

# LESSONS

ON THE

- I. NAMES AND TITLES OF OUR LORD,  
II. PROPHECIES CONCERNING OUR LORD,  
AND THEIR FULFILMENT.

*The Fifty-two Lessons forming a Year's Course of Instruction  
for Bible-Classes, Sunday-Schools, and Lectures.*

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BY

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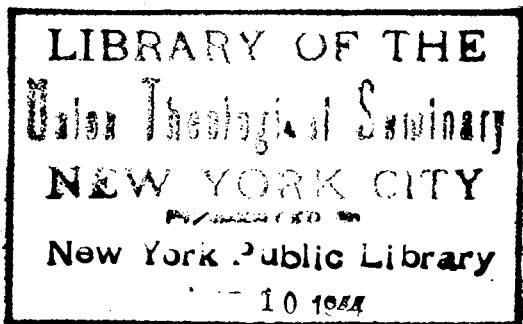
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## PREFACE.

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IN preparing these Lessons it has been the writer's intention to give teachers of Bible-Classes, of Sunday-School Senior Classes, and others, two sets of studies, the first, and likewise the second, being sufficiently complete in itself; and which, when they are taken in connection with two other sets to follow, will present a fairly full view of our LORD JESUS CHRIST as He is set forth in the Old and in the New Testament.

There were reasons for making all the Lessons short, and the book comprising them small.

Teachers will find every Lesson contains matter enough to occupy the time usually allowed for a subject, but they are hereby urged to read all the references; as it is in the careful connecting and comparing of Scripture with Scripture that we may look for increase of knowledge and confirmation of faith.

It will be also found that on every page lines of condensed statement can be profitably expanded in full and varied forms, according to the intelligence and skill of teachers who, before beginning it with a class, should go over the Lesson, and consider how it may be most usefully opened out: only by such preparation, with prayer for the HOLY SPIRIT'S blessing, can the best results be obtained.

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# NAMES AND TITLES OF OUR LORD.

## LESSON I.

### JESUS CHRIST.

THE name JESUS is Greek for JOSHUA. Oshea means *help* or *salvation*: the successor of Moses was so called before his name was changed into Jehoshua, which is JEHOVAH'S *help* or *salvation*, Numb. xiii. 16.

JESUS was a common name among the Jews, as Joshua is with us, 1 Sam. vi. 14, 18; 2 Kings xxiii. 8; Zech. iii. 1, 8; Acts xiii. 6; Col. iv. 11. Note that in Acts vii. 45, and in Heb. iv. 8, 'JESUS' is to be understood as Joshua, the leader of God's people after the death of Moses.

The name JESUS was not chosen by any one in this world, but, before He was born, was appointed for Him by God His Father, Matt. i. 21, 25; Luke i. 31; ii. 21, who made it not only a name but also a fact—the greatest, most wonderful, and most valuable fact on earth.

We find in the name JESUS God's purpose, power, and promise; the fixed purpose and the almighty power to save, with a promise clear and positive—'He shall save.' The salvation is effectual, sure, and by Jesus alone, Isa. xix. 20; xliii. 3-11; xlv. 21-23, with Phil. ii. 9-11; Acts iv. 7, 10, 12.

'His people'—not all men, believers and unbelievers alike, but 'His people,' that is, those who believe and follow Him, John i. 11, 12; iii. 16, 18; viii. 24; xvii. 6-9; 1 Tim. iv. 10.

'From their sins,' *i.e.*, all sins. The Law of the Ten Commandments could not give such salvation, Acts x. 43; xiii. 38, 39; xxvi. 18; 1 Cor. vi. 9, 11; Heb. ix. 12-15; x. 12-17; 1 John i. 7; Rev. i. 5. We cannot be saved *with* our sins, Rom. iii. 8; vi. 1-4, 15, the promise is '*from*,' we find the same in Acts iii. 26. We must come to God through Jesus, confessing our sins, 1 John i. 9, repenting of them, and believing the Gospel; then He gives us full and free forgiveness, Mark i. 15; Luke xxiv. 47; Acts ii. 38; v. 31; x. 43; xx. 21; Rom. iii. 20-26.

