishable waymarks, as they go journeying through the desert: 'The Hebrews pass over the sea into the wide waterless desert, famishing with hunger and thirst. The people make many journeys, they are pilgrims far in the vast wilderness.' The crying of the great multitude for water is continually recorded, as if their terror of perishing by thirst could never be forgotten, nor the miraculous answer to prayer, nor their thankless discontent. 'The people clamour vociferously. The people anger Moses. Swerving from the right way, they thirst for water insatiably. The water flows, gently gushing out of the stony rock. Out of the rock a murmur of abundant waters. Out of the hard stone a springing well. Like the wild asses braying, the Hebrews swallow down enormously and greedily. Greedy of food like infants, they plunge into sin against Jehovah.' The continuity of supply is well confessed: 'The people drink, wending on their way, drinking with prone mouth; Jehovah gives them drink again and again.' Yet they fail to own the God who sustains them: 'The wild ass drinks again and again, drinking copiously in the desert; the people, sore athirst, drink vehemently. They quaff the water-spring without pause, ever drinking. Reprobate beside the gushing well-spring.' The people's gluttony at Kibroth Hattaavah is registered: 'The people have drink to satiety. In crowds they swill. Flesh they strip from the bone, mangling it. Replete with food, they are obstreperous. Surfeited, they cram themselves; clamouring, they vomit. The people are drinking water to repletion. The tribes, weeping for the dead, cry aloud with downcast eyes. The dove mourns, devoured by grief. The hungry ass kicketh: the tempted men, brought to destruction, perish. Apostasy from the faith leads them to the tomb. Devouring flesh rapidly, drinking water greedily. Dancing, shouting, they play.'"—(Rule: "Oriental Records," "Monumental," p. 95.)

ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly. And when the voice of the trumpet sounded long, and waxed louder and louder, Moses spake, and God answered him by a voice. And the Lord came down upon mount Sinai, on the top of the mount : and the Lord called Moses up to the top of the mount ; and Moses went up.”¹

Moses, in recalling this scene in Deuteronomy, emphasizes the point that no similitude was seen : “And ye came near and stood under the mountain ; and the mountain burned with fire unto the midst of heaven, with darkness, clouds, and thick darkness. And the Lord spake unto you out of the midst of the fire : ye heard the voice of the words, *but saw no similitude*, only ye heard a voice ” (Deut. iv. 11, 12).²

Moses was admitted to a nearer and clearer revelation, and God spake to him out of the cloud. The object of this glorious manifestation was twofold : to impress the people with the spirituality, the majesty, and the power of God, and their own close relation to Him, and also to give an everlasting and awful sanction to the law which was then promulgated, and to the covenant under which they were then placed. “A stubborn and ‘stiff-necked’ race like the Hebrews would never have accepted any merely human legislation, or regarded themselves as bound by it a moment longer than suited their own convenience. They had to be convinced that all the laws, all the statutes, all the ordinances

¹ Exod. xix. 18-20.

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“And Moses went up into the mount, and a cloud covered the mount. And the glory of the Lord abode upon mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it six days : and the seventh day He called unto Moses out of the midst of the cloud. And the sight of the glory of the Lord was like devouring fire on the top of the mount *in the eyes of the children of Israel*. And Moses went into the midst of the cloud, and gat him up into the mount : and Moses was in the mount forty days and forty nights” (Exod. xxiv. 15-18). Moreover, Moses’ face shone as a result of the vision.

which Moses gave them were the laws, statutes, and ordinances of *God Himself*. Hence, and hence alone, the enduringness of the law, which was regarded as valid in its entirety for more than fourteen hundred years, and is still held to be obligatory in many if not in most particulars. Never was there a case in which miracle was more justified by its results. Assuming the object to be the creation of a 'peculiar people,' marked out from all the world by a special set of unchanging laws, ordinances, and customs, then the means adopted must be pronounced at once absolutely effectual, and probably the only means by which the result aimed at could have been effected."¹

The Law given on Sinai is seen in its true light only when compared with existing laws and customs prevalent in surrounding nations. Its monotheism was, of course, a vital contrast to the polytheism of Egypt and the Canaanites; while the fact that no image of the Invisible was to be made, cut at the root of all the multiplied idolatries of the ancient world. They were to make no symbol of the sun or moon, as in Egypt, nor of animals, as in Palestine and Assyria.

"To keep holy the Sabbath, ceasing from all work on the seventh day, was a custom already followed from antiquity—perhaps from the days of Adam—but it was now enforced with renewed strictness, as needed to deepen religious feeling, to provide for its constant reinvigoration, and even as a merciful rest for man and beast. That honour should be paid to parents was also of great moment for all ages, but especially when, as yet, morality had no high sanctions, and barbarism largely prevailed. Not a few nations of antiquity were wont to put their aged fathers or mothers to death or to abandon them when helpless. Among ancient races a mother generally stood in an inferior position, and, on the death of her husband, became subject to her eldest son. But it was now commanded that the son, even if he were the

¹ Rawlinson's "Moses : his Life and Times," pp. 147, 148.

death of the father, could honour his mother as he had honoured his father. Human life was little valued in antiquity, for it was soon proclaimed, 'Thou shalt do no murder.' Man was created in the image of God, and therefore his life should be sacred. The old world was poisoned to the core by prevailing unchastity, for even the gods were represented as impure. But the Voice from Sinai commanded, 'Thou shalt not be unchaste.' Property was declared sacred, and theft stamped as a crime, as was also false witness. Nor was only the outward act condemned, for even the thought of evil was denounced in the words, 'Thou shalt not covet.'

"What, in comparison with a moment like this, was the whole record of the Indian, Egyptian, or other nations, however ancient, with all their wisdom or their gigantic creations of temples, pyramids, and colossi? The transaction on Sinai was for all time and for the life beyond."¹

While Moses was still on the mount with God, the wayward people had already fallen back into Egyptian idolatry, and were found worshipping with licentious games and dances a golden calf! The terrible incident brought out two of the grandest features in Moses' character—his *capacity* for stern indignation and terrible severity when occasion required (for on this occasion he sanctioned the judicial execution of three thousand that he might save two or three millions), and his superhuman *love* for the perverse and rebellious children of Israel. He would not accept the Divine offer to be himself made a second Abraham, the father of a new family; nay, he would rather *offer himself a sacrifice* for guilty Israel. Thus he entreated the Lord, "Blot me, I pray Thee, out of Thy book," instead of Israel, if Thou wilt not freely forgive their sin. He was willing to be cut off himself, if only his people might be saved! In no incident of his life does he form so wonderful a type of the One that was to come. His noble, self-sacrificing heart seemed to

¹ Gekie, pp. 269-271.

anticipate in this offer the redemption afterwards to be revealed. If Isaac was a type of the Lamb of God, surely Moses foreshadowed the feelings and the action of the great Substitute, who was of His own free will made a curse for us.

God pardoned the people on the intercession of His servant, and established in their midst the tabernacle, where sacrifice and offering might be a ceremonial and typical means of putting away sin, and so forming a means of approach for sinners. When unbelief excluded the people from an early entrance into Canaan, Jehovah led them about in the wilderness for thirty-eight years longer by the hand of His servant Moses. Their deliverer and law-giver, their friend and intercessor became now their judge, their prophet, their teacher, and he reigned as king in Jeshurun. Not until he had conducted them to the very verge of Canaan, not until from the summit of Nebo he had gazed on the long-promised inheritance, did this great servant of God, who was faithful in all his house, resign his charge to younger hands, and die there in the land of Moab at a hundred and twenty years of age, his eye not dim nor his natural force abated.

How suitable that to this remarkable man in the closing days of his eventful life, and at the most critical juncture in Israel's history, should be granted a *fresh foreview of the future*. Moses stands at the close of the patriarchal dispensation, and at the opening of Jewish national history. From Adam to Moses there was no law. With Moses the dispensation of law had commenced; the seed of Abraham to whom the inheritance had been given by promise, grown into a nation and organized into a theocracy, *were placed under the covenant of law*, and their blessings made *conditional* on their obedience. How would this new dispensation issue? What would be the character and conduct of the nation thus organized? Privileged as no people had ever been before them, chosen of God to be a favoured nation, His own peculiar people, beloved for the fathers' sake, having the adoption, and the glory, and

the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises, would Israel be an exception in the earth, a holy nation, showing forth the praises of the God who had called them out of the darkness of surrounding and universal idolatry into His marvellous light? Would they keep the law they had promised to obey? would they be true to their solemn pledge—"All these things will we do and be obedient"? Would the light just kindled amid the darkness of degrading idolatries burn on through succeeding ages, and shed a steady lustre around in a benighted world, or would it be extinguished? Would Israel prove worthy of the noble mission of being God's witness on earth?

Such must have been the questions weighing on the heart of Moses, as he prepared to resign the charge of the nation over whose birth and infancy he had presided. He must have longed, yet almost trembled to take a look into futurity; trembled, for the past was not encouraging. Already the children of Israel had proved themselves "a perverse and crooked generation." How oft had they provoked God in the wilderness, and grieved Him in the desert! Yea, they turned back, and tempted God, and limited the Holy One of Israel. But for forty years Moses had taught them and expostulated with them, warned and encouraged them; with true paternal love, he had pleaded with them, and set before them the results of fidelity to God, and of unfaithfulness. Un-speakably terrible were the curses that he told them would overtake them if they brake God's covenant; just as exceedingly great and varied were the blessings attached to an observance of it. Israel had moreover seen both the goodness and severity of God exhibited in action during their desert wanderings. Had they taken the lesson to heart? Would they be wise?

With what yearning anxiety the leader of Israel must have peered into that page of future history which God unrolled to his gaze! And ah, how his heart must have sunk as he

read its dark prophetic records! "The Lord said unto Moses, Behold, thy days approach that thou must die: call Joshua, and present yourselves in the tabernacle of the congregation, that I may give him a charge. And Moses and Joshua went, and presented themselves in the tabernacle of the congregation. And Jehovah appeared in the pillar of a cloud; and Jehovah said unto Moses, Behold, thou shalt sleep with thy fathers; and this people will rise up, and go after the gods of the strangers of the land, whither they go to be among them: they will forsake Me, and break My covenant which I have made with them. Then My anger shall be kindled against them in that day, and I will forsake them, and will hide My face from them, and they shall be devoured, and many evils and troubles shall befall them. . . . For when I shall have brought them into the land which I swear unto their fathers, that floweth with milk and honey; and they shall have eaten and filled themselves, and waxen fat; then will they turn unto other gods, and serve them, and provoke Me, and break My covenant." God then commanded Moses to write the song contained in Deut. xxxiii., that it might testify against Israel as a witness, and predicted that it should never be forgotten out of the mouth of the seed of Israel. This was the revelation made by God to Moses, who in his turn disclosed the same dark future to Israel. "Gather unto me all the elders of your tribes, and your officers," said he, "that I may speak these words in their ears, and call heaven and earth to record against them. For I know that after my death ye will utterly corrupt yourselves, and turn aside from the way which I have commanded you; and evil will befall you in the latter days; because ye will do evil in the sight of the Lord, to provoke Him to anger through the work of your hands" (Deut. xxxi.).

Most sad and sorrowful is the Mosaic prediction of Israel's apostasy, and terrible the prophecy of the judgments which would follow. Two long chapters, Leviticus xxvi. and Deut.

emphatically brought from afar ; for not only was Rome itself and Italy and all Europe "far" in the estimation of Moses, but even in much later ages it was so regarded in Palestine. Moreover, Vespasian and Adrian, the two greatest conquerors and destroyers of the Jews, both went to their work in Judea from commanding here in Britain. Their movements, like all the Roman conquests, were swift, like those of eagles ; and their standards bore, as is well known, the device of an eagle. Their character and conduct was proverbially fierce and cruel ; Josephus describes their merciless barbarity in graphic terms, and says they spared neither age nor sex, but slew old men and young infants, mothers and children alike.

"He shall besiege thee in all thy gates, until thy high and fenced walls come down, wherein thou trustedst, in all thy land." The sieges of Jewish cities were many and sore. Shalmanezzer besieged Samaria for three years ; Sennacherib came up against all the fenced cities of Judah and took them ; Nebuchadnezzar besieged Jerusalem and built forts against it, reduced it to the utmost extremity of famine, destroyed the city, broke down its walls and burnt its temple. This was but the first of a series of sieges of Jerusalem, which, strongly placed and well fortified, was always tempted to trust in the strength of its defences, and stand a siege rather than open its gates to a conqueror. But in spite of its strength it was taken, after sieges more or less prolonged, by Shishak king of Egypt, by Nebuchadnezzar, by Antiochus Epiphanes, by Pompey, by Sosius, and by Herod, before its final unparalleled siege and sack by Titus in A.D. 70.

One of the most terrible touches in the sketch of the sufferings that should overtake rebellious Israel is the description of *the famines* that would result from these sieges, and especially from the Roman siege. It occupies five verses, which are almost too horrible to quote, but it may

and sold for slaves to their old enemies. After the fall of Jerusalem the markets of the Roman empire were glutted with Jewish slaves, and multitudes of these were sent into Egypt. Josephus states that captives above seventeen Titus sent bound to the works in Egypt, while those under seventeen were sold ; but so little care was taken of them that thousands perished for want. After the last Jewish war Adrian adopted the same expedient ; for Jerome says of the captives, that many thousands were sold, and those who could not be sold were transported into Egypt, and either perished by shipwreck or famine or were massacred by the inhabitants.

But the most distinctive points of the prophecy remain. Wars and sieges, defeats and captivities are the common lot of nations in a state of decadence, but their complete overthrow leaves them generally a more or less subject race in their own land. Such was not the fate predicted for Israel, such has not been their history.

It was foretold—first, that they should be "*plucked off their own land*"; secondly, that they should be *removed into all the kingdoms of the earth, scattered among all people* from one end of the earth to the other ; and thirdly, that *in* their dispersion they should still maintain *their distinct nationality*.

Sad and singular fate, yet how notoriously has it befallen the Jewish people. Were they not deported into Assyria and Media and Babylonia, carried captive again and again by Tiglath Pileser and Esarhaddon, and Nebuchadnezzar and Nebuzaradan ? All these plucked them off their land to some extent, and scattered their captives far and wide over the East. But this strange doom in its fullest extent overtook them only after they had filled up the measure of their iniquity by rejecting Christ. It was the Romans who at last plucked them completely off their land, not at the time of the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus,—for crushing as was that blow, it did not drive the Jews out of Palestine,—

ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly. And when the voice of the trumpet sounded long, and waxed louder and louder, Moses spake, and God answered him by a voice. And the Lord came down upon mount Sinai, on the top of the mount: and the Lord called Moses up to the top of the mount; and Moses went up.”¹

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Such must have been the questions weighing on the heart of Moses, as he prepared to resign the charge of the nation over whose birth and infancy he had presided. He must have longed, yet almost trembled to take a look into futurity; trembled, for the past was not encouraging. Already the children of Israel had proved themselves "a perverse and crooked generation." How oft had they provoked God in the wilderness, and grieved Him in the desert! Yea, they turned back, and tempted God, and limited the Holy One of Israel. But for forty years Moses had taught them and expostulated with them, warned and encouraged them; with true paternal love, he had pleaded with them, and set before them the results of fidelity to God, and of unfaithfulness. Unspeakably terrible were the curses that he told them would overtake them if they brake God's covenant; just as exceedingly great and varied were the blessings attached to an observance of it. Israel had moreover seen both the goodness and severity of God exhibited in action during their desert wanderings. Had they taken the lesson to heart? Would they be wise?

With what yearning anxiety the leader of Israel must have peered into that page of future history which God unrolled to his gaze! And ah, how his heart must have sunk as he

read its dark prophetic records! "The Lord said unto Moses, Behold, thy days approach that thou must die: call Joshua, and present yourselves in the tabernacle of the congregation, that I may give him a charge. And Moses and Joshua went, and presented themselves in the tabernacle of the congregation. And Jehovah appeared in the pillar of a cloud; and Jehovah said unto Moses, Behold, thou shalt sleep with thy fathers; and this people will rise up, and go after the gods of the strangers of the land, whither they go to be among them: they will forsake Me, and break My covenant which I have made with them. Then My anger shall be kindled against them in that day, and I will forsake them, and will hide My face from them, and they shall be devoured, and many evils and troubles shall befall them. . . . For when I shall have brought them into the land which I swore unto their fathers, that floweth with milk and honey; and they shall have eaten and filled themselves, and waxen fat; then will they turn unto other gods, and serve them, and provoke Me, and break My covenant." God then commanded Moses to write the song contained in Deut. xxxiii., that it might testify against Israel as a witness, and predicted that it should never be forgotten out of the mouth of the seed of Israel. This was the revelation made by God to Moses, who in his turn disclosed the same dark future to Israel. "Gather unto me all the elders of your tribes, and your officers," said he, "that I may speak these words in their ears, and call heaven and earth to record against them. For I know that after my death ye will utterly corrupt yourselves, and turn aside from the way which I have commanded you; and evil will befall you in the latter days; because ye will do evil in the sight of the Lord, to provoke Him to anger through the work of your hands" (Deut. xxxi.).

Most sad and sorrowful is the Mosaic prediction of Israel's apostasy, and terrible the prophecy of the judgments which would follow. Two long chapters, Leviticus xxvi. and Deut.

xxviii., are filled with these dark forecasts of Israel's future. The first describes the sevenfold wrath to be poured out upon Israel for their sins. "I will make your cities waste, and bring your sanctuaries into desolation ; I will scatter you among the heathen, and will draw out a sword after you ; ye shall perish among the heathen, and the land of your enemies shall eat you up." The second gives a still more detailed description of the chastisements that would fall upon them : they should be "oppressed and crushed away," "besieged in all their cities," reduced to the most fearful extremities of famine, carried captive, "plucked off the land" they were then about to inherit, scattered from one end of the earth even to the other, reduced to a few in number from having been as the stars of heaven for multitude ; they should be brought into Egypt again by ships and sold for bondmen and bondwomen to their old enemies the Egyptians ; and that even in the nations amid which they would be scattered, they would find no ease, no rest to the soles of their feet.

The general correspondence of the predictions of these most remarkable prophecies, with the general outline of the history of the Jewish nation, is too close not to strike every one who is in any measure acquainted with the subject. But a careful attention to certain definite predictions selected from the mass, and a comparison of them with the statements of historians of subsequent ages, will greatly enhance our conception of the Divine foreknowledge to which these prophecies, written 3,500 years ago, bear witness.

"The Lord shall bring a swift nation against thee from afar, from the end of the earth, as swift as the eagle flieth ; a nation whose tongue thou shalt not understand ; a nation of fierce countenance, which shall not regard the person of the old, nor show favour to the young."

The power under which Jerusalem fell at last, fifteen hundred years after these words were uttered, was that of the Roman empire. The Roman conquerors of Judea were

emphatically brought from afar ; for not only was Rome itself and Italy and all Europe "far" in the estimation of Moses, but even in much later ages it was so regarded in Palestine. Moreover, Vespasian and Adrian, the two greatest conquerors and destroyers of the Jews, both went to their work in Judea from commanding here in Britain. Their movements, like all the Roman conquests, were swift, like those of eagles ; and their standards bore, as is well known, the device of an eagle. Their character and conduct was proverbially fierce and cruel ; Josephus describes their merciless barbarity in graphic terms, and says they spared neither age nor sex, but slew old men and young infants, mothers and children alike.

"He shall besiege thee in all thy gates, until thy high and fenced walls come down, wherein thou trustedst, in all thy land." The sieges of Jewish cities were many and sore. Shalmanezzer besieged Samaria for three years ; Sennacherib came up against all the fenced cities of Judah and took them ; Nebuchadnezzar besieged Jerusalem and built forts against it, reduced it to the utmost extremity of famine, destroyed the city, broke down its walls and burnt its temple. This was but the first of a series of sieges of Jerusalem, which, strongly placed and well fortified, was always tempted to trust in the strength of its defences, and stand a siege rather than open its gates to a conqueror. But in spite of its strength it was taken, after sieges more or less prolonged, by Shishak king of Egypt, by Nebuchadnezzar, by Antiochus Epiphanes, by Pompey, by Sosius, and by Herod, before its final unparalleled siege and sack by Titus in A.D. 70.

One of the most terrible touches in the sketch of the sufferings that should overtake rebellious Israel is the description of *the famines* that would result from these sieges, and especially from the Roman siege. It occupies five verses, which are almost too horrible to quote, but it may

be matched by passages which narrate what actually happened on various occasions in Israel. The terrible story of the mothers who agreed to boil and eat their children, describes (2 Kings vi. 28) an incident which occurred when the king of Syria besieged Samaria eight hundred years after the date of the prophecy we are considering. Jeremiah laments over similar cases at the time of the siege by Nebuchadnezzar, which was nine hundred years after the time of Moses ; and Josephus, the graphic historian of the Titus siege, tells of similar ones with terrible distinctness of detail. He tells of a rich and noble lady who had been plundered of her all by the tyrants and soldiers, who was driven at last to cook her own child for food, and who, when she had boiled and eaten half, covered and concealed the rest for another time, thus recalling the words about "the tender and delicate woman" eating her children "secretly in the siege and in the straitness."

Moses also predicts that very large numbers of the Israelites should be destroyed by their enemies, so that their remarkable tendency to rapid increase should be more than counter-balanced, and they should be *left few in number*. Josephus reckons that in the Titus siege 1,100,000 persons perished in Jerusalem and Judea alone. No nation on earth has undergone so many cruel massacres and persecutions. All through Jewish history they recur so frequently that it is clear that the nation would long ago and many a time over have been exterminated, but for the unchanging promise given to them of a numerous posterity even to the most distant ages.

The prophecy also asserts that conquests foretold should result among other things in *the enslavement* of a large number of Israelites, and that especially in Egypt, the land out of which they had so lately been triumphantly set free. The very people to accomplish whose Exodus the sea itself had been dried up should be carried back to Egypt in ships

and sold for slaves to their old enemies. After the fall of Jerusalem the markets of the Roman empire were glutted with Jewish slaves, and multitudes of these were sent into Egypt. Josephus states that captives above seventeen Titus sent bound to the works in Egypt, while those under seventeen were sold ; but so little care was taken of them that thousands perished for want. After the last Jewish war Adrian adopted the same expedient ; for Jerome says of the captives, that many thousands were sold, and those who could not be sold were transported into Egypt, and either perished by shipwreck or famine or were massacred by the inhabitants.

But the most distinctive points of the prophecy remain. Wars and sieges, defeats and captivities are the common lot of nations in a state of decadence, but their complete overthrow leaves them generally a more or less subject race in their own land. Such was not the fate predicted for Israel, such has not been their history.

It was foretold—first, that they should be "*plucked off their own land*"; secondly, that they should be *removed into all the kingdoms of the earth, scattered among all people* from one end of the earth to the other ; and thirdly, that *in* their dispersion they should still maintain *their distinct nationality*.

Sad and singular fate, yet how notoriously has it befallen the Jewish people. Were they not deported into Assyria and Media and Babylonia, carried captive again and again by Tiglath Pileser and Esarhaddon, and Nebuchadnezzar and Nebuzaradan ? All these plucked them off their land to some extent, and scattered their captives far and wide over the East. But this strange doom in its fullest extent overtook them only after they had filled up the measure of their iniquity by rejecting Christ. It was the Romans who at last plucked them completely off their land, not at the time of the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus,—for crushing as was that blow, it did not drive the Jews out of Palestine,—

but sixty-five years later, at the close of the last Jewish war. Adrian made the whole country a desolation, *expelled all Jews from it*, and forbade them on pain of death to return, or even to visit Jerusalem. He endeavoured to wipe out even the memory of Zion by calling the city which he built on the site of Jerusalem, Elia Capitolina; he slaughtered 580,000 Jews in the course of three or four years, sold thousands more into slavery at the lowest prices, and cleared the country *completely* of its Jewish inhabitants. For many a long century afterwards, Assyrians, Romans, Greeks, Arabians, Turks, and others might freely occupy the soil and the cities of Palestine, but for Jews it afforded no home. Even so late as the twelfth century, when Benjamin of Tudela, a Spanish Jew who travelled far and wide to look after his people, visited the country, he found in Jerusalem only a couple of hundred Jews living together under David's tower, and occupied as wool dyers, poor despised aliens in their own land. In Galilee he found scarcely any Jews at all, and elsewhere two in one city, twenty in another, and so on.

It is nearly eighteen hundred years since the seed of Abraham were thus "plucked off" the land of promise. They are returning to it *now* in considerable numbers, and will probably ere long do so much more rapidly and on a far larger scale; for their restoration to their land is as clearly foretold as their expulsion from it. But the fact of their long dispersion remains, inscribed prominently on the pages of history. Moses announced, 3,500 years ago, that the Jewish nation *should* be plucked off the land given to their fathers; by the mighty power of Rome they *were* so plucked off, and for eighteen centuries *they have continued so*.

Nor is this all. The Jews might have been plucked off their own land and transplanted to some other, as of old to Babylon. But their peculiar doom was to be scattered in *all* lands from one end of heaven to the other, and this

doom has notoriously overtaken them. It has come to pass through the operation of a variety of second causes; partly through their own enterprise and commercial and financial talent, partly through the cruelty of the Gentiles towards them, and partly from other influences. But varied causes have only worked together to bring about the result long since announced by God, the universal dispersion of the Jewish people throughout the world. What land is without representatives of the house of Israel? We speak of Russian Jews, Polish Jews, German Jews, Dutch Jews, Italian Jews, English Jews, Spanish Jews, etc.; and we know that there is scarcely a large city in Europe, Asia, Africa, or America, that has not its Jewish residents. Dr. Keith says truly: "There is not a country on the face of the earth where the Jews are unknown. They are found alike in Europe, Asia, Africa, and America. They are citizens of the world without a country. Neither mountains nor rivers nor deserts nor oceans, which are the boundaries of other nations, have terminated their wanderings. They abound in Poland, in Russia, in Holland, and in Turkey; in Germany, Spain, Italy, France, and Britain they are more thinly scattered. In Persia, China, and India they are few in number among the heathen. They have trodden the snows of Siberia and the sand of the burning desert, and the European traveller hears of their existence in regions which he cannot reach, even in the very interior of Africa south of Timbuctoo. From Moscow to Lisbon, from Japan to Britain, from Borneo to Archangel, from Hindostan to Honduras, no inhabitant of any nation upon earth would be known in all the intervening regions, but *a Jew alone*."

There is a peculiar race of Jews in India called the "Beni Israel," and there are Jews in China who appear to have settled there since the time of Ezra. There is nothing in the entire history of the human family *at all parallel* to the dispersion of the Jewish race.

The condition and experiences of the people during their dispersion is another point on which the remarkable prophecy of Moses enlarged. It was not to be the ordinary condition of exiles—a sad but calm, quiet, hopeless existence, which, if free from most of the joys of life, is also free from many of the cares and anxieties. No! Israel in their dispersion were to find *no rest in any land, no ease, no peace*; “trembling of heart,” perpetual fear and anxiety, “failing of eyes, and sorrow of mind,” would be their lot; their life should hang in doubt before them, and they should fear day and night, and have “no assurance” (Deut. xxxiii. 65). Their property should be “violently taken away before their faces, and not restored”; their sons and daughters should be given to other people; they should be oppressed and crushed alway, and driven almost to desperation by injustice and cruelty (verses 30–34).

History, both ancient and modern, bears abundant and painful witness to the correctness of this part of the foreview of Moses. Banishment and confiscation of property have been inflicted on the Jews times without number, and by almost every nation in which they have dwelt in any considerable numbers. We read in Acts xviii. 2, that the Roman emperor Claudius commanded all Jews to depart from Rome, even *before* their national dispersion. But from *that* time onward (with a brief respite during the persecutions of the Christians by the pagan emperors of Rome), the Jews were *everywhere* for more than a thousand years at intervals not only cruelly oppressed and persecuted, but perpetually exiled afresh. They were banished at one time or other from almost every country in Europe. Henry the Second, Edward the First, and other monarchs banished them from England; Charles the Sixth from France (for the seventh time), Ferdinand and Isabella drove 800,000 of them out of Spain, and Emanuel in 1479 banished the refugees from Portugal. Their children have been by law taken from them to be

educated in another faith, their property has been ruthlessly confiscated times without number, and they have themselves been tortured and imprisoned to make them give up their gold ; they have been fined and fleeced of their dearly prized treasures, cruelly used and oppressed, insulted and ill-treated, and very often ruthlessly massacred. The council of Vannes, A.D. 465, forbade Christians to eat with Jews ; that of Beziers, A.D. 1246, prohibited the employing of a Jewish physician. At Toulouse, even as late as the thirteenth century, a Jew was compelled to receive every Easter a blow on the face before the doors of the principal church. It would require an entire volume to rehearse in order and in detail their sufferings in their long exile.

Nor were they to be only oppressed, but *disliked* and *despised*. They were to become "an astonishment, a proverb, and a byword" among all nations. Has not this been so ? Do we not still use the name as a synonym for much that is odious when we speak of a person as "a regular Jew" ? Are not avarice, heartlessness, cunning, lying, craftiness, and double-dealing associated in most minds with the name ? Christianity in its purity and power destroys prejudice, but in the dark ages of Popish corruption it seemed as if Mohammedans, heathen, and Christians could agree in nothing save *in vilifying, abusing, and persecuting the Jews*. They were compelled to live by themselves in separate quarters of cities and towns, and were treated as reprobate and repulsive outcasts ; they were sometimes feared, sometimes despised, always disliked and misrepresented. Shakespeare's character of Shylock may be taken as a specimen of the popular notion of a Jew in his days, and Dickens has given a modern sketch in his "Fagin."

But perhaps the most remarkable point in the long and complex prediction of Israel's fate given by Moses is that mentioned in Leviticus xxvi. 44. They would fall back into the sins and idolatries of the Gentile nations of the earth ;

they would in consequence and as a judgment be scattered among those Gentile nations, and their "plagues would be wonderful, even great plagues and of long continuance," but notwithstanding this they would be *preserved* in their dispersion *as a distinct people*; God would remember on their behalf His covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; He would not cast them away, nor abhor them, nor destroy them utterly, but would remember both the people and the land. In the midst of the long and sore judgment which God would send on them, He would still remember mercy; and the seed of Abraham, though sorely punished, should be *preserved* for ultimate blessing. The existence of the Jews as *a distinct nation* in the world, after eighteen centuries of dispersion among all nations, is *the standing miracle of history*. They have suffered enough to destroy a nation a hundred times over, yet they are still preserved and now flourishing exceedingly all over Europe, Asia, and America. At this day they are a numerous, influential, rich, and cultivated people. After the wars, battles, and sieges, the famines, pestilences, and judgments, the massacres, spoliations, and oppressions of three thousand years—like the bush which burned with fire and was not consumed—they still exist, and exist as a separate, distinct, and peculiar people—a nation without a land, a people without a home. Their plagues have truly been great, wonderful, and of *long continuance*. They have never been free and independent in their own land since the days of Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonish captivity, now 2,500 years ago. After the restoration from Babylon a portion of the tribes enjoyed, it is true, a few centuries of comparative independence and restored national existence up to the coming of Messiah the Prince. But their rejection of Him brought on the final stage of their long tribulation, which has already lasted for eighteen centuries. Moses *foretold all this*, and he foretold, also, hope in the latter end. Dirge-like in its mournfulness, storm-like in its wild terrible-

ness is the divinely inspired "song" which he taught to the children of Israel; but it closes with words of peaceful hope, and with a bright glimpse, not only of Israel's yet future restoration, but of the call of the Gentiles to share it. "Rejoice, O ye nations, with His people: for He will avenge the blood of His servants, and will render vengeance to His adversaries, and will be merciful unto His land, and to His people." ¹

"They and they only amongst all mankind
Received the transcript of the Eternal Mind,
Were trusted with His own engraven laws,
And constituted guardians of His cause.
Theirs were the prophets, theirs the priestly call,
And theirs by birth the Saviour of us all.

Their glory faded and their race dispersed,
The last of nations now, though once the first;
They warn, and teach the proudest, would they learn
Keep wisdom, or meet vengeance in your turn!
If *we* escaped not, if Heaven spared not us,
Peeled, scattered, and exterminated thus;—
If vice received her retribution due,
When *we* were visited, what hope for *you*?

Tribes of the wandering foot and weary breast,
How shall ye flee away and be at rest?
The wild dove hath her nest, the fox his cave,
Mankind their country, Israel but the grave!"

Nor must we omit from this brief glance at the programme of the future of Israel under the law given by Moses, one remarkable MESSIANIC prediction which stands out prominently on the pages of Deuteronomy: "*A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren like unto me,*" said the great lawgiver and mediator of Israel. He was urging the people never to resort to necromancy and divination, familiar spirits or wizards, superstitious vices common among the Canaanites whose land they were going to possess; and he enforces the prohibition by this promise, as though he

¹ Deut. xxxii. 43.

would say, You shall not need to resort to such means of ascertaining the mind of God, for He will give you another mediator and legislator like myself. He tells them that he had received this promise from God Himself at the time of the giving of the law forty years before, at Sinai. The terrified people had exclaimed, "Speak thou with us, and we will hear ; but let not God speak with us, lest we die." They had realized their need of a human mediator, "in the days of the assembly in Horeb ;" and God had responded to their desire by saying to Moses, "They have well spoken. I will raise up unto them a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put words in His mouth ; and He shall speak unto them all that I command Him. And whosoever will not hearken unto My words which He shall speak in My name, I will require it of him."

Now God raised up many prophets in Israel in after-years, but of them all we may say, "there arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses." So fully were the Jews in Christ's day convinced that the promised prophet had never yet appeared, that they naturally put the question to John, "Art thou that prophet?" alluding to this very prediction. When subsequently they eat of the food miraculously provided by Christ for the five thousand, the thought was again suggested to them by the remembrance of the manna sent through Moses, and the people exclaim, "This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world."

The rich depth of meaning that lies concealed in those words, "like unto me," was little understood by Moses, and is often little perceived among ourselves through deficient meditation. The following are some of the points that should be noted in the resemblance. Moses was saved from death in his infancy ; so was Christ. Moses fled his country to escape the wrath of the king ; Christ was taken into Egypt for the same purpose. Afterwards the Lord said to Moses in Midian, "Go, return ;" as the angel said to Joseph, "Arise,

and take the young child, and go back into the land of Israel, for they are dead which sought the young child's life." Moses refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, though it might have led to his being a king; Christ refused to be made a king, choosing rather to suffer affliction and death for the sake of His people. Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians. Josephus says he was a forward youth, and had wisdom and knowledge beyond his years. Christ increased in wisdom and stature, and favour with God and man, as His discourse in the temple with the doctors when twelve years old proved. Moses contended with the magicians of Egypt, who were forced to acknowledge that he exercised Divine power; Christ also contended with and cast out evil spirits, who similarly acknowledged His Divine power. Moses was a lawgiver, a prophet, a worker of miracles, and a priest; Christ was still more illustriously all these. Moses brought darkness over the land; and the sun veiled His face when Christ died. The darkness in Egypt was followed by the destruction of the firstborn, and of Pharaoh and his host; so the darkness at Christ's death was a forerunner of the destruction of the Jews. Moses foretold the calamities which would befall the nation for their disobedience; so also did Christ. The spirit which was in Moses was conferred in some degree upon the seventy elders, and they prophesied; Christ conferred miraculous powers upon His seventy disciples. Moses was victorious over powerful kings and great nations; so was Christ in the spread of His faith, and the conversion soon after His death of the Roman empire to His religion. Moses conquered Amalek by holding up his hands and praying for Israel; Christ overcame His and our enemies when His hands were fastened to the cross. Moses interceded for transgressors, caused an atonement to be made for them, and stopped the wrath of God; so did Christ. Moses ratified a covenant between God and the people by

sprinkling them with blood ; Christ with His own blood. Moses desired to die for the people, and prayed God either to forgive them or blot him out of His book ; Christ did more,—He died for sinners. Moses slew the paschal lamb, none of whose bones were broken, and whose blood protected the people from destruction ; “Christ our passover was sacrificed for us,” the true Paschal Lamb offered Himself. Moses lifted up the serpent of brass, that they who looked upon it might be healed of their mortal wounds ; Christ said, “I, if I be lifted up (on the cross), will draw all men unto Me.” All the love and care of Moses for Israel, all his toils and sufferings on their account were repaid with ingratitude, murmuring, and rebellion ; the same return was made to Christ. Miriam and Aaron spake against Moses ; and as to Christ we read, “neither did His brethren believe on Him.” Moses had a wicked and perverse generation committed to his care ; miraculous powers were given him to rule them, and he did his utmost to make them obedient to God, and to save them from ruin, but it was all in vain ; in the course of forty years they all perished in the wilderness, save Caleb and Joshua. Christ was given to a similar generation, His doctrine and His miracles were alike lost on them, and in about the same space of time after they had rejected Him they were all destroyed in the Roman war. Moses was very meek, above all men that were on the face of the earth. Christ said, “Learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest to your souls.” Israel did not enter the land of promise till Moses was dead ; and it is the death of Christ which has opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers.

There is also a resemblance in some points between the death of Moses and the death of Christ, though imperfect, and associated with contrasts. Moses died in some sense because of the iniquities of the people ; it was their rebellion which led to the fault on his part which drew down the

displeasure of God on them and on him. He went up in the sight of the people to the top of Mount Nebo, and there he died, when he was in perfect vigour, his eye not dim or his natural force abated. Christ suffered for the sins of men, and was led up to Calvary in the presence of the people, in the flower of His age and in His full natural strength. Moses was buried, and no man knew where his body lay; nor could the Jews find the body of Christ. Just before his death Moses promised the people another prophet like himself; Christ promised "another comforter."

Eusebius long ago noted many particulars of the resemblance between Moses and Christ. He says: "Moses was the first to rescue the Jewish nation from Egyptian superstition and idolatry, and to teach them the true theology. Jesus was the first teacher of truth and holiness to the Gentiles. Moses confirmed his teachings by miracles; so likewise did Christ. Moses promised a happy life in the Holy Land to those who kept the law; and Christ a better country—that is, a heavenly—to all righteous souls. Moses fasted forty days, and so likewise did Christ. Moses gave the people bread in the wilderness; and our Saviour fed five thousand at one time, and four thousand at another with a few loaves. Moses went himself and led the people through the midst of the sea; and Christ walked on the water, and enabled Peter to do the same. Moses stretched out his rod, and the Lord caused the sea to go backward; our Saviour rebuked the wind and the sea, and there was a great calm. Moses' face shone when he descended from the Mount; our Saviour's shone like the sun in His transfiguration. Moses by his prayers cured Miriam of her leprosy; Christ with a word healed several lepers. Moses appointed seventy rulers, and our Saviour seventy disciples. Moses sent out twelve men to spy the land; our Saviour twelve apostles to visit all nations."

Never was there a prophet so like unto Moses as Jesus

Christ! Isaiah wrought no miracle; Jeremiah promulgated no new law; Daniel instituted no new system of worship. We may search over the sacred and profane historical portrait galleries of the past, during the fifteen hundred years that elapsed between the appearance of these two great deliverers in Israel, but not till we come to the Prophet of Nazareth do we meet with the predicted "like unto me." And it should be noted that the emphatic "Him shall ye hear" of Moses is rendered by Peter in the third of Acts, "Every soul that will not hear that prophet shall be destroyed from among the people." *This settles the question that it was of Christ that Moses spoke.* Previous generations had rejected previous prophets without perishing in consequence. But the generation that rejected Jesus were, according to His own prediction, "miserably destroyed"; and the total excision of the Jewish people for a time from their own olive tree, was the consequence of their refusal to hear the prophet like unto Moses. Seventy years of captivity in Babylon was inflicted on them on account of their iniquities and idolatries in the days of the kings, but eighteen hundred years of dispersion and misery have followed their rejection of Christ. Could Moses have foreseen this? Were not his words weighty with a mournful meaning he little imagined? Were not the mind and purpose of God expressed in the simple yet solemn and sublime prediction: "A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me. And it shall come to pass, that every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people"? If the long and detailed prophecies of Lev. xxvi. and Deut. xxxiii. were a programme of the future of Israel, may we not say that this brief but frequent utterance about the prophet that should come into the world illustrates that programme with *a portrait*? Not only was a long and complete history foretold, but *an individual character* was delineated in the words, "like unto me." The sketch is held

up to the gaze of generation after generation ; fifteen hundred years pass by, and no one at all like it appears. Judges and deliverers arise in Israel, David the man after God's own heart orders and instructs the people, a line of kings and a line of prophets pass over the stage of Jewish history, but no one appears answering to the prophetic sketch, "like unto me." After the lapse of fifteen centuries, however, Jesus of Nazareth appears, and, lo! every feature of the portrait can be recognised, and we need not inquire, "Art Thou that prophet that should come unto the world?" His likeness to Moses makes the question needless! Deliverer, leader, Saviour, lawgiver, mediator, ruler, judge, prophet, priest, king ; God's servant, God's representative, God's reflection, God's ambassador among men, illustrious founder of a new order of things ; mighty yet meek, patient yet inflexible, tender yet stern against sin, loving, even to tears and agony and self-sacrifice, yet denouncing sore judgments to come,—was any one ever so like Moses as Christ, and so like Christ as Moses? When they beheld these two stand side by side in glory in the transfiguration on the Mount, did Peter, James, and John perceive any likeness between them? We know not! There is something far deeper than face or form ; when illuminated by the spirit in after-days, the apostles perceived and expounded this deeper likeness between the great prophet of the old covenant and the greater Prophet of the new, and called on all to obey the voice from the excellent glory which had fallen on their ears, "Hear Him."

"Ah, never earth's philosopher
 Traced with his golden pen
 On the deathless page words half so sage
 As he wrote down for men !

And he stood with glory wrapped around
 On the hills he never trod,
 And spoke of the strife that won our life
 With Christ the incarnate God."

Most marvellously did the Lord Jesus Christ answer to this description, "a prophet like unto me;" and some of the points of resemblance are brought out by God's own words as to Moses, as distinguished from other prophets.

"Were ye not afraid to speak against My servant Moses?" demanded the Lord of Aaron and Miriam when they spake against their brother. "Hear now My words: If there be a prophet among you, I the Lord will make Myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream. My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all Mine house. With him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches; and the similitude of the Lord shall he behold." To other prophets God revealed His message by visions and dreams; to Moses face to face. Superior fidelity characterized the man; greater intimacy with God was his portion. Now "Moses verily was faithful in all God's house as a servant, but Christ as a son." How much more intimate the Son with the Father than Moses with Jehovah! Did not God put His words into the lips of Christ? "The words that I speak unto you, I speak not of Myself," He said; and again, "I have given unto them the words that Thou gavest Me." "I have given them Thy words." "He shall speak unto them all that I shall command Him," said God of the prophet like unto Moses. "I have not spoken of Myself," said Christ; "but the Father which sent Me, He gave Me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak. And I know that His commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto Me, so I speak."

In this glance at the programme of the future sketched by the pen of Moses, we have confined ourselves to his plain and literal predictions, the fulfilment of which can be traced in history. Had we included the *veiled* prophecies of the future, given through him in the form of *typical ordinance and enactment*, we should have had to show that the entire history

of redemption down to its minutest details and even to its very chronology were revealed through him. But we have purposely avoided this, because though *we* can see the types to be only another form of prophecy, yet they were not ostensibly given as such, and our present object is to consider only predictions that *were* given as such. That the ceremonial "law had a shadow of good things to come," was a silent-acted prophecy, extending over all ages of Judaism, we doubt not, for the Epistle to the Hebrews so expounds it. And that its witness to the counsel and foreknowledge of God is as clear, or even clearer, than that borne by the more plainly expressed predictions, we cannot question. But in order to adduce that testimony, the true import of the types has to be first settled, and the perception of their teachings will always be a question of spiritual intelligence. We pass by entirely, therefore, this branch of the foreview of Moses, and present only prophecies that are perfectly plain, and fulfilments that are absolutely undeniable. The incredulous nineteenth century, the age of the scoffers of the last days, is still confronted with an existing fact, a world-wide and well-known fact—the fact of a Jewish dispersion foretold in the days of Moses, accomplished sixteen hundred years later in the days of Titus, Vespasian, and Adrian, just after their crucifixion of Jesus of Nazareth, a prophet like Moses, whom to reject would, he foretold them, be fatal, but whom they nevertheless did reject. If in face of such evidence men refuse to own the finger of God, are they not without excuse?

APPENDIX TO THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

The question of the date of the Exodus, and the Pharaoh under whom it took place, is a disputed one still among Egyptologists, and must remain so until further discovery gives more light, for we have not as yet the means to settle it absolutely. It is agreed by all that it took place under *either* the eighteenth *or* the nineteenth dynasty, but *which* is an insoluble problem at present. The view we have taken above is that Abraham and Joseph were in Egypt under the great Amenemhas of the twelfth dynasty, that AAHMES I. of the eighteenth dynasty was the Pharaoh of the oppression, and that the Exodus took place under his successor, THOTHMES II.

The other view makes Abraham and Joseph in Egypt in the time of the Hyksôs, or shepherd-kings; postpones the oppression and the birth of Moses until the reign of RAMESSES II., which was a long and grand one; and assigns the plagues and the Exodus to the time of his son, PHARAOH MENEPHTAH. A good many arguments may be urged in favour of this last view, but there are also very serious ones against it, and moreover its chronology makes it quite untenable for believers in Scripture.

Egyptian chronology is a dark and very uncertain subject. The Egyptians employed no era to which all the reigns of their kings are referred, as in the dynastic records of other countries. Lists of kings exist, and the inscriptions on the monuments tell how long a king reigned and in what years of his reign he performed his exploits. Thus we have the regnal years of the actual sovereigns, but *no era to which to refer the reigns themselves*. Hence the Egyptian antiquities establish absolutely no date whatever for any event, and they can never afford any clear, continuous, accurate, or complete chronology. The dynasties, moreover, given in the very defective lists we possess, are many of them now proved to have been contemporaneous, though arranged successively, and at one time supposed to have *been* successive. It is proved by the discovery of the Tablet of Abydos that the eighteenth dynasty *immediately succeeded* the twelfth, and that the intermediate ones are local and contemporary. Twenty centuries of Baron Bunsen's long chronology of Egypt are thus cut off at a stroke! There is room for much and learned speculation, but for no certainty. One Egyptologist will insert a thousand years, where others reckon ten or none at all! The *first* date in Egyptian history that can be actually fixed with reference to other events whose absolute date is *certain*, is the invasion of Palestine by Shishak in the days of Rehoboam, the son of Solomon, B.C. 972.

Now the dates assigned to the Pharaohs named in the text, Aahmes and Thothmes II., are variously given by different authorities, like all the rest. But the choice of epoch is limited in their case. The dates for the Exodus are *either* B.C. 1625 or B.C. 1463. The former suits *well* with the Scripture chronology, which makes the period between the Exodus and Solomon's dedication of the temple (in B.C. 1005) 620 years.

This period actually elapsed between the two events, as we prove by adding together the durations of the recorded incidents which intervened. Even omitting the periods of the administration of Joshua and Samuel, whose exact measures are not given, we have the following :—

Wilderness wanderings	40 years.
To the division of the land	6 „
Period of the Judges (Acts xiii.)	450 „
Reigns of Saul and David	80 „
To the fourth year of Solomon	4 „
	<hr/>
	580 years.

Thus the statement in 1 Kings vi. that the interval between the Exodus and the building of the temple was 480 years, *is evidently an error of transcription*. It is impossible to crowd into that period the events recorded in the history.

Rameses II. and Menephtah, who are by many assumed to be the Pharaohs of Moses, are on the other hand altogether too late for any possible reconciliation with Scripture chronology. Rameses II. is given as B.C. 1154, and he reigned sixty-seven years. Menephtah was his son and successor, and if the Exodus took place in his reign, it cannot have been before B.C. 1087, *i.e.*, *only about seventy years before Solomon's time!* Where, then, must we place all the above historical incidents which we know to have intervened? Either, then, Rameses II. and Menephtah were *not* the Pharaohs of Moses, or their assigned dates are altogether too late. Many weighty reasons, independent of chronology, lead us to adopt the former conclusion. Much interesting information on this subject will be found in "Ancient Egypt," by Canon Trevor of York (Religious Tract Society, 56, Paternoster Row, London), and especially in his tenth chapter, where he discusses in a clear and simple style the question of the chronology of Egyptian history. So many bold attacks on the Word of God have been based on this ground, that it is well Christians should be informed on the subject, and be able to prove that the ground is merely shifting sand that cannot sustain any weighty superstructure. A careful excursus on "the bearings of Egyptian history on the Pentateuch," will be found at the end of the first volume of the Speaker's Commentary.

CHAPTER V.

THE DAVIDIC PROGRAMME.

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WE come now to the fifth section of the Divine programme of universal history given to and through David, king of Israel.

That the writings of this remarkable man were largely prophetic there can be no question to any Christian believer, since the Apostle Peter calls him "a prophet," and our Lord Himself asserts that David in the Psalms spoke by the Holy Ghost and wrote of Him—a thousand years before the Christian era.¹

We hope in this chapter to justify these sayings, by showing the demonstrably prophetic character of the Davidic foreview, and its strict and most wonderful accordance with the facts of history, as far as these latter have as yet gone. Only a part of the programme is at present fulfilled; one-third of it is still future. The evidential argument arises of course solely from the two-thirds which already are accomplished.