Jesus saves us from our sins in a twofold way, thus—First, from the *penalty* due to sin, which is death, Gen. ii. 17; iii. 19; Rom. v. 12, 17, 21; vi. 23. This just sentence of punishment for transgression Jesus took willingly on Himself, Isa. liii. 5, 6, 8, 10, 12; Matt. xxvi. 28; Rom. viii. 1; Heb. vii. 25, 27; ix. 26, 28;

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1 Pet. ii. 24. Second, from the *power* of sin, by giving the Holy Spirit to dwell in us, to teach, to purify, and to keep us from all evil, and by thus giving us His own strength to fight and conquer sin and the enemies of our souls, John xiv. 16, 17, 26; Acts ii. 38; v. 31, 32; Rom. vi. 14; viii. 35, 37; 1 Cor. x. 13; 2 Cor. xii. 9, 10; Phil. iv. 13; James iii. 7; 1 John iv. 4; Rev. xii. 9-11.

None less than such a Divine Saviour, nothing less than 'so great salvation,' Heb. ii. 3, 'eternal salvation,' Heb. v. 9, could suffice for a guilty world, and supply all our needs. It would not have been enough for Jesus to be a Teacher, Pattern, Leader, Conqueror, King, Priest, or Prophet, a wise man and a good man; He was indeed such in perfection, but what was wanted for our souls was a *Saviour*, one 'mighty to save,' Isa. lxiii. 1, 5, 'to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him,' Heb. vii. 25, from all the punishment and all the power of all sins; therefore, in His love, 'the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world,' 1 John iv. 14, and so His name was called JESUS, and when He was born the angel said, Luke ii. 10, 11.

CHRIST is Greek for MESSIAH, *i.e.*, Anointed. Anointing signified consecrating, making and marking to be holy unto God. See Gen. xxviii. 18, 22; Ex. xxx. 22-33. Aaron and his sons were anointed to be priests, Lev. viii. 12, 30; Ps. cxxxiii. 2; David (and others) to be king, 1 Sam. xvi. 1, 12, 14; Ps. lxxxix. 20; Elisha to be a prophet, 1 Kings xix. 16. Special mention is made of the Anointed in 1 Sam. ii. 10; Ps. ii. 2; xlv. 6, 7, with Heb. 1, 8, 9; Dan. ix. 24-26.

Jesus took as referring to Himself Isa. lxi. 1, see Luke iv. 14, 21; and called Himself Christ, *i.e.*, Messiah in John iv. 25, 26; xvii. 3. The 'holy oil' was a figure or emblem of the Holy Spirit. Read with these texts the following—Isa. xi. 1-3; Luke ii. 25-30; iii. 21, 22; iv. 1, 14; Acts iv. 27; x. 38; 2 Cor. i. 21; 1 John ii. 20, 27.

Messiah is properly a title, but it came to be used as a name, *e.g.*, Mark xv. 32; John iv. 25; vii. 27; ix. 22; Rom. xvi. 5, 7, 9, 10, 16.

The Jews knew our Lord by His name Jesus, Matt. xxi. 11; xxvii. 17; John vi. 42, but they would not believe that Jesus was Christ, *i.e.*, Messiah, John ix. 11, 12; the Apostles proved from the Scriptures that Jesus (of Nazareth) is CHRIST, the Holy Anointed One, the long foretold MESSIAH, Acts ii. 22, 36; xvii. 3; xviii. 28.

'All have sinned,' Rom. iii. 9-19, 23, therefore, all need Jesus to save them from their sins. He will save every one 'whosoever believeth in Him,' John iii. 16; vi. 37, 40. We must come to Him, and take Him at His word, as bidden in Heb. iv. 14-16, and remembering the warning in Heb. ii. 3; xii. 24, 25.

## LESSON II.

## IMMANUEL.

(Isa. vii. 14; Matt. i. 21-23.)

IMMANUEL is composed of three Hebrew words—*IM* with, *ANU* us, *EL* God; and signifies that he whom God (by His prophet) so named would not only be called but actually *be*. We find it again in Isa. viii. 8, which is to be read with Lev. xxv. 23.

God spoke of Himself as *with* His people, dwelling among them, Num. xxxv. 34; Ps. lxxviii. 15, 18; Zech. ii. 10, 11, especially in the sanctuary, His tabernacle or temple, Ex. xxv. 8; xxix. 42-46, going with them, xxxiii. 12-17, walking among them, Lev. xxvi. 12.

As Moses knew, Deut. xxxi. 6-8, so Joshua knew that God was *with* His people, Numb. xiv. 9-14. Balaam knew this, xxiii. 21, Solomon wondered at the greatness of this mystery, 2 Chr. vi. 18, Kings Abijah and Hezekiah trusted in the fact, xlii. 1, 4, 12; xxxii. 7, 8, and of the same sang the Psalmist, Ps. xlvi. 7, 11.