David was, not only a prophet, but a king; and this fact naturally colours the special revelations given to him. God selects for His varied service instruments equally varied; and just as He chose a patriarchal father to be the channel of the revelation as to "the Seed" in whom the world shall be blessed, just as He chose the founder and lawgiver of the Jewish nation to receive and impart the foreview of that

¹ Acts ii. 30; Luke xxiv. 44.

people's national history, so He chose a monarch to be the medium of His prophetic revelations as to the glorious kingdom of God and its King. The foreview given to David is not an indefinite or general one, like that presented to our first parents,—not a mere ethnic outline, like that given to Noah ; it is a more advanced and complex revelation, a right royal programme for which a king was the fit channel. It consists of a promise about a kingdom and its king, and of a covenant confirmed by a solemn oath of Jehovah, as was the Abrahamic covenant previously. How appropriate, then, that this section of the Divine programme of history should be given to the father and founder of a royal dynasty destined to reign and rule for centuries, to the first true king of God's chosen people !

David was this, though he had, it is true, been preceded on the throne of Israel by Saul. But that son of Kish knew not how to obey, and could not therefore govern. God, whose word he rejected and despised, in due course rejected him from the throne he was unfit to occupy. Not from the tribe of Benjamin, but from that of Judah was to be the ruler of Israel. It was of this tribe that Jacob had foretold, "the sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come." David, unlike Saul, belonged to this royal tribe, and, with all his imperfections and failures, he had a right royal heart and did right royal work, faithfully shepherding, defending, and governing the people whom God committed to his care, subduing all their enemies, providing both for the ark and worship of Jehovah and for the Levitical service and priestly courses, as well as for the glorious temple to be afterwards built by Solomon.

David was a man of a large, powerful, and richly various nature ; he had a mind keen to perceive, a heart quick to feel, a conscience tender—though once, alas ! seared as with a red-hot iron by sin—capable of being aroused into vigorous

action and of exerting mighty control ; he had eyes to weep in bitter contrition, a tongue to utter confession and prayer, a voice and lips to sing songs of tender pathos, of humble trust, or of triumphant exultation ; he had feet to dance before the Lord for joy, a soul to be awed into silent veneration or to thrill with magnificent triumph, as the occasion might demand. He had also a sensitiveness which rendered his loves and his friendships warm and intense, which made filial ingratitude an agony to him, which caused sorrows and fears in anticipation to be a very real torture to his spirit. He could sink to the very lowest depths of woe and rise to the highest heights of enjoyment. The human element was in him rich and strong, while the spiritual side of his being was even stronger ; and the strange, varied experiences of his life called successively into play every part of his intense and vivid nature. Religious reverence, holy faith and courage, mental and moral superiority, tender affection, powerful passions, compassionate kindness, inflexible severity when demanded by justice, executive ability and ruling talent of the first order,—all characterized in marked measure Israel's first great king ; and he had, in addition, the literary ability and musical skill which made him memorable as the sweet psalmist of Israel. He was no mere official monarch ; no selfish, luxurious tyrant, oppressing his people, but a thoroughly natural, sympathetic, loving, large-hearted, God-fearing man, who underwent most remarkable and unique experiences. The events of his life were ordered in Divine providence that they might give occasion to thoughts, feelings, and anticipations, the natural expression of which would prove—unconsciously to himself for the most part—to be prophecy.

What was the state of things when this fifth section of the Divine programme was indicated to David, and to mankind through him ? Some five hundred years had passed away since the days of Moses. Joshua had in the meantime di-

vided to the people their Canaan inheritance, and during his life and the lives of his contemporaries Israel had answered the end for which it had been chosen of God, steering clear of idolatry and maintaining inviolate its monotheistic creed and worship. Among other peoples and nations polytheism and image-worship of the grossest kind everywhere prevailed, and had become systematized. Each country had its own special gods. The Zidonians worshipped Ashtoreth, the Ammonites Moloch, the Moabites Chemosh, and so on. After Joshua's days defection had gradually set in among the Israelites. One after another the tribes fell into idolatry, and adopted the gods of their neighbours; and then, as Moses had predicted, came punishment and calamity: wars were waged on Israel by their heathen enemies, and the God whom they had forsaken suffered them to experience defeat after defeat, and servitude after servitude. Yet again and again He delivered them, raising up for them judges who governed and guided the people aright as long as they lived. These servitudes and deliverances alternated up to the days of Samuel the prophet, in whose old age the people first asked a king. Weary of their distinctive theocracy, they wished to be like their heathen neighbours. "We will have a king over us, that we may be like all the nations." God gave them their desire, foretelling at the same time that its gratification would bring them into future trouble, as proved to be the case. Overruling their evil for good, however, according to His wont, He revealed, in connection with the establishment of the Jewish kingdom and to its first great king, the grand outline we have now to consider, of the present and future kingdom of God.

The Adamic and Noahic programmes were brief, occupying each but a few verses; the Abrahamic and Mosaic were longer and fuller, extending to entire chapters, and comprising many distinct and separate revelations given at considerable intervals. This Davidic programme as to the

kingdom and its king is still more ample. It is embodied, first, in certain direct revelations made to David, and, secondly, in the Book of Psalms, numbers of which are wholly devoted to it, while others contain features of it more or less amplified. It is consequently a very extensive and detailed programme, and we must present it only in outline in an exceedingly condensed form, selecting the main, fundamental predictions alone out of the mass, and then comparing that part of the programme which has been fulfilled with the history which has fulfilled it.

As given to David in its first brief and comprehensive form, it is found in 2 Samuel vii. The story is there related of how David had desired to build a house for the Lord, and of how Nathan the prophet was sent to the king to tell him that, for certain reasons, the erection of the temple was to be left to his son Solomon. This he did, and he then added :—

“Also the Lord telleth thee that He will make thee an house. And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. . . . And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee : thy throne shall be established for ever.”

“I have made a covenant with My chosen, I have sworn unto David My servant, Thy seed will I establish for ever, and build up thy throne to all generations. . . . My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that hath gone out of My lips. Once have I sworn by My holiness that I will not lie unto David. His seed shall endure for ever, and his throne as the sun before Me. It shall be established for ever as the moon, and as a faithful witness in heaven ” (Ps. lxxxix. 3, 4, and 34, 35, 36, 37).

“The Lord hath sworn in truth unto David ; He will not turn from it ; Of the fruit of thy body will I set upon thy throne. If thy children will keep My covenant and My testimony that I shall teach them, their children shall also sit upon thy throne for evermore. For the Lord hath chosen Zion ; He hath desired it for His habitation. This is My rest for ever : here will I dwell ; for I have desired it. . . . There will I make the horn of David to bud : I have ordained a lamp for Mine anointed. His enemies will I clothe with shame : but upon himself shall his crown flourish ” (Ps. cxxxii. 11, 12, 13, 14, and 17, 18).

Here is the first grand and simple outline, and we note in it—

I. DAVID'S SEED WAS TO BE ENTHRONED FOR EVER, TO GOVERN AN ETERNAL KINGDOM; both his house and his kingdom were to be established for ever. The two things, let it be observed, are distinct: first, his house was to be established, that is his dynasty, a literal begotten son of David was to be the everlasting ruler; and, secondly, his kingdom, with its political capital, its definite geographical location and its national relations, was also to be established for ever. The eternal kingdom on the earth was to be ruled by a direct descendant of David, and was to be in some sense a continuation of David's reign over Israel. The throne of Judah which had just been established in the house of David should be, it was promised, everlasting. Features both dynastic and political would be common to the kingdom of David and the eternal kingdom—though combined, of course, with many and wide differences which were subsequently indicated; so that the latter would be in the strictest sense an everlasting continuation of the former. Solomon and his kingdom and the temple he was to erect are mentioned, but only as occupying the nearer future. They were the lesser and comparatively unimportant introductory details of the programme, and over and above and beyond them, reaching right out into an unknown eternity, was to be another and a greater kingdom, the longer and more glorious reign of a king who, though literally descended from David, should reign for ever.

This is foretold as clearly as words can express ideas, and Jehovah confirmed the promise with an oath; it became an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure; and although David realized that his house was not what it should be in God's sight, and that he and his sons were not absolutely just and God-fearing men, yet he rested believingly on this great and infallible covenant promise, and

said of it in his last words: "This is all my salvation and all my desire." The revelation was clear, definite, repeated and solemnly confirmed, but it was unexplained and most mysterious. It suggested questions that could not be answered, and it must have given much food for reflection to the king. How could eternal sovereignty be associated with any son of David? Was not the very notion self-contradictory? A dynasty might indeed be perpetual, though history never yet knew such a one; but an individual? Had not Moses long since sung:—

"The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off and we fly away."

How then could mortal man reign for ever? No further light was thrown on the problem; the revelation appealed to faith, not to reason; and David, like Abraham, knew God well enough to trust Him, though he could not understand how He would fulfil His great promise. "He was strong in faith, giving glory to God; and being fully persuaded that, what He had promised, He was able also to perform."¹ We may well imagine his meditations would often connect this prediction about his own seed with that of Abraham's seed, "in whom the world should be blessed," and with the still earlier Eden promise about the woman's Seed who should bruise the serpent's head; and that he felt these three must be one. But he died in faith, not having received the promise, though having seen it afar off and embraced it; and having been permitted to see his son Solomon seated on his throne, as a first instalment of the fulfilment of the Divine programme.

But David was not only a recipient of prophecy, he was also a channel of prophetic revelation. He himself said: "The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and His word was in my tongue," and his tongue was the pen of a ready writer. *Through* him, though not *to* him, much more about the

¹ Rom. iv. 20, 21.

coming kingdom of his great predicted son was revealed ; line after line was added to the first faint shadowy sketch, until at last a clear picture was produced on the page. We must note these lines one by one, and allow the conception to become gradually perfected in our minds as each successive feature is added to the previous ones.

We cannot tell whether David ever understood all the predictions of which he was the channel ;—very probably not. He was most likely one of those prophets of whom Peter speaks, who “inquired and searched diligently what the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow.” Our concern, however, is not with what he understood, but with what he wrote. We do not pretend to prove that David foreknew or foresaw the future, but that He who does so used David’s mind, heart, and pen to write for subsequent generations the programme of then future events, which the lapse of time has already largely fulfilled.

The features of the coming King and kingdom revealed through David are mainly seven-fold. We have seen the first—its eternal duration ; and we now note—

II. THE KINGDOM OF DAVID’S ILLUSTRIOUS DESCENDANT WAS NOT TO BE MERELY JEWISH, BUT UNIVERSAL.

“Ask of Me, and I shall give Thee the heathen (or the Gentiles) for Thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for Thy possession.”¹

“He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth. They that dwell in the wilderness shall bow before Him ; and His enemies shall lick the dust. The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall bring presents : the kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts. Yea, all kings shall fall down before Him : all nations shall serve Him. . . . His name shall endure for ever : His name shall be continued as long as the sun : and men shall

¹ Ps. ii. 8.

be blessed in Him : all nations shall call Him blessed. . . . Blessed be His glorious name for ever : and let the whole earth be filled with His glory.”¹

These predictions of the universality of the sway of David's Son were no less astonishing than those of the everlasting duration of His reign. The Jewish people were essentially separate from all other nations. “For what one nation in the earth is like Thy people, even like Israel,” said David, “which Thou redeemest to Thyself from Egypt, from the nations and their gods? For Thou hast redeemed to Thyself Thy people Israel, to be a people unto Thee for ever : and Thou, Lord, art become their God.” “Thou didst separate them from among all the people of the earth,” said Solomon, “to be Thine inheritance.”

Israel was so emphatically a separate and peculiar people that the very conception of a world-wide kingdom, embracing all nations, was foreign to their ideas. “In Judah is God known,” was their creed ; and in *their* day the limitation existed most strictly, for Israel alone possessed the knowledge of God and the light of revelation. David would therefore never have conceived of a universal kingdom, and yet the prediction of such a one shines forth clearly from the pages that he wrote. The coming kingdom was to be neither local in sphere, nor Jewish in character, nor temporary in duration ; it was to embrace and bless all mankind throughout the whole earth, and it was to last for ever. It was, however, to be distinctly earthly in character, as we have seen ; and great stress is laid on this point, which is repeatedly and distinctly mentioned in the predictions of the programme itself, and confirmed by the allusions to it of later prophets. This point is an important one, as it is a very common and deplorable mistake to confound the prophecies of this literal kingdom of David's son with the spiritual kingdom of Christ which now exists, as if the former were

¹ Ps. lxxii. 8, 9, 10, 11, 17, 19.

fulfilled in the latter. No such spiritual kingdom could by any possibility fulfil the everlasting covenant made with David, which was to the effect that *his kingdom* as well as his dynasty should be everlasting. Now, just as no *king* of another family could fulfil the *dynastic* part of this promise, so no *kingdom* of another and wholly different nature could fulfil the *national* part of it. Reason alone would suggest that the kingdom of David's son must be of the same nature as David's own kingdom ; but *revelation settles it*. Not only is it spoken of continually in the Messianic predictions as extending to the uttermost parts of the *earth*, and filling the whole *earth* with blessing and glory, but it is always presented as succeeding and replacing the *earthly* kingdoms of all Gentile rulers. It is also spoken of as succeeding the restoration and national conversion of Israel.

"For the children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod, and without teraphim : afterward shall the children of Israel return, and seek the Lord their God, and David their king ; and shall fear the Lord and His goodness in the latter days."¹

"I will save them out of all their dwelling-places, wherein they have sinned, and will cleanse them : so shall they be My people, and I will be their God. And David My servant shall be king over them ; and they shall all have one shepherd : they shall also walk in My judgments, and observe My statutes, and do them. And they shall dwell in the land that I have given unto Jacob My servant, wherein your fathers have dwelt ; and they shall dwell therein, even they, and their children, and their children's children for ever : and My servant David shall be their prince for ever."²

The context in these passages settles the earthly nature of the kingdom. This salient feature of the programme gave shape to the Jewish expectations of our Lord's day, and He

¹ Hos. iii. 4, 5.

² Ezek. xxxvii. 23-25.

never denounced them as false or mistaken, but, on the contrary, admitted that they were correct, though defective by omission of something else destined to come first. These expectations were, in fact, the great ground of the Jewish rejection of the claims of Christ to be the Messiah; He made no attempt *at that time* to found the earthly kingdom they rightly anticipated.

Now, one of the leading attributes of God is unchangeableness, combined with variation of plan for the attainment of His purpose, as the case may require. It is plainly stated¹ that "the gifts and calling of God are without repentance." Hence, the land of promise is *entailed for ever* to the seed of Abraham, and *the sceptre of this earth*—not some other sceptre—to *the seed of David*. An everlasting and universal kingdom on earth governed by a son of David, whose earthly throne is established on Mount Zion, is a fundamental feature of the Davidic programme. The moral features of this kingdom are given with great fulness in the 72nd and other Psalms; it is to be marked especially by righteousness, by peace, and by unexampled prosperity, and also by universal diffusion of the knowledge of the Lord.

It was further revealed in the Psalms that—

III. THE KING WOULD BE DIVINE AS WELL AS HUMAN; HE WOULD BE GOD AND MAN IN ONE PERSON—DAVID'S SON YET DAVID'S LORD.

A most marvellous revelation this, impossible almost of conception to a Jew of David's day, and esteemed blasphemous by the Jews of our own day. It is not that incarnation is foretold as a doctrine, or that any dogmatic statement is made on the subject; but in various Psalms, and especially in *three*, expressions are used, statements are made, and pictures are presented, which admit of no other possible meaning.

In the 2nd Psalm we have a description of the enthronement.

¹ Rom. xi. 29.

ment of the Lord's anointed King on His holy hill of Zion, in spite of the determined opposition of a league of inveterate enemies. The extent of the dominion and the nature of the rule prove that the Psalm does not refer to David, but to his greater Son. In the midst of this description occur the strange and most notable words: "I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto Me, Thou art My Son; this day have I begotten Thee." The son and heir of David is then the Son of God—not a mere man adopted as a son like Solomon, but *the begotten Son of God*. The statement embodied a strange, startling, new, and almost incredible idea when it was penned, though three thousand years later, in our nineteenth century, we can read it as an allusion to a familiar truth. Let us try and realize the marvel of the fact that it was placed on the page, as an item of the Davidic programme, a thousand years before Christianity familiarized men's minds with the doctrine of the Divine Sonship. It was placed there when it was not understood; the Jews never understood it,—they do not understand it now,—they cannot account for it. Yet there it is—the royal son of David was to be the begotten Son of God. He who was to reign for ever was to share the Divine nature as well as the nature of man. This explains the possibility of an eternal rule, as well as many another apparent contradiction in the Davidic programme.

The 45th Psalm confirms the 2nd Psalm on this point. The meaning of the Psalm is defined in the first verse: "I speak of the things which I have made *touching the king*." It treats of the person of the king, of his enemies and his victories, of his kingdom and righteous rule. In the midst of all this we find the following words addressed to him: "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: the sceptre of Thy kingdom is a right sceptre. Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness: therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows."

Now here it is evident that the one who is anointed is a human being, since he is fairer than the children of men, and grace is poured into his lips, and God has blessed him and anointed him with the oil of gladness above his fellows. He is as clearly the great predicted son of David, since he is to reign for ever. This one is addressed as God: "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: the sceptre of Thy kingdom is a right sceptre." Even if the words were not quoted and applied in the New Testament as having this force, there is no mistaking the construction of the Psalm when it is carefully studied. The one addressed in the sixth verse is the one spoken of in the seventh ("Thy throne is for ever"; "Thy sceptre is a right sceptre. Thou lovest righteousness, *therefore*," etc.). In the former he is called God, in the latter he is spoken of as anointed by God. Here again was a mysterious intimation which might have prepared Israel for a Messiah who, without blasphemy, could lay claim to a Divine nature. It did not have this effect; yet the prediction is plain.

And once more—in the 110th Psalm, which again treats of the great King, the rod of whose strength is to go forth from Zion, and who is to rule in the midst of His enemies and judge among the heathen, we have not only David speaking of his son as his Lord, *but Jehovah inviting Him to sit at His own right hand* until His foes should be made His footstool. This wonderful vision again implies the Divine as well as human nature of the Messiah King. For "to which of the angels said He at any time, Sit on My right hand, until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool?" Without a recognition of this double nature there is no solution of the question which silenced the Jews in the days of Christ: "If David call him Lord, how is he then his son?"

Though not properly part of the programme as given to David himself, yet as part of the Old Testament programme concerning David's seed, and as amplifying gloriously the

everlasting covenant, passages from some of the later prophets ought to be considered here. The combination of divinity with humanity is specially clear in the following: "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. Of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end, *upon the throne of David*, and upon His kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this." ¹

Here it is clear that the one who sits on the throne of David, and orders and establishes His kingdom for ever with judgment and with justice, is not only "born" as a child into his family, but is also "the mighty God, the Father of eternity."

"Behold, the days shall come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment in the earth. In His days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is His name whereby He shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS." ²

JEHOVAH TZIDKENU—a Divine title—is here given to a branch from the stem of David.

Again: "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 from of old, from everlasting." ³

In these words it is evident that the Son of David, who is to issue from the town of David, and to be the foretold ruler in Israel, is one "whose goings forth" have been from the days of eternity.

IV. THE DAVIDIC PROGRAMME FORETELLS, FURTHER, THAT THE ANOINTED KING OF DAVID'S LINE WOULD,

¹ Isa. ix. 6, 7.

² Jer. xxiii. 5, 6.

³ Mic. v. 2.

BEFORE HIS EXALTATION, UNDERGO A PRELIMINARY EXPERIENCE OF REJECTION AND SUFFERING, OF DEATH AND RESURRECTION.

The Davidic Scriptures which might be quoted in illustration of this point are legion. The Book of Psalms is full of passages in which the contrasted elements of the sufferings and glories of the King are presented in succession and always in this order. The attentive reader cannot fail to be struck with the constant recurrence of this theme. We must allude in detail to only two or three of the most conspicuous illustrations. The 22nd Psalm is perhaps the most perfect and typical specimen of these pictures of startlingly contrasted shadow and light, but the 69th and many others resemble it more or less closely. A careful perusal will show that it consists, first, of a long and bitter wail elicited by complicated sufferings, spiritual, mental, and physical ; by soul distress and heart-breaking sorrow at apparent desertion by God ; by shame and anguish of spirit ; by cruel mockery and contempt of men ; by agonizing conflict of mind caused by God's dealings with His righteous servant ; by the rough and brutal treatment of enemies ; by bodily weakness and anguish ; and by a sense of approaching death. It is a blending of prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears which is absolutely unequalled in earth's literature. It conveys a degree of pain, grief, and distress of body, mind, and spirit which are inconceivable to ordinary men. The strength of the poetic imagery labours in vain to embody the complicated anguish it strives to depict ; the verses follow each other like the downward steps of a ladder which leads from the light of day to the depths of the bottomless pit. The expressions are singularly specific ; definite speeches and gestures and actions of surrounding enemies are predicted. We meet, for instance, with the words : " They shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying, He trusted in the Lord that He would deliver Him ; let Him

deliver Him, seeing He delighted in Him. . . . They pierced My hands and My feet. . . . They part My garments among them, and cast lots for My vesture."

The mournful minor notes of this melancholy dirge of death follow each other with an ever-deepening tone of misery down to the middle of the twenty-first verse. Then comes a sudden change: the minor key is resolved into the cheerful major, and from the words, "Thou hast heard Me from the horns of the unicorns" (or out of death itself), starts a glad pæan of victory, a psalm of triumph, a vision of glory, and the description of a world-wide kingdom succeeds the graphic picture of rejection and cruel death. "I will declare Thy name unto My brethren: in the midst of the congregation will I praise Thee. . . . All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the Lord: and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before Thee. For the kingdom is the Lord's: and He is the governor among the nations."

The rejection and sufferings of Messiah *prior* to His exaltation are described also with much fulness and precision in Psalm lxix. He cries for deliverance from those who hate Him without a cause, and are wrongfully His enemies. He mourns that He has become a stranger to His brethren and an alien to His mother's children; that, because of His zeal for God's house, the reproaches of the ungodly fall upon Him; that He was the song of the drunkard, and a proverb to the people; that reproach had broken His heart, and none pitied Him; that He looked for comforters and found none; that the floods were about to swallow Him, and the pit to shut her mouth upon Him; and says, "they gave Me also gall for My meat; and in My thirst they gave Me vinegar to drink."

The 16th Psalm goes further than any other—speaks of death not only as impending, but as accomplished. It presents the contrast between the blackest of all shadows and

the brightest of all glories—that between the tomb and Hades, and the presence of God in heaven. We know the Psalm to be Messianic—that is, to treat of the great promised Son of David, from the apostolic quotations of it in the New Testament. But quite apart from this, its prophetic character is proved by its absolute non-applicability to David himself. He, of course, expected to die and to see corruption. He writes of one who, though he was to die and be laid to rest in a tomb, would never see corruption, but be raised to tread the path of life, and to enjoy the presence of God and the pleasures at His right hand. “For Thou wilt not leave my soul in Hades, neither wilt Thou suffer Thine Holy One to see corruption. Thou wilt show me the path of life : in Thy presence is fulness of joy ; at Thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.”

Apart from actual suffering and death, the Davidic programme makes it plain that the anointed king would encounter incessant and tremendous opposition from enemies before his enthronement. The Psalms relating to him abound with complaints of the determined opposition of the wicked to this righteous ruler and man after God’s own heart. The idea of enemies and foes occurs incessantly.

“Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord, and against His Anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us. He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh : the Lord shall have them in derision. Then shall He speak unto them in His wrath, and vex them in His sore displeasure. Yet I have set My king upon My holy hill of Zion.”¹

“Dogs have compassed me : *the assembly of the wicked* have inclosed me : they pierced my hands and my feet.”²

¹ Ps. ii. 1–6.

² Ps. xxii. 16.

"Thine arrows are sharp in the heart of *the king's enemies*; whereby the people fall under thee."¹

"They that hate me without a cause are *more than the hairs of mine head*: they that would destroy me, *being mine enemies* wrongfully, are mighty."²

"The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou *in the midst of thine enemies*."³

This is the spirit that breathes through the Messianic Psalms, and, indeed, through the whole Book of Psalms, and it is evident from the context that moral antagonism is the cause of the opposition experienced by the Righteous Sufferer. He says:—

"For Thy sake I have borne reproach; shame hath covered my face. I am become a stranger unto my brethren, and an alien unto my mother's children. For the zeal of Thine house hath eaten me up; and *the reproaches of them that reproached Thee are fallen upon me*."⁴

The Righteous One destined to be the Ruler of the world is represented as experiencing, first, an opposition which gave Him an ever-present, all-pervading consciousness that He was surrounded by the wicked, and had to appeal to God's righteousness against man's iniquity. As a man, He is solitary among men, He is morally against the world, and the world against Him. He suffers from it instead of ruling it; endures its evil instead of putting a stop to it—anticipating all the time a different state of things, when the meek shall inherit the earth, the righteous flourish, the fear of God be universal, and all the workers of iniquity be fallen, cast down and unable to rise.

The question, of course, occurs: Does the programme assign any *reason* for the strange preliminary experience of the great King—His experiences of cruel and successful opposition even unto death? Why should such a being stoop to such a life,

¹ Ps. xlv. 5.

² Ps. lxix. 4.

³ Ps. cx. 2.

⁴ Ps. lxix. 7-9.

and, above all, to such a death? If the double nature of David's son was mysterious, not less so the double experience predicted. Why should He that was destined to rule and reign first suffer and die? Nay, why should the Son of God become man? Does the programme go at all beyond facts, and hint at reasons? The 40th Psalm answers the question, and gives us the reply of the Messiah Himself to this inquiry. It is the one who, in verse 2, speaking of resurrection, says: "He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings, and hath put a new song into my mouth;" who in verse 6 adds, as accounting for his humiliation, "Sacrifice and offering Thou didst not desire; mine ears hast Thou opened: burnt offering and sin offering hast Thou not required. Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do Thy will, O my God: yea, Thy law is within my heart."

This passage shows the unsatisfactoriness of the Levitical sacrifices and offerings to Him who had appointed them for a time. They were only temporary and only typical. It also shows that under these circumstances One whose ears God had opened—or, as it is translated in the Septuagint, and quoted in Hebrews, for whom God had prepared a body—comes forward expressly to accomplish His will. Moved by his delight in doing the will of God, Messiah volunteered to be a sacrifice, and to put away human sin by becoming a sin offering.

V. THE PROGRAMME FORETELLS, FURTHER, THAT IN THE INTERVAL PRIOR TO HIS ASCENT TO HIS EARTHLY THRONE, THE SON OF DAVID WOULD BE CALLED TO OCCUPY A HEAVENLY THRONE, AND RULE FROM THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD IN HEAVEN.

"Jehovah said to my Lord, Sit thou at My right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool." Here is a throne that is clearly neither on the earth nor of the earth; it is the

throne of the majesty in the heavens—Jehovah's throne. And yet David's son, whom he calls here "my Lord," is invited to take his seat thereon. It is not his own throne, not the predicted throne of David which he is to occupy for ever on earth. It is God's throne, and the invitation to sit thereon at God's right hand has its chronological limits. It is "until" something else be done—until I make thy foes thy footstool. This temporary enthronement in heaven must not be confounded with the promised permanent enthronement on earth. The difference between the two is wide, conspicuous, unmistakable. The programme presents, not two aspects of one kingdom, but two kingdoms, two reigns, two widely different exercises of power. The one rule is exercised on earth, from Zion, over Jews and Gentiles for ever. The other is exercised from heaven, and for a time only. The heavenly reign is at a certain point to give way to the earthly. David's son is to leave Jehovah's throne, and assume his own throne, receiving the heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession, and being established as king on God's holy hill of Zion.

That the anointed king, after his preliminary experience of rejection and death on earth, and prior to his final enthronement, *should enjoy a heavenly exaltation*, is a distinct feature of the Davidic programme. Psalm xxiv. gives another view of it. The question is asked, "Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? or who shall stand in His holy place?" And the answer is given: "He that hath clean hands and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully." And then follows a vision of this righteous man ascending. The everlasting doors of heaven are swung open to admit him; he is welcomed as king of glory; he is hymned as having proved himself strong and mighty in battle, and welcomed to the world above as Lord of hosts and King of glory.

The same feature recurs in Psalm lxviii. : "Thou hast ascended on high, Thou hast led captivity captive : Thou hast received gifts for men ; yea, for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them." The exaltation of the rejected one is again foretold in Psalm cxviii. : the opposition of enemies, the deadly struggle with evil men, the sore thrusts of the wicked are described, and the delivering help of God. "I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the Lord. The Lord hath chastened me sore : but He hath not given me over unto death," is the glad cry that follows ; and then the challenge : "Open to me the gates of righteousness : I will go into them, and I will praise the Lord. . . . The stone which the builders refused is become the headstone of the corner. This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes."

VI. IT IS ALSO REVEALED THAT THE KING WAS TO EXERCISE A PRIESTLY AS WELL AS A KINGLY SWAY.

To the one who sits at God's right hand in heaven during his rejection on earth are addressed the words : "The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek." Now this is an additional feature of the programme quite distinct from any that precede it. It is also one not founded on any fact in the life of David. He was never a priest ; he ordered the courses of the priests, but could never assume priestly functions ; he belonged to the tribe of Judah, of which Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood. Now, a priest is ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer sacrifice for sins, have compassion on the ignorant and on them who are out of the way, and be a mediator between God and man. A priest is one who makes intercession for the erring, and bestows sympathy and benediction. The above words show that David's royal son was to be a priest as well as a king,—was to reign from heaven over human hearts, as well as from Zion over happy nations,—was to bless

men religiously and spiritually, as well as by a righteous rule; he was to be a kingly priest, a priestly king, like Melchizedek, who was a king "first being by interpretation King of righteousness, and after that also King of Salem, which is, King of peace," and also priest of the Most High God. It was in this capacity that He blessed Abraham, the patriarch bowing as the less before the greater. So the coming king was to exercise priestly functions as well as a kingly sway. This is a very notable point, and as plain in the programme as it is singular.

VII. IT FORETELLS THAT THE EARTHLY KINGDOM OF DAVID'S SON WOULD BE INTRODUCED BY HIS RETURN IN GLORY FROM HEAVEN TO EARTH, AND BY THE EXECUTION OF TERRIBLE JUDGMENTS ON HIS FOES.

Whatever else the Davidic predictions included, or did not include, whether on earth or in heaven, it is unquestionable that they did include one thing—the government of his glorious Son over His own people, the nation of Israel, and His everlasting dominion over the land of promise. Unless this its primary idea be ultimately realized, the programme will not have been fulfilled. This was the special point solemnly confirmed by an oath of Jehovah, and it was *this* which David styled "an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure."

It is perfectly clear, also, that the present spiritual kingdom of Christ does not include this distinctively Jewish element. It does not comprise any dominion over Israel *nationally*, or over the promised land *territorially*. The kingdom of God described in the 72nd Psalm has no resemblance whatever to the existing state of things, nor to any that ever has existed, or could exist, while the present dispensation lasts. The leading characteristic of *these* times is that they are "the times of the Gentiles"; that during their course the kingdom of God is given *not* to Jews, but to Gentiles. No extension, therefore, of what we call Christianity, could ever answer to

the promised kingdom of David's Son over the people of Israel in Palestine. No conversion and incorporation into the Church of individual Jews, however numerous, could fulfil the distinctive, solemnly confirmed promises of the Davidic covenant. And, further, never yet, even in the most Christian countries in their best and brightest days, have the perfected righteousness, peace, and blessing that are to characterize the coming kingdom of David's Son, prevailed. No one can read the description of this without feeling at once that it pertains to the future, and not to the past or present.

Now, this future universal and eternal reign of David's Son and Lord is anticipated not only in the 72nd Psalm, but in many others, and especially in the series xciii. to xcix.¹

A glance at these Psalms will show that their theme is the establishment of the theocracy in its final form on earth. Their keynote is the sentence, *THE LORD REIGNETH*, or "has begun to reign."

"O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness: fear before Him, all the earth. Say among the heathen that *the Lord reigneth*: the world also shall be established that it shall not be moved: He shall judge the people righteously" (Ps. xcvi. 9, 10).

"*The Lord reigneth*; let the earth rejoice; let the multitude of isles be glad thereof. Clouds and darkness are round about Him: righteousness

¹ "It is well known that the Messianic interpretation of each and every psalm, which is claimed as directly and exclusively predictive of Christ, was received *by the Hebrews* long before our Lord's coming, and without any misgiving, or any trace of antagonistic opinion. The Rabbins, who are recognised as most faithful to old traditions, carry this system to quite as great an extent as the early Christian writers. A belief in Messiah, founded upon the prophecies, and specially upon typical or direct predictions in the Psalms, was one of the fundamentals of faith. This point is not contested by any critics; they may treat it as a superstition, as a mere delusion, but the fact remains, and it is certainly without a precedent or parallel in the history of religions. We must also bear in mind that the system was retained for centuries after the Hebrew teachers were fully aware of the difficulty which it presented in carrying on the controversy with Christians."—(Speaker's Commentary p. 164.)

and judgment are the habitation of His throne. A fire goeth before Him, and burneth up His enemies round about. His lightnings enlightened the world: the earth saw, and trembled. The hills melted like wax at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of the Lord of the whole earth. The heavens declare His righteousness, and all the people see His glory. . . . For Thou, Lord, art high above all the earth: Thou art exalted far above all gods" (Ps. xcvi. 1-6, 9).

"*The Lord reigneth*; let the people tremble: He sitteth between the cherubims; let the earth be moved. The Lord is great in Zion; and He is high above all the people. . . . The king's strength loveth judgment; thou dost establish equity; thou executest judgment and righteousness in Jacob" (Ps. xcix. 1, 2, and 4).

It is the kingdom come at last—the universal and eternal earthly kingdom of the Son of David. Its sphere is terrestrial, for the word is, "Let the *earth* rejoice." He is called "The Lord of the *whole earth*," and it is stated that *all people see His glory*. All the *earth* is called upon to make a joyful noise to the Lord, the world, and they that dwell therein; the people are told to tremble, and the earth to be moved, because the Lord is great *in Zion*. There is nothing heavenly in the description. It is a vision of the realization of the universal *earthly* kingdom so long foretold.

Two prominent features must be especially noted in these triumphant Psalms. There is in them the element of a *personal appearing* to introduce the reign, and cause the joy and bliss described; and there is in them also the element of the execution of judgment on enemies.

1. The introduction of this kingdom is by *the coming of the King to earth*. HE COMETH, He cometh to judge the earth. He shall judge the world with righteousness, and the people with His truth.¹ And, again, it is repeated, "*He cometh* to judge the earth; with righteousness shall He judge the world, and the people with equity."² The King who had ascended up on high, leading captivity captive, and who had taken His seat at God's right hand in heaven, arises

¹ Ps. xcvi. 13.

² Ps. xcvi. 9.

from that seat—the period until which He was to occupy it having been fulfilled—and descends in glory to rule and reign, not as before, to suffer and die.

2. And, secondly, let it be noted that the establishment of the kingdom is effected *by means of judgment*. “A fire goeth before Him, and burneth up His enemies round about.” “Zion heard, and was glad; and the daughters of Judah rejoiced because of Thy judgments, O Lord.” “His right hand and His holy arm hath gotten Him the victory.”¹ This is the

¹ “Whatever historical allusions may be contained in Psalm xciii. 3 to the past or present assaults of the world-powers upon Israel, this psalm, the first of a remarkable series of theocratic psalms, anticipates the period of Jehovah’s personal manifestation of Himself as the King of the whole earth. (Cf. Apoc. xi. 15, 17, and xix. 6.)

The Lord reigneth. Rather, “Jehovah is King,” *i.e.* He now reigns; His kingdom is visibly established, His foes being made His footstool: LXX., ‘Ο ΚΥΡΙΟΣ ἐβασίλευσεν: Prayer-Book version, “The Lord is King.” The verb in the same tense is commonly used to denote *the beginning of a new reign*. (Cf. 1 Kings i. 18: “Adonijah reigneth.” Cf. also 1 Kings xxii. 41; 2 Kings iii. 1, xv. 13; 2 Chron. xxix. 1; in all of which places it is rendered in the Authorized Version, “began to reign.”) The theocracy, as has been observed by Delitzsch in his introduction to this psalm, had its first manifestation when Jehovah became the King of Israel (Exod. xv. 18), and it will receive its completion when the King of Israel becomes the King of a whole world subdued, both outwardly and inwardly, to Himself. The verb which is here rendered “is (or has become) King,” or, as Delitzsch renders it, “is now King,” is here used in reference to the inauguration of the theocracy in its final and complete manifestation. *This is the watchword of the theocratic psalms.* (Cf. Psalms xcvi. 10, xcvi. 1, xcix. 1.)

Whether the first and second advents of the Messiah be or be not regarded here, as in other Old Testament prophecies, as parts of one connected whole, this psalm has reference to *the coming of the Messiah as David’s Lord—not as David’s Son*; as Jehovah, the Lord and King of the whole earth—not as the “man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief.” . . .

The Psalmist is here again carried onward by the inspiring Spirit into the great day of the Lord, and calls upon the faithful to proclaim *the personal advent of Jehovah, and His assumption of the kingdom.* . . .

The psalm itself contains conclusive evidence that it reaches forward not only to the first advent of Christ, but also from thence to “the consummation of all things.”—(“Speaker’s Commentary,” 382, 389, 390–1.)

period to which apply also the statements of the Messianic Psalms we have before considered :—

“Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron ; Thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter’s vessel” (Ps. ii. 9).

“Gird Thy sword upon Thy thigh, O Most Mighty, with Thy glory and Thy majesty. And in Thy majesty ride prosperously because of truth and meekness and righteousness ; and Thy right hand shall teach Thee terrible things. Thine arrows are sharp in the heart of the king’s enemies ; whereby the people fall under Thee. Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever : the sceptre of Thy kingdom is a right sceptre ” (Ps. xlv. 3-6).

“The Lord at thy right hand shall strike through kings in the day of His wrath. He shall judge among the heathen, He shall fill the places with the dead bodies ; He shall wound the heads over many countries ” (Ps. cx. 5, 6).

When we reach our last section, we shall see that this future earthly kingdom of Christ is by no means all that is foretold in Scripture. It is not by any means the highest or fullest conception which inspiration gives us of the “ages to come.” We could not expect to gather the whole truth from the Davidic programme, any more than from the earlier revelations. It was given three thousand years ago, in the midst of the Jewish dispensation. It revealed immensely more than had been previously revealed, but it did not reveal all that we now know. It presented a blissful future to the faith of believing Israelites, and taught, moreover, that in the Divine Messiah who should come and restore all things lay the hope, not of Israel only, but of humanity. It gave also a glimpse of the present reign of the priestly king from God’s right hand in heaven, but it did not make known what Paul calls the mystery of God’s will.¹ The Messiah King is to wear “many crowns,” amongst which that of earth will be only one. Later on we shall see the outshining of this New Testament light. A clear conception of this revelation to David about the earthly kingdom of his Son will,

Eph. i. 9.

however, prepare us to estimate with greater correctness the varied aspects of the many-sided kingdom of God.

Such then was the seven-fold programme given to David. It foretold, first, the career of Solomon and the permanence of the Davidic dynasty on the throne of Judah ; and then, passing from the near and easily credible future to a more distant and almost incredible one, it announced that a lineal descendant of David was destined, in the purposes of God, ultimately to succeed to his throne in Zion, and from it to exercise a righteous, peaceful, glorious, blessed, universal, and eternal sway over mankind ; that this royal son of David would be also the begotten Son of God, uniting thus in His own person divinity and humanity, with their respective attributes and responsibilities ; that He would experience inveterate opposition from the kings and peoples of the earth ; and that, prior to His exaltation over His enemies, He would endure at their hands the utmost humiliation and suffering, be hated without a cause, betrayed by His own familiar friend, mocked, insulted, and persecuted by His foes ; that He would at last be put to death by crucifixion, and laid in a grave, though His body would not remain in the tomb long enough for His flesh to see corruption ; that, on the contrary, God would show Him the path of life, and, raising Him from the dead, invite Him to sit at His own right hand, and rule from heaven in the midst of His enemies, promising that ultimately they should be made His footstool, and His throne be established in Zion. It foretells that the risen, earth-rejected but heaven-accepted King would, when thus ascending on high, "lead captivity captive," or take others also, redeemed from the power of death, with Him ; that He would "receive gifts for men, even for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them" ; that He would be like a stone refused by the builders, yet made the head of the corner. It foretells that the rule He would exercise from heaven, and afterwards even for ever, would be

that of a royal priest, or priestly king, like Melchizedek ; and that, at last, leaving His position in the heavens, rising up from His seat at the right hand of God, He would appear in His glory on earth to build up Zion, assume the throne of His father David, destroy for ever all His foes, and establish His everlasting kingdom.

Now it is needless to say that *the last part* of this programme is not yet fulfilled ; for the *manifested* kingdom of God on earth we are still patiently waiting, praying daily, "Thy kingdom come." But it is equally clear that a very large part of this Davidic programme *has actually already become fact*. Unlikely of fulfilment as it seemed when given, incomprehensible and almost inconceivable as were some of its particulars, *they have come to pass*, and the lapse of well-nigh two thousand years since they did this has so familiarized them to the minds of men that they scarcely realize or observe them as *fulfilments of Davidic prophecy*.

Some of the leading features of the programme were fulfilled in the first advent of Christ, others are now being fulfilled in this Christian age, while others remain to be fulfilled at His second coming and kingdom. The evidential argument we are developing, arises, of course, exclusively from the past and the present fulfilments. In due time the future will add its confirmation, though for the present it is matter of faith rather than of sight. The accomplishment of two-thirds of the programme is, however, good ground for expecting with calm confidence the fulfilment in its season of the remaining third.

And first as to the *past* events which have fallen out as indicated by the Davidic programme. Solomon, we know, reigned in peace and prosperity, building, as foretold, the splendid temple of God at Jerusalem ; a long series of nineteen kings of his lineage and blood succeeded him, and reigned in Jerusalem for nearly four centuries. The usurper Athaliah sought on one occasion to destroy the royal seed,

but she miserably failed. David's sons continued to occupy David's throne until the day of the captivity of the land, when for their sins God allowed them to fall before Nebuchadnezzar, and the great week of "The times of the Gentiles" began. But Israel knew that the covenant and oath of God could not fail, and they waited for the promised coming of "Messiah the Prince" to restore the throne of David. In the fulness of time He came; "Jesus Christ our Lord was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; and declared to be the Son with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead."¹ He was born of a virgin of the house of David, heralded beforehand by the angelic announcement: "He shall be great, and shall be called *the Son of the Highest*: and the Lord God shall give unto Him *the throne of His father David*: and He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of His kingdom there shall be no end."

The wise men inquired: "Where is He that is born *King of the Jews*, for we have seen His star in the east, and are come to worship Him?" No *mere* king this! The Son of the Highest, the object of the worship of wise men! These angelic and human sayings identify the Babe of Bethlehem with the great hero of the Davidic programme. The predicted King came, the mighty and mysterious Son of David and Son of God was born in the city of David eighteen hundred years ago. Did the Jews recognise and receive their king? History unhesitatingly answers, No. "He came unto His own, and His own received Him not." The people sometimes doubted and queried: Is not this the Son of David? The suffering appealed to Him as the Son of David. But the nation rejected Him. Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered together against Him, fulfilling the prediction: "The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel

¹ Rom. i. 3.

together, against the Lord and against His Anointed." The common people and the little children, with truer instincts, might indeed shout: "Hosanna to the Son of David! blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." "Blessed be the kingdom of our father David that cometh in the name of the Lord." Pilate in mockery might announce the truth in the exclamation: "Behold your King"; but the *nation*, represented by its chief priests, rulers, and scribes, denied the Holy One, and said: "We will not have this man to reign over us." They chose Barabbas the robber, and shouted: "We have no king but Cæsar! As to this son of David, crucify Him. Whosoever maketh himself a king, speaketh against Cæsar." They were offended by Pilate's inscription over the cross; alleging that the title, though claimed by Christ, did not belong to Him. Yet there it remained in spite of their protest, a public recognition that the rejected Jesus of Nazareth was indeed the King of the Jews.

Then lastly, and still in accordance with the Davidic programme, even down to the minutest particulars—piercing His hands and His feet, casting lots for His vesture, and in His thirst giving Him vinegar to drink—they killed the Prince of life. And here their action and their power ended, and God's action began. In harmony with the outline in the Psalms, Messiah's soul was not left in Hades, nor did His body see corruption. God raised Him from the dead, and exalted Him to His own right hand in heaven. The earthly kingdom was postponed for a time, but only postponed, not finally set aside for something different. Jesus Himself admitted that He was a king, and born to rule and reign on earth and over Israel; but He said to Pilate: "*Now* is My kingdom not from hence"; and He bowed His head to receive from man the crown of thorns, and submitted to the soldiers' mockery, saying, "Hail King of the Jews." Earth offered Him no throne at that time, and still "we see not yet all things put under Him" in this world—but do we there

fore see no exaltation? Have the predicted sufferings of Christ come true, and have the glories that should follow *failed*? Far, very far from it! "We see Jesus crowned with glory and honour."¹ "When He had by Himself purged our sins, He sat down (as predicted in the programme) on the right hand of the Majesty on high."² The apostles *saw Him ascend*: "While they beheld, He was taken up; and a cloud received Him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven."³

Stephen beheld heaven open, and *saw the Son of man in glory at the right hand of God*; Saul of Tarsus *heard His voice* from out the ineffable glory; John saw Him in His super-human radiance, and was overwhelmed by the vision. The records leave no room to doubt that He "ascended up on high" as predicted; and He led captivity captive when He did so. In proof of His power to rifle the grave and rob death of his victims, He said to the dying thief: "To-day shalt thou be with Me in paradise." When He died, the graves were opened, and many bodies of the saints arose. He received also gifts for men; Peter said, "Him hath God exalted with His right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for *to give repentance to Israel and remission of sins*." And He received a greater gift still, the supremest gift of all. Before His ascension He had said: "It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you." Peter, speaking of the effusion of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost, said of Christ: "Being by the right hand of

¹ Heb. ii. 9² Heb. i. 3.³ Acts i. 9-11.

God exalted, and having *received* of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, *He hath shed forth this*, which ye now see and hear.”¹ And it must be noted that these were gifts for “the rebellious also,” according to the programme. They were given to those who had rejected and murdered Him ; the first church was composed of Jerusalem sinners : and they were in order “that the Lord God might dwell among them,” by His Holy Spirit. He did so, and in a short time, through this mighty indwelling power, thousands and tens of thousands had become disciples of the ascended Saviour, and the early Church had turned the world upside-down. In less than three centuries it had overthrown the paganism of the mighty Roman empire ; in a few more it had evangelized the Gothic barbarians ; and now the religion of Christ is the religion of the civilized world. Year by year it is spreading in the heathen world. Already *a third of the human race has received it, and bows the knee to the once crucified Jesus*. Whence all this power and progress ? Whence this strange spectacle of the creed of Christ spreading evermore by its own indestructible vitality, while other faiths are languishing and dying out ? Is it not because the ascended Saviour is working with and through His people according to His word : “Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the age” ? His Divine co-operation alone can account for the spread of such a religion in such a world, in spite of all the obstacles that opposed and still oppose it. *Christ is ruling even now in the midst of His enemies*, as well as governing His own people, who willingly obey Him. The second great feature of the programme—the exaltation of the crucified King—is *as clearly fulfilled as the first*. The sufferings *have* been followed by glory. Jehovah *has* appointed Him a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek ; for He is the ONE MEDIATOR BETWEEN GOD AND MEN—the great High Priest of humanity.

¹ Acts ii. 33.

The third section of the programme, the second advent in glory to govern the world in righteousness, is confessedly future ; and we do not consequently treat of it here. He Himself said, "I will come again," and the final revelations of the apostolic age confirm the unfulfilled part of the programme in the amplest way. Our present theme is, however, fulfilled and not unfulfilled prophecy, so we do not dwell further on this.

There is thus no difficulty in demonstrating the marvellous fulfilment of the Davidic programme to those who accept the Gospel narrative as *true*. There is both a broad general correspondence and a minute specific agreement between the predictions and the facts which, taken together, are irresistible. It is not merely that we have the inspired testimony of apostles to the fulfilment of some of the prophetic sayings, and the still more authoritative assertions of the Saviour Himself, that David wrote of Him ; but it is that the outline of the Davidic programme *as a whole* is met by Christianity, *and by it alone*. Nothing else in the wide world has even the remotest resemblance to it. Consider ! An individual man, member of a certain definite family, of a certain definite tribe of the Jewish nation, was to become the ruler of the world for ever, exercising first a spiritual, priestly power from the heavens to which He *ascends* from a cross and a grave, and then a regal power on earth to which He again *descends* in judgment and glory. This broad outline corresponds in all its strange sublimity with Christian doctrine, experience, and hope, and with nothing else. Yet David knew nothing of Christianity. Incarnation was a thing of which he never dreamed. The session of a risen man at God's right hand in heaven was a conception impossible to the Jewish mind ; and a spiritual, priestly reign over a people gathered out of all *Gentile* nations was a providence which no Israelite would have anticipated ! How came the sweet psalmist of Israel to embody such conceptions in his prophetic poems ?

That is the first question. And, secondly, *How came history to realize them?*

The Jews did not intentionally frustrate their own Messianic anticipations by crucifying their King. Pilate and Herod little thought that they were fulfilling ancient Jewish predictions in their cruel and unjust treatment of the innocent Man arraigned at their bar. The Roman soldiers who pierced His hands and His feet, gave Him vinegar to drink, and parted His raiment among them, had never heard the twenty-second Psalm. There was and there *could* be no collusion in the case! A thousand years had intervened since the prophetic words were written. Empires had risen and passed away; the kingdom of David had become a province of the Roman empire; the temple of Solomon had been burned, that of Ezra and Nehemiah had arisen on its ruins, and in its turn fallen into decay, and been restored by Herod. Judah had been carried captive and had returned to her land, the ancient predictions were all the while read and sung in the synagogue of the Jews, and at last a startling and inexplicable series of events fulfilled them both in the letter and in the spirit.

As, however, not a few in these days hesitate as to the measure of credence which may be safely accorded to the Gospel narratives, and will scarcely feel the force of any proof of the fulfilment of the Davidic programme drawn from the New Testament records, we must remind them that no events of Roman history are better attested than the events of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Looking at them simply as historical incidents which occurred eighteen hundred years ago, they are abundantly evidenced by just the same sort of proof as that on which we base our belief in other events of authentic history. And the fact that we have, besides all this, four copious and almost contemporaneous biographies of Christ, together with an original account of the acts of His apostles, may be regarded in this sense as so

much superfluous evidence. If this latter did not exist at all, it would be easy to make out the whole of the Gospel story as to its outline, as well as that of the early spread of Christianity, from other writings of the period—pagan, controversial, and Christian; from monuments and imperial decrees, from ancient inscriptions in the catacombs and elsewhere, and from similar sources. Those who prefer doing so may therefore leave the Gospels out of account, and compare the Davidic programme, which we have been studying, with the facts of the Christian era as attested by other authorities.

And there is even a simpler way still of regarding the subject. Christianity is unquestionably in the world to-day; it is the most widespread and influential religion that exists, or ever has existed, on earth; it commands the intelligent assent and the more or less sincere reverence of the foremost nations of the world; and it has done this for many long ages. It is the parent of modern civilization, and its influence in the earth spreads every year. Its existence is a fact of gigantic importance—a very king of facts—the most conspicuous fact in the whole history of the human race; and it is, moreover, a fact which is evident to our senses, as well as to our intelligence. The foremost nations of the world, to the number of at least four hundred millions of mankind, bow at the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth and confess it to be the only one given under heaven or among men whereby they can be saved. Speaking broadly, and passing over exceptions which only prove the rule, this is the case. Much of this widespread Christianity may be, and is, apostate in character; much of it may be, and is, a mere profession rather than a reality; but this does not alter the fact of its existence, which is the thing that has to be considered and accounted for.

However corrupt and apostate, its professors hold their own form of Christianity to be the primitive one, and vehem-

mently repel the accusation that it is anything else, or anything new.

Now every effect has a cause, and every great effect a great cause. This is a great effect—great, not only by reason of its extent, but by reason of its duration ; for this fact is not observable now only, but it has been observable for the last fifteen hundred years. Christianity has been the leading religion of the world ever since Constantine proclaimed it the faith of the Roman empire. We have, therefore, to find an adequate cause for a fact which not only exists to-day but has existed for fifteen centuries, all through which the state of things has been in this respect what it is to-day. Since the time when the gorgeous and venerable, established and endowed paganism of the old Roman world, together with the benighted philosophies of Greeks and Romans alike, were overthrown by the young faith which less than three centuries previously had been born in Judea—since then, Christianity has unquestionably held the highest place among the nations that make history, and exerted the greatest power over them.

Now, as sensible and reasonable beings, we have to find a cause sufficient to account for this unquestionable and long-enduring fact. That cause must be sought in a comparatively short period of time ; that is, between the days of Constantine (A.D. 306–337), when the supremacy of Christianity was evidenced for the first time to the world, and the days of its Founder and His apostles. This is not a very long period,—it is one of about the same length as that which has elapsed since James the First reigned over England ; and it must be borne in mind that these first centuries are no *terra incognita*, they constitute no dim region of mythical legends or vague traditions like the days of the flood. We are not dependent on the New Testament for a clear conception of what was going on in the world at that time. The eight writers in that book—

Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Paul, Peter, James, and Jude—were by no means the only writers of that great era. Historians, essayists, satirists, poets, and philosophers in abundance were living and writing, for the period was one of unusual intelligence. It was the Golden Age of Augustus. Cicero, Sallust, Virgil, Horace, Strabo, Philo, Seneca, Ovid, Livy, Tacitus, Plutarch, Pliny, Suetonius,—all lived in, or immediately before, the first century, when Christianity came into existence; and many others only a little less celebrated, in the two succeeding centuries.

Now of these clever and observant writers, none who were contemporary with the birth and early growth of Christianity, deny or impugn in the slightest degree the Gospel narrative of its origin. Does not this look as if it were the true account? One of our strongest reasons for believing the Gospels to be true is that *their story was never disputed* by any of those who had the most ample opportunity to show up its falsehood, had it been false. No other account of the origin of Christianity was ever even *suggested*. The facts stated in the Gospels were public events, which occurred in populous places; the actors in the scenes described (especially in the Acts of the Apostles) were numbered by thousands; the witnesses, of course, by tens of thousands. Their lineal descendants must have been still living in the days of Constantine, their martyr tombs were still fresh; the churches they had formed all over the empire were still in existence,—in many cases the very buildings in which they had worshipped were still standing; family and local traditions were still strong and clear; early copies, and even the very original manuscripts of the sacred writings were still extant, and preserved with the most scrupulous veneration; and secular writers not only do not deny but most clearly recognise the facts of the case. *If it was impossible to deny them then, is it not unreasonable to doubt them now?*

Profane historians and secular writers naturally did not go into detail on the subject of Christianity, which was a comparatively obscure phenomenon in their day, and, to some extent, outside the scope of their writings; but they allude to it in precisely the way one would expect. Tacitus, for instance, in his annals (which were written A.D. 100), mentions the Christians incidentally in connection with the burning of Rome in the reign of Nero.¹ He explains who and what they were by a retrospective glance in which he outlines the story, distinctly mentioning their connection with Christ as founder; His death, and the time, place, and manner of it; the wide and rapid spread of this faith throughout the Roman empire: and Gibbon, in quoting this testimony, admits that the most sceptical cannot question its authenticity or authority. Tacitus says that there

¹ "But not all the relief that could come from man, not all the bounties that the prince could bestow, nor all the atonements which could be presented to the gods, availed to relieve Nero from the infamy of being believed to have ordered the conflagration. Hence, to suppress the rumour, he falsely charged with the guilt, and punished with the most exquisite tortures, *the persons commonly called Christians*, who were hated for their enormities. CHRISTUS, *the founder of that name, was put to death as a criminal by Pontius Pilate, procurator of Judea, in the reign of Tiberius*: but the pernicious superstition, repressed for a time, broke out again, not only through *Judea, where the mischief originated*, but through the city of Rome also, whither all things horrible and disgraceful flow, from all quarters, as to a common receptacle, and where they are encouraged. Accordingly, first those were seized who *confessed they were Christians*: next, on their information, a vast multitude were convicted, not so much on the charge of burning the city, as of hating the human race. And in their deaths they were also made the subjects of sport, for they were covered with the hides of wild beasts, and worried to death by dogs, or nailed to crosses, or set fire to, and when day declined, burnt to serve for nocturnal lights. Nero offered his own gardens for that spectacle, and exhibited a Circensian game, indiscriminately mingling with the common people in the habit of a charioteer, or else standing in his chariot. Whence a feeling of compassion arose towards the sufferers, though guilty and deserving to be made examples of by capital punishment, because they seemed not to be cut off for the public good, but victims to the ferocity of one man."—(Tacitus, Bk. xv., ch. 44.)

were already in his day a vast multitude of Christians scattered in various parts of the empire, even in Rome itself. Pliny again, in his well-known correspondence with Trajan, mentions the great number of Christians in his own jurisdiction, and the severe persecutions they had suffered. Indeed, it is evident, on careful examination, that nearly all the secular writers of the first three centuries, whose works have come down to us, make allusions more or less full to Christianity, its origin, its rapid growth, its distinctive tenets and practices, the opposition it encountered, and the sufferings of its professors. Nor are these writings the only proofs of the early and rapid spread of Christianity. The persecuting edicts of the emperors of these three centuries, the Christian literature of the time (controverting the false teachings of the heretics), the apologies addressed by the leading Christian Fathers to the reigning governors and emperors, the monumental remains, the catacombs of Rome and their inscriptions,—all these and many similar proofs confirm in the fullest way the conclusion that the Gospel account of the origin of Christianity is the true and only one.

Now if this be so, if the New Testament as we have it presents the very story whose proclamation had already revolutionized the world in the days of Constantine, and has continued ever since to mould the development of our race, then the things related, however hard to believe, *must have occurred*; otherwise we should have a gigantic result without a cause—a mighty moral movement without any adequate initiatory force—a great fire kindled without even a spark to ignite it! This is impossible! If this Gospel story produced Christianity, common sense argues that *the story must be a true one*. What! Could a silly fable or a wicked lie accomplish the mighty results which Christianity has produced? Could a mere delusion, or a myth, magnified and distorted by human imagination, do what the

Gospel has done and is doing in the world? Fact is mighty; falsehood is weak. The Gospel statements, regarded as facts, are enough to account for everything that has happened. They may be summed up in the two great leading doctrines of Incarnation and Resurrection and Ascension, the latter accompanied by the Pentecostal effusion of the Holy Ghost. This means a *personal revelation of God*; it means that God has been "manifest in the flesh" to redeem mankind. Clearly, if *that* is a fact, it is no wonder the world has been revolutionized! If *that* is a fact, we have a moral cause sufficient to account for the past and the present, and to lead to glorious anticipations for the future in full harmony with the Davidic programme. And that a religion the Founder of which was ignominiously executed as a criminal, and the apostles of which were thereby plunged into hopeless despair, should have suddenly and immediately after this fatal crisis risen up and gone forth with a courage and faith that braved shame and loss, suffering and danger, defeat and death,—that it should have marched straight from the cross and the grave and the upper chamber in Jerusalem to the conquest of all-conquering Rome, and to a seat on the very throne of the Cæsars,—that it should have gone on from that day to this subjugating the minds and hearts of the most intelligent races of men, changing human laws and customs, inspiring all that is good and true, pure and noble, and creating, in fact, a new moral world,—that it should have done all this shows that it *was* a fact. If so, we may boldly say that two-thirds of the Davidic programme were in a most astonishing manner fulfilled about a thousand years after it was given. Its mysterious and apparently contradictory prophecies were explained and reconciled in the person, character, and career of the Messiah of Israel, the Christ of the Gospel, the Saviour of the lost, the priestly King who has already for eighteen hundred years reigned over myriads of willing hearts, and who shall yet reign for

ever over the happy nations of a redeemed humanity, in the glorious kingdom of God on earth.

Now this is *fulfilled prophecy on the greatest and widest scale*. No one can question that the Psalms came down to us from the days of David. No one can read them without perceiving that they contain statements which were never fulfilled in David's experience, and therefore are not history. *He* never had his hands and feet pierced, or his raiment parted among executioners, as in Psalm xxii. ; he was never invited to sit at Jehovah's right hand, or appointed to be a priest for ever, as in Psalm cx. ; he was not raised from the dead, as in Psalm xvi. These statements cannot *possibly* be history. What are they, then? Mere imagination or poetry? They are far too peculiar and too definite for that. What should cause a Jewish poet's imagination to take such a strange, non-natural form? David knew perfectly well that he himself would die, for on the death of his infant child he said, "I shall go to him." Could he then, even as a poet, express the anticipation that his flesh would never see corruption? Why should he in imagination picture himself as being put to death by having his hands and feet pierced? Crucifixion was not a *Jewish* form of punishment, but a *Roman* one; and his poems date from centuries prior to the foundation of Rome. Such an idea in David's writing can be nothing else than prediction. They who refuse to recognise his character as a prophet, or to see inspiration in these utterances, are bound to suggest some explanation of the words, which has at least an appearance of plausibility—which they cannot do. And even if they could, the difficulty would remain, because it is on record as a matter of history that a thousand years after he wrote, *a great Son of David did actually undergo these experiences*, fulfilled these very predictions, *did* suffer death by crucifixion at the hands of Romans, *was* raised from the dead, and was exalted to God's right hand.

The predictions then do not fit David; they are not history, and they cannot be mere poetry. As such they would be utterly unnatural. *They must be inspired prophecy*, for they were fulfilled a thousand years after they were written both in the spirit and in the letter, fulfilled exactly and literally, and quoted *as* fulfilled predictions by the generations that witnessed the fulfilment.

Grasp clearly the argument. We have before us three things :—

I. The Book of Psalms—a collection of Hebrew poems, published three thousand years ago, and in constant use from that day to this in Jewish ritual worship. Most of these hymns proceeded, as is universally acknowledged, from the pen of David, king of Israel, though they describe experiences that he never tasted, and express anticipations which he can never have indulged. These poems are regarded by the Jews as prophetic.

II. We have a series of most remarkable facts which happened about two thousand years ago, and which were very fully recorded by reliable eye-witnesses at the time, in the Gospels and in the Acts of the Apostles. These facts exactly fulfil the Davidic predictions embodied in the Psalms a thousand years previously.

III. We have a condition of things around us in the world *now* which can be accounted for only on the hypothesis that the story of the Gospels, which fulfils the Davidic programme, *is in the main true*. Christianity as it exists at this day—a vast and all-influential system, growing stronger year by year, and spreading continually among men—rests on the basis of the Gospel facts, and is itself a reflex witness to their truth.

Hence we have palpable *present* evidence that the Davidic programme was fulfilled. David spake as he was moved by the Holy Ghost, and the sufferings and glories of Christ were before the Mind that inspired the Messianic Psalms. This

conviction should not be lightly accepted as a matter of opinion merely, but allowed to sink down into the heart. The scene on Golgotha, even to its minutest incidents, lay naked and open before the Omniscient Eye; every physical, moral, and spiritual feature—whether in the victim or the executioners or the crowd—was foreseen. The items foretold are but specimens—samples of what might have been predicted. All was noted. The self-sacrifice of Christ,—oh, how deliberate!—how long contemplated!—how thoroughly anticipated! And as surely as the sufferings came in their season, as surely as the Melchizedek session at God's right hand has succeeded them, so surely will the throne of David be hereafter re-established on earth, and occupied by the Lord's Anointed.

CHAPTER VI.

THE DANIEL PROGRAMME.

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AS the Congo River in its onward flow across the "Dark Continent" broadens and deepens when its great tributaries mingle their waters with its own, so the stream of prophetic revelation increases continually in volume as it rolls down through the ages. From the first, its theme was redemption—the saving blessing in store for the human race ; but to Adam and to Abraham the great benefit—the salvation—only was predicted, while little was said of the great Benefactor, the Saviour Himself. To Moses and David visions of the blessed Coming One were granted, till, by degrees, His mediatorial work, His double nature, His wonderful personal experiences, and many features of His glorious kingdom were revealed. In the times of the Jewish kingdom especially, and during the captivity which followed its dissolution, the river of prophecy thus widened exceedingly. Its revelations concerned three main subjects :—

- I. The fortunes of the JEWISH kingdom and people.
- II. The person and work of MESSIAH THE PRINCE.
- III. The GENTILE nations—pagan kingdoms and empires.

I. THE JEWISH PROPHECIES included predictions of the dismemberment of the kingdom after Solomon's reign ; the overthrow of the ten tribes and its date ; the deliverance of Judah from the Assyrian invasion ; its subsequent conquest by Babylon ; the captivity and its duration ; the restoration and the means of it ; the duration of its restored existence ; the

Roman overthrow and subsequent desolation ; together with minor points so numerous that it may be safely asserted that Israel's entire history was written in advance, and that nothing ever befell them that was not first foretold. Thus the providential government of God over His people was manifested, and the moral reasons for His dispensations expounded beforehand. The Jewish prophets combined pastoral care and spiritual exhortation with prediction in their ministry. They were the ambassadors for God of their day, pleading with His people of "righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come." Like the apostles, they were witnesses for the truth, and often martyrs for its sake. Some of their predictions were accomplished speedily, attesting to the then living generation their Divine commission ; others were recorded for ages to come, and demonstrate in our own day the Divine prescience which inspired them.

II. The MESSIANIC predictions increased in number and in variety during this period, and included revelations as to the nature of Christ's person and mission, His birth of a virgin and the place where it should occur, His works of mercy, His meek and compassionate character, His sinlessness, His atoning self-sacrifice, His humiliation and rejection, His sufferings, death, and resurrection ; the atonement wrought by these, with its results in the gift of the Holy Ghost ; the propagation of the gospel among the Gentiles, and many other particulars.

III. The predictions as to the GENTILE nations and their rulers include those relating to Assyria, Babylon, Moab, Egypt, Tyre, Philistia, Kedar, Elam—all of which had more or less direct and important connection with the Jewish people, together with others relating to individuals, such as Sennacherib, Cyrus, and Nebuchadnezzar, who influenced their fortunes seriously. Such prophecies taught the Jews that Jehovah was not their God only, but the Supreme Ruler over all the earth. The polytheism of the day had divided the countries

of the world among its false deities, and circumscribed the power of each to certain districts. The Assyrians when settled in Samaria complained that they "knew not the manner of the God of the land." The Israelites could never thus limit Jehovah in their thoughts, since the predictions of His prophets unveiled the future of the Gentiles around them as well as their own, and their fulfilment proved that Divine providence controlled the one as completely as the other. Moreover, such prophecies abated the doubts and conflicts which must have arisen in the hearts and minds of pious Jews under the dark providences of defeat and captivity. When the enemy was permitted to triumph, and to boast in his false gods as if of superior might to Jehovah, it was a consolation to know by prophetic revelation that the triumph would be of brief duration, that the spoiler would soon himself be spoiled and the captive delivered, to understand the moral reasons for the disciplinary portions of the providential government of God, and to be led to repentance for the sins that had incurred Divine judgments.

It lies, however, outside the province of this work to examine in detail these several classes of predictions, or to trace their fulfilment. On some of them it would not be easy to base arguments of evidential value ; inasmuch as it might not at this distance of time be possible to prove that the date of the publication of the prediction was sufficiently remote from the event that fulfilled it, or that the event was so beyond the power of human sagacity to anticipate, as to demonstrate supernatural prescience. Moreover, none of these predictions properly fall under either of the great programmes which we are here examining. They stand apart from the comprehensive foreviews given at the commencement of the great sections of human history, to the fathers, or founders, of the new order of things, and they need not therefore detain us.

After the establishment of Jewish monarchy in the reign of David and Solomon, at which crisis the previous foreview

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was granted, no great turn or change in the history of the chosen people through whom the world's redemption was to be accomplished took place until the Babylonian captivity. The promise of the permanence of David's dynasty as long as the kingdom existed was conspicuously fulfilled, as may be clearly seen by a comparison between *his* dynasty which reigned at Jerusalem and that which occupied the throne of Israel or the ten tribes.

Frequent and violent interruptions, owing to revolt and assassination, marked the succession in Samaria. Jeroboam's line failed; Baasha's house did the same; the usurpers Zimri and Omri were cut off; so was the house of Ahab; Jehu's succession was expressly limited to four generations; and from that time to the fall of the ten tribes before Assyria, there was only a series of successive conspiracies which placed strangers on the throne. In Judah, on the contrary, there was an unbroken descent in one line, so that the family of David occupied his throne for 450 years without interruption, until both king and people were carried to Babylon. The related kingdom of Israel, though it only lasted 250 years, saw three complete extirpations¹ of the reigning family, the deposition of the house of Jehu, and perpetual confusion in the order of the kingdom. The stability of David's throne was not owing to an absence of danger; insurrection and conspiracy arose, but they could not overthrow it. Athaliah's domestic treachery did not defeat the promise of God; the confederacy of Syria and Ephraim to set up the son of Tabeal on the throne of Judah in the days of Ahaz, was foiled; and even the great invasion of Sennacherib, though it threatened Hezekiah, was not allowed to overthrow the dynasty of David before the appointed time. It was upheld when ruin was all around it. A very special providence preserved the throne of Judah and the dynasty that occupied it, until by its own act it forfeited all its privileges. But the temporal promises of the Davidic covenant had been made distinctly conditional,

and held good only as long as David's seed remained faithful to Jehovah. "If he (*i.e.* the king) commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men," was one of the provisions of the original covenant; and to Solomon God had said, "If thou wilt walk before Me, as David thy father walked, in integrity of heart, and in uprightness . . . then will I establish the throne of thy kingdom upon Israel for ever . . . but if ye go and serve other gods, and worship them, then will I cut off Israel out of the land that I have given them."¹ Hence, as long as the kings of Judah were even in the main faithful and obedient, they were upheld in spite of many and flagrant transgressions; but when Manasseh filled the land with idolatry and the blood of human sacrifices, when all the three sons of the good king Josiah "did evil in the sight of the Lord," then it was formally announced to the king by the prophet that the covenanted blessings were forfeited, and the penalty predicted 450 years before about to descend. There is something specially sad and pathetic in the whole strain of Jeremiah xxii., where God reluctantly yet solemnly revokes the promises of the covenant. "Go down to the house of the king of Judah, and speak this word, and say, Hear the word of the Lord, O king of Judah, that sittest upon the throne of David;" and then comes the terrible message. Jehoahaz (or Shallum) was to die an outcast in Egypt; his brother Jehoiakim to perish unlamented, and "be buried with the burial of an ass"; Jehoiachin, the last independent king of David's line, to be given into the hands of those that sought his life, cast out to die in another land. "O earth, earth, earth," ends this touching passage, "hear the word of the Lord. Write ye this man childless, a man that shall not prosper in his days: for no man of his seed shall prosper, sitting upon the throne of David, and ruling any more in Judah."²

¹ 1 Kings ix. 4.

² The word "childless" means here, without a successor on the throne,

Thus God revoked the title of David's seed to the throne, but not for ever, for the passage goes on to speak of "the Righteous Branch" that shall yet be raised to David, "the king" that shall "reign and prosper and execute judgment and justice in the earth." "The sure mercies of David" have not failed, his throne is only in abeyance, until He shall come whose right it is to reign.

A crisis of peculiar importance, a great turning-point in history, was reached at this juncture, which was an era of solemn and fundamental change to the chosen people. It was a fit crisis for a fresh outburst of prophetic light. The kingdom of Israel was over. The throne of Judah had fallen to rise no more until days yet to come. The times of the Gentiles were about to commence. The heritage of Jehovah lay waste, the temple of God was a heap of blackened ruins, the corporate nationality of the Jews was shattered, it was an hour of utmost gloom and deepest discouragement. The outward ordinances of religion were in abeyance, the typical ritual suspended, the Davidic covenant apparently broken—how intensely the light of further revelation was required! The national apostasy which had sunk the people of God as low as the surrounding heathen in polytheism and idolatry, had brought down on them an early instalment of the curses of the Sinaitic covenant, as a discipline which should restore them to the faith of Abraham. A foretaste of their present longer and more terrible chastisement had been allowed to overtake them—the Babylonian captivity had been sent to wean them from their besetting sin of idolatry, and draw them back to their allegiance to God. *Temporal* supremacy was taken from the Jews and given to the Gentiles at this time, just as later on *religious* supremacy, "the kingdom of

an heirless king; *officially* childless. Personally Jehoiachin had a family, and his son Salathiel enters into the line of the ancestry of Christ; Matt. i. 12; 1 Chron. iii. 17. The word might be rendered "destitute" or "deprived," not of offspring, but of a successor.

God," was similarly taken from them and given to a people bringing forth the fruits thereof. But mercy was mingled with judgment at this sorrowful crisis, and it was during this captivity that the sixth section of the Divine programme of the world's history, with its all-glorious issue and triumphant termination, was imparted to Daniel.

Before considering this gracious revelation, and in order to its better appreciation, we must take a brief glance at the then existing state of the civilized Gentile world, with whose future, prophecy thenceforth concerns itself as well as with the future of the chosen people.

The interest of history at that period centred still around the original seats of population with which we have before had to do—the great valleys of the Tigris and Euphrates, Palestine, Egypt, and Arabia, though the Medes and Persians and Elámites to the east were also coming more prominently into notice. The balance of power among these nations was, however, materially altered since the epoch we last considered. The golden days of Egypt were over, though it was still a kingdom, and at times able to assume the aggressive. Days of decrepitude and disintegration had long since descended on the land of Ham. Twenty petty princes were sometimes ruling at the same time over feeble sections of the once mighty empire of the Pharaohs. The powerful dominion of David and Solomon had proved as brief in its duration as it was rapid in its rise, and had been early broken into two kingdoms; the northern portion of the divided realm of the Jews had fallen under the power of Assyria a hundred and thirty years previously to the Babylonian captivity. The strong, rapacious, and cruel monarchs, Tiglath Pileser, Shalmanezar, Sennacherib, and Esarhaddon, had, as we know from their own still extant inscriptions, successively ravaged both the Jewish territories east of Jordan, and the fair valleys and plains of Ephraim. They had gradually subdued the ten tribes, and, according to the cruel custom of

the East (which happily has never obtained in Western warfare), they had deported the superior classes of the people to Assyria and Media. Only a poor and mongrel population, though probably a large one, dwelt in Samaria, which had become a tributary province of Assyria.

Sennacherib had also overrun Judea with his vast hosts, and threatened Egypt. He had, however, been checked by Divine intervention, in response to Hezekiah's faith and prayer. His successor Esarhaddon had taken Judah's wicked king Manasseh captive for a time, but he was restored on his repentance, for the throne of David had then to last a little longer. Assyria's own predicted doom was also fast approaching, for Nineveh's temporary respite was over, and the mighty city on the Tigris, whose magnificence, idolatry, corruption, tyranny, vainglory, and horrible cruelties have been revealed to us by its modern resurrection from the dust of ages, was about to fall. The government of Assyria had fallen into the weak hands of Sardanapalus, the provinces had risen in rebellion, the capital had been beleaguered by its foes. Its own great rivers, swelled by heavy rains, had broken down its walls for a length of twenty stadii; and the consequent exposure of his city had driven the miserable Sardanapalus in despair to burn himself, his family, and his treasures in his splendid palace. The prophecies of Nahum and Zephaniah had been literally and wonderfully fulfilled in the fall of the guilty capital and empire, and out of the ashes of Assyria on the Tigris in the north-east had arisen the great empire of Babylon on the Euphrates in the south-west.

It was during the siege of Nineveh that Nabopolassar, then the Assyrian viceroy in Babylonia, had asserted his independence, and established unopposed a new monarchy, which, under the circumstances of the times, grew with amazing rapidity. The fall of Nineveh and of the Assyrian empire had left its many provinces without a ruler and

without defence. Babylon and Egypt both strove for the supremacy, and the latter at first secured some successes in Asia. The good Jewish king Josiah tried to oppose the armies of Pharaoh Necho in their career of Asiatic conquest, but he was defeated and slain at Megiddo in B.C. 609—a defeat which his people bitterly mourned, and from which Judah never recovered. Necho's triumph, however, was brief; for three years later he and his army were routed in the great battle of Carchemish on the Euphrates, where the young and talented prince Nebuchadnezzar—then acting for his father, Nabopolassar—utterly defeated the Egyptian forces, and thus settled the question as to the future mastery of Asia (B.C. 605).¹ Necho retreated with the shattered remnant of his forces into Africa, resigned all pretension to the Asiatic conquests he had made, including Judea; and, as we read in the Book of Kings, he “came no more out of his land.” Judea became shortly afterwards a mere Babylonian province; Jerusalem and its temple were destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar, and its people taken captive (B.C. 606–598).

After four hundred and fifty years of independence the kingdom of David had thus fallen. Israel, as predicted, had “come down very low,” and her enemies had risen very high. The curse causeless had not come; Israel, having broken her covenant, had justly incurred its penalties, but very terrible they were. Profoundly dark to every Jewish heart must have been the abyss of the Babylonish captivity. It had swallowed up their national existence for the present, but that was the smallest part of it. Had it also robbed them of their future? Had the promises of God failed? Was the covenant forsworn for ever? What, then, of the oath to Abraham? What of the promised seed and the blessing of the world through him? Had the throne of Judah fallen to rise no more? But what, then, of the sure mercies of David, and what of Messiah the Prince and His eternal rule over

¹ This battle is prophetically and graphically described Jer. xlv. 3–12.

all nations? Jeremiah had indeed limited the captivity in Babylon to seventy years, but what was to follow? Were pagan Babylonian tyrants to lord it for ever over the earth? Was the worship of the only living and true God to be extinguished? Were polytheism and idolatry still to swamp mankind with their degrading floods of superstition? Power and permanence, wealth and wisdom, art and science—all seemed to be on their side. But was this state of things to continue? What were the counsels of God, and the plans of providence? Thoughtful and godly souls must have longed and prayed for light and for the consolations of hope.

Most dazzling was the vision of Gentile grandeur on which the gaze of the Jewish exiles on the banks of the Euphrates rested in the meantime. Nebuchadnezzar their captor was not only a most energetic and successful military hero and mighty conqueror, but he was besides a builder as magnificent as Rameses II. or Menephtah of Egypt themselves! Scripture gives us on this point only his one fatal soliloquy: "Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom, by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty?" but the speech was eminently characteristic of the man, and the boast was in harmony with the facts of the case, while the inscriptions he has left behind him abundantly explain and amplify the statement.

Babylon had, of course, been built ages before his day, for it was the *city* of the architects of the *tower* of Babel; and though the confusion of tongues stopped their erection of the latter, the former continued to exist. It had indeed been a seat of government from the earliest days, and had experienced a variety of fortunes. Recently in the time of the Assyrian empire it had been the provincial capital of Babylonia. But just as Augustus built Rome—in the sense that he found it brick and left it marble—so Nebuchadnezzar built Babylon; he enlarged, adorned, enriched, and strengthened it to such an extent, that he might well speak of the

magnificent city as his own creation. In a long and detailed account called the "standard inscription of Nebuchadnezzar," he rehearses his various and splendid architectural undertakings. His father, after assuming the regal position and title, had laid the foundations of an imperial city as he fully admits, but *he* erected the splendid superstructures, as Solomon built the temple for which David had prepared. He calls the city "the delight of his eyes," and exults in having made it "glorious," and especially in the impregnable defences with which he had surrounded it. According to Herodotus, the walls formed a circuit of fifty-five miles, enclosing a square measuring fourteen miles each way. Other writers give different dimensions, but the lowest computation represents it as ten miles square, and with an area consequently of a hundred square miles—four times as large as Paris, and twice as big as London.¹ The whole of this immense space was not of course covered with buildings; gardens, orchards, and palm groves were interspersed among them, and the royal quarter alone extended over some miles. Outside it were streets cutting each other at right angles, like those of American cities; most of the houses were many storeys high; and the city of the poor, where dwelt the countless labourers of the great king, was at some little distance. The height of the walls is variously stated by ancient historians as from three hundred feet down to seventy-five feet; but even this lowest estimate is enormous when the width of the wall, which was fifty cubits, is remembered. More than five hundred millions of square feet of solid masonry were contained in these bulwarks at the lowest computation. The buildings they enclosed—the temples, palaces, "hanging gardens," and towers—were gigantic and magnificent; artificial water in abundance was stored within the city, one reservoir alone being a mile long. Nebuchadnezzar's engineering operations were astonishing, and show how great the amount of

¹ London reckoned "within the bills of mortality."

knowledge and skill in those days, and how vast his resources in the "naked human strength" of forced labourers, who were, of course, mostly captives taken in war. A tunnel was, it is said, carried under the bed of the Euphrates, fifteen feet wide and twelve feet to the spring of the arch, and more than half a mile in length; and a magnificent drawbridge spanned the great stream, fully a mile wide at that point. Nor did Nebuchadnezzar confine his operations to the city itself. He connected the Tigris and Euphrates by a broad and deep channel called the NAHR MALCHA, or "Royal River," and dug an artificial lake near Sippara, which was a hundred and forty miles in circumference, and nearly two hundred feet deep. He built quays and breakwaters along the shores of the Persian Gulf, and founded a city in the neighbourhood; he restored the temple of Belus, or "tower of tongues," at Borsippa, eleven or twelve miles from Babylon; and its remains, the great Birs-i-Nimrud, are now the mightiest of all the ruins of Mesopotamia, and identified by many with the Tower of Babel, for it was already a vast and very ancient ruin when Nebuchadnezzar undertook its restoration. His works are spread over the entire country, and Sir Henry Rawlinson calculates that nine-tenths of the bricks brought from Mesopotamia are inscribed with his name. "At least a hundred sites in the tract immediately about Babylon give evidence by bricks bearing his legend of the marvellous activity and energy of this king." "Altogether there is reason to believe that he was one of the most indefatigable of all the builders that have left their mark upon the world in which we live. He covered Babylonia with great works, he was the Augustus of Babylon. He found it a perishing city of unbaked clay, he left it one of durable burnt brick."¹

"We trace the acropolis of the royal city, where stood the palaces from whose terraces Nebuchadnezzar surveyed the placid flood of the Euphrates twenty miles away north and

¹ Canon Rawlinson: "Egypt and Babylon," chap. vi.

as many south, with the city at his feet, the vast plain and palm groves along the river banks, the hanging gardens near, and temples and villages intermingled in the prospect. Closely adjacent were the mansions of Daniel and his friends, busy in the cares of state administration ; and here, too, the Chaldee magicians and the Babylonian princes with their craft and superstitions. Here the banquet hall of Belshazzar, and not far off the dens and the furnaces where suffered the victims of tyranny and the witnesses to truth. Now, as the stranger treads the ground once trodden by king and prophet, he needs but little meditation to call up to view their familiar haunts ; to see where once the wharves bordered the river, and where were the gates that opened to the soldiers of Cyrus, or erewhile to the captives from Jerusalem. Now a deadly silence broods over the scene. . . . All is one undistinguishable heap, and you can only be assured that on this spot Babel was first built, and the speech of man was first confounded ; that the great captive of Judah found honour and consolation here, and that heathen scribes penned, even where you stand, proclamations of honour and worship to the God of Israel, and of deliverance to His captives.

"This was the proud and luxurious court of Babylon, the seat of dominion over the mightiest nation that was under heaven, at the time when its sovereign pronounced the brief soliloquy which brought down upon him the judicial insanity described by Daniel ; and yonder, five or six miles south, Hillah, once a populous city, yet holds its place, and marks the memorable site where the plebeians of that age dwelt apart, with a broad intervening space to separate them from the courtiers and their lord."¹

The captive Jews were for the most part, like all his other prisoners of war, forced to work for the Royal Builder in erecting these splendid structures, and carrying out these vast enterprises. Crowds of expatriated Egyptians, Phœnicians,

¹ Rule : "Oriental Records," p. 220.

Syrians, Jews, Ammonites, and Moabites were forcibly settled all over Babylonia, and especially near the capital, from whom forced labour was required, and whose condition was consequently one of slavery, not unlike that of Israel in Egypt 1,000 years previously. The slavery of the Jews had been predicted: "Ye shall *serve* the king of Babylon seventy years." Even after the restoration, the Jews in Jerusalem still speak of themselves as slaves. "Behold, we are bondsmen this day,"—slaves in the land Thou gavest to our fathers; "it yieldeth much increase to the kings whom Thou hast set over us: . . . they have dominion over *our bodies*, and over our *cattle*, at *their pleasure*, and we are in great distress."¹

Nebuchadnezzar was a cruel and tyrannical monarch, as his treatment of enemies, and his conduct to Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin, and Zedekiah proves. But we must imagine him, nevertheless, as a highly civilized and intelligent ruler. He is represented both in Daniel and on the monuments as "at the head of a magnificent court, surrounded by 'princes, governors, and captains, judges, treasurers, councillors, and sheriffs,' waited on by eunuchs selected with the greatest care, well favoured and carefully educated; attended, whenever he requires it, by a multitude of astrologers and other 'wise men,' who seek to interpret to him the will of Heaven. He is an absolute monarch, disposing with a word of the lives and properties of his subjects, even the highest. All offices are in his gift. He can raise a foreigner to the second place in the kingdom, and even set him over the priestly order. His wealth is enormous, for he makes of pure gold an image, or obelisk, ninety feet high and nine feet broad. He is religious after a sort, but wavers in his faith, sometimes acknowledging the God of the Jews as the only real deity, sometimes relapsing into an idolatrous worship, and forcing all his subjects to follow his example. Even then, however, his polytheism is of a kind which admits of a special

¹ Neh. ix. 36, 37.

devotion to a particular deity, who is called emphatically 'his god.' In temper he is hasty and violent, but not obstinate; his fierce resolves are taken suddenly, and as suddenly repented of; he is, moreover, capable of bursts of gratitude and devotion, no less than of accesses of fury; like most Orientals, he is vainglorious; but he can humble himself before the chastening hand of the Almighty; in his better moods he shows a spirit astonishing in one of his country and time—a spirit of real piety, self-condemnation, and self-abasement, which renders him one of the most remarkable characters in Scripture.”¹

It was towards the close of his long reign of forty-three years that the remarkable episode of Nebuchadnezzar's insanity occurred. It seems to have been an attack of what is termed lycanthropy, a disease not unknown to physicians. It was not to be expected that so proud a monarch would leave on record any account of his own lunacy; but strange to say, there is one passage in his inscription which seems to allude to the interruption which it occasioned in all his usual avocations. The monument is broken and defective, but the extant portion runs thus:—

“‘In all my dominions I did not build a high place of power. The precious treasures of my kingdom I did not lay up. In Babylon, buildings for myself and the honour of my kingdom I did not lay out. In the worship of Merodach my lord, the joy of my heart, in Babylon, the city of his sovereignty and the seat of my empire, I did not sing his praises, and I did not furnish his altars (with victims), nor did I clear the canals.’ And there are other negative clauses, not yet translated. But these few lines suffice to tell of an utter abandonment of all royal care. No joy in his palace. No erection of a place of strength. No treasure laid up. An utter cessation of public works in unfinished Babylon. No observance of religion. Even the canals uncleansed are choked with mud and waterweed. Only suspension of reason, or a paralysis of all energy, could account for this.”²

The king then goes on to describe how he *subsequently*

¹ Rawlinson's "Ancient Monarchies," vol. iii. pp. 58, 59.

² Rule: "Oriental Records," p. 224.

resumed his great building works on his recovery, including the erection of the "Ingur-bel." "In a happy month and on an auspicious day its foundations I laid in the earth," he says. "I completely finished its top . . . and made it the high place of my kingdom. A strong fort of brick and mortar in strength I constructed. Inside the brick fortification another great fortification of long stones, of the size of great mountains, I made. Like Shedim I raised up its head. And this building I raised for a wonder; for the defence of the people I constructed it."¹

This, then, was the proud, pagan, cruel, conquering, busy, building, wealthy, and worldly monarch, into whose court the providence of God introduced at the crisis of the fall of Judah four young scions of the Jewish royal family, taken captive among others in the destruction of Jerusalem. This Babylon was the magnificent city in the midst of whose glory, iniquity, and idolatry, Daniel and his fellows grew up wiser than their teachers, prayerful and pious, pure and holy, steadfast to the God of their fathers, faithful unto death. Blessed illustration of the truth, that without taking His people out of the world, God can keep them from the evil!

The character of Daniel is lofty, beautiful, and gracious,—a model character in many respects, and one befitting a prophet of peculiar privilege. It is not deliberately sketched, but comes out incidentally; it does not obtrude itself on the attention as we read his prophecy, the book being mainly autobiographical in its form, and the prophet having no desire to make himself prominent. This style of writing, in which it is peculiarly easy to fall unconsciously into egoism, serves only to exhibit Daniel's singular self-abnegation and noble simplicity. We learn that he was an exile, a captive, and a slave like Joseph, as is indicated by the change of his name.²

¹ Rule: "Oriental Records," p. 225.

² This change, intended to remind the slave of his servitude, was a

He was only about fourteen when he came to Babylon, as we judge from the fact that it was at that age lads were committed to royal instructors to be trained for the king's service, on which they entered at sixteen or seventeen. The three years during which he was "taught the learning and tongue of the Chaldeans" early displayed his character, manifesting a beautiful boyish simplicity of faith, and that high-principled self-denial in trifles for conscience sake, which is the sure earnest of future greatness, and gives the best promise of a grand career. His faith grew by exercise, till it prevailed to bring down the interpretation of the king's dream, and it lasted through life, leading the prophet in his old age to "continue in prayer," even when the den of lions was the penalty. Bold and uncompromising where allegiance to God was concerned, Daniel was, however, singularly respectful and deferential, sympathetic, polite, and patient. Though never dazzled or deluded by the splendours of Nebuchadnezzar's court, he evidently both admired and respected his vast power. It had, indeed, elements of greatness as the *first* which changed the "robber-tyrant domination of Assyrian and Babylonian might into organized rule." This respect is consistently shown—in his explanation of the king's dream of the image, and subsequently in that of the tree cut down, which predicted Nebuchadnezzar's insanity. How reluctant is the prophet to explain this latter vision! He sat astonished for an hour, and his thoughts troubled him,

custom of the East and of the period, and continued even to Christian times. Chrysostom says: "The master having bought a slave, wishing to show him that he *is* master, *changes his name*." And again, "that the imposition of names is a symbol of mastership is plain from what we too do" (St. Chrysostom, Sermon 12, Op. iii. 1). And Daniel was not only a slave, but a life-long sufferer at the hands of his captors, one of those in whom was fulfilled the prediction to Hezekiah (Isa. xxxix. 7), as appears from the fact stated in chapter i. 3. This makes his noble and faithful character all the more remarkable, as his class were proverbially addicted to intrigue, assassination, and conspiracies. Gibbon dwells on their notoriously pernicious influence on courts and kings.

not because he feared the results to himself of the unwelcome intelligence he had to deliver, but out of sincere sorrow for and sympathy with the proud monarch before him. Tenderly and respectfully he at last, when urged, reveals the counsel of God to the king, accompanying the announcement with words of gentle yet earnest exhortation, if perchance reformation of life might lead to a lengthening of tranquillity. The same deferential, respectful tone marks his words to the weak and unjust Darius: "Before thee also, O king, have I done no hurt." And especially it comes out in his interview with Belshazzar on the eve of the capture of Babylon, when he recalls the glory of Nebuchadnezzar as he had seen it in his own early days. "The Most High God gave thy father a kingdom, and majesty, and glory, and honour: and for (or on account of) the majesty that He gave him, all peoples, nations, and languages, trembled and feared before him: whom he would he slew; and whom he would he kept alive; and whom he would he set up; and whom he would he put down."¹

Daniel's career of prosperity in a strange land never weaned his affections from his fatherland, or lessened his longing for the restoration of his people and the temple at Jerusalem. Three times a day he prayed "towards Jerusalem," as we learn incidentally in his old age. He led a life of earnest, longing prayerfulness for Jewish interests, while all those seventy years doing faithfully the king's business. So perfect was his fidelity that his enemies could find no fault in him in his official capacity, and the length of his career makes the statement remarkable.

"The stripling of seventeen *sat in the king's gate* ('in the Porte,' as we say, retaining the oriental term), president over all the colleges of the *wise men*, and of the whole province of Babylon. *Daniel continued even unto the first year of King Cyrus*, are the simple words; but what a

¹ Chap. v. 18, 19.

volume of tried faithfulness is unrolled by them! Amid all the intrigues, indigenous, at all times, in dynasties of oriental despotism, where intrigue too rolls round so surely and so suddenly on its author's head; amid all the envy towards a foreign captive in high office as a king's councillor; amid all the trouble incidental to the insanity of the king, or to the murder of two of his successors,—in that whole critical period for his people Daniel *continued*. . . .

“The force of the words is not drawn out; but, *as perseverance is the one final touchstone of man*, so these scattered notices combine in a grand outline of one, an alien, a captive, of that misused class who are proverbially the intriguers, favourites, pests of oriental courts, who revenge on man their ill-treatment at the hand of man; yet, himself, in uniform integrity, outliving envy, jealousy, dynasties; surviving in untarnished uncorrupting greatness the seventy years of the captivity; honoured during the forty-three years of Nebuchadnezzar's reign; *doing the king's business* under the insolent and sensual boy Belshazzar; owned by the conquering Medo-Persians; the stay doubtless and human protector of his people during those long years of exile; probably commissioned to write the decree of Cyrus which gave leave for that long longed-for restoration of his people, whose re-entrance into their land, like Moses of old, he was not to share. Deeds are more eloquent than words. Such undeviating integrity, beyond the ordinary life of man, in a worshipper of the one God, in the most dissolute and degraded of the merchant-cities of old, first minister in the first of the world-monarchies,” gives him a place among the highest and holiest men the world has ever seen.¹

This was the prophet to whom He who sees the end from the beginning, was pleased to reveal THE SIXTH SECTION OF THE PROGRAMME OF THE *world's history*.

This section was fuller and more detailed and definite

¹ Pusey: “Lectures on Daniel the Prophet,” pp. 20, 22.

than any which had preceded it, and extending from its own date, five to six centuries before Christ, to the end of the present state of things, the resurrection of the dead and the era of blessedness. It contains, with some *unfulfilled* predictions, a prophecy of *the outline of history for twenty-five centuries*; and a comparison of its statements with the well-known course of events must either attest its supernatural inspiration, or confute it even more clearly than any of the programmes we have as yet considered.

Questions as to the date of the Book of Daniel have been raised by rationalistic critics to whom real prophecy in any sense is as incredible as real miracle. The objections raised are about as baseless as objections well could be; and the counter-theories as to the date of the prophecy are one and all incredible, some even ludicrous. The true date, as we will presently show, has been abundantly confirmed and verified both from external and internal evidence. No further proof of the authenticity of the accepted date ought to be demanded—nor can any be given, until further Babylonian exploration brings to light, as it probably will do, contemporaneous evidence of the existence and career of the prophet. But our present argument requires no consideration of this question. Because, even if we accept the latest date suggested for the publication of Daniel, it fails to abate the claim of the book to contain supernatural predictions which were published hundreds and some of them thousands of years before they were fulfilled, and remains therefore an unanswerable witness to the prescient wisdom of God, to the intense reality of His providential government of the world, and to the Divine inspiration of the Scriptures.

In treating on this subject, we must presume on an acquaintance with the Book of Daniel on the part of our readers. As a mere work of very ancient literature it is an intensely interesting one, while as an important part of

the word of God it well repays study. Its life-like sketches of the state of things in which the writer lived, and of the characters of those with whom he came in contact ; its graphic accounts of the tragic and wonderful incidents of his career ; its pictures of saintly devotion, heroic self-sacrifice, calm faith, holy courage, and prevailing prayer, of fidelity under most ensnaring temptation, and of patriotism that nothing could shake ; above all, its glorious witness to the delivering power and grace of God, and its lessons of lofty morality, to say nothing of its wonderful anticipations of the world's history—all conspire to make it a document of surpassing attraction. The greatest and wisest philosopher may ponder its pages, as the incomparable Sir Isaac Newton loved to do ; while the simplest child finds no stories more interesting than those of the den of lions, the Hebrew children, and the handwriting on the wall ; and evangelists like Moody find no theme more moving than the experiences of the holy prophet. The book is partly historic and partly prophetic, facts and foreviews being blended in about equal proportions. The second and the last six chapters of the book are mainly prophecy, the remainder history, in which however detached predictions of events which were near at hand at the time occur.

The prophecies, with the exception of the one great Messianic prediction, and the few closing ones of the book, are *political* in character ; they relate to kings and kingdoms, victories and defeats, treaties and royal marriages, and the fortunes of different nations ; and in this fact we have a fresh proof of the suitability of the instruments divinely selected for the work they are destined to do. Moses, trained in college and at court, and placed in command of armies and expeditions, familiarized subsequently with the mountains and valleys and resources of the Sinaitic peninsula, was appointed to lead the Exodus of Israel, and convey the law of God to the Jewish nation. David, the first great king of

Israel, is chosen to receive revelations as to the kingdom, and as to the Messiah who should rule to the uttermost ends of the earth. And now Daniel with his noble Jewish lineage, his high and careful Gentile education and training, his familiarity with the imperial politics of Nebuchadnezzar and with the varied civilization of Chaldea,—Daniel with his statesmanlike experience of government, with his personal faith and his pure aspirations, with his strong national sympathies, yet his wide acquaintance with the world,—Daniel the royal exile, the “ruler over the whole province of Babylon, and chief of the governors over all the wise men of Babylon” (Dan. ii. 48), is made the medium of revelations embracing the political outline of long centuries of Gentile history, the first and second advents of Messiah the Prince, the hope of Israel and the salvation of the world. His training and experience, his character and position, all adapted him peculiarly for his work, and to be the channel of the wonderful revelation which was committed to him.

So numerous are the predictions in this short book that it would require a volume to consider them in detail. We must take up the main outline only of its programme of the future, and that outline is so clear and so comprehensive that subsequent history must have either definitely verified or absolutely falsified it. There can in this case be no possible uncertainty or doubtfulness as to the correspondence of prophecy and fulfilment. When a long series of consecutive events, embracing the political fortunes of all the leading nations of the world for twenty-five centuries, together with the characters and epochs of the greatest heroes of history, are predicted in succession as luminously and clearly as if the prophecy were a narrative, it must be either plainly fulfilled or not so. In this sixth section of the programme there is evidence of greater strength than in any of the previous ones of Divine foreknowledge, and of the control of the course of history by Divine power.

The programme has four main divisions, the last of which is still unfulfilled :—

I. The twice-repeated prediction of a succession of FOUR GREAT EMPIRES, followed by the kingdom of God.

II. The full and chronological prophecy of the FIRST ADVENT OF CHRIST, and the DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM.

III. A long and detailed prediction of the events connected with the second and third of the four great monarchies, including especially the wars of the Ptolemies and Seleucidæ, the Maccabean persecutions and martyrdoms, and the career of Antiochus Epiphanes.