The burning bush, the pillar of cloud and fire, the tabernacle, the mercy-seat, the cloud of glory in the temple, 1 Kings viii. 10, 11, were tokens of God's being with Israel; yet in all these God was not then with His people as He promised to be and as He now is, for bush, fiery pillar, tabernacle, mercy-seat, and cloud of glory have all passed away, having been but shadows of better things to come, Heb. x. 1; xi. 40.

No son of Ahaz or of Isaiah was worthy to have such a name: sons of the prophet are named in vii. 3 and viii. 3. IMMANUEL was not one of them, and we may look in vain for that name after Isaiah's time until we come to the Apostle Matthew, who tells us in i. 20-23 how God fulfilled the sure word of His prophecy, in sending His only Son, one with Himself, to become man, and thus to be in very deed 'God with us.'

Now God is with us not by figures or tokens, things which last only for a time, but *bodily, livingly, everlastingly*, Col. ii. 9. Christ's body is the perfect temple, not made with hands, holy, everliving, in which the holy and everliving God is worthily to be worshipped by His people, John i. 14; ii. 19-21; 1 Cor. iii. 16, 17; vi. 19; 2 Cor. vi. 16; Eph. i. 22, 23; Heb. x. 5-7; 1 Pet. ii. 5.

Moreover, in 'Jesus Christ the same, yesterday, and to-day, and

for ever,' Heb. xiii. 8, God is more than simply 'with us,' He is *one with us*, 2 Pet. i. 4.

If it be asked, Why did Christ come in the flesh to be 'God with us?' we can answer from Holy Scripture :—

He came as IMMANUEL to save us from sin and death, which was by sin, John iii. 14-17; vi. 10; x. 10; Rom. v. 12; Heb. ii. 9, 17.

He came as IMMANUEL to defend and deliver the faithful, Deut. xx. 1-4; Isa. xliii. 2-5; Jer. i. 19; Acts xviii. 10.

He came as IMMANUEL to help and strengthen His people, Isa. xli. 10; 2 Cor. xii. 9; Phil. iv. 13.

He came as IMMANUEL to revive and comfort them, Isa. lviii. 14; John xiv. 16-18.

He came as IMMANUEL to sanctify them, Ex. xix. 10, 11; John xvii. 17-19; Eph. v. 25-27; 1 Pet. i. 15, 16.

He came as IMMANUEL to destroy the works of the devil, 1 John iii. 8; Heb. ii. 14, 15.

He came as IMMANUEL to bless us in all things because He loves us with an everlasting love (see Prov. viii. 30, 31); Jer. xxxi. 3; John xiv. 13.

He came as IMMANUEL to carry on to perfection the purpose and work of God, for which He prayed in John xvii. 21-24, and which is more particularly mentioned by St. Paul, Eph. ii. 13-17; Col. i. 20-23.

Now we have His assurance, Matt. xxviii. 20, we shall hereafter have what is described by St. John, Rev. xxi. 3, and context. Then and not till then will be fully known all the wisdom, power, blessing, and love contained in the name IMMANUEL.

Let us never doubt the name, after the manner of those who said, Ex. xvii. 17.



## LESSON III.

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**THE SEED OF THE WOMAN—THE SEED OF  
ABRAHAM.**

THE first prophecy is in the first book of the Bible. In Gen. iii. 15 we read what is often and rightly called The First Gospel. God Himself was the Prophet who preached the good tidings to all the people then in the world—Adam and Eve.

When a leaf drops off, a new bud, which will open in the coming spring, appears in the place where that which has fallen used to be; so, when Adam fell, God immediately gave this promise of the new Man who would conquer Satan who had overcome the first man.

'Her seed' cannot mean more than one, for the text says not—*they*, but—'*it*'—'*his*.' Roman Catholic translators give in their Bibles a false rendering, '*she* shall bruise,' wishing to make the prophecy point to the mother of our Saviour; but the Hebrew verb '*shall bruise*' is third person singular, masculine, *i.e.*, '*he* shall bruise.' Rev. xii. will not help them so to pervert the Scripture, for 'the woman' in that chapter cannot be Eve nor Mary the mother of Jesus, inasmuch as the description given, *e.g.*, in verse 14, would not suit either the one or the other.