IV. Predictions relating to events still future—the second advent of Christ, the resurrection of the dead, the restoration of Israel, the cleansing of the sanctuary, and the establishment of the kingdom of the Son of man.

We shall only have time to consider the first two of these sections in detail and to glance at the third, a large portion of which is fulfilled already, though it passes towards the close into the unfulfilled.

On the first point—the four empires—the following is the revelation which was given first in a dream to Nebuchadnezzar, and secondly in a vision to Daniel :—

“Thou, O king, sawest, and behold a great image. This great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee ; and the form thereof was terrible. This image’s head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass. His legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay. Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing-floors ; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them : and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth.”¹

¹ Dan. ii. 31–35.

“Daniel spake and said, I saw in my vision by night, and, behold, the four winds of the heaven strove upon the great sea. And four great beasts came up from the sea, diverse one from another. The first was like a lion, and had eagle’s wings: I beheld till the wings thereof were plucked, and it was lifted up from the earth, and made stand upon the feet as a man, and a man’s heart was given to it. And behold another beast, a second, like to a bear, and it raised up itself on one side, and it had three ribs in the mouth of it between the teeth of it: and they said thus unto it, Arise, devour much flesh. After this I beheld, and lo another, like a leopard, which had upon the back of it four wings of a fowl; the beast had also four heads; and dominion was given to it. After this I saw in the night visions, and behold a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth: it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it: and it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it; and it had ten horns. *I considered the horns*, and, behold, there came up among them another little horn, before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots: and, behold, in this horn were *eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things*.

“I beheld till the thrones were set, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened. I beheld then *because of the voice of the great words which the horn spake*: I beheld even till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame. (As concerning the rest of the beasts, they had their *dominion* taken away: yet their lives were prolonged for a season and

time.) I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought Him near before Him. And there was given Him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve Him: His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.”¹

Both these prophecies are conveyed by means of symbols. Is their meaning doubtful, obscure, and uncertain on this account? By no means. The divinely selected symbols are *divinely interpreted*, and hence there is happily no room for doubt as to their precise signification. The following is Daniel's interpretation of the king's vision:—

“This is the dream; and we will tell the interpretation thereof before the king. Thou, O king, art a king of kings: for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory. And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath He given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all. Thou art this head of gold. And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee, and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth. And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron: forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things: and as iron that breaketh all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise. And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potters' clay, and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay. And as the toes of the feet were part of iron, and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong, and partly broken. And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men:

¹ Dan. vii. 2-14.

but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay. And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed : and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall *break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever*. Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold ; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter : and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure.”¹

And again the angel's interpretation of Daniel's own vision is as follows :—

“ These great beasts, which are four, are four kings (or kingdoms), which shall arise out of the earth. But the saints of the Most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever.”

This explanation was comprehensive and clear, but went no further than the former revelation given fifty years previously to Nebuchadnezzar, though the vision had suggested much additional matter. Daniel consequently was not satisfied. He asks for fuller explanation, especially of certain features of the fourth beast.

“ Then I would know the truth of the fourth beast, which was diverse from all the others, exceeding dreadful, whose teeth were of iron, and his nails of brass ; which devoured, brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with his feet ; and of the ten horns that were in his head, and of the other which came up, and before whom three fell ; even of that horn that had eyes, and a mouth that spake very great things, whose look was more stout than his fellows. I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them ; until the Ancient of days came, and judgment

¹ Dan. ii. 36-45.

was given to the saints of the Most High ; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom."

The desired explanation was graciously given—given with the brevity, authority, and clearness, which always characterize angelic communications, in which every word has weighty meaning.

"Thus he said, The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall be diverse from all kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down, and break it in pieces. And the *ten horns* out of this kingdom are *ten kings that shall arise*: and *another* shall rise after them; and he shall be diverse from the first, and he shall subdue three kings. And he shall speak great words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time, and times, and the dividing of time. But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end.

"And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey Him."¹

The Jewish captivity was the *occasion* on which this programme was given, and its main *object* was *to cheer and sustain the people of God*, through the ages of delay, and the frequent times of tribulation that were to intervene prior, not to the first advent, but to the *Kingdom* of Messiah. The two prophecies each announce a succession of four Gentile empires to fill the interval between Nebuchadnezzar's days and that Everlasting Reign; four, and four *only*, and then—the Kingdom of the Son of man and of the saints. To Daniel and his fellows, and to others like him, this prediction

¹ Dan. vii. 17-27.

must have brought strong consolation. Pagan wild-beast-like empires, cruel, ravening, destructive, and brutal in their degradation and ignorance of God, were not, however, fierce and strong to last for ever. After a brief succession of *four*, of which one was already in existence, they were to cease and give place to the Kingdom of Messiah. The fall of Judah had not then abrogated the covenant! The dark and terrible experiences of the present were only an interlude, the sure mercies of David were *not* to fail, though there was room for the patience of hope. No chronology at all had been attached to the first prophecy; and though a mystical period was named in the second, it did not convey any such clear notion as to the duration of the four empires as would damp the hope that the time might be comparatively brief. In any case pagan dominion *had its limits*, idolatrous tyranny was not to endure for ever, the Kingdom of the Son of man and of the saints was the glad goal of human history.

On Nebuchadnezzar, too, the moral effect of the vision had a strong and wholesome bearing. It was given to him just after his great empire was established, when thoughts came into his mind upon his bed, "What should come to pass hereafter," what should be the future of the dominion he had established, and the dynasty of which he was the head. It was a salutary lesson for a monarch so rich and mighty, for a man so proud and vainglorious, and for a worshipper so devoted to idols, to learn that he owed his dominion to "the God of heaven," and that it was a very passing one; that he was merely the head of a great image, that other empires were destined to succeed the one he had founded, and that all such empires would be destroyed ere long by a dominion of a very different character, one which would last for ever. On him, however, the vision seems to have produced but little effect. He was pleased to have the dream which had so impressed him, recalled and interpreted; he duly rewarded Daniel, and accorded also a place in his pantheon to Daniel's

God, to whom the prophet had carefully attributed the revelation. But that was all. It needed a more painful and personal lesson to produce in the mind of this heathen despot the profound conviction which in his old age he so heartily expressed, of the glory and absolute supremacy of the God of heaven.¹

The two prophecies agree as to *the fourfold succession* ; but the second adds expressly a marked and important feature which the first only intimates, *i.e.*, that the fourth empire was to exist in *two different stages*, first as a single *empire*, and secondly as an association of *ten kingdoms*. The ten toes of the image had hinted this distinction, the angelic interpretation of the ten horns of the fourth beast *emphasizes* it, and seems to attach special importance to this stage of the history prefigured, for stress is laid on this feature. The fourth and last empire is interpreted much more fully than all the other three, and its last tenfold section is dwelt on more fully than its first.

The two predictions indicate unquestionably one and the same reality ; they give one and the same simple definite outline of the future, they present an identical programme, first in bare outline and then more filled in ; they agree in the assertion that the Gentile age then beginning would witness first four successive universal empires, and that then the fourth would dissolve into a commonwealth of ten separate but associated kingdoms.

The question before us is, Has this programme been fulfilled, and how? Did there actually and conspicuously occur such a succession, not of kingdoms merely, but of *empires* exercising by right of conquest dominion over *many* kingdoms—empires *universal* as far as the known world of their day extended—empires that brooked no rival, but lorded it over all during their span of supremacy. Can four such be indicated, as having succeeded each other from Nebuchadnezzar's day

¹ Chap. iv. 34.

onwards? And was the last dissolved into a ten-kingdomed commonwealth?

It is notorious that four such universal empires did arise, and did rule the world in succession. Scripture itself *names* them all, as well as profane history. It speaks of four supreme ruling kingdoms, and of four only, as having existed from Daniel's day to its own close. The first, that of Babylon; to whose king it was said, "Thou art this head of gold." The second, as the angel Gabriel told the prophet, was, "The ram having the two horns," "the kings of *Media and Persia*." The third, symbolised by "The rough goat," was "The king of *Grecia*." And in the Gospels we meet with the fourth: "There went out a decree from *Cæsar Augustus*, that all the world should be taxed." "If we let him alone, all men will believe on him, and *the Romans* will come and take away both our place and nation."

The testimony of profane history is equally clear.

One of the most invaluable relics of antiquity which we possess is the *Syntaxis* or *Almagest* of Ptolemy, an astronomer and chronologist who lived at the time of Hadrian's destruction of Jerusalem. This accurate writer records in his Canon (in connection with astronomic data verified by modern observations and absolutely certain) the names and dates of fifty-five successive sovereigns whose reigns extended over 907 years, from Nabonassar, the first king of Babylon (B.C. 747), to Antoninus Pius, the Emperor of Rome, in whose days Ptolemy wrote. He traces thus the succession of the greatest monarchs in the world from before Daniel's time to his own, a period of nine centuries, and presents in one unbroken line imperial rule as it was administered by different dynasties of monarchs from various centres of government, in Asia, Africa, and Europe. This Canon of Ptolemy is an unquestioned and unquestionable authority both as to history and chronology. He was not a Jew or a Christian, and had probably no knowledge of the prophecies of Daniel. How did the world's

history for those nine centuries present itself to him? He divides it into *four successive parts*, and enumerates twenty BABYLONIAN kings, ten PERSIAN (terminating with Alexander the Great, eleven in all); twelve GRECIAN, and ends with twelve ROMAN emperors, thus bringing the list down to his own time, which was that of the early Roman empire. He could not, of course, go any further, or foretell the fall of the empire, and the rise of the Gothic kingdoms of the middle ages. We append his celebrated Canon, a document of supreme importance to the historian.¹ Babylon,

¹ THE CANON OF PTOLEMY.

ΠΤΟΛΕΜΑΙΟΥ ΚΑΝΩΝ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΝ ΑΣΣΥΡΙΩΝ ΚΑΙ ΜΗΔΩΝ.

	Ετη	Συνα- γωγή.
α	Ναβονασαρου	ιδ ιδ
β	Ναδιου	β ι
γ	Χωζιρου και Πορου	ε κα
δ	Ιουγαιου	ε κη
ε	Μαρδοκεμπαδου	ιβ λη
ι	Αρκιανου	ε μγ
ζ	Αβασιλευτου πρωτου	β με
η	Βηλιβου	γ μη
θ	Απροναδιου	ι νδ
ι	Ριγηβηλου	α νε
ια	Μεσεσσιμορδακου	δ νθ
ιβ	Αβασιλευτου δευτερου	η ξζ
ιγ	Ασσαραδινου	ιγ π
ιδ	Σαοσδουχινου	κ ρ
ιε	Χυνιλαδανου	κβ ρκβ
ις	Ναβοπολλασαρου	κα ρμγ
ιζ	Ναβοκολλασαρου	μγ ρπλ
ιη	Ιλουαροδαμου	β ρπη
ιθ	Νιρικασσολασαρου	δ ρλβ
κ	Ναβοναδιου	ιζ σθ

ΠΕΡΣΩΝ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΙΣ.

κα	Κυρου	θ σιη
κβ	Καμβυσου	η σκλ
κγ	Δαρειου α.	λλ σξβ
κδ	Ξερξου	κα σπγ
κε	Αρταξερξου α.	μα τκδ
κη	Δαρειου β.	ιθ τμγ

PTOLEMY'S CANON OF KINGS OF THE ASSYRIANS AND MEDES.

	Each.	Sum.
1	Nabonassar	14 14
2	Nadius	2 16
3	Khozirus and Porus	5 21
4	Jougaius	5 26
5	Mardocempadus	12 38
6	Archianus	5 43
7	First Interregnum	2 45
8	Belibus	3 48
9	Apronadius	6 54
10	Regibelus	1 55
11	Mesesimordachus.	4 59
12	Second Interregnum	8 67
13	Asaridinus.	13 80
14	Saosduchinus.	20 100
15	Khuniladanus.	22 122
16	Nabopolassar.	21 143
17	Nabokolassar.	43 186
18	Ilvarodamus.	2 188
19	Nerikassolasar.	4 192
20	Nabonadius	17 209

PERSIAN KINGS.

21	Cyrus	9 218
22	Cambyses	8 226
23	Darius I.	36 262
24	Xerxes	21 283
25	Artaxerxes I.	41 324
26	Darius II.	19 343

Persia, Greece, Rome ; this was the order Ptolemy saw in looking *back* ; this was the *retrospect* of the historian, and it accords absolutely with the outline seen beforehand by the prophet. Moreover, as Faber points out :—

“ In each case the principle of continuous arrangement is

κζ	Αρταξερξου β.	μλ	τπθ
κη	Οχου		κα	υι
κθ	Αρωγων		β	υιβ
λ	Δαρείου γ.	δ	υιγ
λα	Αλεξανδρου Μακεδονος .		η	υκδ

ΕΤΗ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΝ ΤΩΝ ΜΕΤΑ ΤΗΝ
ΑΛΕΞΑΝΔΡΟΥ ΤΟΥ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ
ΤΕΛΕΥΤΗΝ.

α	Φιλιππου του μετ' Αλεξ- ανδρον τον κτιστην .	ζ	ζ
β	Αλεξανδρου Αιγου . . .	ιβ	ιθ

ΕΛΛΗΝΩΝ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΙΣ ΕΝ
ΑΙΓΥΠΤΩ.

γ	Πτολεμαιου Λαγου . . .	κ	λθ
δ	Πτ. Φιλαδελφου . . .	λη	οζ
ε	Πτ. Ευεργετου α. . . .	κε	ρβ
ι	Πτ. Φιλοπατορος . . .	ιζ	ριθ
ζ	Πτ. Επιφανους	κδ	ρμγ
η	Πτ. Φιλομητορος . . .	λε	ροη
θ	Πτ. Ευεργετου β. . . .	κθ	σζ
ι	Πτ. Σωτηρος	λη	σμγ
ια	Πτ. Διονυσου	κθ	σοβ
ιβ	Κλεοπατρας	κβ	σρδ

ΡΩΜΑΙΩΝ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΙΣ.

ιγ	Αυγουστου	μγ	τλζ
ιδ	Τιβεριου	κβ	τνθ
ιε	Γαιου	δ	τζγ
ιγ	Κλαυδιου	ιδ	τοζ
ιζ	Νερωτος	ιδ	τρα
ιη	Ουεσπασιανου	ι	υα
ιθ	Τιτου	γ	υδ
κ	Δομετιανου	ιε	υιθ
κα	Νερουα	α	υκ
κβ	Τραιανου	ιθ	υλθ
κγ	Αδριανου	κα	υξ
κδ	Αντωνιου	κγ	υπγ

27	Artaxerxes II.	46	389
28	Ochus	21	410
29	Arogus	2	412
30	Darius III.	4	416
31	Alexander of Macedon .	8	424

YEARS OF THE KINGS AFTER
THE DEATH OF KING
ALEXANDER.

1	Philip, after Alex- ander the Founder .	7	7
2	Alexand. Ægus . . .	12	19

KINGS OF THE GREEKS IN
EGYPT.

3	Ptolemy Lagus	20	39
4	— Philadelphus . . .	38	77
5	— Euergetes I. . . .	25	102
6	— Philopator	17	119
7	— Epiphanes	24	143
8	— Philometor	35	178
9	— Euergetes II. . . .	29	207
10	— Soter	36	243
11	— Dionysius	29	272
12	Cleopatra	22	294

KINGS OF THE ROMANS.

13	Augustus	43	337
14	Tiberius	22	359
15	Caius	4	363
16	Claudius	14	377
17	Nero	14	391
18	Vespasian	10	401
19	Titus	3	404
20	Domitian	15	419
21	Nerva	1	420
22	Trajan	19	439
23	Adrian	21	460
24	Antoninus	23	483

identical. Where Ptolemy makes the Persian Cyrus the immediate successor of the Babylonian Nabonadius, or Belshazzar, without taking into account the preceding kings of Persia or of Media, *there*, in the image, the silver joins itself to the gold; where Ptolemy makes the Grecian Alexander the immediate successor of the Persian Darius, without taking into account the preceding kings of Macedon, *there*, in the image, the brass joins itself to the silver; and where Ptolemy makes the Roman Augustus the immediate successor of the Grecian Cleopatra, without taking into account the long preceding roll of the consular Fasti and the primitive Roman monarchy, *there*, in the image, the iron joins itself to the brass. In short, the Canon of Ptolemy may well be deemed a running comment upon the altitudinal line of the great metallic image. As the parts of the image melt into each other, forming jointly one grand succession of supreme imperial domination, so the Canon of Ptolemy exhibits what may be called a picture of *unbroken imperial rule*, though administered by four successive dynasties, from Nabonassar to Augustus and his successors."

The same Divine care which raised up Herodotus and other Greek historians to carry on the records of the past, *from the point* to which they had been brought by the writings of the prophets—the same providence which raised up Josephus, at the termination of New Testament history, to record the destruction of Jerusalem—raised up also this Ptolemy, to show *the historian's view of the four great empires* of their succession and chronology. Nor does Ptolemy stand alone in his review of history. Ancients and moderns all are agreed as to the main outline of the history of those nations of which prophecy takes cognisance; *i.e.*, the nations which formed the environment of the people of God in the world, and have had to do with the Jews and the Christian Church. The ancient Jewish Targum of Jonathan Ben Uzziel, written shortly before the first advent; the writings of Josephus, who was born during

the lifetime of our Lord, the Commentary of Jerome, and the writings of other Fathers, of the early centuries of our era, the histories of Sulpicius—all give the same outline. In fact, ancient history is written on this principle; *all* the best writers divide their subject thus, and the experience of school and college teaches us the truth of Daniel's outline. Do we not study as four separate branches the histories of Rome, of Greece, of Persia, and of Babylon? ¹

Moreover, these empires, and especially the two latter, are the sources whence we derive the laws and politics and the foundation of the literature still prevailing among us, the arts of sculpture and drawing, and especially that of architecture. But little is known comparatively of the history of the other nations of antiquity, and there can be no question that these four had a *special* relation to the people of God and to the history of redemption. It was Babylon who led the Jews captive, Medo-Persia who restored them to their own land; Alexander who in his turn conquered Jerusalem and held Palestine, in and about which his successors the Ptolemies and the Seleucidæ were always warring; it was under the empire of Rome the glorious redemption itself was accomplished, and the Christian Church founded, while Jerusalem was destroyed, and the Jewish people were finally expelled from Palestine. So general is the concensus of opinion on this point among all who have any acquaintance with history, that it is needless to dwell on it. The succession of Normans, Plantagenets, Tudors, and Stuarts in our own history is not more patent than that of Babylonians, Persians, Grecians, and Romans in the history of the world since the days of Daniel, *including* in the last, the modern nations of Latin

¹ The latter is often combined with the Assyrian empire which preceded it, for until recent archæological discovery made it comparatively plain, the successions and distinctions of the earliest monarchies of the East were obscure, and their annals were often combined under the general title of "Ancient History." The four empires of this prophecy start with the *later* Babylonian empire of Nebuchadnezzar.

Christendom, the tenfold commonwealth of European nations which arose out of the ruins of the old Roman empire.

For it must be borne in mind that the double prophecy not only presents these four empires as successive, but as *filling the whole interval* until the second advent of Christ in glory, and the establishment of the everlasting kingdom of Messiah on earth. They exclude by implication any other or different state of things. The last, or Roman rule, continues in its tenfold state to the end of the existing order; there is nothing in the image lower than the feet, and there is no "beast" subsequent to the fourth. What follows is another age altogether. It is the kingdom of the Mountain that fills the whole earth—the kingdom of the God of heaven, to which we must revert presently. Meantime, a few details as to the history which has justified and fulfilled this first leading feature of Daniel's programme must be given, to recall the familiar facts.

The expressions used in ver. 38 about THE FIRST BABYLONIAN EMPIRE denote universality, but they must not be taken in a strict but in a popular sense, and with reference to the *then known world only*. As a matter of fact, Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom never extended even at all into Europe, nor into Africa beyond the bounds of Egypt; and even over the Asiatic countries he conquered, his dominion did not descend into the actual administration of government in them all—it was simply a general control, a superior power, and the exaction of tribute. As we have seen in other cases, Scripture occasionally uses unlimited terms in limited senses, and this principle must always be borne in mind in considering such statements as those in this prophecy. The principal conquests of Nebuchadnezzar were Syria, Palestine, Moab, Ammon, Tyre, Lydia, and Egypt. His successors were none of them equal to himself in administrative ability, and the empire did not last long. It was coterminous in its duration with the Babylonish captivity, seventy years: the

conquest of Babylonia and capture of Babylon by Cyrus brought it to an end in accordance with Jeremiah's predictions.

It should be realized that during the period of its dominion, and while the exploits of Nebuchadnezzar were engaging the minds of men, Greece and Rome—much more Spain, France, and Britain—were merely occupied by nomadic tribes, and not known even by name to the kingdoms of the East. The birthplace and nursery of mankind was the sphere in which the first empires were developed. The two rivers of Paradise, the Tigris and Euphrates, had numerous and populous cities all along their courses ; and Mesopotamia was the busy, rich, and influential part of the world, when Europe had not yet emerged from obscurity, and was unknown even by name to the Assyrians and Babylonians. How wonderful the contrast with the present state of things ! What remains of all this ancient wealth and power ? The mounds of Babylon, the ruins of Nineveh, the shattered temples of Mesopotamia, a few traditional sites and names, broken tablets and buried inscriptions, and a history contained for the most part in a few chapters of the word of God. The spirit which inspired Daniel foresaw the transitory nature of the glory of the then existing empires ; his predictions dwell very briefly on them, mention them only in a verse or two, and pass on rapidly to the more important dominion of the fourth empire. *An uninspired writer would have done the reverse*—dwelt on the then absorbing present at length, and paused lightly over the dim, uncertain future. But things are not what they seem. The glory of Babylon was the passing incident, the mighty king would soon be forgotten. The true greatness is moral, not material. The fame of Daniel remains ; his writings are pondered and studied to this day ; the record of the faith and fortitude of the Hebrew children stimulates and influences mankind even now ; while the doings of Nebuchadnezzar and Belshazzar, except

in as far as their histories were a fulfilment of prophecy, are simply matters of literary curiosity.

THE SECOND, OR MEDO-PERSIAN, EMPIRE, represented by the breast and arms of silver, and by the bear which raised itself up on one side, is in the subsequent vision (chap. viii.) represented as a ram having two horns, interpreted as "the kings of Media and Persia" (ver. 20). History shows us that Media was originally the stronger power of the two, but that it yielded to the ascendant of Persia in the days of the talented and enterprising young Cyrus. The way in which he rapidly obtained empire is well described by Herodotus, recalling the words of this prediction that "no beasts could stand before him, neither was there any that could deliver out of his hand, but he did according to his will and became great" (ver. 4). He says of his prosperity in war: "Wherever Cyrus turned himself to march, it was impossible for that nation to escape." Xenophon also describes in detail his conquests:—

"But Cyrus, receiving the tribes of Asia in a similar state, under their own laws, and starting with a small army of Persians, ruled the Medes and the Hyrcanians by their own consent; and subverted the Syrians, Assyrians, Arabians, Cappadocians, both the Phrygians, the Lydians, Carians, Phœnicians, Babylonians; and ruled also over the Bactrians, and Indians, and Cilicians: in like manner over the Sacæ, and Paphlagonians, and Mariandyni, and many other tribes, whose very names one can scarcely mention. And he ruled also over the Greeks in Asia, having come to the sea coast, and over the Cyprians and Egyptians. He reigned, therefore, over these nations, which were neither of the same language with himself nor with each other; and yet he was able to range over so great a territory by the fear he inspired, so that he struck all with dread, and none assailed him; and was able to infuse such a desire into the minds of all men to obtain his favour, that they consented continually to be ruled by his judgment. And he subverted so many tribes as it is troublesome to recount, in whatever direction we start from the royal palace, to the east and west, north and south."

THE THIRD, OR GRECIAN, EMPIRE is represented in the image by "the belly and thighs of brass," and in Daniel's

own vision by "a leopard with four wings of a fowl and four heads." Both are remarkably suitable emblems for the Grecian empire. Brass is frequently used as a symbol of eloquence, a feature in which Greece surpassed all other nations, and one which was applied by the Greeks to themselves. Theodoret writes: "The prophet has very fitly compared Alexander to the leopard, for swiftness, speed, and variableness." The empire of Greece in another part of the prophecy is compared also to a he-goat with a notable horn on his head, on the breaking of which four other horns appear. Rapidity of conquest, irresistible power, and geographical origin are all expressed in the words: "A he-goat came from the west on the face of the whole earth, and touched not the ground. He ran unto the ram in the fury of his power, smote him and brake his two horns. There was no power in the ram to stand before him; he cast him down to the ground and stamped upon him, and there was none that could deliver the ram out of his hand. Therefore the he-goat waxed very great; and when he was strong, the great horn was broken." The history could not be more exactly symbolised. Its period is that following the close of Scripture history. Thucydides tells the story and traces the struggle between the he-goat and the ram. The rapidity of Alexander's conquests in Asia was marvellous; he burst like a torrent on the expiring Persian empire, and all opposition was useless. The gigantic armies collected to oppose him melted like snow in the sunshine. The battles of Granicus B.C. 334, Issus in the following year, and Arbela in B.C. 331, settled the fate of the Persian empire, and established the wide dominion of the Greeks.

The entire and wonderful career of Alexander the Great was comprised in twelve brief years and seven months; he was only thirty when he drank himself to death. From the straits of Gibraltar to the banks of the Indus, ambassadors came to congratulate him on his glory and to seek his

friendship. He had himself traversed Asia victoriously from the Hellespont to India, stamped upon the Persian ram, destroyed its power, and none could deliver out of his hand. But when the world lay at his feet, and its suppliant embassies came seeking his favour,—“when the he-goat was strong, the great horn was broken.”

The connection of this great conqueror with the Jewish people is peculiarly interesting. The story is related by Josephus, and there seems no ground for questioning its truth. The Jews had taken an oath of allegiance to Darius, and did not feel at liberty to provision the troops of Alexander engaged in the siege of Tyre as he had ordered them to do. He was enraged, but could not at once punish them. As soon as he was at liberty, he started on this errand, however; and the fate of Jerusalem would have been that of Tyre but for a remarkable providential deliverance.

Jaddua, the high priest, warned of God in a dream, opened the gates and decorated the city, and dressed in his official robes, and with the priests and people dressed in white following him, he went forth to meet Alexander. On seeing them, the conqueror's anger was at once abated, and he told Parmenio, his general, that while still in Macedonia he had in a dream seen this person Jaddua, who had promised him victory. He entered Jerusalem in company with the priest, who then showed him this very prophecy of Daniel (then between two and three hundred years old), thereby greatly encouraging his hope of overthrowing the Persian empire.¹ Alexander not only did no harm to the Jews and their city and temple, but granted them immunities and gave them gifts.

It is interesting to observe that in the two visions we are

¹ “When the Book of Daniel was shown him wherein Daniel declared that one of the Greeks should destroy the empire of the Persians, he supposed that himself was the person intended.”—(Antiq. Bk. XI. viii. 5.)

specially considering, the whole history of this heroic period from Cyrus to Alexander, a period more celebrated probably than any other in history, is again passed over in a few verses. Profane historians and poets have dwelt on the glorious epoch which included the conquests of Cyrus, Cambyses, and Darius, the wars of Greece, the expedition of Xerxes, the battles of Marathon, Thermopylæ, and Salamis, the names of Miltiades, Themistocles, Aristides, Cimon, and Pericles, the struggles of Athens and Sparta, of Sparta and Thebes, the eloquence of Demosthenes, and the victories of Alexander. Arts and arms, taste and genius, conspire to make the era memorable for ever in the eyes of men. And yet how briefly does the Spirit of God dismiss the whole narrative. Alexander's empire was divided on his death among his generals, and formed the four kingdoms of Asia Minor, Syria, Greece, and Egypt. The mutual relations of these kingdoms are given in a later prophecy (chaps. x. and xi.), which we must not here attempt to consider fully. The prediction of the fourfold division was fulfilled, when Ptolemy Seleucus, Lysimachus, and Cassander shared Alexander's dominions between them, and assumed the title of kings.

THE FOURTH, or iron, kingdom symbolised the great EMPIRE OF ROME, which was to exist in two different stages : the first united with a strength like that of iron, which would devour the whole earth and break it in pieces ; the second divided into ten, the iron sharing the weakness of clay. The first or unbroken stage covers a period of about six centuries, from the conquests of Scipio, Sylla, and Pompey to the fall of the last emperor of Rome, Romulus Augustulus, A.D. 476. Jerome at the beginning of the fifth century clearly perceived, not only the fulfilment of the first part of the prediction, but the commencement of the second, which was observable even in his day, though abundantly more clear afterwards. He says :—

“ But the fourth kingdom, which clearly relates to the Ro-

mans, is iron, which breaks in pieces and subdues all things. But its feet and toes are in part iron and in part clay ; which is proved very plainly at this time (A.D. 400). For as in the beginning nothing was harder and stronger than the Roman empire, so in the end of things nothing is weaker."

Marvellous was the announcement in the days when it was given, before even Greece had risen into notice, and when Italy was the home of only a few feeble and constantly warring tribes, that an empire born among those barbarians was to extend its sway over the East, and be endued with a firmness of which oriental monarchs knew nothing. So little known was Rome even two hundred years later that Herodotus, in describing the earth with all its towns and cities, rivers and mountains, etc., never once mentions either the city of Rome or the Tiber on which it stands. For five centuries from its foundation there was very little indication that the Roman power would ever become a great one. Even when the empire of Alexander was falling into decay, Rome was nearly brought to destruction by the Punic wars ; and not till just before the end of the Macedonian monarchy were the Romans sufficiently free from domestic enemies to enter on a career of conquest. But then indeed it fulfilled to the letter the remarkable predictions in the prophecy, carried its victorious arms throughout the world by conquest, and by its singular power of governing subdued all nations and attained dimensions that had never before been equalled, and a degree of power which has never been paralleled since. When the victories of Trajan carried the power of Rome to its height, all nations were merely vassals to the mistress of the world. Gibbon's description of the might and majesty of the Roman empire should be read in the light of the prophecy in order to a real appreciation of the wonderful fulfilment of the latter. After reviewing in detail the different countries subjected to its sway, he says :—

"This long enumeration of provinces, whose broken frag-

ments have formed so many powerful kingdoms, might almost induce us to forgive the vanity or ignorance of the ancients. Dazzled with the extensive sway, the irresistible strength, and the real or affected moderation of the emperors, they permitted themselves to despise, and sometimes to forget, the outlying countries which had been left in the enjoyment of a barbarous independence; and they gradually usurped the licence of confounding the Roman monarchy with the globe of the earth. . . . That empire was above two thousand miles in breadth, from the wall of Antoninus and the northern limits of Dacia to Mount Atlas, and the Tropic of Cancer. It extended, in length, more than three thousand miles from the Western Ocean to the Euphrates. It was supposed to contain above sixteen hundred thousand square miles, for the most part of fertile and well-cultivated land. The arms of the republic, sometimes vanquished in battle, always victorious in war, advanced with rapid steps to the Euphrates, the Danube, the Rhine, and the ocean; and the images of gold, or silver, or brass, that might serve to represent the nations and their kings, were successively broken by the iron monarchy of Rome. . . .

“The empire of the Romans filled the world; and when that empire fell into the hands of a single person, the world became a safe and dreary prison for his enemies. The slave of imperial despotism, whether condemned to drag his gilded chain in Rome and the senate, or to wear out a life of exile on the barren rock of Seriphus, or the frozen banks of the Danube, expected his fate in silent despair. To resist was fatal, and it was impossible to fly. On every side he was encompassed with a vast extent of sea and land, which he could never hope to traverse without being discovered, seized, and restored to his irritated master. Beyond the frontiers his anxious view could discover nothing except the ocean, inhospitable deserts, and hostile tribes of barbarians of fierce manners and unknown language, or dependent kings

who would gladly purchase the Emperor's protection by the sacrifice of an obnoxious fugitive."¹

We have seen that Daniel's fourfold image and the vision of the four beasts both represent the Roman power as continuing in existence up to the time of the second advent, and as being destroyed and succeeded *only by it*. They represent the fourth, or Roman empire, as rising on the fall of the Grecian, and as occupying *the whole interval* between that date and the close of the times of the Gentiles. There is no break or gap in *the image*, and the fourth *beast* it is distinctly said continues *till* the establishment of the kingdom of the Son of man and of the saints.²

Now the old empire of Rome ended in the fifth century ; has any other form of power exercised from Rome arisen, and is it now in existence, and has this revived power of Rome been exercised over a commonwealth of ten kingdoms? This is evidently an exceedingly interesting and most important part of our inquiry into the fulfilment of this Daniel programme, because if history has realized this part of the foreview as exactly as the former portion, the fulfilment *must embrace our own times*, since the tenfold condition of the Roman world is to continue to the end of the age. Now it is one thing to read of a fulfilment in the past, and another to see it with our own eyes in the present. The Canon of Ptolemy and Gibbon's history of the Decline and Fall are doubtless good and trustworthy evidence ; but, after all, "seeing is believing," and there is nothing like experience for producing conviction. Present phenomena must needs impress the mind more than past ; hence the importance of the inquiry, *Was the Roman world divided into ten kingdoms on the fall of the empire? Has this division continued from that day to this* clearly traceable? Is it evident even now? What were the ten kingdoms at first? What have they been

¹ Gibbon : "Decline," chaps. i. and iii.

² Dan. vii. 26, 27.

ever since? and what are they at present? The answer to these inquiries is profoundly interesting, because among other reasons it must needs afford an indication of our present position in the stream of time with regard to the second advent. That indication may be to some extent indefinite, but it must be there, and it is the clearest information on the all-important subject which is attainable. The programme presents five episodes—the four empires and the tenfold commonwealth—and then follows the second advent. The four empires are past. When we have examined history on the subject of the tenfold commonwealth, we shall see how much of that is also past, and be able to judge to some extent how much remains; and this, though not the main object of our investigation, is a deeply interesting incidental result. To trace the fulfilment of the prophecy as an evidence of the inspiration of Scripture is our object; but who can fail to welcome any light on the subject of our Lord's return?

The first question that arises for consideration is, *In what sphere* are we to look for the ten kingdoms? Shall we seek for them in the whole extent of the Roman empire at the time of its widest dominion? or in that part of its territory which was properly Roman as distinguished from the countries belonging to previous empires subjugated by Rome?

A very little consideration will show that prophecy regards the four empires as being as distinct *in territory* as *in time*; as distinct in geographical boundaries as in chronological limits. They rise in a definite sequence; the supreme dominion of one does not in point of *time* overlap the supreme dominion of the following one, nor is the *territory* of a former "beast" or empire ever regarded as belonging to a later one, though it may have been actually conquered. Each has its own proper theatre or body, and the bodies continue to exist after the dominion is taken away. This is

distinctly stated, both in connection with the fourfold image and with the four beasts. In the first case the stone falls upon the clay and iron feet only, but the iron legs, the brazen body, the silver breast, and the golden head, are all by it "broken to pieces *together*." Now the *empires* represented by these have long since passed away. They cannot therefore be "broken to pieces" by the second advent. But the *territory* once occupied by them is still existing and still populous, and exposed to the judgments of the day of Christ just as much as Rome itself.

Similarly we read that the three earlier beasts did not cease to *exist* when the fourth arose. "Their *dominion* was taken away, yet their *lives* were prolonged for a season and time."¹ That is to say, the first three empires are regarded as co-existing *with the fourth* after their *dominion* has ended. This proves that they are regarded as *distinct in place* as well as in time. They continue to be recognised as territorial divisions of the earth after the disappearance of their political supremacy. Now the eastern empire of Rome which it acquired by conquest occupied precisely the same territory as the Grecian empire had done, and *its* conquests in Asia occupied the territories which originally formed the Babylonian and Medo-Persian empires. None of this territory belongs to "the legs of iron." It constitutes the golden, silver, and brazen portions of the image. It cannot be regarded as forming any part of the empire proper and peculiar to *Rome*.

The ten horns or kingdoms of the fourth empire must none of them be sought in the realms of the third, second, or first, but exclusively *in the realm of the fourth*, or in the territory PECULIAR to ROME, and which had never formed part either of the Grecian, Medo-Persian, or Babylonian empires. Sir Isaac Newton says on this point: "Seeing the

¹ Dan. vii. 12.

body of the third beast is confined to the nations on this side the Euphrates, and the body of the fourth beast is confined to the nations *on this side of Greece*, we are to look for all the four heads of the third beast among the nations on this side the Euphrates, and for all the eleven horns of the fourth beast among the nations on this side of Greece. Therefore we do not reckon the Greek empire seated at Constantinople among the *horns* of the fourth beast, because it belonged to the *body* of the third."

Our question then becomes more definite and takes this form—Was *'the territory peculiar to Rome*, the territory which is sometimes spoken of as the Western Empire, and of which Rome itself was the capital, *divided* on the fall of the old empire into ten kingdoms? *It is notorious that such was the case.* From the rise of the Roman empire to its fall in the fifth century it was one and undivided; since its decline and fall *as an empire*, the territory peculiar to Rome has been broken up into many independent sovereignties, bound *together into the one family of Latin Christendom by a common submission to the popes of Rome.* The number of distinct kingdoms has always been about ten—at times exactly ten, sinking at intervals to eight or nine, rising occasionally to twelve or thirteen, but averaging on the whole ten. The prophecy distinctly predicted that the number would not be constantly or invariably ten. It represents a little horn springing up among the ten, then there must have been eleven. It represents that three of the horns were plucked up before this little horn, then there could have been for a time eight only. Fresh horns must however have taken the place of the uprooted ones, for at the close of the beast's history the number is represented as still *ten*.

Hence the number of the kingdoms was to be generally, but not rigidly or unvaryingly, ten; there would as a rule throughout the whole period be ten kingdoms, occupying the sphere of the western empire of Rome; but the number

would be elastic, sometimes less, sometimes more, but always *about* ten, so that no *other* number of horns would as correctly represent the facts of the case. Alexander's empire was represented by one notable horn, the dynasties that arose amidst its broken fragments by *four* horns ; but Rome was to break up into a larger number, and *ten* different kingdoms would appear upon the scene, and occupy even till the end, the territory belonging to the fourth beast, still having Rome as in some sort their centre and bond of union, for they were to be horns of the *Roman* beast.

Such are the symbols, and they are the more remarkable because they foretell a state of things which had never existed in the world at the time when the prophecy was given, and which never did exist till a thousand years afterwards. Babylon, Persia, Greece, and Rome in its first phase, all sought and obtained *universal* dominion, and could brook no rival power. The prophecy foretold that in the distant future another state of things should arise, and that co-existing side by side, a family of ten kingdoms should divide the heritage of Rome, and while no longer in subjection to it as provinces, should yet, as independent kingdoms, continue to have a common connection with Rome.

The fact that the portion of the prophecy devoted to the detailed history of these horns is two or three times as long as that devoted to the history of the undivided empire, suggests that their actual history might probably extend over a much longer period than that of the undivided empire ; and there is no question that they continue in existence until the coming of Christ, and the establishment of His millennial kingdom.

They rise *on the fall of the empire*, for there is no gap in the image, and no break in the continuity of the history of the fourth beast, no indication whatever that any interval is to exist between the united and the dismembered conditions of the Roman world. The iron legs run *right on to*

the ten toes, and the story of the beast is continued without a break in the story of the ten horns.

What now have been the facts of history? *Was* the Roman empire on its fall divided into a number of separate kingdoms, and has it continued to be so ever since? Has the number of such kingdoms averaged ten? Have they retained a common connection with Rome? And how many such kingdoms now occupy the scene?

The ten kingdoms must first of course be sought among the Gothic dynasties of the fifth and sixth centuries by which the empire of the West was overthrown; and then at intervals ever since. Should we find that Europe has for ages been united under one monarch, or should we on the other hand find that it has been divided as a rule into thirty or forty kingdoms, we shall be driven to conclude that the prophecy has failed of fulfilment. But should we on the contrary find that amid incessant changes the number of the kingdoms of the European commonwealth has, as a rule, averaged ten, we must surely admit that this portion of the prophecy is as much fulfilled as the earlier portion of the four undivided empires. What further evidence of fulfilment can be desired, than that the thing predicted has come to pass?

As it would be impossible to note the exact number of kingdoms for each year of the thirteen or fourteen centuries which have since elapsed, we must content ourselves with taking a census each century.

The historian Machiavel, *without the slightest reference to this prophecy*, gives the following list of the nations which occupied the territory of the Western Empire *at the time of the fall of Romulus Augustulus, the last emperor of Rome*.

The Lombards, the Franks, the Burgundians, the Ostrogoths, the Visigoths, the Vandals, the Heruli, the Sueves, the Huns, and the Saxons; *ten in all*.

After a time the Huns disappeared, but other powers arose and obtained a home in the domains of old Rome. The changes were incessant, as horde after horde of barbarian invaders pressed in on every side to share the spoils; but still the number of established kingdoms was again and again ten. It never rose to twenty or thirty, it never fell to two or three. Charlemagne in his day reduced it for a time, and attempted, like Napoleon in a later age, to restore unity; both utterly failed, and after a very few years the normal ten kingdoms reappeared.

The following list gives the contemporary kingdoms existing in Western Europe at intervals of a hundred years apart, from the 9th to the 19th centuries. It is extracted from a much longer series in "The Four Prophetic Empires," by the Rev. T. R. Birks, and is introduced by the remark that a measure of uncertainty must exist as to whether some of the States should be included, as "it is sometimes doubtful whether a kingdom can claim an independent sovereignty on account of the complex and varying nature of its political relations." But as exactly as it can be estimated from the records of history, the following lists present the members of the family of kingdoms as they appeared from century to century. Where a note of interrogation follows a name, it implies that there are some elements of doubt as to whether it should be included or not.

A.D. 860.

Italy, Provence, Lorraine, East France, West France, Exarchate, Venice, Navarre, England, Scotland. Total, 10.

A.D. 950.

Germany, Burgundy, Lombardy, Exarchate, Venice, France, England, Scotland, Navarre, Leon. Total, 10.

A.D. 1050.

Germany, Exarchate, Venice, Norman Italy, France, England, Scotland, Arragon, Castile, Normandy (?), Hungary (?). Total, 9 to 11.

A.D. 1150.

Germany, Naples, Venice, France, England, Scotland, Arragon, Castile, Portugal, Hungary, Lombardy (?). Total, 10, or perhaps 11.

A.D. 1250.

Germany and Naples, Venice, Lombardy, France, England, Scotland, Arragon, Castile, Portugal, Hungary. Total, 10.

A.D. 1350.

Germany, Naples, Venice, Switzerland (?), Milan (?), Tuscany (?), France, England and Scotland, Arragon, Castile, Portugal, Hungary. Total, 9 to 12.

A.D. 1453.

Austria, Naples, Venice, France, England, Scotland, Arragon, Castile, Portugal, Hungary, Switzerland (?), Savoy (?), Milan (?), Tuscany (?). Total, 11 to 14.

A.D. 1552.

Austria, Venice, France, England, Scotland, Spain, Naples, Portugal, Hungary, Switzerland (?), Lombardy (?). Total, 9 to 11.

A.D. 1648.

Austria, Venice, France, Britain (?), Spain and Naples, Portugal, Hungary, Switzerland (?), Savoy, Tuscany, Holland. Total, 8 to 11.

A.D. 1750.

Austria and Hungary, France, Savoy and Sardinia, Venice, Tuscany, Spain, Portugal, Switzerland (?), Naples (?), Britain (?), Holland. Total, 8 to 11.

A.D. 1816.

Austria, Bavaria, Wurtemberg (?), Naples, Tuscany, Sardinia, Lombardy (?), France, Belgium, Spain, Portugal, Britain (?), Switzerland (?). Total, 9 to 13.

An examination of this list reveals the surprising fact, which would only become more apparent were the list lengthened ten times, so as to present a census of each *decade* instead of each century, that, amidst unceasing and almost countless fluctuations, the kingdoms of modern Europe have from their birth to the present day *averaged* ten in number. They have never since the break-up of old Rome been united into one single empire; they have never formed

one whole even like the United States. No scheme of proud ambition seeking to reunite the broken fragments has ever succeeded ; when such have arisen, they have been invariably dashed to pieces. Witness the legions of Napoleon buried beneath the snows of Russia, the armadas of Spain wrecked by Atlantic storms, and all the futile royal marriage arrangements by which monarchs vainly sought to create a revived *empire*. In spite of all human effort, in defiance of every attempt at reunion, the European commonwealth for thirteen or fourteen centuries *has* numbered on an average *ten kingdoms*.

And the division is as apparent now as ever ! Plainly and palpably inscribed on the map of Europe this day, it confronts the sceptic with its silent but conclusive testimony to the fulfilment of this great prophecy. Who can alter or add to this tenfold list of the kingdoms now occupying the sphere of old Rome ?

ITALY, AUSTRIA, SWITZERLAND, FRANCE, GERMANY, ENGLAND, HOLLAND, BELGIUM, SPAIN, and PORTUGAL.

Ten, and no more ; ten, and no less ! The Franco-Prussian war and the unification of Italy have once more developed distinctly the normal number of the kingdoms of Europe.

Nor is this all. The most marked feature of this prophecy is neither the four beasts nor the ten horns of the fourth, but the little horn with eyes and mouth that came up among them ; it is neither the four empires nor the ten kingdoms, but the one supremely influential and singularly wicked dynasty that rises with, and rules over, the latter ; exalts itself, blasphemes God, wears out His saints, and ultimately brings down Divine judgment on the beast and all his horns, itself included ; *i.e.*, on apostate Latin Christendom, and its centre—ROME.

What was this little horn ? To answer this question we ask another. What was the central ruling power in the European commonwealth of nations throughout the thousand

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years of the dark ages from the sixth to the sixteenth centuries? It was a power that ruled from Rome as did the Cæsars. It was the succession of Roman pontiffs, the line of tiara-crowned monarchs who for more than twelve centuries governed papal Rome; who ranked as temporal sovereigns as well as high priests in the Church, and who united under their sway the separate kingdoms of Latin Christendom. Every feature of the prophecy was fulfilled in their dynasty, and in no other. Those features are eight in number. The prophecy lays its finger on the place where we are to find the great enemy—Rome; on the point of time in the course of history at which we may expect to see him rise—the fall of the empire and the division of the Roman territory into a commonwealth of kingdoms; it specifies the nature of the power—politico-ecclesiastical, a horn, and yet an overseer or bishop; its character blasphemously self-exalting, lawless and persecuting; it measures its duration—a time, and times, and the dividing of time (or 1,260 years); and it specifies its doom—to have its dominion gradually consumed and taken away, and then be suddenly destroyed for ever by the glorious epiphany of Christ and the introduction of the kingdom of God on earth.

The proof that the Papacy is the power intended is strictly cumulative. If it answered to one of these indications, there would be a slight presumption against it; if to several, a strong one; if to the majority, an overwhelming one; while if it answer to all, then the proof that it is the power intended becomes irresistible. There is not a single clause in the prophecy that cannot be proved to fit the Roman Papacy exactly, except the last, which is not yet fulfilled.

Rome, which in her pagan phase defiled and destroyed the literal temple of God at Jerusalem, in her papal days defiled and destroyed the anti-typical spiritual temple of God—the Christian Church. Was it not worthy of God to warn that Church beforehand of the coming of this dreadful anti-Chris-

tian power, and to cheer her in all the sufferings she would have to endure from its tyranny by a knowledge of the issue of the great and terrible drama? Was it not right that the Roman power, pagan and papal, should occupy as paramount a place on the page of Scripture as it has actually done on the page of history? The eighteen Christian centuries lay open before the eye of the omniscient God, and no figure stood out so prominently in all their long course as that of the great antichrist. The pen of inspiration sketched him in a few bold, masterly strokes; and there is no mistaking the portrait. The prophecy identifies the greatest power of evil that has ever arisen in the earth, and unmasks the most treacherous and deceptive foe which the Church has ever had to meet; for if the ten horns be the kingdoms of modern Europe, there can be no question as to what the little horn is. Throughout Western Europe and throughout the dark ages all men revered, served, and obeyed the popes of Rome, whose dominion was exceeding evil, and whose pretension was the blasphemous one to be *quasi Deus*—as God on earth. The idolatry of ancient Babylon was revived under this modern Babylon in another form, and the judgment that descended on the former will ere long descend on the latter according to this prophecy. We must, however, refer to another work for the full exposition of the subject, as space forbids our going further into it here.¹

We have now reviewed the predictions of the course of Gentile empire in the earth and the leading events of the last twenty-five centuries. Is there any harmony between the two? The reply must needs be, never did key fit a complicated lock better than Daniel's foreview fits this extended series of facts! We have not paused to point out the precise agreement which actually exists between the minor items of the programme and the corresponding parts of the history,

¹ "Romanism and the Reformation from the Standpoint of Prophecy," also "The Approaching End of the Age," part 3.

as in this brief sketch space compels us to confine ourselves to the broad outlines only. This we regret, for we are painfully conscious that such an outline must needs fail to exhibit the full correspondence between the prophecy and its fulfilment. No skeleton can convey the life-like appearance of the man. Vague and slight must be the impression produced by such brief reminders of long-lasting, important, and influential historical episodes. We are so apt to live in our own days and the days of our immediate ancestors, and to lose sight of the far-reaching family traditions of our race; yet we are the outcome of all that long past, and when we go into its records sufficiently to realize what it was, we are impressed with its absolute similarity to the present in all essential features. The men and women of Egypt and Assyria were precisely what the men and women of Europe in this nineteenth century are. We see them in all their domestic, social, and public life, in their fashions and foibles, their virtues and vices, their work and their worship, their ambitions, hopes and fears, and we realize that conquest and captivity, barbarian inundations, bloody persecutions, political struggles, religious revivals, and similar changes, meant to them precisely what they would mean to us. The revolutions of history, the changes of dynasty, the ascendancy of one race over another—these seem little matters when we merely read of them, but what would they be if we experienced them? Babylon, Persia, Greece, Rome, the Gothic invasions, the papal tyranny and the dark ages, the Reformation, the French Revolution—are these things mere words to us, or do we conceive the realities they recall? Who would imagine from the outlines of the four continents in a student's blank map the variety, beauty, wealth, and glory of the world? Every square inch of the map means a thousand square miles perhaps of land and water, mountain and valley, city and town and village; it means forests, lakes, caverns and mines, rocks bearing gold and silver, corn-

fields and flowers, pastures and gardens, countless living creatures, and millions of mankind, each man and woman of those millions being as precious as we ourselves are in the sight of God, and equally redeemed by the death of Christ. So as to history. These four Gentile empires mean a hundred generations of mankind, each one of which numbered millions of individuals. These historical changes so little to us were to them all important. Marvellous is the variety and magnitude of the events condensed into the words Babylon, Persia, Greece, Rome, with its second still extant stage, Latin Christendom. And God foresaw each and all. He marked the ravages of these wild beasts; He noted how they would destroy wonderfully in the earth; He anticipated their oppressions and persecutions of His people; every page of the long and terrible story lay naked and open to His eye. His wisdom saw fit to suffer so long the reign of monsters, but His purpose to destroy this evil state of things and to follow it by one as blessed as this has been the reverse, is revealed for the comfort of His people and the vindication of His providence. The four empires are but the brief and passing introduction to the fifth, to the eternal kingdom of the Son of man and of the saints.