Of Jesus and of Him alone the prophecy holds good. His heel was bruised on the cross by His chief enemy, Satan, whose head Christ bruised, *i.e.*, whose deadly power He broke, and will hereafter utterly destroy, Luke x. 17-19; John xii. 31; xvi. 11; Rom. xvi. 20; Heb. ii. 4; 1 John iii. 8; Rev. xii. 10, 11; xx. 1-3, 7-10.

'Her seed' fitly denotes 'the man Christ Jesus,' who had no earthly father, who was, as St. Luke records, born of a virgin, and of whom St. Paul says that he was 'made of a woman,' Gal. iv. 4.

In 1 Cor. xv. 21 we read, 'Since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead;' we can see that, in like manner, as the sin of the woman brought ruin, the seed of the woman brought restitution into the world, Acts iii. 20, 21. Thus God made good to triumph over evil.

The 'enmity' is referred to by our Lord in John vii. 7; xv. 18-25. The seed of the serpent are those who do the works of the devil, Matt. xiii. 38, 39; John vii. 40-44; Acts xiii. 10; 1 John iii. 8-10, 14.

'THE SEED OF ABRAHAM.' As the first prophecy, so this was given by God Himself, saying to Abraham, 'In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed,' Gen. xxii. 16-18; also xii. 1-3, 7; xv. 18; xxiv. 7. The promises include countless posterity, victory, and everlasting possession of the land.

Though Isaac was Abraham's promised son, he was not the one in whom personally the prophecy would be fulfilled; for to him the same promise was repeated as to his seed, Gen. xxvi. 3, 4, see also xlvi. 4; Ex. xxxii. 13. David, Solomon, and other descendants of Abraham had some of the promised blessings, but in Jesus alone can the perfect accomplishment be found, Matt. i. 1; Acts iii. 25, 26; Gal. iii. 8, 16-18; iv. 28-31.

Israel is called in Isa. xli. 8, 'the seed of Abraham my friend,' yet all the offspring of Abraham cannot be meant, for most of them rebelled against God, and so forfeited the blessing, Isa. i. 1; Matt. iii. 9; John viii. 33, 39.

Christ's family spiritual is 'a multitude no man can number,' Isa. liii. 10; Rev. vii. 9; He will possess the gates of His enemies, and the whole earth must be His, Ps. ii. 8-12. Even now all nations who receive His Gospel are blessed in Him, Ps. lxxii. 8-11, 17, as this our nation is in a special measure and manner; but only by obedient faith in Him can the spiritual and everlasting blessings be inherited, Rom. iv. 13-16; Gal. iii. 14, 29.

## LESSON IV.

## SHILOH, OF THE TRIBE OF JUDAH—THE SON OF DAVID.

'By faith Jacob when he was a-dying' prophesied thus—'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,' Gen. xlix. 10.

More than six hundred years afterward David was made king over Judah (his own tribe), 2 Sam. ii. 4, and the royal power remained in his family for many generations.

At Shiloh the tabernacle was set up, Josh. xviii. 1, but that the prophecy refers to a person, not a place, is clear. The meaning of the name seems to be *Whose it is*, though it might signify *Peace* or *Sent*; the ancient Jews certainly regarded it as a title of Messiah.

Our Lord Jesus was of the tribe of Judah, Matt. i. 1-6; ii. 6; Heb. vii. 40, and He is called 'the Lion of the tribe of Juda,' Rev. v. 5. 'He is our *peace*,' Eph. ii. 14; He was also the one *sent* of God, John viii. 42; ix. 7, and, by right divine, the throne of universal dominion is Christ's. With this explanation the words of another prophecy well agree, Ez. xxi. 25-27, as do those of Luke i. 32, 33, and even now He is the Lawgiver of all His people.

The sceptre did not depart altogether and finally from Judah till Archelaus (mentioned Matt. ii. 22) was banished, A.D. 6 (when Jesus was a child), and the Romans governed Judæa by their own officer, called a procurator. Pilate was one. Since then the Jews have remained 'without a king, and without a prince,' Hos. iii. 4, which is enough to show them that Shiloh must be come.

'Unto Him shall the gathering (or obedience) of the people be.' The fulfilment of this has been going on ever since Jesus began to call the Jews, and afterward, by His apostles, all nations to come unto Him. Christians in all countries now obey Him, and hereafter all mankind must be gathered unto Him, and bow to His power, Matt. xxv. 31, 32; John xii. 32; Phil. ii. 11; 2 Thess. ii. 1; Rev. i. 7.