It is most important to observe that the introduction of Christianity into the world *as a religion* at the time of the first advent of Christ is *not* the fulfilment of this last blessed prophecy, though it is often alleged as such to the great weakening of the prediction, as if it taught that human history was to wind up with Christianity as we now have it become universal! This is not what Daniel's programme presents as the outline of the future, but very far from it. The symbol of the falling stone cannot predict this reality, first because of its own intrinsic *nature*, and secondly because of the *period* at which it is placed in the prediction.

As to the first point, *its nature*. The sudden descent of a stone massive enough to crush a great image to powder and

annihilate it utterly would be a most inappropriate symbol, and one wholly inapplicable to represent the slow and gradual spread of the healing, saving faith of Christ. He came at His first advent, not as a mighty victor overthrowing the hosts of evil, but as a helpless babe, a suffering witness to the truth, and a dying Saviour of mankind; and He sent forth His disciples as sheep amid wolves. It is an insult to Divine intelligence to suppose that *such* a symbol would have been selected to foreshadow *such* an event. A sudden and awful catastrophe making an end at once and for ever of all monarchies—the symbol of what happened to the world, when “Jesus of Nazareth went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil,” and saying, “I came not to judge the world, but to save it”? Impossible. Besides, after the catastrophe the stone becomes a mountain and fills the whole earth, *taking the place of the image*. This did not happen after the first advent. A spiritual religion spread among men, it is true, but not by *force*. Christianity destroyed no kingdoms or nations. Force was arrayed against it. The Roman empire sought to destroy the faith of Christ. The blood of the martyrs was the seed of the Church, but neither Christ nor His disciples tried to overthrow the Roman empire. The fall of the stone cannot possibly represent something thus wholly distinct and even contrasted in character. Its gradual cutting out without hands, while the image still stood in all its imposing majesty, its silent and mysterious formation by an unseen power in preparation for its subsequent descent, *may indeed* represent the present spiritual process of the separation of the Church of Christ out of the world, and its spiritual union with Him through the invisible power of the Holy Ghost. But *the fall* of the stone must represent something very different, even the coming of the Lord from heaven hereafter with ten thousand of His saints in glory and judgment. The first advent and the introduction of Christianity into the world *did not do to Gentile*

empires what the fall of the stone did to the image. The thing prefigured is a sudden crushing blow of final judgment. Nothing of the kind has ever happened under the influence of Christianity. Its operation and its results have been of another kind altogether. Mohammedanism overthrew kingdoms in abundance, though it never filled the earth, but Christianity never overthrew one. The empire of the Cæsars, under which it was born, stood firm for centuries after its birth, and Gentile empire still exists as much as in Daniel's day.

And, secondly, the first advent did not occur *at the time* predicted in these prophecies. The stone falls on the clay-iron feet of the image. The kingdom of the mountain, the kingdom of the God of heaven, is in both visions set up at the end of the last or *tenfold state* of the fourth monarchy, and is in itself a fifth, more universal and more enduring than they all. It does not *co-exist with the Roman power*, but it *follows it* in chronological sequence. Now the tenfold condition of the Roman world did not commence until the sixth century, and the first advent took place five hundred years too soon for *it* to fulfil this prediction. The tenkingdomed state continues still, so the fifth monarchy, or kingdom of the mountain, cannot have commenced as yet. It is a future *manifested* kingdom of God on earth, which is predicted here—the same kingdom which had previously been predicted to David, the universal and eternal kingdom of the Son of David and Son of God—"the kingdom of the Son of man and of the saints."

Is then the first advent silently ignored in Daniel's programme of the future? Though only five hundred years distant from his own day, do his comprehensive foreviews take no notice whatever of so all-important an event? On the contrary, Daniel's programme devotes an entire chapter to the great theme, or rather Daniel's God granted him a distinct and supremely important revelation about it. The first

advent, as we shall presently see, forms *the sole subject of a separate prophecy*, but this prediction of the four empires does not introduce it at all. It were altogether beneath its inherent dignity to mention the supreme event of time and of eternity as a mere incident in the history of the fourth empire. Incarnation and redemption are properly passed by in silence *here*, where *the succession of earthly monarchies* is the subject; but the *second* advent of Christ *to judge and rule the world* as King—to establish the kingdom of God—is presented as the grand terminus of all Gentile dominion. His is the fifth monarchy—the mountain that fills the whole earth and stands for ever—and it is introduced by the sudden and complete destruction of the image whose very dust is blown into oblivion.

THE PROPHECY OF THE SEVENTY WEEKS.

But we must turn now to a consideration of the second great feature of the Daniel programme. If the first be, as we have seen, a world-wide and most comprehensive outline of the political changes of twenty-five centuries, the second is an absolute contrast to it.

The Messianic revelation of the ninth of Daniel relates mainly to a single half-century of history, to Daniel's own people, to one individual among them, and a few years of his one brief life. If the earlier visions threw their beams abroad over the known world, and onward through the ages of history, this concentrates its rays on one limited spot,—sheds its brilliant blaze of prophetic light on one specified era, on one human life, the life of all lives—the life on which the salvation of the world depends. The political prophecies were like a wide landscape painting, with a Babylonian and Persian foreground, a Greek and Roman middle distance, and a papal extreme distance, stretching away to a glorious golden horizon line where earth and heaven meet and mingle in the coming kingdom of God. But this Messianic prediction is, on

the contrary, like a beautiful portrait, and the eye, that like Noah's dove could only rove restlessly over the blood-stained scenes of earth's ever-shifting empires, can rest with joy on this matchless miniature, for the impress of Divinity sits on the holy brow, and the light of infinite love and benevolence beams from the eye, while the lips have language and utter wondrous words of pardon, peace, reconciliation, renewal, and everlasting righteousness. Of all the prophecies in the Bible, Daniel's of the "seventy weeks" is the most wonderful and the most important. It stands erect among the ruins of time like the solitary and colossal obelisk amid the mounds of Heliopolis, grandly evident, archaic in its rugged simplicity, covered with an ancient script, whose decipherment demands indeed some study, but richly repays it; its authoritative assertions cut clear and deep in the hard granite, defying time's power to efface their record; its sentences few, but full of meaning, their very style betraying their origin and Divine authority.

Not dynastic but personal, not Gentile but Jewish, not temporal so much as spiritual, this prophecy is framed in a setting altogether unlike that of the previous ones. They were given in dreams and visions, and expressed by hieroglyphic signs. This falls gently from angelic lips on the ear of the man greatly beloved, and comes at a moment when the prophet's heart is tender from recent prayer, his spirit contrite after heartfelt confession, his hope fresh kindled by study of previously given predictions, and his faith strengthened by earnest supplication. Daniel had set his face unto the Lord, with prayer and fasting, sackcloth and ashes; making a confession remarkable in its fulness of the sins of his people. Thirteen times over in the course of his prayer he uses expressions confessing sin—we have done wickedly, we have rebelled, we have transgressed, we have sinned. He speaks of "our sins and the iniquities of our fathers," "my sin and the sin of my people," and makes earnest supplication for

pardon. "O Lord, hear! O Lord, forgive! let Thine anger and Thy fury be turned away from Thy city Jerusalem . . . and cause Thy face to shine upon Thy sanctuary that is desolate." He urges the Christian argument, if we may so say, "for the Lord's sake," and pleads, "We do not present our supplications before Thee for our righteousnesses, but for Thy great mercies."

Daniel was an old man at this time. The monarch whom he had served so faithfully for over forty years, Nebuchadnezzar, had long since passed away, with all his weak and unworthy successors. The short-lived empire of Babylon was over, and Darius the Median was now master of the city. Cyrus, the promised deliverer of Israel, was commander of the army, though not yet king. Daniel was still honoured and respected at court, but his heart yearned more intensely than ever over his fatherland, though he had been exiled from it since boyhood. His longing for the restoration of his people was a perfectly unselfish one, as he knew that he personally could never again set foot on Mount Zion. *His* tomb in any case would have to be by the banks of the Euphrates, for the patriarch of fourscore years could not journey over desert and mountain back to Palestine. But Daniel thought not of himself, but of his people, of the house of God, of the sanctuary of Israel lying desolate, of the name of Jehovah dishonoured; he thought, too, of the cause of all this, and blameless and holy as his own life had been, he appropriates all the sins of his people both before and during the captivity, confesses with heartfelt contrition the righteousness of God in afflicting them, praying that the Divine displeasure may cease, and that Israel's sin may in mercy be forgiven. While asking the restoration of Israel, his *deepest* desire seems to be for forgiveness of sin and reconciliation with God. What a contrast this to Nebuchadnezzar's frame of mind when revelations of the future were made to him! The mighty monarch cared for worldly matters only, and

such alone were made known to him. The holy prophet yearns after heavenly blessings, pardon, peace, and purity; and Gabriel's visit is God's answer to his holy aspiration. "He touched me about the time of the evening oblation," says Daniel, "and he informed me, and talked with me, and said, O Daniel, I am now come forth to give thee skill and understanding. At the beginning of thy supplications the commandment came forth, and I am now come to show thee; for thou art greatly beloved: therefore understand the matter, and consider the vision. Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy. Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and three score and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times. And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for Himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined. And He shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week He shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations He shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate."

It will be perceived that this prediction given in response to Daniel's prayer says nothing at all about the restoration of Israel, which was then close at hand. The reason for this is evident: the restoration, and even its date, had already been predicted with singular distinctness by Jeremiah, and the name of the appointed deliverer, Cyrus, had actually been mentioned by Isaiah. Daniel had not prayed that any

further revelations should be granted on this point ; such were needless. He had prayed rather that the thing promised might be performed. His prayer was itself a fulfilment of prophecy. Jeremiah had said, "After seventy years be accomplished at Babylon I will visit you, and perform My good word toward you, in causing you to return to this place. . . . Then shall ye call upon Me, and ye shall go and pray unto Me, and I will hearken unto you. And ye shall seek Me, and find Me, when ye shall search for Me with all your heart. I will be found of you, and will turn away your captivity." The great burden of Daniel's petition was not therefore for any new prediction of Israel's return to their own land, but it was an echo of David's words when he received the promise of God : "Now, O Lord God, the word that Thou hast spoken concerning Thy servant, and concerning his house, establish it for ever, and do as Thou hast said" (2 Sam. vii. 25). There was therefore no need for Gabriel to inform Daniel that the restoration edict of Cyrus would be issued within twelve months or so. The prophet well knew that the captivity was all but over, and that fact is taken for granted in the new prediction, and that restoration becomes the starting-point instead of the goal, the *terminus a quo* of a fresh prophetic period, the point of departure for this prophecy of seventy weeks.

As the ambassadors of God are never lavish in their performance of miracle, so His angelic messengers never waste words. Gabriel's message here goes directly to the heart of the matter. The thing about which Daniel had been most deeply exercised was the forgiveness of sin, and the answer which was given promised first that blessing—addressed itself to the fundamental desire of his heart, lifted once more the veil of futurity, and allowed him to behold what the earlier visions had not shown him—the *first* advent of Christ "to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself." From Nebuchadnezzar's dream and his own vision he had learned the

coming and kingdom of Messiah at the end of the fourth empire, but that glorious reign seemed to have no connection with the question of sin and its pardon. Now a new thing is revealed to him—an advent of Messiah “to make an end of sins, to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness.” Here indeed was a response to Daniel’s deepest yearnings; here was strong consolation for the aged saint. The promise in Eden, the covenant with Abraham, were then approaching their fulfilment; sin was to be put away; redemption was to be brought into the world; God would actually bring near to man His everlasting righteousness. This was a renewal of all the highest and holiest hopes of the nation through whom the redemption of the world was to come; and, for the first time, *the period* of Messiah’s coming was indicated. Many things had been revealed about it before, but never its time. The period of the *second* advent had been fixed in history as at the close of the fourth empire, though this assigned no actual date. But now the precise interval to the appearance of Messiah the Prince is revealed, together with the results both spiritual and temporal of His first advent. The *spiritual* results were to include the putting away of sin, making reconciliation for iniquity, the introduction of everlasting righteousness, the sealing up of vision and prophecy, the anointing of a most Holy One, and the establishment of a covenant with many—a new covenant, a covenant that should replace that of Sinai, and secure all these blessings for ever to those who have a share in it.

The *temporal* results were to be strange indeed, and to Daniel probably incomprehensible. Messiah—and the word is here used for the first time as a proper name—the name of the hope of Israel—Messiah was indeed to come and to accomplish this glorious redeeming work; but He was not at that time to rule over Israel as expected, or to establish the kingdom so long foretold. Instead of that, He was to be

"cut off." Cut off? How Daniel must have paled and started at the strange announcement! Messiah the Prince, the glorious King who was to reign in righteousness, and whose kingdom was to be like a mountain filling the whole earth for ever—Messiah—to be "cut off"! The word admitted of no double sense, however; it was one used for the execution of a judicial sentence by death. Messiah was to be "cut off." What could the unexpected announcement mean? The next words of the angel implied that this cutting off would be the result of His rejection by His people. They are rendered in our version by a clause which is beautiful, but incorrect,—*"but not for Himself."* However true this thought as regards Christ, the original here does not bear this translation, and contains no intimation of the vicariousness of the death of Jesus. It would, indeed, be out of place in this immediate connection—the treatment of Messiah at His advent by the Jewish nation. The marginal reading is a better rendering of the brief and rather obscure clause in the Hebrew. Messiah will be "cut off" and "shall have nothing." The literal expression is, "and none unto Him," the meaning being apparently that no one was for Him, no one on His side in the crisis of His fate, that He would be rejected as Messiah by His people, and "cut off" because of this rejection. The strange prediction was therefore doubly clear: Israel's Messiah would come at the close of a certain definite period, and—marvel of marvels!—His people would doom Him to die. In punishment of this crime, the city and temple about to be rebuilt would be again destroyed, and the people and land given up to desolation. There is some obscurity as to certain points of this great prediction, though the drift of the whole is perfectly clear. The extreme condensation and brevity which mark it are one cause of the difficulty, and an occasional ellipsis in the Hebrew affords room for alternate constructions in one or two of the expressions. An immense amount of contro-

versy has for ages been carried on about this prophecy—controversy attributable to several causes : first, its absolute clearness as a whole combined with its difficulties in minor points ; secondly, the inveterate determination of the Jews to silence its glorious witness to the Messiahship of Jesus of Nazareth ; thirdly, the equal anxiety of infidels to blunt the edge of a prophecy which establishes indubitably Divine inspiration ; and, lastly, the intrinsic difficulties of sacred chronology. We cannot here enter into any controversial exposition of the prophecy, as that would require a volume, and it is not necessary to our argument to settle the exact force of every word, or the precise application of every detail. The obvious and unquestionable meaning of the prediction as a whole, together with its marvellous fulfilment, are all that we need establish.

This prophecy was given just as the seventy years' captivity in Babylon was drawing to a close. It announced the duration of the restored national existence of Israel, up to the great epoch of all history—the advent of Messiah the Prince. It was foretold that within 490 years from the date of the decree to restore and to build Jerusalem, the long-foreshadowed, long-predicted atonement for sin was to be accomplished by the advent of Messiah, reconciliation for iniquity effected, and everlasting righteousness brought in ; that vision and prophecy should be sealed up, and the Most Holy anointed.

The period was then subdivided into three parts : 7 weeks, 62 weeks, and one week ; *i.e.*, 49 years, 434 years, and 7 years. The rebuilding of the city and the re-establishment of the Jewish polity would occur in the first forty-nine years, or "seven weeks." Four hundred and thirty-four years more would elapse, and then Messiah the Prince would appear. After that, at some time not accurately defined, but within the limits of the seventieth week, or last seven years, of the period, Messiah would be cut off and "have nothing." It

is further foretold that Jerusalem and its temple would subsequently, and as a consequence, be destroyed; and that a flood of foreign invasion would overthrow the land. But though thus cut off, Messiah would confirm the covenant with many (not the whole nation) during the course of the "one week" (*i.e.*, the last week of the seventy); in the midst of it He would "cause sacrifice and oblation to cease." Jerusalem should then be made desolate, until a certain predetermined doom should fall upon the power that should desolate it; a fact which our Lord afterwards foretold in the words, "Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled."

All this was accomplished with wonderful exactness. The edict to restore and build the city was issued by Artaxerxes, and Ezra and Nehemiah were the two great restorers of the Jewish people, polity, and religion. Their joint administration occupied about "seven weeks," or forty-nine years; the wall and the street were rebuilt in troublous times. After the lapse of 434 years more, Messiah the Prince did appear, saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand"; *i.e.*, the time indicated by this very prophecy. He came unto His own, and, alas! His own received Him not! He was cut off, and had nothing. Shortly after the Roman soldiery—"the people of a prince that shall come"—(Titus)—destroyed the city and the sanctuary; the end of Jewish independence came with a flood of foreign invasion, and predetermined desolation fell on land and people. But though the nation was thus judged, Messiah *did* "confirm the covenant" with many; not with Israel as a people, but with an election according to grace.

What covenant? and how did He confirm it? "This is the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you," said He to His disciples the night before His passion;¹ or as Matthew and Mark give the words: "This is My blood of

¹ Luke xxii. 20.

the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins." "He shall confirm the covenant with many," said the angel to Daniel. "My blood of the new covenant shed for many," said Christ. Is not His blood declared to be "the blood of the everlasting covenant"? And is not He Himself repeatedly styled, "the Mediator of the new covenant"?¹ And can any Bible student doubt what is the event predicted, when in immediate connection with the coming and cutting off of Messiah, it is added, "He shall confirm the covenant with many"?

The chronological precision with which this prophecy was fulfilled is most remarkable, and the more so because it was accomplished both in solar and lunar years. To prove this, it is necessary to go a little more carefully into the chronological measures and historical facts. The starting-point was to be a decree to restore and to build Jerusalem, and the terminus was to be "Messiah the Prince." Now there were two restoration decrees issued by Artaxerxes, and they were thirteen years apart. Either of them may be taken as the starting-point, as each involved a measure of rebuilding of Jerusalem and of re-establishment of Jewish polity and national existence. The two decrees are associated with the two names of Ezra and Nehemiah, and the second of the two—that given to Nehemiah—answers most fully to the terms of the prophecy. The first was given by Artaxerxes in the seventh year of his reign, B.C. 457, and the second in the twentieth year of his reign, B.C. 444. The 490 years ran out on the solar scale from the first date, in A.D. 34; and, more accurately, on the lunar scale from the second date, A.D. 32-3. In both cases the last or seventieth week of years included most of the ministry of Christ, His death, resurrection, and ascension; together with the formation of the Church by the descent of the Holy Ghost at Pentecost, and the early proclamation of the gospel in Palestine.

¹ See Heb. viii. 6; ix. 15; xii. 24.

But the prophecy states that the Messiah was to be cut off before the close of the seventy weeks (or 490 years), "after" the sixty-ninth had elapsed, and before the seventieth fully ran out; that is to say, in the course of the seventieth week. He was to be cut off "in the midst of the week," *i.e.* of the last supreme week, the one week which is marked off from its fellows; the week which stands pre-eminent, not only among the seventy, but among all the weeks the world has ever seen; the week of seven years which witnessed the miracles, the death, the resurrection, and the ascension of the Son of man and Son of God. In the middle of this terminal week of the seventy, Messiah would, according to the prophecy, be "cut off," and by shedding of His own blood would confirm the new covenant with "many"—not with the nation of Israel, but with many, both Jews and Gentiles. He would also cause all Jewish sacrifice and oblation to cease by putting away sin for ever "by the sacrifice of Himself."

This chronological prediction was fulfilled on the solar scale from the first edict of Artaxerxes, and on the lunar scale to a day from the second. A simple calculation shows this. Seventy weeks are 490 years, but sixty-nine and a half weeks are only $486\frac{1}{2}$ years; this is therefore the number of the years predicted to elapse between Artaxerxes' decree and the death of Christ. Nehemiah commenced his journey to Jerusalem in accordance with the decree given in the twentieth of Artaxerxes, during the passover month, the month of Nisan, B.C. 444; and, as we know, our Lord was crucified at the same season, the Passover, A.D. 29.¹ From

¹ JULIUS AFRICANUS ON THE SEVENTY WEEKS OF DANIEL.

"This passage, therefore, as it stands thus, touches on many marvellous things. At present, however, I shall speak only of those things in it which bear upon chronology, and matters connected therewith. That the passage speaks then of the advent of Christ, who was to manifest Himself after seventy weeks, is evident. For in the Saviour's time, or

Nisan, B.C. 444, to Nisan, A.D. 29,—472 ordinary solar years only elapsed, not 486½. *But 472 solar years are exactly 486½ lunar.* Hence sixty-nine and a half weeks of lunar years, from Passover to Passover, did extend between Artaxerxes' decree in the twentieth year of his reign, and the crucifixion, or cutting off, of "Messiah the Prince," A.D. 29. Thus the prophecy was accurately fulfilled, even to a day on the lunar scale. Who but He who foresees the end even from the beginning could thus have foretold the exact time

from Him, are transgressions abrogated, and sins brought to an end. And through remission, moreover, are iniquities, along with offences, blotted out by expiation; and an everlasting righteousness is preached, different from that which is by the law, and visions and prophecies (are) until John, and the Most Holy is anointed. For before the advent of the Saviour these things were not yet, and were therefore only looked for. And the beginning of the numbers, that is, of the seventy weeks, which make up four hundred and ninety years, the angel instructs us to take from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem. And this happened in the twentieth year of the reign of Artaxerxes, king of Persia. For Nehemiah his cup-bearer besought him, and received the answer that Jerusalem should be built. And the word went forth commanding these things; for up to that time the city was desolate. For when Cyrus, after the seventy years' captivity, gave free permission to all to return who desired it, some of them under the leadership of Jesus the high priest and Zorobabel, and others after these under the leadership of Esdra, returned, but were prevented at first from building the temple, and from surrounding the city with a wall, on the plea that that had not been commanded.

"It remained in this position, accordingly, until Nehemiah and the reign of Artaxerxes and the 115th year of the sovereignty of the Persians. And from the capture of Jerusalem that makes 185 years. And at that time King Artaxerxes gave order that the city should be built; and Nehemiah being despatched, superintended the work, and the street and the surrounding wall were built, as had been prophesied. And reckoning from that point, we make up seventy weeks to the time of Christ. For if we begin to reckon from any other point, and not from this, the periods will not correspond, and very many odd results will meet us. For if we begin the calculation of the seventy weeks from Cyrus and the first restoration, there will be upwards of one hundred years too many, and there will be a larger number if we begin from the day on which the angel gave the prophecy to Daniel, and a much larger number still if we begin from the commencement of the captivity. For we find the sover-

of Christ's crucifixion, five hundred years in advance? Let the date of Daniel be as late as any critic has ever placed it, we still have here prediction—and that of the most exact chronological kind.

The prophecies whose fulfilment we have now traced are by no means the only ones contained in the Divine programme of the world's history given to Daniel—they are the principal ones. But the EIGHTH chapter and the ELEVENTH

ignity of the Persians comprising a period of 230 years, and that of the Macedonians extending over 370 years, and from that to the sixteenth year of Tiberius Cæsar is a period of about sixty years.

“It is by calculating from Artaxerxes, therefore, up to the time of Christ, that the seventy weeks are made up, according to the numeration of the Jews. For from Nehemiah, who was dispatched by Artaxerxes to build Jerusalem in the 115th year of the Persian empire, and the twentieth year of the reign of Artaxerxes himself, and the fourth year of the eighty-third Olympiad, up to this date, which was the second year of the 202nd Olympiad, and the sixteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Cæsar, there are reckoned 475 years, which make 490 according to the Hebrew numeration, as they measure the years by the course of the moon; so that, as is easy to show, their year consists of 354 days, while the solar year has 365 and a quarter days. For the latter exceeds the period of twelve months, according to the moon's course, by eleven and a quarter days.¹ Hence the Greeks and the Jews insert three intercalary months every eight years. For eight times eleven and a quarter days make up three months. Therefore 475 years make 59 periods of eight years each, and three months besides. But since thus there are three intercalary months every eight years, we get thus 15 years minus a few days; and these being added to the 475 years, make up in all the seventy weeks.”—(Quoted by Eusebius, book V. *Anti-Nicene Fathers*, vol. ix., p. 182.)

In his Commentary on Daniel, Jerome sets forth the measurement of the “seventy weeks” in *lunar* years, from the 20th of Artaxerxes, advocated by Julius Africanus,—“Africanus in quinto temporum volumine, de septuaginta hebdomadibus, hec loquutus ad verbum est. . . . *A vicesimo autem anno Artaxerxes regis usque ad Christum, complentur hebdomadæ septuaginta, juxta lunarem Hebræorum supputatione; qui menses non juxta solis, sed juxta lunæ cursum numerant.*”—(Jerome on Dan. ix.)

¹ More accurately 10 days 21 hours.

also contain remarkably full and detailed political foreviews of certain portions of the history. The prophecy of the four empires is like a map of Europe comprising all its countries in outline and their entire history for twenty-five centuries. The Messianic ninth chapter is, on the contrary, a map of one country only ; its predictions concern the people and holy city of Daniel, it announces the duration of the restored nationality of the Jews, the advent and rejection of Messiah, with its consequences in the renewed dispersion of the Jews and desolation of their land. The eighth chapter enlarges another detached portion of the previous all-comprehensive map. It amplifies the account of the second and third empires. It was given in the third year of Belshazzar, fifty-two years after Nebuchadnezzar's dream, when the Babylonian power was falling, and the Medo-Persian, which was to destroy it, rising. The chapter should be carefully studied, as it is profoundly interesting, and with it we must associate the eleventh chapter, which goes into similar subjects and succeeding events in still greater detail. Space forbids our tracing the fulfilment of these wonderful predictions by quotations from the historians who narrate the facts. Suffice it to say, that the prophecy gives beforehand, with all the accuracy of history written afterwards, the events of three or four hundred years especially, and then passes on more in outline to those lying at a greater distance. The centuries whose events are so fully predicted are those which lay between the time then present and the first advent—a period when the light of prophecy was to cease, when Israel would be under the power of Gentile rulers, and exposed to many wars and troubles and to some cruel persecutions, and when their faith in Divine providence would greatly need to be sustained by the evidence of prophecy fulfilling before their eyes. The days of miracle had passed, the age of prophets was over, and from the time of Malachi the last 400 years which preceded the advent of Messiah was a time of peculiar trial of faith to the

people of God. The revealing Spirit graciously *spans this interval with a prophecy* so full and accurate, that sceptics have rejected the entire book which contains it, on the ground that these chapters *must be historical* and not prophetic; a groundless objection to which we will allude more fully in a note at the end of this chapter.

Starting from the time then present, the close of the Babylonian empire, the eighth chapter begins by describing the rise of the Persian empire, the conquests of Cyrus westward in Lydia, northward in Armenia, southward in Babylon; while chapter xi. 2, speaks of his successors, Cambyses, Smerdis, Darius, and Xerxes: "There shall stand up yet three kings in Persia; and the fourth shall be far richer than they all: and by his strength through his riches he shall stir up all against the realm of Grecia. And a mighty king shall stand up, that shall rule with great dominion, and do according to his will. And his kingdom shall be broken, and shall be divided toward the four winds of heaven; and not to his posterity, nor according to his dominion." There are distinctly indicated the succession of Persian monarchs and their overthrow by Alexander, the rapidity of his course of victory, his mighty exploits, his total conquest of Persia, his universal dominion, his sudden death in the height of his power, the fourfold partition of his kingdom among his generals, the early extinction of his own posterity, and the division of his dominions—not among his children—but among "others beside those."¹

Space obliges us to refrain from any detailed explanation of the eighth and eleventh chapters of the prophecy, the last of which foretold, four hundred years beforehand, the long complicated struggles between the dynasties which succeeded Alexander, especially those between the Ptolemies of Egypt and the Seleucidæ of Syria. It has been carefully expounded by many writers, and the correspondence of its statements

¹ Chap. viii. 7, 8; xi. 3, 4.

with the records of history prove to be *absolute and exact*, although scores of persons and incidents are definitely mentioned in their order.

Jerome observed on this prophecy: "To understand the last parts of Daniel, many histories of the Greeks are necessary; namely those of Sutorius, Callinicus, Diodorus, Hieronymus, Polybius, Posidonius, Claudius, and Andronicus Alypius, whom also Porphyry professes to have followed; that of Josephus also, and those whom Josephus names, and especially of our own Livy, Pompeius Trogus, and Justin, who relate the whole history of this latest portion."

To the same effect, Bishop Newton justly observes: "There is not so complete and regular a series of these kings, there is not so concise and comprehensive an account of their affairs to be found in any other writing of those times. The prophecy is really more perfect than any history. No *one* historian hath related so many circumstances, and in such exact order, as the prophet hath foretold them. So that it was necessary to have recourse to several authors, Greek and Roman, Jewish and Christian, and to collect here something from one, and there something from another, thus to explain and illustrate *the great variety of particulars contained in the prophecy.*"

The Rev. T. R. Birks remarks: "If any one continuous history of these wars and alliances were now extant, the correspondence between the prophecy and the events would be easier to trace. But now, when it results from the careful collation of separate fragments, gathered from eight or ten authors, Polybius, Diodorus, Appian, Josephus, Justin, and Trogus Pompeius, the writers of the two books of Maccabees, Livy, Porphyry, and Dexippus, with medals and inscriptions; and in several of them, from incidental allusions, or brief and passing statements, where the leading object of the history is quite different; the moral evidence becomes far more striking to every ingenuous mind."

NOTE TO CHAPTER VI. ON THE DATE OF THE BOOK OF DANIEL.

The prophecies of Daniel stand pre-eminent among all others in their evidential value. Not only does his brief book give a foreview of twenty-five centuries of Jewish and Gentile history, including the first and the second advents of Christ, but it also fixes the chronology of various episodes of the then unknown future, with a simple certainty which would be audacious if it were not Divine. Would any mere man dare to foretell, not only a long succession of events lying far in the remote future, but the time at which some of them would occur and the periods they would occupy? This Daniel did, and the predictions have come to pass.

This unquestionable fact can be explained away only on one of three grounds.

I. The accord between prediction and fulfilment must be purely accidental and fortuitous ; or,—

II. The events must have been manipulated, so as to fit the prophecy ; or,—

III. The prophecy must have been written to fit the events, *i.e.* after them ; it must, in other words, be a forgery of a later date.

None of these three explanations can account for the agreement between Daniel's predictions and history, as reflection will show. For,—

1. Such an agreement cannot be merely fortuitous. It is too far-reaching and detailed, too exact and varied. Chance might produce a few coincidences of fulfilment out of a hundred predictions, not a hundred or more *without a single exception*. Common sense perceives this at a glance. As far as time has elapsed *every single point* predicted in Daniel has come true, and there remain but a few terminal points yet to be fulfilled.

2. *The events were certainly not made to fit the prophecy by human arrangement.* The rise and fall and succession of monarchies and of empires, and the conduct and character of nations, for over two thousand years, are matters altogether too vast to be manipulated by men. Such a notion is clearly absurd. What ! did Babylonian and Persian monarchs, Grecian and Roman conquerors, Gothic and Vandal invaders, mediæval kings and popes, *conspire for long ages* to accomplish obscure Jewish predictions, of which the majority of them never even heard ?

3. The third and last solution is consequently the only possible *alternative* to a frank admission of the Divine inspiration of the book, and of the Divine government of the world amid all its ceaseless political changes. *Can the prophecy have been written to fit the events ?* In other words, can it be a forgery of a later date? This is the theory adopted by all the unbelieving critics, who *start with the assumption that prophecy in any true sense is impossible.* They endeavour to assign to the

book a date later than the true one, a date towards the close of the reign of Antiochus Epiphanes, who died in the second century before Christ. Then they endeavour to compress all the four empires into the four centuries previous to that date, excluding therefore from the prophecy any allusion to the Roman empire and the first advent of Christ. Multitudinous have been the attacks made on these lines on the fortress of this Book of Daniel; for scepticism has realized that while it stands impregnable, *a relic of the sixth century before Christ*, all rationalistic theories must fall to the ground, like Dagon before the ark.

But *the fortress stands firm as ever*, its massive foundations revealed only the more clearly by the varied assaults it has repelled. The assailants, German as well as English, have been beaten off time after time by one champion after another, earnestly contending for the faith. The superficial and shallow nature of the linguistic, historic, and critical objections has been demonstrated, and one line of assault after another has had to be abandoned.¹ But even if this were not the case, and the later date could be substantiated, it would not in the least establish the sceptical denial of the existence of prophecy in Daniel. The predictions of the first advent and of the Roman destruction of Jerusalem would be in no wise affected by the later date, nor those of the tenfold division of the Roman empire, and of the great Papal and Mohammedan apostasies.

Candour is shut up to the conclusion that real, true, and marvellous foreknowledge is, beyond all question, indicated by the predictions of the book, since twenty-five centuries of history can be proved to correspond with it accurately, in their chronological as well as in all their other features. If this be so, the question of inspiration is settled for honest minds. Nor that alone. For the rule of God over the kings of the earth—the fact that history is working out His Divine purposes, and that all the changing kingdoms of the Gentiles are merely introductory to the eternal kingdom of the Son of man and of the saints—is also established beyond controversy.

It was alleged by the sceptical school that the late origin of Daniel was demonstrated by the presence of Macedonian words, and of impure Hebrew expressions; that its spurious character was proved by its position in the canon, as not among “the prophets,” but among the “hagiographa”; that it contained historical errors, and irreconcilable contradictions; that it had traces of later ideas and usages; as well as—and this was evidently the head and front of the offending—that the predictions were so clear and definite, that they must have been written after the events.

¹ It is simply a historical fact, that unbelief has been always the parent of this criticism, not the criticism the cause of the unbelief. The pseudo-criticism is a mere plea for unbelief.

The defence has been twofold. First, a demonstration which leaves nothing to be desired of the utter *baselessness of the objections*; and, secondly, an array of unanswerable arguments in support of the authenticity and date of the book. The contention has given rise to a whole literature, to which we can merely allude in a few sentences. Those who wish to examine into the subject for themselves will find the works of Hengstenberg and Dr. Pusey thorough, candid, and learned, giving not the results of investigation only, *but the process* and the fullest reference to original documents. We must indicate briefly the nature of the defence, though we cannot do more.

Porphyry, in the third century, in his attack on Christianity as a whole, devoted one of his fifteen books to an assault on Daniel. He asserted that it must be the work of a Jew of Palestine, written in Greek in the time of Antiochus; and assigned as the main *ground* of his theory *the exact correspondence of events with the predictions*, asserting that Daniel "did not so much predict future events as narrate past ones,"—as Jerome remarked, "this method of opposing the prophecies is the strongest testimony to their truth, for they were fulfilled with such exactness that to infidels the prophets seemed not to have foretold things future, but to have related things past,"—and bearing thus a noble testimony to the prophet! Porphyry's book was by imperial command condemned to the flames, and we know it mostly from fragments preserved in the writings of Jerome. Spinoza, the infidel Jew, was the first modern to renew this old attack; and then Hobbes and Collins, and other English deists. It was J. D. Michaelis who made the first *scholarly* attempt to undermine confidence in the authenticity of Daniel, and even he decidedly *maintained* the genuineness of the greater part of it. The names of more recent German critics are legion, and we need not give them here, but simply indicate the arguments that prove the futility of the objections alleged.

To a Christian mind the highest and most conclusive testimony lies in the fact that *our Lord speaks of Daniel as a prophet*, and quotes from him. The name by which He most frequently speaks of Himself, "the Son of man," is taken from Daniel vii. 13. Many of His descriptions of His own coming and kingdom are also distinctly connected with Daniel's predictions of them.¹ Surely our Lord would not thus have endorsed an impostor! Josephus tells us that the book was eagerly studied in Christ's days; would He have treated it as Scripture, and allowed His disciples to regard it as such, if it were a forgery?

The apostles uniformly recognise Daniel as a prophet. Peter alludes to his inquiries as to the "times," and states that he was inspired by the

¹ Compare Dan. vii. 13, 14, and 26, 27, with Matt. x. 23; xvi. 27, 28; xix. 28; xxiv. 30; xxvi. 64; John v. 27; Dan. xii. 2.

Spirit of Christ. Paul in 2 Thessalonians ii. builds his argument on Daniel's prediction of the man of sin and the apostasy. Hebrews xi. 33 alludes distinctly to Daniel and his companions and their heroic deeds; and the whole Book of Revelation is so closely connected with that of Daniel, that we might almost style it Second Daniel, or Daniel First Revelation.

The allusion to Daniel as one of the holiest and one of the wisest of men, by his contemporary Ezekiel, shows how *early* he attained his high position in the court of Nebuchadnezzar, and how far the fame of his blameless, holy life had spread, even in his own days. As he most distinctly and repeatedly claims to be the author of his own book, and writes much of it as an autobiography, the very *holiness of his character* makes the thought of deliberate forgery and falsehood revoltingly inconsistent.

That the book was widely distributed and well known and revered by the pious in pre-Maccabean times can be demonstrated. The very accurate and reliable First Book of Maccabees makes exact, though brief and simple, reference to the stories in Daniel. The dying words of Mattathias to his sons are recorded, in which he encourages them to fidelity to God amid persecution by recalling various Bible histories, and among the rest that of the Hebrew children in the fire, and Daniel in the lions' den. Hence it is evident that the book was known and regarded as Scripture at that time.

Further, Josephus makes several remarkable and explicit statements on the subject. Speaking of one of the predictions, he says, "Now this was delivered 408 years before the fulfilment," thus recognising the received date as unquestionable, and as generally admitted to be so in his day. In a still more conclusive and very interesting passage he asserts that Daniel's prophecy was shown to Alexander the Great when he visited Jerusalem, and that this monarch took the prediction about a Greek who was to overthrow the Persian empire to mean himself, and was much encouraged thereby in his enterprise, and very favourably disposed towards the Jews in consequence.

Josephus was indeed much impressed by the remarkable fulfilments of Daniel's predictions, which even in his day were evident. After expounding several of these he says, "All these things did this man leave behind in writing, as God had showed them to him: so that those who read his prophecies, and see how they have been fulfilled, must be astonished at the honour conferred by God on Daniel."¹ This eminently learned man, whose works were published towards the close of the first century, and who lived, therefore, comparatively near the days of Daniel, thus broadly asserts the date of Daniel, expressing, of course, the conviction of the learned of his day—an opinion which had never apparently been even questioned.

¹ "Antiquities," x. 11, 7.

He affirms the *predictions* of the book to be of an extraordinary character, and challenges attention to their fulfilment. He was most unlikely to have been taken in by a mere forgery, and ought surely to have been better informed about the matter than modern critics can possibly be.

A strong argument in favour of the received date may be drawn from *the languages* in which the book is written, Hebrew and Aramæan. Both were familiar to the Jews of the captivity era, and to those of no later date ; the one was Daniel's mother tongue, the other the language in which he had been educated, and by which he was surrounded for the greater part of his life. Hebrew ceased to be used by the Jews in and from the captivity, except as a sacred learned language. It had been *entirely superseded* before the Maccabean days, and no writer of the time of Antiochus could have counted on being even understood had he written in that language ! Daniel reckons on such a familiar acquaintance with both languages, that it is evidently a matter of indifference to him and to his readers which he uses. "The use of the two languages, and the mode in which the prophet writes in both, correspond perfectly with his real date ; they are severally and together utterly inexplicable according to the theory that would make the book a product of the Maccabean times. *The language is a mark of genuineness set by God on the book.* Rationalism must rebel, as it has rebelled ; but it dare not now with any moderate honesty abuse philology to cover its rebellion."¹

Further, the exact knowledge of contemporary *history* evinced in Daniel is such that no writer of the time of the Maccabees could possibly have attained it. Almost every single circumstance mentioned in the book is confirmed directly or indirectly by contemporary historians, and proved to be absolutely and even minutely correct. In the Maccabean age, as existing remains prove, the utmost ignorance of the history and geography of foreign countries prevailed among the Jews in Palestine, and an exact and comprehensive knowledge of the history of a period so dark and already so remote as the captivity era, did not exist and could not have existed. And the same may be said of the accurate knowledge exhibited in the book of the institutions, manners, usages, and entire state of things, existing in the Babylonian and Medo-Persian times.

Again, it has been remarked that "the complexion of *the prophecies* of Daniel corresponds so exactly with what is related in the historical part of *the circumstances of his life*, that even the most crafty impostor would not have been able to produce this agreement artificially. Daniel occupied high offices of state ; he was witness to great revolutions and changes of rulers and empires ; and this circumstance is very significantly impressed on his prophecies. The succession of the various empires of the world forms their principal subject. In the representation of

¹ Dr. Pusey : "Lectures on Daniel."

the Messianic idea also he borrows his colours from his external relations. Throughout there is apparent a religious, as well as a political gift, such as we meet with in no other prophet."

Lastly, *the canon of the Old Testament contains the Book of Daniel*, and that canon was closed by Ezra the scribe, and Nehemiah, the second Moses in Jewish estimation, about 400 B.C. Hence the prophecies of Daniel *were already at that date recognised as inspired writings*. It is true the book does not appear in the list of the prophets, because Daniel was not *officially* a Jewish prophet, but a Babylonian statesman. David, also, though a prophet, was officially a king, and thus his writings, like Daniel's, are classed among the hagiographa, or sacred books, rather than among the prophets. The principle of the Jewish arrangement of the canon was, that sacred writings by men *in secular office*, and not occupying the pastoral or prophetic position, were put *in a class apart from the prophets*. Hence Daniel appears not in the list with Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, but rather with David and Solomon, and Mordecai the writer of Esther. But the Jewish rabbis hold his prophetic revelations in the *highest* esteem, and the Talmud places him *above all other prophets*.

There is therefore no question at all for candid minds that the book is authentic, and rightly attributed to the time of the Babylonish captivity ; and if so, it must be granted by all that it contains prophecy—definite predictions which have been most marvellously fulfilled.

The importance of this conclusion can scarcely be over-estimated, though it seems to be less appreciated by Christians than by sceptics. They regret their inability to wrest a mighty weapon out of the hands of the Church. But we—what use are we making of it? What execution are we doing with it? Is it not a pity that it is allowed to so great an extent to lie idle?

If eight or nine centuries of fulfilled prophecy drove Porphyry, in the third century, to feel that we must either admit Divine inspiration or prove the Book of Daniel spurious, ought not the twenty-five centuries of it, to which we in our days can point, be even more efficacious in convincing candid inquirers and confounding prejudiced opponents? The battle of authenticity has been fought and won ; no fresh objections can be invented. Archæological discovery may yet find Daniel's name among the Babylonian records ; it will certainly produce no evidence against the book which it has already done so much to authenticate. It rests with Christian teachers and preachers to use the miracle of the last days, fulfilled and fulfilling prophecy, for the conviction and conversion of men.

CHAPTER VII.

THE CHRISTIAN PROGRAMME.

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WITH the first advent of Jesus Christ our Lord came the final outburst of prophetic light as yet granted to our world. Through Him personally, and through His Holy Spirit in the apostles, were revealed things to come—the closing section of the Divine programme of the world's history as far as it is at present unfolded. What additions may be yet made to it in the ages to come, who shall say? The infinitude and eternity of God forbid the thought that the section we have now to consider is the last in any absolute sense, but it is the last at present published to mankind.

Previously to the first century of our era, the voice of prophecy had for four hundred years been perfectly silent, and it has been similarly hushed ever since. The century of the first advent stands thus as the only one in the course of twenty-three hundred years during which the Omniscient condescended to reveal the future, and exhibit His Divine prescience for human consideration in future ages. Prophecy has no more been granted lavishly and at all times than miracle. Both have been restricted to special eras when they were needed to attest Divine intervention in the affairs of the human race, and when they could best subserve their all-important ends. These ends are similar in some aspects, different in others. Miracle serves to convince unbelievers, and to confirm faith, in its own age. Prophecy is intended to do the same in distant ages. The one consequently witnesses

for God to man at the beginning of great dispensations of providence; the other at the close of such. It is *given* at the *outset*, that it may by fulfilment demonstrate its own inspiration of God at the *end* of the age. The miracles of 1,800 years ago have so far lost their force in our days that their very occurrence is doubted and denied. But the power of fulfilled prophecy, to prove the existence and the providential government of God, only increases as time passes on, and will increase until the next great climax in the history of our race. It is the peculiar witness in the last days, and by neglecting it the Church deprives herself of the help of the most effective weapon in her armoury for the combat with modern unbelief. If Jesus Christ revealed the future well-nigh two thousand years ago, and if intervening ages have fulfilled every one of His predictions,—and can be shown to have done so,—what shall we say? what shall we think? Shall we lightly esteem His mission? Shall we give no heed to His message from God? Shall we dare to despise His warnings? Shall we argue that, though He foretold a hundred events, and ninety-five of them have come true, we need not anticipate the fulfilment of the remaining five? Or shall we bow the head and worship, and believe with the heart His every word?

The fact that we have 1,800 years of authentic and detailed history with which to compare and by which to test the New Testament prophecies gives them a special evidential value.

There can be no question as to the date of these predictions. Sceptics may raise a cloud of dust about the date of Daniel, though their desperate efforts to assign it an epoch late enough to deprive it of its conspicuously prophetic character fail to conceal its true origin, but they cannot do the same about the New Testament. It was not concocted and published in modern times, or even in the middle ages. Abundant writings still extant of the first and second centuries attest that it was already in wide circulation in Asia,

Africa, and even Europe, and that is enough for our argument. We need not pause to settle the exact date of each Gospel, nor of each of the letters of the Apostle Paul. We know that even the Apocalypse of St. John—which was published long after all the rest of the New Testament—dates from the close of the first century, and that therefore, in considering the final section of our programme, we may be confident that it was published to the world 1,800 years ago, the bulk of it between A.D. 38 and A.D. 70, and the last work in A.D. 96 or 97. If we can prove the fulfilment of *its* predictions, consequently, we have unquestionable evidence of inspiration, and of Divine foreknowledge and providence.

No human sagacity could have correctly outlined the history of the eighteen Christian centuries, complicated and marvellous as it has been. Superhuman wisdom prompted the utterances and guided the pens of the prophets of the New Testament as of those of the old. This section of the programme is in some senses the most interesting of any to Christian students, as it deals with our own dispensation, predicts our own experiences, and enlarges on our own hopes. It contains, moreover, chronological statements of peculiar interest, as indicating our own position in the stream of time, and our proximity to the end of the present age. Further, it not only sketches the present condition of Christendom, affording as it does so precious practical guidance, but it reaches out into the ages to come far more fully than any previous portion of the programme, so that its vistas of glory and joy are calculated to sustain faith and hope in these dark and perilous times of doubt and infidelity.

The subject is so rich and full a one that our introductory sketch must be brief, but a few words seem needful to connect this first advent era and Christian outburst of prophetic light with that which occurred in the captivity and restoration era, on which we dwelt in the last chapter.

When the Persian monarch Artaxerxes passed away, his

commission to Nehemiah had been executed. Jerusalem was once more the defensible capital of a re-constituted state and nation, and the temple was once more the centre of the re-established worship of God. Both the national polity and the national religion were again visible among men, and recognised by neighbouring nations. But the centuries which intervened between the return from Babylon and the advent of Christ were to the restored Jews in Palestine anything but a time of peace or an era of national glory. They were, to some extent, like sheep among wild beasts. Weak, small, and defenceless, they fell successively under the fierce pagan rulers of the second, third, and fourth of the wild-beast Gentile empires which dominated one after the other during the four or five centuries which preceded the advent of Christ.

The restored remnant was at first too feeble and too obscure to be of much account among men. The Medo-Persian kings were for the most part kind to the Jews, and even Alexander showed them favour.

Judea had been, after the death of Nehemiah, added to the prefecture of Syria, and it ultimately shared in the miserable lot of that province, and became the battlefield of opposing nations. The Jews suffered very severely in the long struggles and incessant warfare which was waged, on the break-up of the Greek empire, between the Ptolemies of Egypt and the Seleucidæ of Syria. In the second century before Christ especially, they passed through a most bitter experience. Antiochus Epiphanes, the infamous monster who—as is agreed by most—foreshadowed a greater persecutor still, caused them the severest sufferings. At one time he took Jerusalem by storm, slew 40,000 of the Jews, and sold as many more into slavery, and defiled the temple by offering a sow on the altar, and sprinkling the broth of it all over the sacred enclosures. He tried to compel the nation to abandon the faith of their fathers, and succeeded in inducing many to apostatize. But after the Babylonish captivity Israel dreaded

and detested the idolatry to which in earlier ages they had been so prone, and nothing could induce them to comply with the tyrant's orders. At last, in B.C. 168, he ordered his general, Apollonius, to destroy Jerusalem ; and the order was as far as possible carried into execution. The men were put to the sword, and the women and children enslaved. The houses were demolished or fired, and the walls broken down ; the temple was re-dedicated to Jupiter, and Antiochus erected his statue on the altar of burnt-offering. It was a rehearsal on a small, brief scale of the subsequent doings of the Roman soldiery of Titus. Antiochus subsequently swore that he would destroy the entire nation of the Jews, and make a common cemetery for them at Jerusalem. But God smote him, and he died in torment, like Herod in after-days.

In these dark and dreadful times Jewish faith and heroism shone more brightly, perhaps, than at any previous or subsequent period. Had it not done so, Judaism might have become extinct, under the combined influences of persecution from without and apostasy within. But Israel's great mission was not over then, any more than it is over now. The people were preserved once more. The bush burned with fire, but it was not consumed. When hope itself was almost dead, up rose the Asmonean Mattathias, and his still more illustrious son, Judas Maccabeus, and did exploits for their faith and people. They delivered Israel, cleansed the temple, restored the Divine worship, and ruled as priests and princes in Jerusalem for many generations. The struggle with this fierce storm had strengthened the faith and courage of the Jews, and they clung to their monotheistic creed more firmly than ever.

The Asmoneans continued to rule the Jews under the later Syro-Macedonian monarchs until family dissensions arose, and a struggle for power, in which Aristobulus called in the help of the then rapidly rising Romans. Judea soon became tributary to the fourth empire, which was at the time in its

full career of conquest, and fast approaching its day of undisputed sway. An Idumean named Antipater was subsequently, by Julius Cæsar, made procurator of Judea, and from this man were descended the Herods who ruled the Jews in the days of Christ. An Edomite dynasty would, in any case, have been hateful to the Jews. Its outrageous vices made the Herodian dynasty peculiarly so. But they were powerless to resist the iron will of Rome, though often sorely tempted to revolt; and the Herods, by a cruel tyranny, kept the people down. Never, therefore, was the longing expectation of the advent of Messiah to deliver Israel stronger or more intense than at the time when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea.

It is important, however, to realize that at that time the Jews of Palestine formed only a minority of the Jewish nation. To say nothing of the ten tribes, whose fate and whose locality were more or less unknown, the number of the two tribes which had returned from Babylon to Judea was very small compared with their whole number. This relative proportion continued to exist in the days of our Lord. The home Jews were far less numerous than the foreign Jews, who were known as "the dispersion."¹ True, they were no longer scattered as a penal judgment, or by the will and power of Gentile conquerors. They were voluntary exiles,—but exiles still,—whatever the motive of business or pleasure, policy or interest, which kept them so. Year by year the temple courts were thronged with crowds of foreign Jews—Jews "out of every nation under heaven," as they were "when the day of Pentecost was fully come." A Babel of languages might be heard in the streets of Jerusalem, even as there would be now were Jews from every land to congregate in one city.

But, though living among other nations, all these Jews looked to Jerusalem as their centre, and felt themselves

¹ ἡ διασπορὰ τῶν Ἑλλήνων.—John vii. 35.

strangers in the lands where they dwelt. There was an Eastern and a Western dispersion. The Babylonian Jews, and all who dwelt beyond the Euphrates, were much more closely connected with the restored people than were the Western dispersion. From the language which they spoke, they were called Hebrews as much as those who lived in Palestine. They were the "Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and dwellers in Mesopotamia" mentioned among the crowds gathered in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost. The Western dispersion included all the rest, the pilgrims from Cappadocia, Pontus, Phrygia, Pamphylia, Egypt, Cyrene, and Rome. Josephus and Philo estimate that millions of Jews belonged to the Eastern dispersion, which was the most influential and wealthy part of the nation. The Persian monarchs had treated the Jews kindly, Alexander the Great had favoured them, the Parthians, who succeeded the Seleucidæ in governing those regions, found them so influential that they avoided making enemies of them, and even the Romans in the first century before Christ shrank from provoking their hostility. They were united, though scattered, and had already become a sort of world nation, as they still are. The Calendar of the feasts of the Lord observed by this Eastern dispersion was identical with that of Jerusalem, the Sanhedrim indicating to them by fire signals from mountain top to mountain top the visibility of the new moon. The Babylonian Rabbis were very highly esteemed at Jerusalem. Ezra, Rabbi Hillel, and Rabbi Chija, who all three did good service in restoring the law, were from Babylon. This dispersion extended to the Black Sea, northward to the Caspian, and eastward as far as India. They were intensely Jewish, kept their genealogies with the utmost strictness, and observed the customs of the Talmud as well as the precepts of the law.

They must not be confounded with the wanderers of the ten tribes, whose destiny is involved in obscurity, and the only indications of whom from early sources are laid in the

countries to the north of India, the Kurdish mountains of Armenia, and the region of the Caucasus. They ceased to be known as Jews at all, with the exception of the comparatively few who settled in Palestine, like the family of Anna, which belonged to the tribe of Aser, and the few who had mingled with the exiles of Babylon, and formed part of that Eastern dispersion which never lost its nationality.

It was otherwise, however, with the Grecian, or Western dispersion. This also was very extensive—Asia Minor, Egypt, Greece, Rome, Spain, and other lands contained at the time of the first advent very numerous Jewish colonies and scattered residents. They were merchants, traders, doctors, craftsmen, and artisans; and though they were regarded as strangers and foreigners by the heathen, and often hated on account of their peculiar laws and customs, yet their higher religious faith had its influence on the Grecianized world which despised them, and their sacred writings, translated into Greek more than two hundred years before Christ, were widely known and read among philosophers. The Jews, in their turn, felt strongly the effect of the mental atmosphere in which they lived. The Stoic and Epicurean philosophies current in those centuries could not but affect the Jewish mind, with its keen and meditative cast. Their faith as Jews rested on authority, on Divine revelation. But what were the grounds of this authority, what the proofs of this revelation? These questions never troubled the Rabbis of Palestine and the East. But they were rife among the Jews of Alexandria and the Mediterranean. Young Judaism, waking up under the influence of what was to them modern thought, were tempted to compromise, to endeavour to conciliate Greek philosophy, to admit that Socrates as well as Moses was inspired, and to try to blend the teachings of Plato with those of the Pentateuch. The Palestinian Jews so dreaded the influence of Hellenistic writings that they forbade their perusal entirely, and endeavoured to repress

the curiosity awakened by them about the philosophies of Greece. When a young Rabbi, Ben Dama, asked his uncle whether, since he had thoroughly mastered every aspect of the law, he might not study Greek philosophy, the old Rabbi referred him to the words of Joshua about meditating in the law day and night : "Go search for the hour which is neither day nor night ; in it thou mayest study Greek philosophy."¹

Not only the books of the Apocrypha, but a whole literature, sprang up, in the two centuries preceding the advent, from the effort to blend Grecian thought and Hebrew revelation. Some of it remains to this day, though much has perished. Philo of Alexandria was perhaps the greatest of uninspired Jewish writers, and lived about twenty years before Christ. He treated the Old Testament as symbolical, and drew from it, by very arbitrary interpretations, doctrines which approached those of the popular philosophies. His writings and similar ones bridged over to some extent the great gulf between Judaism and Greek thought ; and though they were full of error, they led to a Gentile consideration of the Jewish Scriptures. Alexandria, where three worlds meet—Europe, Asia, and Africa—a city then of about a million inhabitants, was the home of this Jewish Hellenism ; an eighth of the people were Jews, synagogues abounded, and the city had a great Jewish basilica, or cathedral. Rome also had its synagogues and its large Jewish population, which was cordially hated by the rest of the people.

But wherever they dwelt, and however much they were Grecianized, the scattered Jews in east, west, north, and south, were all one in their expectation of a coming Messiah. This especially united them amid many diversities of language, custom, and thought. "The links which bound them together were—a common creed, a common life, a common centre, and a common hope." They all believed in the God of Abraham, in the law of Moses, in the observance of the

¹ Edersheim : "Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah," p. 22.

Sabbath, and feasts and fasts of Leviticus; and they all maintained synagogue worship. Jerusalem was the centre of the world to the Jew, whether he lived on the Euphrates, the Nile, or the Tiber; and thither, whenever possible, the pilgrim proceeded, at least once in his life. The advent of Messiah to deliver and restore them all to Palestine was the common hope of Jews both in the East and in the West, and never was that hope stronger or so full of expectancy as at the time of the first advent. The unrest and expectancy were heightened by the fact that the chronological prophecy of the seventy weeks from Artaxerxes pointed to the near future as the time of Messiah's manifestation. The hour at which the great Deliverer was due would soon strike. Daniel's prophecy was, it was true, mysterious, and did not say much about the glorious kingdom which they anticipated from other sacred promises and predictions. But still it fixed the time for Messiah's advent; and when He was come, He would restore all things. This prophecy of the seventy weeks would not seem to have been *generally* understood, but it was influential with the pious few who looked for redemption like the godly Anna, and waited like Simeon for the consolation of Israel.

Such then was the condition of the chosen people at the time when the last section of the prophetic programme was published. There was a vast dispersion in all lands: the "Hebrew," or Eastern one, speaking Aramean, intensely conservative, ritualistic, and learned in Rabbinic and Talmudic lore; the Western one, progressive, liberal, Hellenized, and philosophic; and between the two the nation, in its own home, Palestine, gathered around its restored temple, yet oppressed by aliens and under tribute, hating its Gentile rulers, though unable to oppose them, and waiting impatiently for Messiah to deliver them and destroy their foes.

The ancient synagogue referred to Messiah not only all the passages in the Psalms and prophets which Christians so

refer, but many more. More than four hundred and fifty passages of the Old Testament are by ancient Rabbinic writings applied to the coming Messiah ; 75 from the Pentateuch, 243 from the prophets, and 138 from the Hagiographa.¹ To the Jewish mind every hope and expectation centred in the Messianic age. The present night might be dark, but the coming day would be glorious, and meantime the midnight sky was illuminated by the brilliant stars and constellations of Messianic prophecy. Their expectation was of a Messiah King, however, rather than of a Messiah Saviour, and their hope was of One who should be the glory of His people Israel, rather than a light to lighten the Gentiles. Their own national exaltation was the great result to be attained, for there reigned among them an overweening idea of their exclusive divine privileges. In the glory of the prospect of their own universal domination they to some extent forgot the great Deliverer who was to raise them from their low estate to the pinnacle of earthly glory. Yet there are passages in the writings of the Rabbis which intimate that some of them realized that Messiah would be more than human and even super-angelic, and also that through Him reconciliation for Israel's sins would somehow be effected. With passages like Isaiah liii. and Daniel ix., it would indeed have been impossible that such thoughts should *not* have been forced on some minds. But Jewish understanding of these evangelical predictions was hazy, confused, and even contradictory, and the national mind rested only on the contrasted and more numerous predictions of the glorious earthly kingdom which Messiah was to found.

And what was the condition of the Gentile world outside ? The fourth empire was in its glory. The "dreadful and terrible and exceedingly strong" wild beast had been for some time in the ascendant, ravaging, devouring, and breaking in pieces the nations with its great iron teeth, and

¹ Edersheim, p. 163.

stamping the residue with the feet of it, as Daniel had predicted.

The empire of Rome filled the scene. Julius Cæsar had subdued the world; Augustus ruled it. From the Euphrates to the Atlantic, and from the Sahara to the German Ocean, the earth was for the first time crushed, stilled, united under one mighty sceptre. Liberty was dead. The paw of the Roman wild beast had pressed on her heart until it ceased to beat. All nations bowed in submission before the mighty Cæsar. The Mediterranean Sea was a Roman lake. "The empire of the Romans," says Gibbon, "filled the world; and when that empire fell into the hands of a single person, the world became a safe and dreary prison for his enemies."

Gibbon, as we saw before, tells us that the empire was 2,000 miles in depth from north to south, from the wall of Antoninus and the northern limits of Dacia, to Mount Atlas and the tropic of Cancer, and 3,000 miles in length, and that it contained 1,600,000 acres of fertile land in the finest part of the temperate zone. The capital of this vast empire was a magnificent city, whose population is variously given as from 1,200,000 to six or seven millions, varying probably according to the amount of suburbs included. The civilized world had been welded into one great monarchy for the first time, and the temple of Janus was closed, announcing that the earth was at peace, twenty-three years before the birth of Christ. This great calm of the stormy sea of nations lasted long, for who could oppose such overwhelming power? The commands of the Roman Cæsar were obeyed through all this vast domain, and its inhabitants were all citizens of one great state.

This widespread power of Rome was one of the preparations for the advent of the world's Redeemer. Jewish law, Grecian philosophy, and Roman conquest and policy had each done its preparatory work. Conscience had been educated, language refined and perfected, and fitted to receive

a new and final revelation, while the habitable world had been united under a wise and strong government, opened up by Roman roads and posts, and tranquillized by Roman civilization.

Morally and socially also the state of things was ripe for a fresh crisis of Divine interference and illumination. The world was, in spite of the peace and plenty which prevailed, profoundly unhappy. The old faiths had lost their power. "The various modes of worship which prevailed in the Roman world were all considered by the people as equally true, by the philosopher as equally false, and by the magistrate as equally useful." The rankest polytheism was the result, and religion was dissociated from morality. Irreligion was fashionable, immortality was denied, and vice reigned as a result.

One of the strongest indications of the hopeless moral condition of the Roman world was the utter and incredible degradation and suffering of the masses of the people. The great were very powerful, the rich were marvellously and uselessly wealthy. The small and select upper class had all the pleasures and refinements that luxury could invent or selfishness desire; magnificent cities studded the empire, architecture was in its glory, and an elegant literature flourished; but all this was only for the few—the very, very few. The misery of the industrial classes was indescribable. The tillers of the soil, forming everywhere the largest part of the population,—in Europe four-fifths,—and the domestic slaves of the rich and noble,—individuals among whom sometimes held many hundreds or even thousands of such,—were beyond the pale of the law, and regarded as scarcely superior to cattle. Augustus himself at one time gave up to their masters 30,000 slaves, who had fought for Sextus Pompeius, to be *executed*, though he had pledged his word not to do so!

Even the good Trajan amused the populace for 123 days by the horrid spectacle of 10,000 slaves killing each other

in fights in the amphitheatre! The rural peasantry were oppressed and ground to the earth by cruel bondage. The slaves won in war were treated worst of all. These wretched beings worked almost constantly with chains on their feet; they were worn down with fatigue in order to crush their spirit, and were shut up nightly in subterranean holes. The frightful sufferings of so large a portion of the population, its bitter hatred against its oppressors, produced continual servile insurrections, plots, assassinations, poisonings. In vain did a sanguinary law condemn to death *all* the slaves of a master who had been assassinated; vengeance and despair multiplied crime and violence.¹

The condition of woman, even in the highest ranks, was one of slavery. The law regarded her as the property of her husband. The bonds of marriage were utterly relaxed, and immorality reigned among all classes. Tacitus speaks with amazement of the purity and fidelity to the marriage bond which existed among the comparatively uncivilized Germans. In every relation of life the weak were oppressed. Might was esteemed right. There was no fear of God, no hope of life after death, no law of love and brotherhood. Regarded from a moral standpoint, nothing could well be worse than the Roman world into which Christ was born. Darkness covered the nations. But the light of the world arose with healing in its beams, and moral light, religious light, and prophetic light alike streamed forth in abundance. A very era of light succeeded an era of darkness so dense that it is difficult for us even to conceive it.

Such then was the political, moral, and religious state of the Gentile world in the first century of our era, at the crisis when the final section of the Divine programme of human history was given, the foreview of the dispensation in which we live.

And who was the channel of the new revelation? It was

¹ Sismondi: "Fall of the Roman Empire," vol. i. p. 23.

neither David, the founder of Jewish monarchy, nor Nebuchadnezzar, the founder of Gentile monarchy, but

CHRIST, THE FOUNDER OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

The rôle of history contains no other name that can for a single moment be placed beside that of Jesus of Nazareth under any one single aspect of His wonderful character and career. He came fulfilling all previous prophecy: the seed of the woman, He crushed the serpent's head;¹ the seed of Abraham, He has brought blessing to all nations; the seed of David, He has founded a kingdom that shall never end; the Messiah of Israel, He has "finished transgressions, and made an end of sins, made reconciliation for iniquity, and brought in everlasting righteousness." He proved Himself, moreover, to be *the Prophet* of whom Moses spoke, and it is in this last character as a prophet that we have now to regard Him as the author of this, the last section of the Divine programme of the world's history.

"God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days SPOKEN UNTO US BY HIS SON, whom He hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also He made the worlds."

This statement includes the prophetic utterances of Christ, though it goes far beyond them, and refers principally to the revelation made by Him as a whole—that wonderful revelation of God which was the main object of His incarnation, life, and death. "I have declared unto them Thy name" (or character), "and will declare it," He said in His last prayer; and to His disciples, "He that hath seen Me, hath seen the Father."

From the full and glorious moral and spiritual revelations made by Christ, from all His wonderful and new doctrinal

¹ Heb. ii. 14

teachings, we must, however, turn our thoughts. They are not here our theme. He illumined every subject of vital importance to mankind ; to receive His teachings was and is to have eternal life. But our present subject is limited to *that foreview of future events* given directly or indirectly by the Prince of prophets, and which has come down to us from the first century of our era. We must not, indeed, dwell on the whole, even of *it*, for it is too vast, and it extends to yet future ages. We must confine ourselves mainly to that portion of it which has already been fulfilled by history.

The New Testament prophecies, as will at once be recognised, divide themselves naturally into four groups.

I. There are first the beautiful annunciatory predictions of the approaching advent of Christ by the angels,—to Zacharias and Mary, and then to the shepherds,—followed by the exultant prophetic songs of Zacharias and Mary, and by the words of Simeon and John the Baptist. These were partly fulfilled in gospel history, though in their full scope they embrace the present and the future. But on them we need not dwell ; they are but as the porch to the temple. They mark, however, the commencement of the new prophetic era.

II. The predictions, parabolic and plain, of our Lord Himself in the days of His flesh.

III. The revelations given by the Holy Ghost to the apostles, and through them—and especially through Paul—to the Church.

IV. The latest revelation of Christ risen and glorified, from heaven to John in Patmos : “The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave to Him, to show unto His servants things which must shortly come to pass,” and which He sent and signified by His angel to His servant John.

This last prophecy of the Bible is closely related to the entire Old Testament, and to the prophetic parables of Christ. It is given by the same person, deals with the same

theme, is couched in the same symbolic form, and is perfectly harmonious in its statements with all the rest of the programme.

For brevity's sake we shall not refer in detail to all the Scriptures to which we must now allude, much less quote them in full. This is not, indeed, needful. We may count on our readers' familiarity with the text of the New Testament. Our endeavour will be merely to recall their knowledge, both of predictions and events, in order to lead them fairly to compare the two, and draw the supremely important inferences which are suggested by the comparison. We begin, then, by a consideration of

OUR LORD'S OWN PREDICTIONS

during His earthly life, both parabolic and plain. That many of even His earliest parables are prophetic none can question. Of the thirty or three and thirty parables in the Gospels, fifteen or sixteen, at least, are of this character. Take, first, the group recorded in Matthew xiii., which were given near the commencement of Christ's public ministry. In them, omitting—for the sake of simplicity of statement and clearness of impression—all *detail*, He drew an outline blank map, as it were, of the eighteen Christian centuries. He described, in advance, the broad aspects of the new dispensation He was about to inaugurate.

Under various *similitudes of the kingdom of heaven*, He presented the essential characteristics of the Christian age as contrasted with the Jewish age, then drawing to a close. The revelation made in the parables of the sower sowing the seed, the wheat and tares, the mustard seed, the leaven working in the three measures of meal, the treasure hid in the field, the pearl of great price, and the net cast into the sea, was a startlingly new one when it was given, though

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long familiarity with its fulfilment makes it seem most natural to us.

It is the same with our Lord's later parables, and especially with His plain predictions in non-parabolic form. Perplexing, and almost incredible, even on His authority, to Jewish minds, filled with expectation of the future such as we have previously considered, must have been the predictions given in such parables as those of the wicked husbandman who killed the heir, and lost the vineyard ; the marriage of the king's son ; the nobleman who went into a far country, and of whom his citizens said, "We will not have this man to reign over us" ; of the talents used or wasted in a long interval which was to elapse before the establishment of the kingdom ; of the dark night-watch of the ten virgins for the expected bridegroom, which was so prolonged that they all slumbered and slept ;—all these foreviews were not only puzzling, but painfully startling, to men convinced that Messiah had come, and that the long-promised kingdom of God, in all its glory, was on the point of being introduced by Him.

For what did all these parables with ever-increasing clearness foretell ? A course of history with which *we* are acquainted as well as with the air we breathe, but which in the first century of our era must have seemed to Jew and Gentile alike not only unnatural, improbable, impossible, but absolutely inconceivable. As a matter of fact, they *could* not, and did not, conceive it, even after all the prophetic instructions of their Lord and Master. Notwithstanding all He had foretold them to the contrary, they still thought that the kingdom of God would immediately appear ; and even as they stood around the ascended Saviour in their last earthly interview, they asked : "Lord, wilt Thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel ?"

It is exceedingly difficult for us to divest ourselves of our Christian knowledge and consciousness, and transport our-

selves in imagination back into the mental and moral condition of the society in the midst of which Jesus Christ promulgated this programme of the future. Yet we must endeavour to do this if we would estimate aright the altogether supernatural character of the foreview. It was like a description of the tropics given to Lapps and Esquimaux, who have seen nothing but snow and ice, aurora borealis, and the midnight sun ! It was like a sketch of the wide ocean presented to men who had no conception of anything but the inside of a temple ! *They could not take it in* : it was too strangely incredible ! He could not mean what He said ! They sought explanation, hoping to elucidate the mystery, but His interpretations only added to it instead. For, combining in one view all the predictive utterances of Christ, what did He announce as the main features of the age which He was about to inaugurate ? Let us try, as we enumerate them one by one, to regard them from the standpoint of Peter or John, as if we were wholly ignorant of all that has since happened in the world.

They were convinced that Christ was the long-looked-for Messiah, and they were expecting that He would bring consolation to Israel, deliverance, exaltation, and supremacy. They had heard out of the law that He was to abide for ever, that of the increase of His kingdom there would be no end, that He would sit on the throne of David for ever, and be the glory of His people Israel. They expected, and rightly expected, from Old Testament prophecy, that He would exalt the Jews, and destroy their enemies, and make Jerusalem the joy of the whole earth. Having long delayed His advent, the Anointed of God, the Christ, the King, the Lion of the tribe of Judah was at last come. They had no doubt of it. "Rabbi, Thou art the Son of God, Thou art the King of Israel." *At last* the Son and Lord of David was in their midst, the King was present, the kingdom must follow !

But the parables and predictions of Jesus assured them, on

the contrary, that a future of a wholly different character lay before them and the world. He did not set aside or destroy their hope and expectation of the oft-predicted kingdom of God on earth. On the contrary, He confirmed their expectation of it, and put into their lips a prayer for its advent : "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done *on earth* as it is in heaven." It would come at last, it *would* be revealed in due time. But

AN INTERMEDIATE PROSPECT

of an entirely different character was opened to their astonished gaze. It was predicted by our Lord—

I. That He Himself, the King, would be rejected. The husbandmen would say, "This is the heir; come, let us kill him." The invited guests would refuse to come to the marriage, and would even slay the messengers sent to invite them. The citizens would say, "We will not have this man to reign over us." The builders would reject the stone which should become head of the corner. And mingled with these and similar symbolic intimations were still plainer hints of the foreseen issue. He told them that the Son of man would be "lifted up," like the serpent in the wilderness; that He, when He was "lifted up," would draw all men to Him. He spoke of His blood, or sacrificed life, being the life of the world; told them He was going to lay it down, and at last distinctly predicted that the Jews would deliver Him to the Romans, and that they would crucify Him; that, like Jonas, He would be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth; and that though, like Jonas, He would rise again, yet that it would not be to destroy His enemies and establish His reign on earth. On the contrary, before He did that, the King would go into a far country, to receive investiture of His kingdom and to return,—as Archelaus, king of Judea, had recently gone to Rome to be invested by Cæsar with his crown,—that there would

be opportunity for the evil servant to say, "My Lord delayeth His coming," to smite his fellow-servants, and eat, and drink, and be drunken; that there would be time for a prolonged probation of the King's servants, and for use or misuse of the talents committed to their care; that it would not be till "*after a long time*" that the Lord of the servants would return to take account of them; and at last, in plainer words, that He was returning to heaven, where He would prepare a place for them,—going back to the Father from whom He had come forth; and that the only kingdom which would *then* be established would be *a kingdom of heaven*,—that is, a rule which would be exercised by a king unseen on earth—exalted in heaven.

This was the first main, clear, strong feature of Christ's programme of the future. No one can question its prominence in His predictions, and no one can doubt that it was a strange, unexpected, and incredible announcement to those who heard it. The Jews express their astonishment and mental confusion. "How sayest Thou, The Son of man must be lifted up? The law says that the Christ will abide for ever!" But the great Prophet repeated again and again, without a shadow of hesitation or wavering, that it would be even so.

Was it mere human foresight that gave this prophecy? Was it likely that the eager, impatient, enthusiastic, and ambitious Jewish people would reject and murder their mighty, miracle-working, Divine Messiah, when, after ages of waiting expectation, He was at last in their midst? Was such a prediction one which a mere man in Christ's position would have put forward? Would authors of spurious gospels put such a programme into the lips of their imaginary hero? Would one who was merely acting the *rôle* of Israel's Messiah have counted certainly on his own rejection, and persisted in predicting it? The adhesion and enthusiasm of the crowds that shouted "Hosanna!" never misled for a moment or blinded Christ to what was coming. He foresaw the cross; He fore-

told the cross, and the grave, and the ascension from Olivet, when none but Himself could have even conceived such events. And we know what happened.

II. But that was not all ! Christ foresaw and foretold also *the twofold result* of this apparent miscarriage of His mission as Messiah: *the fall of Judaism* and *the rise of Christianity*. Apart from all question of the invisible *spiritual* consequences, the eternal salvation of millions—a consideration which as an invisible, intangible one to sight and sense, we must not here adduce—He foresaw and foretold the approach of *two conspicuous and contrasted series of outward events*, each series extending over ages—events of national and cosmopolitan importance ; events of a mundane, material, historic nature, about which no two opinions can possibly be entertained ; events which submit themselves to the evidence of our senses, which historians could record and artists paint, and poets and musicians sing ; events most momentous in the history of humanity. Such have unquestionably been the fall of Judaism and the rise of Christendom.

Neither of these great changes was*in the days of Christ within the range of the most keen-sighted mental vision ; no human sagacity could descry anywhere on the horizon a cloud as big even as a man's hand portending their approach. The prescience that anticipated and foretold them was and must have been, therefore, supernatural—Divine.

And first, as to THE FALL OF JUDAISM. The Saviour's revelations on the subject were, as usual, progressive—hints only at first, then statements, then full and clear descriptions. The moral reason for and cause of the event is also exhibited : the Jews are made to pronounce their own doom. What would the householder do to the disloyal men who had killed the heir of the vineyard ? “ He will miserably destroy those wicked men,” say the chief priests and elders of the people, “ and will let out the vineyard to other husbandmen, who will render him the fruits in their season.” The Lord endorses

their judgment, and adds, "Ye are the men!" For He says, "The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof." Here is foretold a loss of all the peculiar privileges of Judaism, as a result of their rejection of Christ; as well as that *others*—some who had never enjoyed it previously—would gain "the kingdom of God," which they would lose.

The same prediction was oft repeated. The carefully cultured but still fruitless tree would, after long and patient waiting, be cut down. The barren fig-tree afforded a visible symbol of what was to happen to the nation when it withered away. The enemies who would not have the King to reign over them would be slain before His face. Strangers from the east and from the west would sit down in the kingdom with Abraham, while the children of the kingdom would be cast out. As the great tragedy drew near its climax, and the leaders of Israel ranged themselves decidedly against their Messiah, the utterances of Christ became plainer. Not that His convictions were deepened by such indications of what was likely to come, but that He would not anticipate rejection too distinctly before it had been resolved on by His foes. It was only in the last week of His earthly life that He spoke out fully on this subject, and His most memorable and touching utterance about it was made on that festive Palm Sunday, when, for a brief moment, it seemed as if the result might be different. Amid thousands of grateful disciples—the lame and the blind whom He had healed, the lepers whom He had cleansed, the very dead whom He had raised, and the multitudes whom He had taught—Zion's King came to her that day, meek, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt, the foal of an ass. The crowd were waving palms of victory as they escorted Him from Bethany, and laying their garments for Him to ride over. The children sang "Hosanna!" and greeted Him as Son of David. But the present could not conceal from Him the future, and as He

approached Jerusalem His tears flowed as He bewailed, in tender and animated utterance, her terrible approaching fate and self-inflicted doom. She had rejected all His loving efforts, and failed to recognise her day of gracious Divine visitation. In sad and solemn prophecy Jesus foretold, "The days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, and shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee ; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another."

This seemed a strange future to be announced to Israel by the Messiah, for whom she had so longed and waited, as the harbinger of better and brighter days. It was enough to shock men who were indulging half-worldly and half-religious ideas of approaching deliverance from their enemies, and triumph over all Gentile foes. What! their enemies not only to rule them as Herod, Pilate, and Cæsar were already doing, but actually to raze Jerusalem to the ground!

Judea was then a flourishing province of the mighty Roman empire. Jesus Christ was simply a young Galilean prophet to the outward eye, nothing more. The Herodian dynasty was safely seated on the throne, and the temple—of which Jesus said, "Your house is left unto you desolate"—had been rebuilt in much magnificence and almost regardless of cost ; cities and palaces of Roman and Grecian architecture studded the land ; Roman soldiery guarded the country, and kept the people in order. Nothing boded change, ruin, banishment, extermination for some, and age-long exile even unto this day for others. How could even the unjust execution of any individual involve such consequences? Could anything be more unlikely than the delivery, not to say fulfilment, of these predictions? Imagine a parallel case. Some young and humble religious teacher who has, however, great power and originality, comes up to London from the northern counties, takes the position of a bold reformer,

claims the right to overthrow existing religious abuses, upbraids the Church leaders of the land for their simony, worldliness, and traditional customs opposed to the word of God, ventures to purify the Church by some bold, practical measures, is, in consequence, arrested and accused by those who reject his religious pretensions. He is tried and condemned—and then, without the least personal feeling, but seriously, sadly, and even solemnly, he predicts that the result of his rejection will be the utter overthrow of the Protestant religion, the downfall of the British empire, the complete destruction of St. Paul's and Westminster Abbey, so that not one stone will be left on another, and ages of a foreign occupation of England !

Yet it was thus Jesus of Nazareth, the prophet of Galilee, forewarned the Jews as to the results of their rejecting Him ; and the wonderful fact is that *the event justified the prediction*, and all subsequent history attested its Divine inspiration.

He said much more on the subject to His disciples shortly afterwards. Seated together with Him on the Mount of Olives, and gazing across the valley of Jehoshaphat on the striking view of Jerusalem outspread before them, with its beautiful temple, and temple area, in the foreground,—the twelve, pondering the sad future He had predicted for their holy house, and finding it hard to believe, remarked to Him, in a deprecatory, expostulating tone, on the extent, variety, magnificence, and solidity of the structures recently erected by Herod. They pointed out how richly the temple was adorned with goodly stones and gifts, and seemed anxious to elicit, if possible, some qualification, if not contradiction, of the doom that had been foretold. It was a perfect vision of beauty from that point, with its marble courts and golden gates glittering in the glorious sunshine of the East, and contrasting in its massive magnificence with the graceful palms, the feathery tamarisk, and the dark cypress around.

The scene was the pride of Jewish hearts, and, as they chal-

lenged Christ's admiration of it, His gaze was troubled, and in accents of deep sincerity and sorrow He assured them that His previously expressed anticipation was only too correct. "See ye not all these things? verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down." He then went on to assure them that they would themselves see Jerusalem compassed with idolatrous Gentile armies; and that when they did so, they and all His Judean disciples should flee to the mountains, for that days of dreadful vengeance would then be commencing; that a time of great and unparalleled tribulation for the Jews would be opening; that many of them would fall by the edge of the sword, many more be led away captive into all nations, and that Jerusalem itself would not only be taken and destroyed, but that the very site of it would—throughout an entire dispensation—be held by Gentile conquerors. "Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles," He prophesied, "until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." Now, as the times of the *Jews*, or Jewish age, had lasted for 2,000 years, these words might well suggest to the disciples that "the times of the Gentiles" would be no brief seventy years, like the Babylonian captivity, but, as has proved to be the case, a long dispensational "age" analogous to that of Judaism.

Our Lord thus foresaw and foretold as definitely and clearly as possible, both in parabolic and plain predictions,—

1. The fall of Judaism as a religion;
2. The destruction of Jerusalem as a city, and of the temple as a sanctuary;
3. A time of great tribulation, and of prolonged dispersion of the Jewish people;
4. An age-long desolation of the land, and Gentile domination of Jerusalem.

Here are four distinct elements of the future; and it should be noted that any one of the four might have happened without the other three. The religious economy of Judaism might

have come to an end without the political extinction of the nation ; the city and temple might have been destroyed *and rebuilt* within a century, as after the Babylonian captivity ; the Jews might have been scattered *and restored* ; or Jerusalem might, like Nineveh, or Palmyra, or Ephesus, have lain long in its ruins without being trodden down by Gentile occupants all those ages. The foreview given on this one point alone was no simple, obvious one, easy to invent, certain to be realized. On the contrary, it picks its way carefully amidst a crowd of probabilities, possibilities, contingencies of all kinds. It announced, simply and authoritatively, the future will be thus and thus, at a time when no human wisdom or prescience could have decided—out of a thousand contingencies—which was even most *likely* to occur.

An elaborate series of events, embracing complicated, intricate, and long-continued episodes of Jewish and Gentile history, which it has taken volume upon volume to *record*, is predicted in a few sharp, clear sentences. The prophecy is precisely such a one as no pretender to supernatural prescience would have ventured on. But just as there are portraits, landscapes, sea pictures, and cloudscares that *could* only have been painted from the actual sight of the originals, so this outline of the future of the Jews, uttered 1,800 years ago by Jewish lips, amid scenes of Jewish peace and prosperity, could only have been drawn by One whose all-seeing eye could gaze on events which lay at the time hidden in the womb of the future.

For we need scarcely tell how history justified the daring predictions. The tragic and wonderful story is so familiar that it suffices to recall our knowledge of it in the briefest way. Who has not shuddered over the pages of Josephus, as he narrates, with the exactness of an eye-witness, the episodes of the long drawn-out agony, all the more painfully impressive because the tale is traced by a Jewish pen ? If we inquire of this writer, Did many fall by the sword, as Jesus

here predicted?—humanity itself sickens over the reply. Christian faith in considering it exclaims in awe : Behold “the severity of God,”—the proof that severity is as truly one of His attributes as “goodness.” We may not quote Josephus, for his story is far too full. The following summary from the pages of Bishop Newton will recall some of the facts so vividly described in full in his “Wars of the Jews” :—

“The number of those who ‘fell by the edge of the sword’ was indeed very great. Of those who perished during the whole siege, there were,” as Josephus says, “1,100,000. Many were also slain at other times and in other places. By the command of Florus, who was the first author of the war, there were slain at Jerusalem 3,600; by the inhabitants of Cæsarea, above 20,000; at Scythopolis, above 13,000; at Ascalon, 2,500, and at Ptolemais, 2,000. At Alexandria, under Tiberius Alexander, the president, 50,000; at Joppa, when it was taken by Cestius Gallus, 8,400; in a mountain called Asamon, near Sepphoris, above 2,000; at Damascus, 10,000; in a battle with the Romans at Ascalon, 10,000; in an ambuscade near the same place, 8,000; at Japha, 15,000; of the Samaritans, upon Mount Gerizim, 11,600; at Jotapha, 40,000; at Joppa, when taken by Vespasian, 4,200; at Tarichea, 6,500, and after the city was taken, 1,200; at Gamala, 4,000 slain, besides 5,000 who threw themselves down a precipice; of those who fled with John from Gischala, 6,000; of the Gadarenes, 15,000 slain, besides an infinite number drowned; in the villages of Idumæa, above 10,000 slain; at Gerasa, 1,900; at Machærus, 1,700; in the wood of Jarden, 3,000; in the castle of Massada, 960; in Cyrene, by Catullus, the governor, 3,000. Besides these, many of every age, sex, and condition were slain in this war, who are not reckoned; but of these who are reckoned, the number amounts to about 1,357,660, which would appear almost incredible if their own historian had not so particularly enumerated them.

“But, besides the Jews who ‘fell by the edge of the sword,’ others were also to be led away captive into all nations; and, considering the number of the slain, the number of the captives too was very great. There were taken, particularly, at Japha, 2,130; at Jotapha, 1,200. At Tarichea, 6,000 chosen young men were sent to Nero, the rest sold, to the number of 30,400, besides those who were given to Agrippa: of the Gadarenes, 2,200; in Idumæa, above 1,000. Many, besides these, were taken at Jerusalem, so that, as Josephus himself informs us, ‘The number of the captives taken in the whole war amounted to 97,000. The tall and handsome young men Titus reserved for his triumph; of the rest, those above seventeen years of age were sent to the works in Egypt; but most were distributed through the Roman provinces, to be destroyed in their theatres

by the sword or by the wild beasts. Those under seventeen were sold for slaves. Of these captives, many underwent hard fate. Eleven thousand of them perished for want. Titus exhibited all sorts of shows and spectacles at Cæsarea ; and many of the captives were there destroyed, some being exposed to the wild beasts, and others compelled to fight in troops against one another. At Cæsarea, too, in honour of his brother's birthday, 2,500 Jews were slain ; and a great number likewise at Berytus, in honour of his father's. The like was done in other cities of Syria. Those whom he reserved for his triumph were Simon and John, the generals of the captives, and seven hundred others of remarkable stature and beauty. Thus were the Jews miserably tormented and distributed over the Roman provinces ; and are they not still distressed, and dispersed over all the nations of the earth ?

"As the Jews were 'to be led away captive into all nations,' so Jerusalem was to be 'trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.' And accordingly Jerusalem has never since been in the possession of the Jews, but hath constantly been in subjection to some other nation, as first to the Romans, and afterwards to the Saracens, and then to the Franks, and then to the Mamelucs, and now to the Turks."¹

The Emperor Hadrian, whose first name was *Ælius*, placed a Roman colony on the site of Jerusalem, and built there a city, which he called, after himself, *ÆLIA*. It had a temple dedicated to Jupiter Capitolinus. The erection of the temple excited to revolt the remnant of the Jews left in Palestine. They rose in rebellion under Barchochab, a robber and murderer, and then came the final catastrophe, the last act of the tragedy in the land, in A.D. 135.

"The Jews were at length subdued with most terrible slaughter : fifty of their strongest castles and 985 of their best towns were sacked and demolished ; 580,000 men fell by the sword in battle, besides an infinite multitude who perished by famine and sickness and fire, so that Judea was almost all desolated.

"The Jewish writers themselves reckon that doubly more Jews were slain in this war than came out of Egypt ; and that their sufferings under Nebuchadnezzar and Titus were not so great as what they endured under the Emperor Adrian. Of the Jews who survived this second ruin of their nation, an incredible number of every age and sex were sold like horses, and dispersed over the face of the earth. The emperor completed his

¹ "Newton's Dissertation," p. 414.

design, rebuilt the city, re-established the colony, ordered the statue of a hog in marble to be set up over the gate that opened towards Bethlehem, and published an edict strictly forbidding any Jew, upon pain of death, to enter the city, or so much as to look upon it at a distance.”¹

The tears which Israel's Messiah shed over Jerusalem and her children welled up from eyes that *foresaw what was coming*—foresaw all this and much more of the same sort.

For 1,800 years exile, persecution, and cruel oppression have, as we showed in the Mosaic section, been the portion of the Jewish nation—for all that we have recalled here was only the beginning of sorrows. The entire interval up to the time of the French revolution at the end of last century was to Israel a time of great tribulation, though its extremest severity was not continuous, but intermittent. Our century has seen a very marked change in the fortunes and condition of the Jews, for the times of the Gentiles are well-nigh over, and Israel's long story is not finished yet. It is only beginning, indeed, for it will need eternity to tell it all.

Twice over our Lord employed the important little word “*until*” in His predictions of these Jewish experiences. Your house is left unto you desolate, He said, *until* ye are ready to welcome, instead of reject, Me; and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles *until* their age has run its appointed course. What do these *limits* mean? If a judge says to a criminal, “You are to remain in prison *until* five years have run their course,” what does he imply? If an architect says, “I will not begin to rebuild that house *until* funds have been secured for the purpose,” what is the inference? He who foretold the present doom of Israel indicated its limits, and *indicated also what would follow*.

For Christ foretold His own return, as well as His departure—His return to reign on earth and over Israel, as the prophets of the Old Testament had promised. He did not set aside the Jewish hope for ever, but only postponed it

¹ “Newton's Dissertation,” p. 415.

for a time, and revealed an intermediate dispensation. The gifts and calling of God are without repentance. The kingdom promised to Israel under their Messiah cannot be fulfilled by the present Gentile dispensation, while Christ is in heaven and the Jews under great tribulation. It is derogatory to the truth and inspiration of Scripture to suppose it! The angel, in announcing the birth of Jesus, predicted that He should be great, and that the Lord God would give unto Him the throne of His father David; that He should reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and that of His kingdom there should be no end. This prediction has yet to be fulfilled. It is not and cannot be fulfilled by the present kingdom of heaven. On the contrary, Christ predicted that He would establish it at His second advent. He sets His seal to all the old predictions, and adds new ones. The kingdom, He tells them, when it does come, will be a far more glorious one than they imagined. The Son of man will come in clouds, with power and great glory. He will send forth His angels, and gather His elect. He will come in the glory of His Father, and of the holy angels, and sit on the throne of His glory. He will reckon with His servants, and award places of honour in the kingdom to His faithful followers (Luke xxii. 29). But Israel's repentance would have to be the preliminary. "Until" then they would see Him no more. All this was in perfect harmony with Old Testament prophecy, with Zechariah xi. and xii., and many other passages. As all this is, however, at present unfulfilled prophecy, we do not dwell on it here.

We have now seen what the programme given by Christ was in its *negative* aspect. The coming age would *not* be a continuation of Judaism. The favoured nation, which for 2,000 years had been the channel of revelation, and the sole witness for the living and true God in an idolatrous pagan

world, was to be removed from the position of which its rejection of Christ had proved it unworthy. This predicted destruction of Jerusalem and the temple, with which Jewish ritual worship was inseparably connected, involved a change in God's providential action towards mankind. *What would be substituted for Judaism?* What was the *positive* side of the prophetic programme presented by our Lord Jesus?

He announced THE RISE, CHARACTER, COURSE, AND ISSUES OF AN ENTIRELY NEW AND PREVIOUSLY UNPRECEDENTED ECONOMY OF DIVINE PROVIDENCE, of which He speaks under the name of "the kingdom of heaven." He did not Himself personally reveal *all* that the programme was to contain on this subject. Much could not properly be revealed until after His resurrection. As we shall presently see, this part of the prophecy was left to be communicated subsequently, through the inspired apostles. But Jesus Himself sketched its outline. He neither defined fully what the true Church would be, nor what the outward professing Church, which we call Christendom, would be. That was foretold later on. But He gave similitudes of the coming "kingdom of heaven," which prove that the eighteen Christian centuries lay naked and open before His all-seeing eye, though during the days of His flesh a full disclosure would have been premature.

This "kingdom of heaven," or present spiritual kingdom of God on earth, must be broadly distinguished from the other kingdom of which we have just spoken. It is in mystery only a kingdom, not in manifestation. None can see its King or its court, its hosts or its palaces, nor even distinguish its subjects, by any outward sign, from its enemies. Christ speaks of "*the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven,*" and He paints it as wonderfully different from the earthly kingdom of God which Israel had been expecting, and which, owing to their rejection of its King, was postponed *sine die*, and is still future. *That* kingdom was to be introduced by

the return of the King in power and great glory, characterized by His personal presence, by His session on the throne of David, and by the exaltation of repentant and restored Israel. *This* kingdom, on the other hand, exists during the absence of the King in heaven, runs its course during His Melchizedek session on the throne of God, and coincides with the time of Israel's dispersion and rejection. The two are contrasted in every respect: the one is a rule on earth, the other a rule from heaven; the one is over peoples and nations, the other is over the hearts and lives of Christ's disciples mainly, though involving also a hidden providential government of the world; it is an invisible rule, a mysterious sway, an intangible dominion; it is a kind of kingdom of which the Jews had no conception, and of which the disciples themselves were slow to catch the idea; it was one which had never been clearly predicted in the Old Testament, and they had failed to understand the hints of it which the prophets had given; it was practically a new revelation. Hence our Lord began His gradual unfolding of it in simple parables, in order that the homely analogies might make way for the novel conception.

Combining all the intimations given by its Founder as to this kingdom of heaven, we must now deduce, from the mass of parable and prediction in the Gospels, the positive side, or Christian aspect, of Christ's programme of the future.

And *first*, in His prophetic parables, our Lord foretold that the coming dispensation, or kingdom of heaven, would have no national limits, but be cosmopolitan—*universal in its scope*. "The field" of Divine operation would in future be "the world." This was a novel and most startling idea for Jewish minds, and the disciples sought an explanation of what to them seemed so strange, though to us so simple and familiar. The world? Yes. "The field is the world." As if He had said: In the future no one nation will enjoy any religious advantages more than another. All distinction of Jew and

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Gentile will be done away. The revelation of God will be for all, to all. There will be no planting and hedging of a vineyard. "The field is the world." Absolute equality of religious privileges among men, irrespective of nationality, is here clearly predicted.

Secondly, the future operations of God in this field would be *dissimilar in character* from any past operations of His in the world. He would establish no outward visible theocracy nor ritual religious service. He would enact no new code of laws, as from Sinai, nor establish ceremonial worship and a separate priesthood. He would work no special miracles of preservation and deliverance for His people; on the contrary, His action would be like that of a sower sowing the seed. "Behold, a sower went forth to sow." The new dispensation would be marked by a wide distribution of living seed; that is, by a world-wide diffusion of truth—living and life-giving truth. Hence its one great ordinance would not be, as of old, sacrifice, but preaching, teaching, imparting to men the word of God. The Sower's object was to diffuse His precious seed, and the seed possessed, latent in itself, the powers of life and of self-multiplication. All life comes from seed, and tends to produce seed, which, in its turn, gives birth to new life. The kingdom of heaven would grow, by inward life-power, from small beginnings to immense development. The seed would grow secretly,—the progress of the kingdom of heaven would be by the hidden and concealed operations of spiritual life; for as seed is capable of being quickened into wondrous action, so the word of God has in it the germ which can produce rich and ever-increasing results.

This was clearly a prediction that the coming age would see inward and spiritual operations on the part of the Divine Being, that He would work in the hearts and minds of men, and that, instead of imposing a new law, He was about to impart a new life. It was a prediction that the kingdom of

heaven would not be established by force, like the empire of Cæsar or the subsequent sway of Mohammed. The Jews expected Messiah to establish His kingdom by force, by the subjugation of enemies and the punishment of all opponents. The only kingdoms the Jews had ever known, or indeed that the world had ever seen up to that time, had been won by force, and been held by force alone. But Christ told them there was coming a dominion wider and longer than any earth had seen, that would be established solely by a gradual dissemination and spread of the truth of God.

He intimated, *thirdly*, that the subjects of the new kingdom would not be received *en masse*, as nations, but only *individually*, and that in every case the growth of the seed would depend upon the condition of the soil into which it fell. There would be a recognition of individuality: the state of heart and mind of each hearer of the word would in each case determine the issue of the sowing. This again was something wholly new, for a man was a Jew, whether he would or no, but no one would enter the kingdom of heaven against his will.

Fourthly, the new age was to present a *mixed condition* of things. He tells them that the kingdom of heaven will in this respect bear no resemblance to the future kingdom of God, in which He will "gather out all things that offend, and those that do iniquity," in which righteousness will reign triumphant, and sin will not be suffered, nor enemies and evil-doers tolerated. He predicts that, on the contrary, in the kingdom of heaven tares will grow as well as wheat, that the enemy will be at work as well as the sower, that the husbandman will not suffer the tares to be eradicated, that both good and bad fish will be gathered in the net, and that no separation will take place until the end of the age. This mixed condition of things is predicted again and again as a feature of the coming kingdom in later parables: there would be foolish virgins without any oil in their lamps, as well as

wise ones; there would be foolish builders laying their foundations on the sand, as well as wise ones, who would build on the rock; there would be wicked and evil servants, who wasted their Lord's substance, as well as good and faithful ones; and there would at last be goats on the left hand, as well as sheep on the right.¹

Thus our Saviour's very earliest parables—before there were any signs that Israel would reject their Messiah, and thus interpose a barrier to the immediate coming of the kingdom which they expected—predicted four of the most salient features of the new dispensation, which He alone fore-saw. Its sphere was to be *universal*; its nature was to be *spiritual*, as He taught the woman of Samaria in plain words; it would deal with men *individually*, and not nationally; and

¹ The meaning of the parable of the leaven has been much controverted, but we have ourselves no question that it teaches the same truth, only in a more definite form. It speaks of a state of things which exists not so much in the world as in a small and pure mass—"three measures of meal"; it says that leaven will be hidden in this pure mass, and will work till the whole is leavened. That is, evil will be introduced into the Church, and will permeate it completely. Though it is often supposed to do so, this prediction cannot possibly point to the action of the gospel in the world, gradually evangelizing it, and that for two reasons: First, because Scripture is always consistent in its symbology, and never employs emblems to signify opposite things. Now everywhere else in the Bible leaven is used as a symbol of evil, not of good—Exod. xiii. 3; Lev. ii. 11; Amos iv. 5; Luke xii. 1; 1 Cor. v. 7; Gal. v. 9. The only passage which could be supposed to be an exception to this rule (Lev. xxiii. 17) is in reality the strongest instance of it. It commands the presentation on the day of Pentecost not only of the wave sheaf, typifying Christ, but of two loaves baked with leaven, typifying the Church, in which sin continues to exist, even though it be *redeemed and sanctified*. Secondly, the gospel never has influenced "the whole" world, and never will in this age, seeing that it is distinctly predicted that when Christ returns to close it there will be vast numbers who know not God and obey not the gospel, and who will be punished with everlasting destruction from His presence. Hence we take the parable of the leaven to be a further revelation of the fact that the kingdom of heaven would witness not only the co-existence of evil and good in the world, but an active and corrupting influence in the Church.

its character, though a kingdom of heaven, would be *mixed*, imperfect, good and bad.

In later parables He revealed many additional features of the coming age, to which we must only allude. In His story of the labourers who, though they had toiled for dissimilar periods, were equally rewarded by the householder, He foretold that the exercise of *sovereign grace* would be a leading principle of God's providence, for this was a similitude of the kingdom of heaven. In giving every man his due,—the wages for which he had agreed,—the master acted in strict and simple justice. So God had acted in Judaism. In giving some men much more than their due, the owner of the vineyard had acted in free grace, for the labourers had no claim to so much, and had made no bargain at all. That was undeserved kindness, unmerited generosity, for which the recipients made no return. *That* principle was to mark the future in contrast to the past. So "the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ."

In the parable of the ten virgins, again, Christ not only teaches the duty of watchfulness, but indicates in advance facts concerning the future, to name which is to recall the fulfilment of His prediction. He foresaw that His own second advent would be long delayed. *The Bridegroom tarried*,—came not when He was expected. He foresaw also the effect of this on the Church,—“They all slumbered and slept.” For a thousand years the Church did so: the hope of the Lord's coming, so bright at first, so bright again now since the warning cry went forth, was lost sight of throughout the middle ages. He foresaw also that false profession would be exceedingly prevalent. Half the virgins would have no oil in their vessels with their lamps. We are accustomed to look at this parable and similar ones as teaching needed moral and spiritual lessons. They do this, but they are also *prophecies*. They foretell a new state of things, and one contrasted with Judaism. Jews did not slumber

and sleep as to their Messianic hopes! The longer Messiah's advent was delayed, the more impatient they became for it. They did not make false profession of being Jews, for they were such by blood. This sketch portrayed a future state of things, and one without any previous precedent; in other words, it was distinctly part of a prophetic programme.

The wide extension of the kingdom of heaven in the world had been distinctly predicted in the similitude of the mustard seed. Later on Christ foretold the bitter persecution of His disciples; the hatred and opposition of the world to them and their mission. He told them that He Himself was leaving them, that they would lose the help of His Divine wisdom and supernatural power, and be like sheep among wolves. And yet they were to witness for Him to the uttermost ends of the earth, and spread the story of a despised, rejected, and crucified Prophet among all nations. They were practically to establish this "kingdom of heaven," which was to become so great, and they were but a few poor, ignorant, unlearned, and very commonplace Galilean peasants, with no power, or wealth, or experience, or special talent of any kind. The plan seemed very unlikely to succeed, and yet we know it *did* succeed, as was predicted, so that the apostles turned the world upside-down; and that the Christendom which now is, owes its origin instrumentally to their lives and labours.

How was this? The question brings us to the last of our Lord's predictions, which we must notice here,—those we have noticed being only a sample of many more, which our readers will recall on reflection,—the last, and, with one exception, the most important and distinctive.

The Lord Jesus foretold repeatedly and emphatically the advent from heaven to earth of God the Holy Ghost, and His future indwelling in the disciples.

This was no mere doctrine which He taught. It was a stupendous *fact* of the first magnitude which He predicted.

No other facts, save His own incarnation and atoning sacrifice, can even be compared to it in importance.

The Holy Ghost, the mighty Spirit of God, who brooded on the face of the deep before the world was; the Spirit of truth, who could reveal things to come; the Comforter, whose presence would so replace His own as to make it even "expedient" that He should go away; whose coming would prevent their being lonely and helpless "orphans"; who would be to them "power from on high"; who would reprove the world of sin and righteousness and judgment; who would teach them all things, and recall Christ's own words to remembrance, illuminating with heavenly light sayings which had been dark to them when uttered, and enabling them also faithfully *to record* the words He had spoken to them;—this Divine Being should not only come, and influence them as He had often done before, but, said the great Prophet, "He dwelleth with you, AND SHALL BE IN YOU."

Here we have a present and a future. The Holy Spirit had in earlier ages come upon God's saints and influenced them from an external position, as it were, and in Christ's own presence He had dwelt with them. But in the coming age His relation to the disciples would be an altogether different one. "He shall be *in* you," said the Saviour. And He described this indwelling *in figure* as a fountain springing up from the inmost depths of a man's being,—*"in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life."*

This advent of the Holy Ghost was to *succeed* Christ's own ascension. "The Holy Ghost," says John, "was not yet given, because Christ was not yet glorified." "If I depart," said Jesus, "I will send Him unto you." What a magnificent indication of the Divinity of Jesus of Nazareth! Who but God can send the Spirit of God? "I will send HIM!"

But this is not the aspect in which we must here consider the words. We regard them only *as a prediction by Christ* of the distinguishing feature of the kingdom of heaven—the

indwelling in His disciples of His own Holy Spirit. The prediction began to be fulfilled, as we know, at Pentecost, and has been fulfilling ever since ; and nothing else but its fulfilment accounts for the spread of the religion of Christ which has taken place. Christians alone could have done nothing ; Christ, in His people, by His Spirit, has changed the face of the world, and established a spiritual kingdom which has embraced already unnumbered millions, who have been translated from the power of darkness into the kingdom of God's dear Son.

To this point we shall have to revert in considering the Pauline view of the Christian age. In the meantime we must ask, before going further, Has the section of the programme given by our Lord Himself been—so far—borne out by subsequent events ?

It is, of course, of the religious history of the world we must think mainly in seeking the answer. Political events were mentioned under the negative Judaic section ; here it is mainly with Church history, with the aspect of the world in its relation to God and to religion, that we have to do. We have pointed out that the state of things *predicted* differed widely from anything that *had* existed on earth up to that time. Need we point out that it corresponds precisely with that which came into being soon afterwards, has lasted from that day to this, and is all around us now ? In the first century there was one nation, and one only, that knew anything at all about the one living and true God. In the nineteenth, over four hundred millions of men, of all nations, profess to adore Him through Jesus Christ. In the first century there was one temple only to Jehovah—that of Jerusalem. Then Egypt, Greece, and Rome with all the nations she had subjugated, were “without hope and without God in the world.” Now, in the nineteenth century, churches for the worship of God may be found from Eastern Japan girdling the globe to California, and studding it everywhere, from

Greenland in the north to New Zealand in the south. Is it not true that the field is the world? Did Moses ever give such a command as, "Go ye into all the world and preach to every creature"? Limitation by nationality was not more characteristic of Judaism than universality and individualism of this Christian age. Yet, when Christ sketched this outline, no eye but His own foresaw the change that was coming.

Again. What has wrought the change from Judaism and heathenism to the Christendom of our days?

Sowers sowing the seed, preachers preaching the word, martyrs witnessing for Jesus, the Holy Spirit convincing and converting individuals one by one. Nothing else! No warlike aggression, no philosophic speculation, no scientific discovery, no miraculous intervention, no political organization. It has "pleased God by the foolishness of *preaching* to save them that believe."

It is so with every other point: the fact and the foreview correspond as the scene and its photograph. They do this so obviously that it would only be wearisome to particularize. Reflection will discover countless such correspondences between Christ's own plain or symbolic predictions and their fulfilments in the eighteen Christian centuries, and the only thing needed to produce an overwhelming sense of wonder and adoration in the mind as we contemplate the harmony, is to realize the condition of the world when the programme was given. It is nothing *now* to say, "We shall one day see China intersected with railways," because we *have* seen England and Europe so intersected. But to have conceived and described the steam engine, the train, and the iron road, with the speed of transit and the number of travellers, in the days of stage coaches would have evinced the foresight of genius. So to describe beforehand a great change in the providence of God, and in the religious state of men, demanded Divine prescience, and that Christ did so proves that He possessed such foreknowledge.

But we must turn now to His indirect revelations through His apostles, which, from the nature of the case, were even more full and definite than His own direct prophecies.

THE APOSTOLIC SECTION OF THE CHRISTIAN PROGRAMME.

The nature of the case rendered it inevitable that much about the future should *not* have been clearly or fully revealed by our Lord Himself during His earthly lifetime. There were features of the coming age consequent on His own death, resurrection, and ascension which were necessarily veiled in mystery until these all-important events had taken place. Hence He said to His apostles, "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will show you things to come."

This promise and prediction would lead us to expect to find in the recorded utterances and still extant writings of the apostles further details as to the programme of the eighteen Christian centuries. Nor are we disappointed, for on examining the Book of Acts, and especially the Epistles of Paul and the Revelation of John, we find the outline of Christ filled in with a thousand details, and the sketch which He drew coloured with the rich and glowing tints of a finished picture. Yet He was Himself the great Prophet, for not only did He give in embryo all that is afterwards developed into the full Christian programme of the apostles, but it was HE who spake *by* the apostles, and He who gave to John the wonderful Apocalypse of the future which he transmitted to the Church. The programme is all from Himself, therefore, though it was given in three successive sections: the first from His own lips, the second through the apostles, and especially through Paul, and the third through John.

It should be noted that Paul had never companied with our Lord in His earthly lifetime, like the twelve. He was called

by the ascended Saviour from heaven, and was acquainted only with Christ risen and glorified. This imparted, as we shall presently see, a peculiar character to his revelations. John, again, wrote long after the other apostles had sealed their witness with their blood. He wrote after Jerusalem had fallen, and the temple been destroyed by the Romans, in the year A.D. 96.

In considering the apostolic programme, we shall find that it consists almost entirely of an enlargement and amplification of Christ's own predictions. It shows how the future which He foretold would *work itself out*, and the actual *form* which the results of the great changes He announced would take. There is in it nothing independent or disconnected with the earlier predictions in the Gospels, though much that is *apparently* new. We can trace back each of the fresh revelations to its root in the Lord's own previous teachings. His prophetic words are seen in the light of the apostolic foreviews to have been seeds—germs of great things. A whole group of predictions connects itself with each one of His brief similitudes and simple statements. This will at once be perceived, if we consider the apostolic programme under the three main heads of,—

I. ITS DISPENSATIONAL PREDICTIONS.

II. ITS REVELATIONS ABOUT THE TRUE CHURCH.

III. ITS PROPHECIES OF THE APOSTASY.

The first set will be found to grow out of and harmonize perfectly with our Lord's predictions about Judaism; the second with His revelation of the coming Comforter and the indwelling of the Holy Ghost; and the third with His foreview of the mixed condition of Christendom and of the conduct of the unfaithful servants.

I. THE PROPHETIC STATEMENTS OF THE APOSTLES ON DISPENSATIONAL SUBJECTS.

Inspired by the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost itself,

Peter quotes and applies Joel's prediction of the effusion of the Spirit of God on people of all ages and both sexes in the last days,¹ and claims that the wonderful event which had just taken place, and as to which all Jerusalem was marveling, fulfilled the ancient prophecy.

Now that prophecy was not one of *Jewish* blessing, but of *universal* blessing, and speaks of a time when the distinctively Jewish age will have passed away and given place to another. It speaks of "*all flesh*," and strikes the keynote of the gospel age in the words, "*Whosoever* shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved." Peter thus endorses our Lord's own statement, that the kingdom of God had been taken from the wicked husbandmen and given to others; that the universal age had begun, and that henceforth the field was the world.

In his address to the Jews on the occasion of the healing of the lame man at the Beautiful gate of the temple, after showing them what they had done in rejecting Christ,—that they had "denied the Holy One, and the just, and killed the Prince of life,"—Peter re-echoes the Lord's statement about His departure and its limits, saying, "Whom the heaven must receive until *the times of restitution of all things*, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began,"—that is, until the dawn of the glorious kingdom of God on earth at the second advent. Peter here places *the same limit* to the present "kingdom of heaven"

¹ This expression "last days" may be and is applied either to the whole of the Christian dispensation, or to its closing portion. So a British officer returning from the East might say he had entered on the last stage of his journey when the P. and O. steamer left Gibraltar, because its next stop would be in England. But the ship might touch at Plymouth, and he might run up to town by train. That would be in another sense the last stage of his long journey, and only the drive from the terminus of the line to his own home would be absolutely the last stage. In Joel's day, and in Daniel's, the whole of this dispensation is spoken of as the last days, that is to say, *the last dispensation of Providence*; but we now live in the last stage of the last days.

which our Lord Himself had indicated. He says Christ is gone from earth—heaven had received Him for a time ; but it is *for a time only* ; and when Israel repents, His absence will terminate,—He will return, and bring “times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord.” Both these expressions, “times of refreshing” and “times of restitution of all things,” refer to *the yet future kingdom of God on earth*,—the kingdom predicted by David and by Daniel, and expected by Israel, and for the coming of which Christ bade us pray. The apostle here, like his Master, interposes *between the time then present and the advent of that kingdom* an age during which, the Jews having disowned Christ, the heavens receive Him ; that is, this present time of His absence, in which those who have never *seen* Him yet *believe* in Him, and are saved.

The Book of Acts traces the story of apostolic witness to Christ in Jerusalem and in Judea, in Samaria and to the uttermost parts of the earth, and shows that this was the way in which historically it spread. In these ever-widening circles the gospel was preached when the members of the Church of Jerusalem were “all scattered abroad” by persecution. Samaria received the word with joy ; so did the eunuch of Candace, an Ethiopian, who was the first-fruits of Africa unto God. Then Saul of Tarsus, a Jew of the Western dispersion, was converted. Then Cornelius, the Roman centurion, and his household received the gospel and the effusion of the Holy Ghost, to the utter astonishment of the Jews who were with Peter, and to the perplexity and disturbance of the Church in Jerusalem, who even “*contended*” with Peter about it, so little had Christ’s disciples at that time realized that the field was the world ! The rehearsal of Peter’s vision, however, brought them to consent, though with surprise, to this new providence, saying, “Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.”

Gospel preaching had at first been deliberately addressed

to "none but unto the Jews only";¹ but some of the early disciples were men of Cyprus and Cyrene, Jews belonging to the great Western dispersion. On their return from Jerusalem, they began, we read, "to speak unto the Grecians also, preaching the Lord Jesus; and a great number believed and turned to the Lord." Then afterwards Paul, who had from his conversion been designated as the apostle of the Gentiles,² went forth with Barnabas or with Silas on his wide and lifelong mission to the nations. Antioch, Seleucia, Cyprus, Pamphylia, and Pisidia received the gospel, the Jews constantly opposing and hindering, until at last Paul formally abandoned them, saying, "It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles. For so hath the Lord commanded us." By special providences the great apostle is led to cross from Asia to Europe, when Thracia, Macedonia, and Achaia, philosophic Athens, luxurious Corinth, and at last imperial Rome, also received the word. It had then extended from the Jewish metropolis to the metropolis of the vast Gentile world. Thus, under the guidance of the Holy Ghost, it was practically proved that the field was the world, and the sphere of the new dispensation universal.

But to Paul especially was granted very clear light on the relation of this new Gentile age to the past and to the future of Judaism, and his dispensational programme is peculiarly distinct. He intensely loved his people, and highly appreciated their peculiar privileges. But he recognised frankly in his letter to the Romans that as a nation they had "stumbled," that Christ had been to them "a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence," that they had proved themselves to be "a disobedient and gainsaying people." He announced that though God had not cast them away for ever, they had for

¹ Acts xi. 19.

² Acts ix. 15; xxvi. 17; Rom. xv. 16.

the time *fallen*, and been "*broken off*" as branches from the olive tree of promise, because of their unbelief, and been made an illustration of "the severity of God." But that, on the other hand, though blindness had befallen *the nation* as such, there was even then "*a remnant* according to the election of grace," and that ultimately (if they abode not still in unbelief) they would be grafted again into their own olive tree, clearly predicting "*so all Israel shall be saved.*" He foretells also that this crisis of *their* recovery would be the riches of the world at large, and like "life from the dead" to mankind in general. If the blessing that had come to the Gentiles through their fall was great, that which should result from their restoration would be far greater.¹

In the meantime, he says that through their fall *salvation* had come to the Gentiles. Blindness in part had happened to Israel, *until the fulness of the Gentiles should be come in.* The interval of Jewish rejection was to be filled up with a gathering out of a Gentile Church. Is not this revelation harmonious with what Christ had previously intimated in His parable of the vineyard taken from the wicked husbandmen and given to others, and is not the limit which He fixed in Luke xxi. again laid down here? He said, "until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled," and Paul says, "until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in." Similarly, in his letter to the Corinthians, Paul says that a veil is on the heart of Israel when Moses is read, and that only when *their heart shall turn to the Lord* will that veil, or blindness, be removed. Israel's repentance is the antecedent to the earthly kingdom of God promised to them, and to the world, and the salvation of a Gentile Church is the antecedent to Israel's repentance. This is Paul's programme, and it agrees with the outline of Christ.

II. THE SECOND DISTINGUISHING FEATURE OF THE APOSTOLIC PROGRAMME OF THE FUTURE IS THE FORE-

¹ Rom. xi.

VIEW OF THE TRUE CHURCH AS GIVEN BY PAUL, AND BY PAUL ONLY.

It is an enlargement or development of our Lord's final and all-important revelation, that the Holy Spirit of God would in future dwell in and abide with the disciples. The further unfolding of this great subject was committed, not to Peter, James, or John, who had been with Christ in His mission to Israel, and whose ministry was mostly confined to the Jews, but to the one who knew Him only in His glory, and who was in a special sense the founder of the Church among the Gentiles.

It is important to note that St. Paul distinctly and repeatedly claims to have received a *special* ministry, to have been commissioned to reveal what had previously been concealed from the beginning of the world. No assertions could be more emphatic than his *reiterated* declarations on this point. There is nothing like them in the Bible; no other apostle uses language at all similar. Paul, we learn, was chosen by God to be the channel through which He would communicate to men—a new conception—the revelation of a *new and quite peculiar relationship to Himself*. He was the messenger through whom a new calling or “vocation” was expounded. This plainly stated fact is not so generally understood as it should be, though ignorance or confusion on the point, a non-recognition of the absolute *novelty*—at the time it was given—of this Pauline revelation, leads to many and most serious mistakes as regards the revealed purposes of God, as we will presently show. Meantime, let us gather from the following sentences *what the new revelation was*, and let us also note the insistence of the apostle as to the fact that it was *new*. “God,” he says, “BY REVELATION MADE KNOWN UNTO ME *the mystery which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men*, as it is now revealed unto His holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; that the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs, and of the same body, and partakers

of His promise in Christ by the gospel : whereof I was made a minister, . . . to make all men see what is the fellowship of *the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God*, who created all things by Jesus Christ : to the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by *the Church* the manifold wisdom of God " (Eph. iii. 3-10).

In his letter to the Colossians, Paul says he was made a minister of the gospel of Christ "*for his body's sake, which is the Church* : whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfil " (or fully to preach) "the word of God; even *the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations*, but now is made manifest to His saints : to whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of *this mystery* among the Gentiles ; which is *Christ in you, the hope of glory* " (Col. i. 24-27).

Again, in closing his long letter to the Romans, he says : "Now to Him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, . . . *the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began*, but now is made manifest " . . . (Rom. xvi. 25, 26).

These sentences, addressed respectively to the Ephesians, Colossians, and Romans, all three *Gentile Churches*, sufficiently attest :—

1. That there was a *special* element in Paul's Gospel which was of a new and additional character.

2. That this new revelation had been by God *kept secret* until that time ; it was a mystery *hidden* from all previous ages and generations, something entirely new.

3. That it is something, therefore, which we cannot find either in the prophets of the Old Testament, or in the Gospels, or in the teachings of the other apostles,—something we must learn *from Paul alone*, to whom, in the Divine wisdom, a stewardship of this "mystery" was committed, so

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that through him it was, for the first time, "manifested," or revealed.

Let us observe, first, this is 'a striking instance of *progressive revelation*. We have here the unquestionable assertion of a *principle* which is of supreme importance to a correct understanding of the Scriptures. For thousands of years God had been revealing His will and His purposes ever more and more clearly to mankind. He had but lately spoken by His own Son, and since then by His Spirit in Peter and John, Philip and Stephen, James and Jude. Yet here was a *new* and most important revelation committed to Paul.

What should we learn from this fact? The duty of not attempting to limit later prophecies by earlier, of not doubting a Divine revelation because it is given subsequently to others and contains additional matter, and especially of not making confusion by saying, "*This new thing is the same as the old.*" The ascended Saviour committed to Paul something He had *not* committed to the twelve, something *not to be found* either in the Gospels or in the Old Testament, something which had been "a mystery" *in all previous ages and generations*.

What then *was* this new revelation, which Paul calls "my gospel," and says he was specially commissioned to preach among the Gentiles?

It was that of the Church,—it was the revelation that a vital, spiritual, organic union existed between the ascended Saviour and all His believing people, whether Jew or Gentile, so that they together formed ONE BODY, OF WHICH HE WAS THE LIVING HEAD.

Was not this revelation peculiar to Paul? Can the doctrine be found anywhere else save in *his* Epistles? This conception of *one body* composed of the God-man, Jesus Christ, and redeemed men and women, whether Jew or Gentile, can nowhere else be found. Paul only presents it, but he does so constantly. He dwells much on its varied, deeply

important, present, practical consequences, and traces it also to its glorious results in the future.

How had he learned this great truth? The very circumstances of his conversion had been a revelation of it! The position of Christ at the time, the glory from amid which He had called the zealous Pharisee breathing out threatenings and slaughter, the question which he had addressed to him,—all these were in themselves an unveiling of the mystery. For the glorified Christ had identified Himself with His suffering saints on earth, as the head with the members of the body. He had said to Saul of Tarsus, who had been persecuting men and women on earth: “Why persecutest thou ME?” That was a revelation of *oneness*. And He had then sent the new apostle to bear His name before “*the Gentiles and kings, and children of Israel*,” not *excluding* the latter, but giving them no pre-eminence. How *natural* then for Paul to understand and teach first that the members of the Church are vitally connected with the risen Christ, and that Jews and Gentiles are alike called to fellowship with Him, and with each other in Him. A more formal and explicit revelation may have been and probably was made to Paul on the subject, though no particulars of it are recorded. But the circumstances of his call to the apostolate were in themselves almost sufficient.

We must now consider a little more fully what this Pauline doctrine of the Church was,—what it involved. “The Church, which is HIS BODY, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all.” What does this mean? How was it a new revelation?

To answer these questions we must ask another—What is a body? It is an organized whole, made up of parts and members? It is the temple of a spirit—a living temple; it is the visible dwelling of the invisible soul, the material house of the immaterial mind; it is an organic unity, not a mere collection of separate individuals, like a nation or other community. The Church is a Spirit-born and Spirit-governed

body, whose Head is a risen and exalted Saviour, whose very life is Christ ; a body to every member of which He says, "Because I live, ye shall live also." It is a body controlled by internal spiritual intelligence and vitality, not by external laws and regulations merely ; it is a community in which nothing is lacking and nothing superfluous, but in which each member is necessary ; an organization in which there is the greatest diversity of gifts for the well-being of the whole, and all under the control of the Head. As a living body, it is, moreover, *separated from all else*,—it may grow, develop, and change, but it remains still the same distinct entity. "Now ye are THE BODY OF CHRIST, and members in particular."

It is easy to see that this new truth is closely *connected* with our Saviour's earlier revelation of the advent and indwelling of the Holy Ghost, but it goes beyond it, showing *results of that indwelling*, which He did not *develop* and *define*, though in His parable of the vine and its branches, and in the prayer which followed, He anticipated some of them.

Now the Pauline *revelation* is that the new dispensation of Providence inaugurated at Pentecost and by the descent of the Holy Spirit, was *characterized and distinguished from all previous dispensations* by the existence of such a body composed of *the risen Christ and all true believers*.

He represents this body as having been formed for the first time, not by Christ's advent and call of the twelve, not by the group of disciples which gathered around Him in the days of His flesh, but by the effusion of the Holy Ghost at Pentecost.¹ And he represents it as *continuing on earth* until "the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God : and the dead in Christ shall rise first : then *we which are alive and remain*" (*i.e.*, the then existing generation of the Church) "shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air : and so shall we

¹ 1 Cor. xii. 13.

ever be with the Lord." Hence, until the glorious advent of Christ at the end of this age, until the resurrection of those that are Christ's at His coming, there was to be on earth a Church which would be vitally united to Christ. There was to be, in other words, not merely the Christendom which Christ had predicted in the parables, with its tares, its foolish builders, and its unfaithful servants, but a *body of Christ*, of which nothing spurious, nothing evil, nothing dead, could ever form part, but only those between whom and the Divine, yet human, Head there existed a bond of life ;—only those in whom the Holy Spirit dwelt abidingly ; for "if any man *have not the Spirit of Christ*, he is none of His"—no member of this wonderful, living body.

Here, then, we have the crowning prophetic revelation of the Apostle Paul. The dispensation then commencing would, it is true, be marked by the substitution of one *outward* constitution of things for another—of Christendom for Judaism, of a professing Christian *world* for the Jewish and heathen worlds of the first century ; but in the midst of that mixed state of things there would be something very different, a new thing in the earth, a new incarnation of Deity,—THE BODY OF CHRIST,—a true and living Church, its Head in heaven, its members here, its animating spirit Divine, its earthly form human. This revelation, be it observed, is something wholly distinct from any mere call of the Gentiles to share Jewish blessings. *That call* had been distinctly predicted in the Old Testament ; even from Abraham's day it had been promised that, not his own family only, but all the nations of the earth should be blessed in his seed, which is Christ. The new revelation is something wholly different, or it could never have been spoken of as a mystery *hidden* from all previous generations.

Peter had received and taught the call of the Gentiles ; and the Church at Jerusalem, after hearing his account of Cornelius, had admitted that God had "to Gentiles also granted

repentance unto life." They perceived—for *facts proved it*—that Gentiles were to share in Christ's salvation. *That was not, therefore, Paul's new and distinctive gospel.* It was not that Gentiles were to come into a Jewish faith, or share Israel's privileges merely, but that out from among Jews and Gentiles alike individuals would be gathered and formed into *a new organization*, a body of which Christ was the Head, and the Spirit of God the life. This truth is fully and frequently asserted in Paul's Epistles, and was no doubt very prominent in his preaching. In writing to the Colossians, and enumerating some of the glories of Christ, he says: "He is before all things, and by Him all things consist; and He is the Head of His body, the Church."¹ In the First Epistle to the Corinthians, he dwells very fully on the subject, showing that the phenomena of spiritual life in the Church correspond very closely with those of physical life in the natural body. "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body : so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free ; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. For the body is not one member, but many. If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body ; is it therefore not of the body ? If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing ? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling ? But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased Him. And if they were all one member, where were the body ? But now are they many members, yet but one body. And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee : nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you. Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary : and those members of the body, which we think to be less honour-

¹ Col. i. 18.

able, upon these we bestow more abundant honour ; and our uncomely parts have more abundant comeliness. For our comely parts have no need : but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honour to that part which lacked : that there should be no schism in the body ; but that the members should have the same care one for another. And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it ; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it. NOW YE ARE THE BODY OF CHRIST, AND MEMBERS IN PARTICULAR.”¹

Sixteen times over in this one passage is “the body” mentioned, and so perfect is the union, so complete the identification, that the words “so also is Christ” speak—wondrous fact!—of the Head *and all His members* under that one name!

In the Epistle to the Ephesians (chap. v.) the apostle presents the same truth, that the Church is the body of Christ, under a somewhat different form, speaking of it as “the bride” which He loved and for which He sacrificed Himself, and arguing that man and wife are one, that “he that loveth his wife loveth himself,” and that though it is a great mystery, this is so as regards Christ and the Church, “for we are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones.”

It is clear, then, if we combine into one programme our Lord’s earlier predictions of the kingdom of heaven with Paul’s revelations as to the bride and body of Christ, that *two greatest* and most characteristic features of the Christian dispensation of the last 1,800 years were foreseen and foretold in the first century of the era. Christ foretold the history of CHRISTENDOM, and Paul unveiled the mystery of the TRUE CHURCH.² (Eph. v. 32 ; 1 Cor. xv. 51 ; 1 Thess. iv. 15.)

¹ 1 Cor. xii. 12-27.

² In Matt. xvi. 18, our Lord uses the word *ἐκκλησία*, which we translate Church. It was one in common secular use at the time, meaning a

The two things are as distinct as the kernel of the nut from its shell, as the outer nature from the inner core. The first—Christendom, the professing Church—is the sphere in which the preaching of the word has taken effect as distinguished from heathendom, which has scarcely heard the gospel. In this sphere there is, and always has been, a twofold result—good and bad, false and true, profession and reality. That is one thing.

On the other hand, *from* that sphere has been gathered out, by the action of the Spirit of God, A BODY which, although invisible as such, has yet made its presence and power felt in the world. It has been the salt of the earth, the light of the world, the teacher of heathendom, the transformer of the Roman society of the first century to the Christian society of the nineteenth. It has been the mother of the multitudes, which no man can number, who have already joined the glorified Head in heaven. It has been the pillar and ground of the truth, the body through which Christ has acted in the world for the last 1,800 years. Through its eyes He has seen and wept over the sins and sorrows of men; through its heart, moved with compassion, He has healed, and fed, and taught, and saved; through its lips He has uttered the invitation, "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest"; by its feet He has gone into all the world, and proclaimed the glad tidings of salvation among all nations. In its actions He has glorified God on the earth, and in its sufferings He has continued to manifest His own self-sacrificing love. Yes! in spite of the false pretensions of all who merely profess

gathering out of any kind. It had not acquired the distinctly religious meaning which we now apply to it. So that our Lord's prophecy that the doctrine of His own Messiahship and Divinity which Peter had just confessed would be the rock on which He would in the future *build His Church*, was no *revelation* to the disciples of *the true nature of that Church as His own Body and Bride*. He used the expression, but He *did not define the reality*.

His name, in spite even of the inconsistencies, errors, and sins of true believers, there has been a body of Christ on earth ever since Pentecost, and it is here still. Was not Stephen a member of it when he said of his murderers, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge"? Was not Paul a member of it when he said, "I, yet not I, but Christ that dwelleth in me"? Were not the martyrs, who died that they might not worship idols, members of it? Have not the very thoughts and tones of Christ been heard hundreds of times since He personally left the earth? Are we not ourselves true believers, conscious of a heavenly life, a Divine spirit indwelling and influencing us—a fellowship with each other and with our Head in heaven?

As surely as Christ's predictions of Christendom have come to pass, so surely has the Pauline programme of a body of Christ on earth, during the age which opened at Pentecost, been realized in human history. It has been sustained amid persecution, preserved amid corruption, revived even when apparently dead, and enabled to withstand all the fiery darts of the wicked. The gates of hell have not prevailed against it, and after 1,800 years of perils from without and from within, it is more conspicuous by its action on the world now than ever before. This is not only a miracle of grace, but a marvel of history, and a marked fulfilment of Pauline prediction.

APOSTOLIC PREDICTIONS OF THE APOSTASY.

Paul—the apostle who was commissioned to unfold the hidden mystery of the vital union of Christ and His members, the mystery of the *true* Church—was inspired also to reveal a second and strangely contrasted "mystery," the mystery of the false Church, or great apostasy of the Christian religion.

He does this especially in his first letter to Timothy and

in his second letter to the Thessalonians. His words are as follows :—

“Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils ; speaking lies in hypocrisy ; having their conscience seared with a hot iron ; forbidding to marry, *and commanding* to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth ” (1 Tim. iv. 1-3).

In his letter to Thessalonica, Paul tells them that the second advent of Christ will not take place—

“Except there come *a falling away* first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition ; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped ; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things ? And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work : only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming : even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish ; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved ” (2 Thess. ii. 3-10).

These passages are evidently *prophetic* ; they predict what had not come to pass at the time they were written, what was to happen later on, “in the latter times” of the dispensation. Hence it falls within the scope of our investigation to ask, Have these predictions been fulfilled ? Before adducing the facts which constitute the reply, we must conjoin with these Pauline notices of the great apostasy John’s more detailed though symbolic prediction of it, as it will be convenient to consider the apostolic outline of this subject *as a whole*. If two artists have painted portraits of the same individual, one giving the face only, and the other the full figure, any question of identification will be best decided by an examination of both.

In the symbolic language of the Apocalypse the *true* Church is described as "the bride, the Lamb's wife," and as clad in fine linen, clean and white. She is also seen under a second figuration as the heavenly Jerusalem. The false Church is also represented as a woman and as a city, but of wonderfully contrasted character.

"And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither; I will show unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters: with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication. So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication: and upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration" (Rev. xvii. 1-6).

John wondered at this vision, and the angel interpreted for him its leading features, as follows:—

"I will tell thee the mystery of the woman. . . . The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth; . . . the waters are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues, . . . and the woman which thou sawest is *that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth.*"

The last verb is in the present tense, implying that the city was regnant at the time when the angel spoke to John, A.D. 96,—*i.e.*, in the days of Domitian.

Now, as the bride and the heavenly Jerusalem represent the true Church, this harlot, who is also called "Mystery, Babylon the Great," represents *a false Church*.¹

¹ These prophecies present two broadly contrasted *women*, identified with two broadly contrasted *cities*, one reality being in each case doubly

Hence John presents the same contrast as Paul. For the apostasy which the latter describes as headed up in "the man of sin" was an organization *contrasted* in every respect to the true bride and body of Christ. It was one which

represented as *a woman* and as *a city*: the harlot and Babylon are one; the bride and the heavenly Jerusalem are one. It is evident that the true interpretation of either of these double prefigurations must afford a clue to the true interpretation of the other. The two women are contrasted in every particular that is mentioned about them: the one is pure as purity itself, "made ready" and fit for heaven's unsullied holiness; the other foul as corruption could make her, fit only for the fires of destruction. The one belongs to the Lamb, who loves her as the bridegroom loves the bride; the other is associated with a wild beast, and with the kings of the earth, who ultimately hate and destroy her. The one is clothed with fine linen, and in another place is said to be clothed with the sun, and crowned with a coronet of stars—that is, robed in Divine righteousness, and resplendent with heavenly glory; the other is attired in scarlet and gold, in jewels and pearls, gorgeous, indeed, but with earthly splendour only. The one is represented as a chaste virgin, espoused to Christ; the other is mother of harlots and abominations of the earth. The one is persecuted, pressed hard by the dragon, driven into the wilderness, and well-nigh overwhelmed; the other is drunken with martyr blood, and *seated on* a beast which has received its power from the persecuting dragon. The one sojourns in solitude in the wilderness; the other reigns "in the wilderness" over peoples, and nations, and kindreds, and tongues. The one goes in with the Lamb to the marriage supper, amid the glad hallelujahs of heaven; the other is stripped, insulted, torn, and destroyed by her guilty paramours. We lose sight of the bride amid the effulgence of heavenly glory and joy, and of the harlot amid the gloom and darkness of the smoke that "rose up for ever and ever." It is impossible to find in Scripture a contrast more marked; and the conclusion is irresistible, that whatever the one may represent the other must prefigure *its opposite*. They are not two disconnected visions, but a pair—a pair associated, not by likeness, but by contrast. Now Scripture leaves us in no doubt as to the signification of the emblematic bride, the Lamb's wife, the heavenly Jerusalem. What, then, must the contrasted symbol, the Babylonian harlot, represent? *Surely some false and apostate Church*—some Church which, while professing to belong to Christ, is in reality given up to fellowship with the world, and linked in closest union with the kings of the earth; a worldly Church, which has left her first love, forgotten her heavenly calling, sunk into carnality and sin, and proved shamelessly and glaringly faithless to her Lord.—("Approaching End of the Age," pp. 143-145.)

would owe its origin and existence to "the working of Satan," instead of to the operation of the Spirit of God. It was a "mystery of iniquity," instead of a mystery hid in God; its votaries are "wicked," full of lying, of deceivableness, of unrighteousness; deluded and unbelieving, instead of being fruitful in every good work, through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth. It has a mere earthly human head instead of a Divine and heavenly one; and its ultimate destiny is "everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord" at His second coming, instead of the rapture to be "for ever with the Lord" which awaits the true Church at that crisis.

Both apostles thus predict that there will arise in the course of the Christian dispensation an ecclesiastical organization like the true Church in some respects, but utterly unlike it in others,—possessing the features of a worthless imitation,—and produced by Satan to oppose and counterwork Christ and the true Church.

Now this was a strange prediction. It would have been natural to foresee for the Church *Jewish* opposition, or *heathen* opposition, or even general declension and backsliding. But *Christian* opposition!—that was something which human intelligence would never have surmised as possible in the apostolic era. That the Christian Church should ever reign over the kings and nations of the world at all seemed extremely improbable. But that, being so exalted, its influence should be for evil, and not for good,—used to oppose Christ and His true witnesses,—that would have seemed well-nigh incredible! An evil world? Yes! But *an evil Church*? That was no native idea in Paul or in John! It was inspiration that foretold the actual though most improbable future. True, Christ had Himself predicted that Christendom would present a mixed condition of wheat and tares, good and bad; but this is something very different. It is a revelation that just as out of the incoherent mass

of a Christianized world there would be gathered, by the working of Christ's Holy Spirit, a true Church, so out of the same mass would be also gathered, by the working of Satan, a false Church. This last would equally with the first be *an organic unity*, something different from a number of individual false professors, scattered all over Christendom like tares in a wheat-field. It would be one whole, a body with a head, which would govern and direct all its movements. But as no bond of true spiritual life would exist between its members, as in the case of the true Church, *this* body would have visible bonds of outward uniformities to unite each to all and all to the head. Moreover, this false Church would also be in some sense a bride. Not the chaste and beloved bride of Christ, joined to the Lord in one spirit, but a corrupt, faithless, worthless "harlot," selling herself to the kings of the earth for filthy lucre, until by them detested and destroyed prior to being whelmed under Divine judgments at the second advent of Christ.

It would be a counter "mystery," a Satanic parody of God's true Church. And its head would be a counter-Christ, an anti-Christ,—not by opposition, but by imitation,—not by fighting against Christ, but by substituting himself for Christ, putting himself in Christ's place, making men regard him as Christ's vicegerent. Just as the real Church would be the salt of the earth and the light of the world, so this false Church would be the leaven of the earth, corrupting it more than it is naturally corrupted, and would obscure the gospel light, love darkness, teach lies, and deny the truth. So far from witnessing for Christ, she would kill His witnesses; and so far from shedding her own blood for His sake, she would drink herself drunken with the blood of His martyrs.

Moreover, and this is a most important point, the existence of this false Church with its sinful human head—this imitation Church born of the working of Satan—would run parallel with the existence of the true Church; it would form

the most conspicuous of the dangers and difficulties of the saints of God during the Christian dispensation. Its incipient workings were already apparent in the days of Paul; they would never cease until they produced, in his full-blown iniquity, "the man of sin," or human head of this false Church, and *he* would continue his career of blasphemous self-exaltation until destroyed by the second advent. Thus the *entire interval from Paul's day to the end of this age at the return of Christ*, would be occupied by the rise, culmination, reign, and decay of this corrupt Church system and its head. No time of peace and purity, no age of truth and righteousness, could consequently be expected. The reign of "the man of sin," the rule of a false and persecuting Church, a Satanic propagation of delusion and error,—this was the future which the apostles foretold—this, and nothing but this, —*until* Christ comes again, and His people are caught up to meet Him in the air.¹

¹ Our subject here forbids us to do more than make a passing reference to the strange fact that while this is unquestionably *the apostolic programme*, the Church has so neglected its predictions as positively to have come to expect a state and age of millennial blessedness *before* the return of Christ! *No prediction of such an age can be found in the New Testament programme.* On the contrary, it uniformly presents the interval as one filled with most un-millennial characteristics—wars, famines, bloodshed, persecution of the truth, sackcloth witnessing, Jerusalem trodden down, the Jews dispersed, the heaven working corruption, the anti-Christ tyrannizing, iniquity abounding, love growing cold, faith failing, the virgins slumbering, the servants, many of them unfaithful, scoffers mocking, perilous times, even in the last days; and the question asked is, "When the Son of man cometh, will He find faith on the earth?" Where in *such* an age shall we place a millennium? Our New Testament programme never speaks of one at all until *after* the return of Christ, consequently the second advent must be *pre-millennial*.

Could the Holy Spirit have *omitted* the prediction of a prolonged age of purity and peace, if such were to come before the return of Christ? Why, it would have been naturally the most prominent feature of the programme! But He places the second advent, *not* the millennium, before the Church, as its hope. This advent *closes the existing Christian age*. The millennial age is a distinct one, *beginning with* the advent.

This is, however, a question of *unfulfilled prophecy*, and hence beyond

The apostolic predictions of this apostate Church are copious. They comprise more points than space will permit us to take up here. As our argument is evidential and not controversial, it will suffice if we show that an organization of immense importance, calling itself a Christian Church, and answering to every feature of these prophetic portraits, came into existence centuries after the prophecy was given, rose to a position of supremacy in the earth, ruled and reigned for ages, and exists in a decadent state to this day, awaiting the just judgment of God.

As the prediction of this apostasy is but *one* feature of *one* section of our programme, we can give but a few pages to its consideration ; less than the immense evidential value of the fulfilment demands, but sufficient, we trust, to prove that it has been fulfilled.

Combining, then, the features of these two apostolic predictions, what is foretold in relation to the great apostasy of the Christian dispensation as to—

1. The *place* where it should arise.
2. The *historic juncture* at which it would appear.
3. The *period* which it would last.
4. The *political relations* it would sustain.
5. The *moral character* of its influence.
6. The *agents* by which it will be wasted.
7. The *climax* at which it will be destroyed.

Now, just as in looking for a certain place on the map we take its latitude and longitude from the table, and at the point where the two intersect find the spot we seek ; or as in searching the heavens for a certain star we learn first its right ascension, and then its declination, and are thus guided to its exact position ;—so the intersection of *all* the above lines cannot fail to enable us correctly to apply this to our subject here. Those who wish to consider it are referred to our work on “The Approaching End of the Age.”

plicated prophecy; and the application gives us the fulfilment.

If, at the place and in the sphere indicated, there arose at the predicted juncture an ecclesiastical power which has lasted for the period and stood in the political relations prophesied, which has borne the moral character and done the deeds foretold; if it has been gradually undermined and consumed by the very agents described, can we doubt that we have found the power intended?

The last point, the climax of its destruction, is still future. If all the other lines intersect in one and the same organization, and in *no other*, it must be the fulfilment we seek. Our point here is neither controversial nor theological, but simply evidential. If the result of search for a fulfilment leads us, as it inevitably must do, to stigmatize a certain ecclesiastical power as the great predicted apostasy, that is an incidental result only in this place; as the prophecy *predicts* an apostasy, the historic fulfilment, when discovered, must of course *be* an apostasy. We glance, then, over the whole eighteen Christian ages looking for the predicted apostasy, for a great, long-lasting, mighty, influential, reigning ecclesiastical power calling itself the Church of Christ.

We see many Churches—the “Catholic” Church, the Greek Church, the old Armenian and Nestorian and Coptic Churches, the young Protestant Churches of many lands. Many of them are grossly corrupted, some of them are decayed, half-dead. Which is THE great apostasy? Which is *the false Church par excellence*, the great enemy, the principal and cruel foe of the true Church, of that invisible “body” consisting of all true saints?

The apostolic predictions say you will find it seated at a certain *place*, and that place the seven-hilled city which reigned over the kings of the earth in John’s day—ROME.

Now we have our longitude! Turning away, therefore, from all Churches which have not had their centres at Rome,

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we fix our attention on those that have. We note that the apostles themselves planted a Church there, and that throughout the pagan persecutions that Roman Church yielded crop after crop of blessed martyrs, who fought and died in the Colosseum and other amphitheatres of the city, who were burned for Jesus' sake on its lamp-posts, and whose ashes were laid in the dark catacombs, "in peace," "in hope," "in love." Could this early Church—before the conversion of Constantine—be the apostasy? or can the young Protestant communities which have grown up in Rome of late years, can they be the Church of Rome which we seek? We want our latitude as well as our longitude. The predictions give it. The great apostasy was to arise *at a certain juncture* of history—in that notable period of time when the old Roman empire of the Cæsars was just breaking up under the barbarian invasions, and when the young Romano-Gothic kingdoms were forming out of the fragments; that is, during the sixth and seventh centuries. The Western empire fell when Romulus Augustulus was persuaded by Odoacer to abdicate, A.D. 476; and the settlement of the new kingdoms which emerged from the flood occupied at least a couple of centuries. Hence the martyr Church of the first three centuries, though it was a Church of Rome, will not at all fit the prediction, nor will the modern Protestant Church there, since it only rose this century. But there is a Church which, according to its own account of itself, exactly answers to this test. It is *the* Church of Rome, which began at that very period, has ruled all Europe from Rome for twelve centuries, and whose head is called the Pope of Rome. The prophecy shows that the head of this apostate Church would be a temporal sovereign as well as a chief priest. Cardinal Manning's "Origin of the Temporal Power of the Popes" traces it back to the historical juncture in question, and shows that the simple primitive bishops of the local Roman Church grew into popes after the fall of Romulus Augustulus, in consequence of the

absence of imperial rulers in Rome. So Paul said, alluding to the then existing imperial dynasty, "He who letteth will let" (or that which hinders will hinder) "until he be taken out of the way" (or providentially removed). "And *then* shall that Wicked" (the great head of the apostasy) "be revealed." On the removal of the imperial throne from Rome, the papal throne took its place.

The intersection, then, of these two lines of place and time withdraws our gaze from all other Churches, and proves that we must seek the fulfilment of all the other features of the prophetic portrait in THE PAPAL CHURCH OF ROME.

And here we must make a distinction, and quote one more prediction to make the matter clear. There is a great difference between a body and its head. We must distinguish between the papacy or papal dynasty—which is the *head* of the Church of Rome—and the Church which it founded, governed, and used as its tool. There is a difference similar in kind, though greater in degree, between the Head of the true Church and the Church which He founded, governs, and uses as His instrument to do His will in the world. Now the duration of the corrupt *Church* is never mentioned, but only that of *the reign of its head*. The prophecy represents this papal dynasty of temporal rulers, as it had previously symbolized other dynasties, as "a beast," a head of the ten-horned Roman beast. What period does it assign to the power of this dynasty? *Twelve hundred and sixty years*—between twelve and thirteen centuries.¹ Can this period be traced in the history, not of the Romish Church, but of the reign of the papal dynasty? When did it rise? Between

¹ Rev. xiii. 5, xi. 3, xii. 6. The period indicated is the same in each case,—42 months of 30 days is 1,260 days,—and a day is the miniature symbol for a year, as a beast is for an empire. Daniel assigns the same period to the "little horn" of the Roman beast, which rules during its later history—another symbol of this power of the Roman papacy.

the two pope-exalting decrees of the Roman emperors of the East, Justinian and Phocas. Each of these potentates made a decree conceding to the bishops of Rome the headship "of all the holy Churches, and of all the holy priests of God"; or, as the latter put it, "the headship over all the Churches of Christendom." The first was issued A.D. 533, and the second A.D. 607. The seventy-four years between these two dates was in a special sense the era of the rise of the papacy. It includes the life of the celebrated Gregory the Great, whose successor, Boniface III., may be considered in certain senses *the first of the popes*.

To these dates add 1,260 years, and the result is the period from A.D. 1793 to A.D. 1867. This period may be broadly considered as that of the downfall of the temporal power of the popes, the close of their reign over Europe, which had lasted for between twelve and thirteen centuries, as predicted. The first year marks the date of the reign of terror and crisis of the great French revolution, in the course of the wars of which the pope was dethroned by Bonaparte, Rome seized by the republican armies, a Roman republic proclaimed, and the pope removed from the Vatican and obliged to take refuge in Florence. In 1849 the pope (who had been restored) was again deposed, and a republic proclaimed; in 1860 there was an insurrection in the Papal States; in 1866 papal Austria was overthrown by Protestant Prussia at Sadowa; next year the monasteries in Venetia were suppressed, and the country annexed to the newly-formed Italian kingdom; the year after papal Spain was convulsed by a liberal revolution, and Garibaldi attempted an insurrection in Rome, which was suppressed only by French troops; while in 1870 came the great war between France and Germany, which led to the overthrow of the papal French empire, the withdrawal of her troops from Rome, and the union of Italy under Victor Emmanuel, who established his throne on the ruins of the

temporal sovereignty of the popes in Rome, September, 1870.

Thus the series of events which ended in the complete destruction of the papal temporal sovereignty occupied a period of seventy to eighty years, removed by 1,260 years from the similar period which witnessed its first establishment. The popes are still rulers in their own apostate Church, and will be till the end. They are no longer rulers in Europe, and never will be again. Divine prophecy limited the days of their domination, and the same year which witnessed the decree of the new and blasphemous doctrine of papal infallibility witnessed also the downfall of the papal sovereignty, which had endured for more than twelve centuries.

How came John, in Patmos, in the days of Domitian, to foresee a downfall so distant? How came those events to fall out in harmony with his predictions—ay, and with Daniel's still earlier prophecy?

The line of *duration* intersects the others in this same Church of Rome with its dynastic papal head.¹

The Apostle John represents this apostate Church as corrupting the nations of the earth, and its head as ruling over them. He represents the *woman* as sitting upon "many waters," and the angel explains that the waters are "peoples and nations." He represents her also as sitting on and upborne by the Roman beast—another expression of the same thing. What was the fact? That all through the middle ages the Romano-Gothic kingdoms of Europe submitted to papal Rome, and secured to her temporal benefits, in return for her supposed spiritual favours and blessings. Enlarge-

¹ There is an elaborate exactitude about the fulfilment of this chronological prophecy which we cannot even indicate here. The period has *various termini*, and is measured by lunar, calendar, and solar years, and crises of rise and fall correspond. The subject is carefully and fully treated in our work "LIGHT FOR THE LAST DAYS." Harley House, Bow, E.C. 6s., post free.

ment is needless for those familiar with history: 'Rome's domineering and tyrannical relations to the kingdoms of Europe in the past is a gigantic fact, and the cessation of that power of late is equally conspicuous.

The *moral character* attributed by the apostles to this power is exceedingly evil—about as dark as it well could be. Its main features are the practice and inculcation of idolatry under Christian names, corruption of doctrine, blasphemous self-exaltation of a man in the Christian Church, "showing himself that he is God," *quasi Deus*, as the popes claim to be, together with false miracles and lying wonders, and, above all, sanguinary persecutions of the saints of God, and systematic opposition to His truth.

Were these features one and all characteristic of the false apostate Church and her papal head?

Let the Reformation and its copious literature reply! The great *fact* of the secession of the sixteenth century speaks for itself, and its *causes* may be appreciated by a study of the burning accusations against Romish corruptions of such men as Wickliffe, Jerome of Prague, and John Huss, Tyndale and John Frith, Luther and Zwingli, Calvin and Melancthon, Cranmer, Latimer, and Hooper. The deceptions, wickednesses, and crimes of Rome are incredible, and all the more so because of her Christian profession. Her prohibition of marriage to the clergy, in opposition to the apostolic direction that a bishop should be the "husband of one wife," deluged Europe with the grossest immorality for centuries. Her withdrawal of the Bible from the people, her mixture of licentiousness and formality, her saint and virgin worship, her Jesuit principles, her tortures and inquisition, what words shall describe or what mind conceive their effect in darkening and exterminating the truth of God! Well are the ages of Rome's dominion styled "the dark ages"!

In brief, the apostles predict "a tyrannical power, of a

Christian kind, to be seated at Rome, dressed in a robe of gaudy decoration; spreading its abuses and errors over the kingdoms of the earth, persecuting the Church of Christ, and deeply stained with its blood, especially that of its martyrs, its public witnesses and confessors, that same State holding a number of dependent kings under its yoke, and turning their strength and power, with their consent, to the furtherance of its designs. The complexity of the things in this single prophecy is sufficiently manifest. And since the complex whole has, point by point, been fulfilled, and that not in an obscure corner, but in the heart of Christendom, . . . the inference is not to be evaded."

And lastly, the fate which Paul predicts for this apostasy *prior* to its final judgment is that it shall be "consumed" or wasted by *the spirit of God's mouth*; while John foretells also that political judgments will overtake it. The ten horns will at last hate, and reject, and desolate the whore they have so long carried and supported.

This double prediction has been fulfilling for the last 300 years. The recovered word of God—the "spirit of His mouth"—was the cause of the Reformation—a movement that diminished and consumed Rome to an enormous extent. Prior—*just* prior to the beginning of the Reformation there was not for a brief time a single witnessing Church in Europe. They had all been exterminated by persecution. There was not an avowed meeting of protesters against Rome's corruptions anywhere. Now there are about *a hundred and fifty millions* of Protestants in the world! Rome's dominion was all but universal in Christendom in the sixteenth century, in the nineteenth nearly half Christendom (omitting the Greek Church) has escaped her tyranny, rejected her corruptions, and spurns her intoxicating cup. That is one fact; and another is, that even nations which remain in Romish darkness have, ever since the French revolution, been throwing off the yoke of Rome's authority,

refusing her guidance, secularizing her revenues, closing her monasteries, expelling her Jesuits, neglecting her confessionals, and ridiculing her pretensions. Infidelity, as well as true religion, has been at work for her overthrow. The spirit of God's mouth on the one hand, and the revolt of human intelligence against superstition and selfish tyranny on the other, have combined to lower the pride and abate the power of the once mighty papal dynasty ; and, though its claims are as great and as blasphemous as ever, its ability to enforce them is gone.

All the six tests we proposed to apply concur, therefore, in showing that the papal Church of Rome has fulfilled, in the course of its long career, every feature of these apostolic predictions, and that on a scale which, before the event, no one would have believed possible. The marks of Divine prescience in these predictions are singularly clear.

“To foretell that a religion pure and excellent as that of the gospel would in some future time be depraved was to foretell nothing improbable. For what is there so sacred in truth which the wickedness and mistakes of men, or the love of novelty, or the spirit of enthusiasm, or policy and interested designs, will not model anew, and distort from its original rectitude? Error and heresy are nearly coeval with truth. They began to work as soon as Christianity was taught, and they may be expected to attend it to its latest day of trial. But in the predictions of the corrupted state of the Christian faith, which we are now considering, there are definite signs of a foreknowledge very different from the deductions of probability, calculated on the general principles of human weakness or human depravity. The prophetic criteria are precise, and they are such as must be thought to have militated with all rational probability, rather than to have been deduced from it. For that the doctrines of celibacy, and of a ritual abstinence from meats, against the whole genius of the gospel, by an

authority claiming universal obedience, should be set up in the Christian Church; that "a man of sin" should exist, exalting himself in the temple of God, and openly challenging the rights of faith and honour due to God; that he should advance himself by signs and lying wonders, and turn his pretended miracles to the disproof and discredit of some of the chief doctrines or precepts of Christianity; and that this system of ambition and falsehood should succeed, that it should be established with the submission and, indeed, with the deluded conviction of men still holding the profession of Christianity, which is the prophecy of St. Paul, is *a paradox of prediction* which must be allowed to surpass the ordinary limit of human observation, and almost to exceed the power which man has to corrupt the best gifts of God. The natural incredibility of it is, not that such errors and abuses should be established in the world, but that they should be grafted on the Christian faith, in opposition to and in outrage of its genius and its commands, and take a bold possession of the Christian Church. *There, however, they have been grafted, and there they have had possession*, and the strength of the improbable fact is the proof of the prophetic inspiration."¹

THE APOCALYPTIC SECTION OF THE PROGRAMME.

We must not close our brief outline of the last, or Christian, section of the Divine programme without any allusion to its most considerable document—the Book of Revelation, the saintly John's contribution towards the end of the first century. This last book of the Bible consists almost entirely of an apocalypse of the future; that is, of what was future in the days when Domitian was reigning in Rome, and John suffering under his cruel tyranny in the lonely island of Patmos.

As in the Old Testament we have first historic books, then didactic and poetic writings, and then the volume of pro-

¹ "Davidson on Prophecy" (Warburton Lecture), pp. 327, 328.

phesy, containing all the extant works of sixteen different authors, so in the New we have first the four Gospels and the Book of Acts, which are *historic*, then the Epistles, which are didactic, devotional, and hortatory, and lastly a book of prophecy. It is true that, as we have seen, predictions of the first importance, fundamental and far-reaching in character, are scattered through both Gospels and Epistles. But the Apocalypse alone is wholly prophetic, and it thus occupies in the New Testament the place of the major and minor prophets of the Old. It finishes the book with a foreview of the then commencing, but now closing, age, including multitudes of definite particulars, and glancing on more briefly into ages yet to come.

It would, therefore, be a conspicuous omission to leave the Book of Revelation entirely out of account in this last section of our programme. It is a principal part of it; and as it traces beforehand the outline of the main secular and ecclesiastical *events* which were to occur in the sphere of the Roman earth, and as the outline has been most accurately realized in history, it would seem as if this section would serve our evidential argument even better than the previous ones.

And indeed it would do so were we at liberty here to make use of it; but two reasons forbid our doing this. In the first place, the Apocalypse is, we may say, not written in our Bibles in English, but in ancient Eastern hieroglyphics. It needs therefore *translation* before its statements can be adduced in evidence. Those statements are nevertheless just as precise, and the predictions they embody are consequently just as capable of verification, as if they had been made in plain non-symbolic language. The key by which they are to be translated is found in Scripture itself, and the work presents no real difficulty. *But it takes time.* Exposition of the book must precede any evidential argument based on its prophetic statements, and for this a whole volume, rather the closing pages of one, is requisite. And, secondly, the nature

of some of its principal predictions is such as to have caused the book to become a very battlefield of controversy. The Church of Rome is in it so definitely indicated and branded as apostate, that its advocates have been driven to the use of every possible expedient to avoid the application of the predictions to Rome papal, and to refer them either to Rome pagan—that is, to the past—or else to some power still *future*, some antichrist yet to come. This misapplication of the central prediction dislocates the rest of the visions, and introduces *confusion* into a prophecy conspicuous for its *order*. Hence a determination of the *application* as well as of the *meaning* of the predictions would be needful before any use of their fulfilment, as evidence of inspiration, could be attempted.

It is true that in our last section we have employed its predictions of the apostasy as confirmatory of the plain prophecies of the Apostle Paul. But an angelic interpretation of this special point settles *its* application for all candid minds. The majority of the visions are *not* thus interpreted or applied; and hence before we could demonstrate the *fulfilment* of the prophecies of Patmos *as a whole*, the *meaning* of each and all of its symbols would have to be determined, and their true *application* proved by solid arguments.

For this purpose it is evident that a separate book is required, and such a one we hope, if the Lord permit, to publish ere long, as a sequel to the present volume.

It is already partially prepared, and will be completed as soon as leisure can be secured from more practical engagements. If any of our readers wish to expedite its appearance, they can do so materially by sending financial help to our large Missionary Institute, formed to assist in the evangelization of the world during the brief remainder of this dispensation.¹

This work is an extensive and important one, and requires

¹ See prospectus of East London Institute for Home and Foreign Missions.

a large income to sustain its efficiency. To secure this demands, naturally, a very considerable share of our time and attention, so that help sent to *it* makes it the easier for us to use the press for the diffusion of Divine truth. We would urge Christian readers who feel the deep importance of this, in these days of doubt and unbelief, *to act with all the liberality they can towards our missionary enterprise.*¹

While, therefore, we can make no attempt to demonstrate in this place the fulfilment of the Apocalyptic predictions of the Apostle John, we may state in a few words the nature of the evidence they afford.

The Book of Revelation is an essential and integral part of Scripture, and occupies a place in the volume of prophecy which, if we had it not, would present a blank without any previous parallel. Every event of importance to the people of God and to the history of redemption had, under the old Jewish dispensation, *been predicted before it occurred*, as, for instance, the birth of Isaac, and of Jacob and Esau, the exaltation of Joseph in Egypt, the descent of the Israelites into Egypt, and their exodus from it; the forty years in the wilderness, the entrance to the land, the subjugation of the Canaanites, the building of the temple, the separation of the kingdoms of Israel and Judah, the Assyrian capture of the ten tribes, and its date, the Babylonish captivity, and its date, the succession of the Persian kings, the reign of Alexander the Great, and the wars of the dynasties of Syria and Egypt, the birth, ministry, and death of Messiah, and the judgments and desolations of Jerusalem and Judea. *All* these events were foretold before they came to pass, as well

¹ In the meantime we may refer to books already in existence which give, with great fulness, the historic exposition of the Apocalypse, and among these the first is, unquestionably, the learned and elaborate work of the late Rev. E. B. Elliot, in four volumes, or his briefer book, "The Last Prophecy."

as many others. Now the prophecies of our Lord and of the apostles as regards the Christian age did not foretell historic *events* in which the Church would be interested, and by which she would be vitally affected, they did not foretell her fortunes in the world so much as the deep, underlying principles of her existence, the moral character of her surroundings, and the development both of spiritual life in the true Church and gross corruption in the apostate Church. *Events* of an outward political character were not predicted either in the Gospels or Epistles in connection with *Christian* history. The fall of Jerusalem affected, of course, the early Christians, but it was essentially an event of Jewish history—its last episode.

Was it not to be expected that, before the volume of inspiration was closed, a programme of the eighteen Christian centuries of a more outward, definite, event-predicting kind would be given? The saints of this age would *need* such a one even more than the Jews of the preceding age. The wide diffusion of the Church through all lands, the great changes it was to undergo, the strange and subtle temptations it was to experience, the disguised enemies it was to encounter, the cessation of inspired guides and teachers, with John himself, the long ages to elapse before Christ's return,—all would lead us to expect—judging by analogy—that the outline of the *events* to take place in the world in which she was destined to move, *would* be placed in the hands of the Church before the canon of Scripture closed. We should not expect much reference to merely political events *as such*, however great the world might deem them, but only to those which directly influenced the redeeming work of God in the earth,—in other words, Church history. The age was to be a long one, faith and hope would be sorely tried, experience would show that the promises of Christ's speedy return were to be understood on the scale of "a thousand years—as one day"; and without some *orderly serial* prophecy to guide the expectation and sustain the faith of

the Church, there would be a danger that both might, in the course, and especially towards the close, of the age, fail. Such predictions had been given in the Jewish age; would they be withheld in the more enlightened Christian dispensation? Every analogy would lead us to expect the reverse.

Yet, on the other hand, Christ had made it perfectly plain that He wished every generation of His people to live in constant watchfulness for His return. To reveal *plainly* from the first either the events or the chronology of the Christian age would entirely have prevented this, and rendered watchfulness impossible, save for the last generation. How was the apparent difficulty to be met? How was a revelation of the future, sufficiently clear to answer all desirable purposes, to be made without being *so* explicit as prematurely to unfold the facts and foreseen length of this age? The problem was solved by Divine wisdom in this wonderful Apocalypse. It presents a consecutive and continuous outline of the occurrences which would take place in the outward history of the Church from John's day to the second advent, and beyond; *but it presents it in symbolic language, in a form which would veil the true meaning for a time, but would allow it to become progressively clear in the later stages of the dispensation.* In its chronological statements of *periods* prior to the second advent, this book employs, in harmony with its general plan, the year-day system of representing the orbital or annual, by the axial or diurnal, revolution of the earth—a day stands for a year. This has been proved, however, only by the lapse of time, and could not have been certainly anticipated at first. As a matter of fact, the writings of the Fathers and of the early Church show us that while the outline of the great eternal future to *follow* the second advent was clearly understood in early times, yet that the prophecies of this present evil age of Satanic power were scarcely comprehended at all. Light as to their meaning dawned on the Church

very gradually as the centuries passed away ; and not until the apostasy was fully developed was even a partial comprehension of their meaning at all widespread. With the Reformation came a great illumination as to the scale of the chronology and the scope of the prophecy, and ever since it has been increasingly understood and applied, until a recognition of its relation *to*, and absolute harmony *with*, other and earlier prophecies is common now among students of Scripture.

This harmony is evident, and lies so on the surface, as well as in the depths of the book, that it may be noted even by cursory readers. The Apocalypse is not isolated from the rest of the prophetic scriptures. It is intimately related to the Book of Daniel in the Old Testament, and agrees perfectly with the other prophetic teachings of our Lord and His apostles in the New. As to its relation to the former—the Book of Daniel—its *subject* is the same, and its *symbols* are the same. At the time when John lived, the three earlier empires of Daniel had passed away ; but the fourth, or Roman, was in the zenith of its power, and was destined to continue in existence for nearly two thousand years. Daniel had briefly outlined its character and career under the striking symbol of the ten-horned wild beast. John enlarges the Daniel foreview, *employing the same symbols*. Three times over in the pages of the Apocalypse this terrible ten-horned wild beast is portrayed (chs. xii., xiii., xvii.). Moreover, the most notable feature of this wild beast as represented in Daniel,—its blasphemous, persecuting “*little horn*,” whose action draws down the advent of the Ancient of Days in judgment,—reappears in the Apocalypse with fuller detail and in more vivid colouring. Its rise, place, power, pride, tyranny, blasphemy, are the same ; its *duration* as assigned in Daniel and the Apocalypse is the same, and the time and manner of its destruction are the same. This identity is indeed the principal key to the Apocalypse.

Secondly, the parables of our Lord are in similar agreement with the Apocalypse. In the parables the king is seen to go into a far country to receive the investiture of his kingdom, and to return for its exercise ; in the Apocalypse he is seen in the heavens, and his second advent in manifested glory is symbolized and foretold. In the parables we have the marriage of the king's son ; in the Apocalypse "the marriage of the Lamb." In the parables the virgins are awakened by the midnight cry, "Behold, the bridegroom cometh ; go ye forth to meet him" ; in the Apocalypse the advent is represented together with its accompanying events. In the parables the conduct of the faithful and faithless servants is described, and the reward of their respective works ; in the Apocalypse we see the two classes and the issues of their acts. The Lord comes, and His reward is with Him, and He gives every man according to his works. The lesson of the parables as to the kingdom which is the everlasting recompense of faithful service is repeated in the Apocalypse, with a fulness of detail and splendour of imagery peculiarly its own.

The same harmony is traceable between the prophetic teachings of the apostles of our Lord and those of this final New Testament prophecy. The oft-repeated warnings and predictions occurring in the Epistles of Paul with reference to the great *apostasy* which was to take place in the Church of Christ—predictions echoed more or less clearly and emphatically by *all* the apostles—are confirmed by the wonderful Apocalyptic symbolization of that apostasy, especially that part of it which portrays its connection with Rome, and the persecution of Christ's faithful witnesses by the apostate Church. So Jude's prophecy of the advent of Christ in judgment on the ungodly (quoted from Enoch, "the seventh from Adam") is in harmony with the detailed vision of that advent and of that judgment in the Apocalypse ; and so also Peter's prophecy of the new heavens and the new earth.

The Book of Revelation enlarges this last into the exquisite imagery of its twenty-first and twenty-second chapters, adding a multitude of details, of definite features, entirely omitted in Peter's earlier prediction of the ultimate issue of Divine Providence and of the eternal state of mankind.

The object of this final prophecy of Scripture was not, however, mainly to reveal more of the advent and post-advent events than had been previously revealed, but to unfold those of the interval which was *to precede* the advent. The closing section of the book, from chapter xix. onwards, relates, it is true, to what is still future; but the previous prophetic portion of Revelation, comprising twelve or thirteen chapters, is *fulfilled*, and not unfulfilled, prophecy. It was announced to John as a revelation of "things that must shortly come to pass"; and of some of them it was said "the time is at hand." Accordingly, it has a series of consecutive visions—as we can only *state*, without attempting to *prove*, at this time—of the glory and prosperity of the empire of Rome under the Antonines in the second century, of its military and fiscal troubles in the third century, and of the terrible famines and pestilences which followed; of the prolonged pagan persecutions of the early Church, and of the noble army of martyrs under them; of their triumph and patience, and of the great revolution, unparalleled in the Roman earth, when paganism was proscribed and the empire became Christian. It traces then the rapid development of the professing Church, and marks the contrast between it and the true Church, and subsequently it follows out the fortunes of the Roman empire, in which the young Church had to develop. It presents, under the symbols of the four first trumpets, the series of tremendous judgments under which the empire went to pieces in the Gothic, Hunnish, and Vandal invasions of the fourth and fifth centuries; the rise and career of the great Mohammedan power in the Eastern empire,—first, under its Saracenic, and then under its Turkish

form ; and the coincident rise among the Gothic kingdoms of the West of a revived power of Rome, of a rule ecclesiastic in nature, blasphemous, corrupting, idolatrous, and persecuting in character, connected with the apostate Church of which it is the head. It recounts by anticipation the existence, during the tyranny of this revived Roman power, of *witnesses for Christ*, who would, throughout its career, protest against its assumptions, and suffer even unto death from its wild-beast-like cruelty ; of the sudden resurrection of these slain witnesses at the era of the Reformation, and of the rise of powerful Protestant *nations* soon after that revival of primitive Christianity. Then it goes on to portray the outpouring of judgments of a consuming character on the papal power itself, as was fulfilled in the French revolution and in all the subsequent anti-papal revolutions of this century ; also the similar preparatory consumption and decay of the Turkish, or Ottoman, power, even to the verge of extinction ; and, lastly, a great final revolution in Europe, ending in the fall of Babylon, or Rome papal, and of Rome itself, immediately prior to the marriage of the Lamb, or second advent of Christ. At this point the fulfilled glides into the unfulfilled, and it is a point to which history has almost brought us.

Thus the special office of the Book of Revelation in the Divine programme of the world's history, is to unfold to the people of God in this dispensation the outline of the history of the Church in the world, *from the beginning of the second century to the end of the age*—the period of Israel's rejection and dispersion—the eighteen Christian centuries. It also describes the great crisis at which this age melts into the next following, or millennial age, much more in detail than any previous prophecy, presenting *in their order* its successive incidents ; and it adds some particulars of the later crisis at its close, through which that age passes into the eternal state or new heavens and new earth. From this *last* portion must

be learned, rather than from any earlier and less orderly prophecy, the sequence and succession of the closing episodes of the story of human redemption. By its position as the last part of the last section of the programme it has the authority of a *final* statement from Christ of what His Church is to look for, and it closes with the words: "Behold, I come quickly; and My reward is with Me, to give every man according as his work shall be." "Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus!"

To sum up our argument from the New Testament section of the Divine programme:—

A fresh outburst of light from heaven took place in the first century of our era. An entirely new view of the then approaching and commencing future was given to the people of God on earth. The essential facts on which that new future depended were not only foretold, but in the course of that century *accomplished*. The amount of fresh light imparted at this time may be estimated by contrasting the hopes and expectations of Mary and Elisabeth, Simeon and Anna, Zacharias and John the Baptist, at the beginning of the century, with those of Paul the aged, and of the saintly Apostle John, at its close. Israel and her fortunes filled the view of the former; "every creature under heaven"—"all the world"—"all nations and kindreds, and peoples and tongues"—that of the latter. A human, yet superhuman, Messiah to be born, and to deliver the Jews, was the expectation of the first group; a crucified, risen, and ascended *Saviour* of the world, to come again in power and great glory—of the second. The foretold and fulfilled fact, of Israel's rejection of Christ, had made the great change, and the Christian programme revealed the amazing difference between the results which had been *expected* and those which would actually ensue. It sketched clearly, though in

outline only, the fortunes of the Jewish nation, of the Roman world, of the true Church, of the false Church, and of the papal dynasty which would rule it. It gave consequently a most comprehensive and, at the same time, a most definite foreview of the main historic features of the dispensation then beginning and now drawing to a close.

This anticipative outline was entirely new and original in most of its features, though it harmonized with that of Daniel in others. It could not have been sketched from analogy or from memory, for it resembled nothing in the past. It was drawn by Jewish pens, and yet it was diametrically opposed to Jewish anticipations. It could not be imaginative, for it was full of definite, yet most unlikely, predictions, embracing a vast variety of historical episodes affecting millions of mankind for many ages, and history has actually fulfilled them all.

The facts now inscribed in order on the records of the past were noted, and that in the same order, in this programme of the future. The great difference between the two is that the former gives *in detail* what *has* been; the latter, only in outline and principle, what *would* be. As a great philosopher goes behind phenomena in quest of law, and sums up countless facts in one great formula or statement of underlying principle, so the revealing spirit, passing by the multitudinous and often confusing details of history, includes volumes in a verse, and ages in an expression, seizing for prediction only the fundamental feature which associates innumerable earthly events.

Thus our Lord, for instance, traced clearly on the chart of the then opening age which He drew two great broadly divergent streams of events as resulting from His own death and resurrection. He no more paused to specify particulars than a geographer would to mark the trees and bushes on the banks of the great river whose course he indicates by a

certain line. The traveller who descends the river estimates the geographer's knowledge of it by the correspondence of *its general direction from its source to the ocean*, not by the unavoidable absence of detail. It would be ten thousand chances to one, as all experience proves, that the true windings of the stream could have been rightly indicated by a stranger to the country. So the omission of minor particulars in no wise invalidates the evidence of inspiration afforded by predictions which are clearly correct when compared with *the general course of events extending over ages*.

What were the two streams laid down thus on the chart of the eighteen Christian centuries by Christ at their very outset ?

The first was the turbid and troubled torrent of Jewish history. Its source was pointed out—their rejection of Himself ; its course was defined—Titus, Vespasian, Hadrian—myriads of slaughtered and captive Jews—the state of Jerusalem and Judea, the Saracenic conquests, the Ottoman occupation of Palestine, the dispersion of Israel in all lands and their long-continued and great tribulation, “until” a yet future day—all these events are foretold, though summed up in a few sentences.

The other great stream was outlined as plainly in the parables and predictions of Christ. It includes all that is meant by the propagation of the gospel and growth of the early Church, the world-wide diffusion of Christianity, the age of martyrs, the conversion of the Roman empire and of the Gothic nations to Christianity, and the character and course of Christendom.

Were either of these great streams of events *visible* in Christ's day or from His point of view ? As well ask are the Tigris and Euphrates visible from London streets to-day ! How then came they to be thus clearly predicted ? Have not the streams themselves flowed steadily and persistently for ages ? What long catalogues of events go to form the

waters of the Jewish stream! And as to the other—the Christendom stream—why, Eusebius and Sozomen, Bede and Baronius, Gibbon and Ranke, Mosheim and Milner, Hallam and D'Aubigné, Carlyle and Froude, and a hundred other historians unite their rivulets to make but a small contribution to the flood of its mighty waters! We stand ourselves this day on the banks of the ever-widening and deepening stream. It is flowing precisely in the direction in which the Prophet of Galilee said long since it would flow, and every sign portends that it will merge into the ocean at the time indicated in His last Revelation. *How came He to select these two all-important streams of events, and to anticipate so clearly and correctly the general course of each?*

Again, how came He through His apostles to indicate the future careers and true characters of two great dissimilar *organizations* which should be developed in the midst of Christendom from germs already in existence—a true Church, one in life and one in spirit with Himself, and a false Church, energised by Satan and seated at Rome? Out of all the countless organizations men have formed since the first century, two and *only two* fixed the prophetic eye and claimed anticipative mention—the *true Church*, including every living Christian of every land and every age, a great *Unity*, though invisible as such, a body of which the risen Christ is the Head; and the *Church of Rome*, a vast worldly ecclesiastical system, whose relations are with the kings of the earth, and which stands opposed to Christ and to His truth. Why were these two thus selected? Have they actually had supreme importance in the world? Can more of the facts of history be proved to have depended on their existence and operation among men, than on any other causes whatsoever? As well inquire whether the light of day depends on the sun, or the waves of ocean on the winds of heaven! The history of the civilized world for the last eighteen centuries is mainly a record of the conflicting acts

and influences of these two all-important unities or organizations. The one has exhibited the working of Christ, the other the working of Satan. The one has evangelized and elevated the nations ; the other has intoxicated and corrupted them. The one has proclaimed and spread abroad the truth of God, the other has taught lies in hypocrisy and propagated doctrines of devils ; the one Christianized the pagan world, the other paganized afresh the greater part of Christendom. We speak broadly of contrasted systems in the long run, not of individual exceptions. There have always been members of the true Church entangled in the false. God has always had His children even in Babylon—as He had in Ahab's day seven thousand hidden ones who had not bowed the knee to Baal. But as contrasted bodies, each doing its appropriate work in the world, history portrays these two even as prophecy predicted them—as of super-eminent importance. Taking thus a broad comprehensive view of the course of history as a whole, can there be any question that the hand that drew these outlines was guided by *a mind which beheld beforehand* the events of the eighteen Christian centuries ?

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION.

A review of this programme as a whole suggests a few thoughts with which we must close.

The facts of history have assuredly fulfilled the prophetic outline, and yet what a concatenation of improbabilities it presented! Consider! That a Redeemer should arise from a ruined race, capable, though the woman's seed, of grappling with the mighty foe of God and man; that of the three races of mankind the mightiest should become the meanest and most degraded, and the least conspicuous the most enlarged and influential;¹ that an aged and childless couple should become the parents of many nations, and especially of one great and important people; that a fate terrible as that predicted by Moses for Israel should overtake that special nation, through whom the world was to be blessed; that a Jewish king who lived 3,000 years ago in Palestine should have a Son who should sit on the throne of God in heaven as well as on an earthly throne in Zion, and should be adored by angels and by all nations, though "a reproach of men and despised of the people"; that this great Heir of the throne of Judah should exercise an everlasting and universal sway, though a suffering and dying man; that Messiah the Prince, whose kingdom was to last for ever, should come at a certain predicted time, and, instead of ruling and reigning, be cut off; and, lastly, that our Lord should be rejected by the Jews, and executed by the Romans, and yet conquer the world, without sword or spear, by the force of truth alone; that He should depart, yet remain with His people to the end of the age; that Christendom should become so corrupt as to oppose Christ, and persecute His people to the death; that

¹ When Moses recorded the Noahic prediction, the race of Ham was far more prominent than any other; it was, indeed, the only one exercising empire at the time.

Rome pagan, becoming Rome Christian, should prove Rome *anti-Christian*, and be a far worse foe to Christianity than ever paganism had been—all these things seemed, when announced, *paradoxical*, so unlikely were they ever to occur. Any *one* of them was a great improbability, and the entire succession was simply *a stupendous improbability!*

In *no single instance* could experience of an analogous character have suggested these predictions. Human sagacity could not have foreseen the facts that fulfilled them, nor could imagination have pictured them. Yet none can question that the course of history broadly regarded *has run precisely on these lines*. Historians, ancient and modern, the inscriptions and monuments of antiquity, the very constitution and customs of the society amid which we live, all attest that facts have fallen out in harmony with the prophetic programme. There can be no reasonable doubt entertained as to the dates of these predictions, nor, consequently, that they preceded their own fulfilment by hundreds and sometimes by thousands of years. Whatever date be assigned to the Pentateuch, it certainly preceded the Roman destruction of Jerusalem, which it minutely predicts; and whatever the date of the Book of Daniel, it must have been in circulation centuries before the Christian era, since it appears in the Greek Septuagint version. Yet it predicts the exact chronology of the First Advent era, and the desolations of the temple and of Judea, which should follow the rejection of Messiah. Such announcements of future events cannot, therefore, have been mere fortunate guesses. If any one thinks it possible that they may have been such, let him try whether he can describe in advance, in this year 1888, what will happen in Europe for hundreds and even thousands of years to come; let him insert the precise dates at which certain events will take place, and give the chronological measures of the leading episodes of the future history. The attempt might teach the supernatural nature of the task!

Nor can the long correspondence between prediction and fulfilment which we have indicated have been brought about by chance. The law of probabilities forbids the supposition. Chance might account for a few fulfilments out of many failures, but not for uniform fulfilment without exception. Chance? What! In fulfilments as wide as the world and as broad as humanity, and extending over six millenniums? Impossible!

Had Daniel's prophecies been mere guesses at what the order of history would be, is it likely that he should have *chanced* to hit just the right number of the universal Gentile empires—four, and only four? Why should he not have guessed six or seven? Why should he not have made the first the strongest, since Babylon in its might and magnificence was actually before his eyes, instead of making the last so? Could he guess at the iron-like strength and universal dominion of Rome at a time when its first mud wall was the only fortification of the little cluster of outlaws' huts on the banks of the Tiber? Common sense revolts at the suggestion! The Tiber and the land through which it flows were alike buried beneath the mists of an undreamed-of futurity in Daniel's day! Was it by chance that he predicted a *tenfold* division of Rome's vast empire? Why did he not make it fivefold or fiftyfold, if he shot at a venture? Why did he foresee a *double* existence for this last of the four empires—a *united* and a *divided*? Why did he not attach this singular feature to Medo-Persia, instead of to Rome? Why did he *not* attribute the swiftness of the he-goat to the Persians, and the heaviness of the bear and the ram to Alexander the Great? How could he by chance assign his emblems with the perfect appropriateness they actually exhibit? Could he *imagine* the strange phenomena with which the lapse of time has familiarized our minds—that the old Roman empire of the sword should pass into the new papal empire of the crozier, and that millions more should submit

to the latter than ever submitted to the former rule of Rome? No sane man can suppose that happy *imaginations* account for this prophet's brief but accurate outline of the events of twenty-five centuries—an outline in which experience itself can detect no flaw !

In the Bible foreview of the history of 6,000 years no single instance can be indicated in which events have *falsified* the Divine programme. This is a startling fact, and an unquestionable one. It foretells, of course, much that is still future, much that is not *yet* fulfilled ; but as regards the 6,000 years that *have* passed away, its anticipative outline is invariably correct.

Let it be noted, also, that the evidence of Divine inspiration afforded by this prophetic programme is strictly *cumulative* ; it grows in strength with each separate fulfilment. Some of these are on a small scale, as the birth of individuals ; others on a vast one, as the history of Rome ; some are national, others ecclesiastic, and others are political and international. Like all the works of God, they comprise infinite variety. We need both microscope and telescope to study them. They contain minute and astronomically accurate statements of chronology, which it requires some exact erudition to unravel, and they contain announcements so comprehensive that we must glance over all lands and ages to appreciate their truth. Their cumulative testimony is all the more irresistible. From various quarters, and from various epochs, these prophecies bring each its own witness that the mind which inspired it was omniscient—Divine.

They are all, moreover, evidently the fruit of *one* and the same mind, for they unfold *one* plan. The Bible programme is no mass of disconnected and unrelated predictions. There are many petals, but one flower ; many cantos, but one grand epic ; many chapters, but one book. These prophecies unfold one harmonious scheme for the redemption of the human race ; they carry it steadily forward, through patriarchal,

Levitical, and gospel economies, to ages to come, when its glorious issue shall be attained. There is no contrariety between one section and another ; they form a consecutive series—patriarchal, national, universal.

The *channels* varied at different times, but the water that flowed through them was always one and the same. Abraham and Moses were very unlike Peter and Paul, and the worlds in which they respectively moved were most dissimilar. But they all unfolded one revelation—the Lamb slain, and the salvation of our race through Him.

Now this is very noteworthy, for, outside the realm of inspiration, *nothing similar can be found*. Can the entire literature of humanity produce a work wielded into one whole by its own contents, by the unity of purpose that runs through it, by the identity of its successive prophecies, and which was yet written by authors some of whom were contemporary with the Pharaohs of the pyramids, others with Cyrus and Darius, and others again with Josephus and Cæsar? The lapse of ages alters merely *human* religions and philosophies, as it alters customs, manners, and languages. But the prophetic words of Abraham—"My son, God shall provide Himself a lamb"—find their illustration in the lambs of the Mosaic ritual, their echo in John's "Behold, the Lamb of God!" and their distant reverberation in the Apocalyptic "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain" of the heavenly hosts hereafter. Nor is it only as regards the *First* Advent that we find this absolute agreement in their anticipations between authors who were separated by long ages one from the other. Enoch, the seventh from Adam, announced the *Second* Advent to judge and punish the ungodly ; Daniel does the same, and the apostles quote and confirm both. Moses foretold the present Jewish dispersion ; so did Jesus Himself. Isaiah and Jeremiah foretold Jewish restoration, and so did Paul. Again we say, *literature has no parallel case*. Compare this with the Avestas of Persia, the Vedas of India, the Koran of

Mohammed! "Holy men of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." This is the only rational explanation.

Note, again, the singular *definiteness* of this programme. How far removed is it from the elastic, hazy, and purposely ambiguous utterances of the oracles of antiquity, which were vague enough to fit any event! Is this the case with Noah's ethnology? How completely would his predictions have been falsified by history had he assigned Shem's destiny to Japhet, or *vice versa*! Is it the case with David? How natural it would have been for him to foretell the glories of his great Son, and to omit His sufferings and humiliations—to dwell on His throne in Zion, and omit His prior Melchizedek reign in heaven! The angularity, order, and exact chronology of Daniel's predictions again are as far removed from oracular ambiguity as pole from pole! These prophetic foreviews admitted of one fulfilment, and of one only. History must take one certain sharply defined course, or else they would be palpably falsified. There is nothing general or vague even in the earliest Eden section of our programme, elementary, brief, and enigmatical as it is. Only one great event could fulfil it—the overthrow of moral evil and its author by a suffering Redeemer born of woman. So as to the apostolic outline. It is not content to predict apostasy in a general way, but it defines beforehand the doctrines of the apostate Church, its geographical seat and sphere, and its chronological epoch. This alone is a stamp of truth. No false oracle would risk its reputation by such precision. Our programme does not grope its way doubtfully along, as a blind man might do. It marches boldly forward, planting its feet firmly on the only stepping-stones amid the rushing waters, as one moving with clear, keen vision and steady tread. Amid ten thousand possibilities it selects *one*, and says, with unhesitating authority at each juncture, although the event be thousands of years ahead, *This is what will happen—this, and nothing else.*

Is this the manner of *man*? or bears it not rather the stamp and seal of Divinity?

The sublime and dignified *moral* character of these prophecies is another proof of their Divine origin. They are worthy of God. How far are they removed from anything transitory or trivial, worldly or wicked! Do they subserve any objects of earthly ambition? do they foster a selfish greed of gain, or pander to pride and human selfishness? Are they not linked with the promulgation of a holy, just, and good law, and with the proclamation of a gracious gospel? Do they not form an integral part of a great economy, the object of which is avowedly and evidently the moral deliverance of a ruined race, the removal of alienation between the blessed God and His creature man, and the everlasting renovation of the earth and of the human race? The very nature of the plan bespeaks the source whence it emanated! Redemption as revealed in its gradual development is and can be the fruit of eternal power and infinite love alone.

In conclusion, then, if the Bible offers as a pledge of its Divine inspiration *a complete programme of future history*; if it has recorded in advance the events of ages to come, and placed the document containing the record in the possession of mankind; if all the events of the slowly unfolding ages have actually fallen out according to its prophetic foreview; if all that was predicted has happened, and nothing has occurred contrary to its programme; then, beyond all question, WE ARE BOUND TO HOLD THE BIBLE TO BE FROM GOD, AND PRACTICALLY TO ACKNOWLEDGE ITS DIVINE AUTHORITY.

If we reject it, we do so at our peril. We cannot but recognise that The Infinite Intelligence which created our finite intelligence has, by an intellectual proof of the most conclusive kind, commended to us His revelation of Himself and His purposes. He has given to these last days the supreme miracle of fulfilled prophecy.

We may not say, Had we seen the miracles of Christ, had

we been convinced by ocular demonstration of His supernatural wisdom and power, we would have believed. Fulfillments of predictions such as we have indicated are every whit *as* conclusive evidence of supernatural wisdom and power. They are miracles in the realm of *mind*, and higher than any miracles in the realm of matter. They are also, by their very nature, the proper miracles of the closing days of dispensations. The lapse of time is essential to them. The predictions of Christ and of Paul were no miracles *to those that heard them*, but they are the mightiest proofs possible of their Divine inspiration to the generations of the nineteenth century.

Men crave in these days some demonstration from the unseen world. Here is abundance of such evidence! Here is clear proof of an unseen and almighty *intelligence* presiding over human history, and showing us that He does so by describing beforehand the whole course of its events. What need we any further proof? The order of the *visible* world is evidence of the invisible to him who reads history in the light of prophecy! He beholds the hand of God in human experience, and watches the development of the Divine plan in the progress of the world. He knows, moreover, *what events to expect*, for he discerns his own chronological position in the stream of time; and as nine-tenths of the programme have already been fulfilled, he doubts not that the remaining tenth will be in its predicted and fast-approaching season.

And further, it is clear that if by so many infallible proofs we are convinced that the Bible as a whole is from God, no difficulties as to the *mode* of its inspiration, no scientific or critical objections, should be suffered to interfere with our hearty and thankful reception of its revelation. If God has spoken, man is responsible to hear, to believe, and to obey.

And lastly, may we say, that to study the Christian evidences, whether of this or of any other kind, is merely

to examine the foundations of the house. It is well at times to do this. But it is better to enter and abide in the house! It is infinitely better to avail one's self of its shelter from the stormy blast, to enjoy its rich and spacious accommodation, to dwell in safety and peace under its blessed roof, and to gaze on the widespread prospect from its windows. There *are* evidences of the truth and Divine origin of the Christian faith, blessed be God!—evidences enough to satisfy any candid inquirer. But, oh, that faith itself—the faith or revelation thus evidenced! What thought can measure its unspeakable preciousness! What tongue can utter, what pen can write, its glorious soul-satisfying, world-transforming nature and effects! Darker than midnight is the problem of existence apart from it,—blank as the grave our prospects, whether as individuals or as a race. Man *without* a revelation from his Maker, like a rudderless and dismayed vessel, driven by mighty winds over raging billows towards a rock-bound coast, drifts helplessly, hopelessly towards destruction. Redeemed man, enlightened by the beamings of the Sun of righteousness, steers steadily and peacefully into the desired haven. The pilot is at the helm, home is in sight, and though the voyage has been dark and dangerous, it is all but over, and its blessed end and eternal issue is the kingdom of righteousness and glory, prepared and promised “from the foundation of the world.”

APPENDIX.

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THE EAST LONDON INSTITUTE

For Home and Foreign Missions.

LONDON CENTRE—HARLEY HOUSE, BOW, E.
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DERBYSHIRE.
YOUNG WOMEN'S BRANCH—DORIC LODGE, BOW,
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Theodore Howard, Esq., <i>London.</i>	Rev. H. M. Williamson, <i>Belfast.</i>
Rev. David Lowe, <i>Glasgow.</i>	

FIFTEEN years ago, under a strong sense of the claims of the heathen on the Christian Church, we were led to found the EAST LONDON INSTITUTE FOR HOME AND FOREIGN MISSIONS, with a view to the training of earnest and able Christian young men as Missionaries.

Our reasons for making this effort were—

1. THE UTTER INADEQUACY OF THE EXISTING STAFF OF MISSIONARIES. According to Mr. Keith Johnston's latest estimates, the world's population is now over 1,400 millions. Of this vast number, less than 400 millions are—even in name—Christians. The remainder, of over a *thousand millions*, are non-Christians, and for the most part heathen. Among this almost inconceivable mass, Protestant Missionaries are labouring to spread the gospel, but only in proportion of *one to four hundred thousand souls*; so that practically 800 millions of our fellow-creatures may be said to be totally unevangelized.

2. THE CONVICTION WE ENTERTAINED THAT TO MEET THIS IMMENSE DEMAND FOR MISSIONARIES, THERE EXISTS AN AMPLE SUPPLY, IF ONLY IT COULD BE UTILIZED. There are numbers of Christian young men in the various sections of the Church well adapted for missionary work, and really anxious to devote their lives to it, who are never likely to do so unless they are helped to secure, first, a suitable *training* for the mission field; and secondly, an *introduction* into it.

We felt, that in order to do useful missionary work among the countless tribes of Central Africa, or the teeming millions of the labouring classes in China, not highly educated scholars *only* were needed; that plain, practical men, if endued with faith, love, zeal, and common sense, might, with suitable training, become *exceedingly useful Missionaries* in such spheres; and that the sending forth of such men might help to solve the difficult problem, how to support an adequate missionary staff, by proving that in some spheres, at any rate, missionaries may be sustained at com-

paratively small cost, while in others they may become, to a certain extent, self-supporting.

3. THE CONVICTION WHICH WE ALSO ENTERTAINED, THAT BEFORE MEN ARE SENT FORTH TO DO MISSIONARY WORK AMONG THE HEATHEN, ABILITY FOR IT SHOULD BE PRACTICALLY TESTED, AND, WHEN FOUND TO EXIST, DEVELOPED BY PRACTICE IN MISSIONARY WORK AT HOME. Unless a man be a successful soul-winner in his native land, he is not likely to become such in China or in Africa ; while cumberers of the ground are more to be dreaded in the mission-field (where their true character and work can be little observed) than at home. Hence it was considered that the special training given to candidates for foreign missions should consist partly of *practice in home missions*. The preparation for all ordinary work consists in *the actual doing of it*, not merely in gaining a theoretical knowledge of how it ought to be done. There seems to be no good reason why mission work should be an exception to the rule.

The East of London, with its mass of a million of the working classes, multitudes of whom have, as is well-known, lapsed into practical heathenism, was consequently selected as a suitable locality for A TRAINING HOME FOR MISSIONARY VOLUNTEERS.

THE INSTITUTE WAS OPENED IN MARCH, 1873. IT IS BROADLY CATHOLIC IN ITS PRINCIPLES ; it trains men of all evangelical *denominations*, of all *nationalities*, and of all *classes* ; and it trains them for all societies, all lands, and all spheres of Christian effort. It is as comprehensive as it is possible to be, within the limits of evangelical truth.

The students have been of various nationalities ; not only English, Scotch, Irish, and American, but French, German, Italian, Spanish, Swedish, Danish, Russian, Bulgarian, Syrian, Egyptian, Kaffir, Negro, Hindoo, Parsee, Koordish, and Jewish : and they have been of various denominations. Those of them who have gone forth as missionaries are now connected with about twenty different societies and associations.

MORE THAN FIVE HUNDRED MISSIONARIES—former students in the Institute—are now labouring in England, Ireland, Scotland, France, Italy, Holland, Switzerland, Spain, Portugal, Bulgaria, Finland, and Russia ; Norway, China, Japan, India, Syria, and Turkey ; North, South, East, and West Africa, and the Cape Verde Islands ; the United States, Canada, Brazil, Jamaica, the Argentine Republic, Australia, and New Zealand. The object of the Institute is especially to send evangelists to “the Regions Beyond” those already evangelized.

Between Eighty and Ninety students are now in training, and some of their number are continually passing out into the great world field.

The present branches, and operations of the Institute, are as follows :—

I. A CENTRAL COLLEGE AND TRAINING HOME—HARLEY HOUSE, BOW, E.,—where forty men of proved Christian character, volunteers for

Foreign Mission Service, receive a course of special instruction and practical preparation for the important and arduous work to which they aspire, either as General or Medical Missionaries.

2. A SIMILAR COLLEGE AND TRAINING HOME IN DERBYSHIRE—HULME CLIFFE COLLEGE, CURBAR—where, in addition to the usual educational and evangelistic training, a knowledge of practical agriculture and other useful arts is imparted in connection with the farms attached to it. This College likewise accommodates forty men.

3. A FEMALE BRANCH—DORIC LODGE, BOW ROAD—where there are trained young women looking forward to service in the Foreign Mission-field.

4. BERGER HALL, BROMLEY—a centre of the Home Mission work, in connection with which the students receive practical training. Large Sunday and night schools, mothers' meetings, temperance meetings, and the preaching of the Gospel, are constantly carried on here and elsewhere in East London.

5. HOME MISSIONS are carried on, as a part of their training, by the students of the Institute, in very many other missions and evangelistic efforts both in town and country.

6. FOUR HUNDRED FACTORY GIRLS, and as many rough lads, are reached regularly every night, through evening classes in Berger and Harley Halls (the latter also belonging to the Institute), by the Deaconesses and Students. And as a result of the Home Mission work in East London, three large and flourishing Churches have grown up in Stratford, Hackney, and South Bromley.

7. SEVERAL HUNDRED CHILDREN are taught in the Sunday Schools belonging to and sustained by the Institute in East London.

8. A PASSAGE AND OUTFIT ASSOCIATION connected with the Institute has defrayed the cost of sending out Missionaries—a large number of young evangelists to the colonies, as well as of Missionaries to the heathen.

IT WAS FORESEEN THAT IN ORDER TO MEET THE NECESSITIES OF THE CASE, THE COURSE OF TRAINING WOULD HAVE TO BE GIVEN GRATUITOUSLY, as most of the applicants for admission would be unable to defray their own expenses, since their entering the Institute would necessitate their relinquishing the employments by which they had previously supported themselves. Such has proved to be the case with ninety-nine out of every hundred of the students who have been received. The Institute consequently involves a considerable expenditure, the ordinary expense being at the rate of about £50 a year for each of the students in training, and a considerable sum besides being expended in the maintenance of home mission work.

The Institute is conducted in faith in God, and is wholly dependent on the free-will offerings of Christian friends of all denominations.

THE BIBLICAL INSTRUCTION is designed to give a clear grasp of the fundamental truths and evidences of Christianity. In addition to the ordinary routine of an English education, the students are instructed in the Greek of the New Testament, in scientific knowledge, and, when needful, in modern languages. Those of them who are preparing to become medical missionaries attend the School of Medicine at the London Hospital.

Young men desirous of devoting their lives to Foreign Missions are invited to write to the Directors.

Full particulars as to the principles and operations of the Institute can be obtained on application to the Secretary,

HARLEY HOUSE, BOW, LONDON, E.

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