As time went on the prophecies of the Coming One became more and more precise, each title given narrowing the bound within which He would appear, from 'her seed' to 'the seed of

Abraham,' then to 'the tribe of Judah,' at last to the family of Jesse the Bethlehemite, 'the house of David,' 2 Sam. vii. 19; Luke i. 27, 32, 33.

Among 'the sure mercies of David,' Isa. lv. 3, 4; Acts xiii. 34, the great promise was that of his seed one should sit on a throne of everlasting dominion, 2 Sam. vii. 13-15; Ps. lxxxix. 29, 35-37, consequently 'the Son of David' became a well understood title of Messiah, Isa. xi. 1-10; Jer. xxiii. 5, 6; Micah v. 2; Matt. xii. 23; John vii. 42; as such it was addressed to Jesus, Matt. xxi. 9, 15; Mark x. 47, 48, and was by Him accepted as His proper honour and right: while He sat before the Pharisees the fact that in Psalm cx., given by the Holy Spirit, the Son of David is plainly shown to be David's Lord, Matt. xxii. 41-45.

Like David, Jesus is a Shepherd, deliverer of His people, prophet, persecuted, hated, the chosen and anointed of God, by Him exalted to power and honour, all His enemies to be subdued under His feet, 1 Kings v. 3, 4; 1 Cor. xv. 24, 25.

We are to count it our duty and our happiness to yield the obedience of faith to our Lord Jesus, our Lawgiver and King; remembering that He '*Whose it is*' has full right over all we are and all we have, to rule us after His perfect law which is love: under His sceptre we shall dwell in safety and in peace.

## LESSON V.

## A NAZARENE—A BRANCH.

To the north of Judea was Galilee, a province in which so many heathen peoples were mingled with the Jews that it was called 'Galilee of the nations,' or, 'of the Gentiles,' Isa. ix. 1; Matt. iv. 15. Partly for this reason, and also because the inhabitants were counted rough and uncultivated, it was looked on with contempt by the dwellers in Jerusalem and the south.

Nazareth (about three days from Jerusalem) was a Galilean town, and in it was the home of Mary before Jesus was born, Luke i. 26; ii. 39, 51; there He was brought up, iv. 16. His ministry began in Galilee, Matt. iv. 23-25; John ii. 1, 11. His earliest disciples were fishermen on the Lake of Galilee, Matt. iv. 18-21, and were all known as Galileans, Acts i. 11; ii. 7, while women followed Him from Galilee to the cross, Luke xxiii. 49. Galileans were betrayed by their speech and strange accent, Matt. xxvi. 73; Mark xiv. 70. After His resurrection Jesus went before His disciples into Galilee; there they saw Him, Matt. xxviii. 10, 16; Mark xiv. 28; xvi. 7.

It is worth noticing that our Lord was a Hebrew of the Hebrews, born of the family and in the city of King David (Bethlehem), and lived at Nazareth in Galilee of the Gentiles.

Jesus was called the 'Nazarene,' or 'of Nazareth,' by friends, Luke xxiv. 19, by disciples, John i. 45; Acts xxvi. 9, by people in general, Matt. xxi. 10-11; xxvi. 71, by evil spirits, Mark i. 24, by good angels, xvi. 6, and by Himself, Acts xxii. 8.

'That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene,' Matt. ii. 23. Because the very words, 'He shall be called a Nazarene,' are not found in the Old Testament, this has been felt as a great difficulty, and various explanations have been offered:—1st. That the text only means He shall be despised, as Isa. liii. 3 said, because the Nazareth and Galilee people were all despised, John i. 46; vii. 41, 52. 2d. That as the word *Nayzer* is Hebrew for king's and high priest's crown, text points out that Jesus would be King and High Priest, and was crowned but with thorns. 3d. That Nazarene is the same as Nazarite—that is, one set apart, as were Samson, Samuel, and John the Baptist; the next signifying that what they were in a figure, Jesus would be in reality, viz., 'separate from sinners,' wholly consecrated to God, Jud. xiii. 5, 7; i Sam. i. 11; Luke

1. 15. But the Hebrew words for Nazarite and Nazarene are not the same ; moreover, a Nazarite must not drink wine, Numb. vi. 2-4, and Jesus did, xi. 18, 19 ; xxvi. 27-29.

4th. In Isa. xi. 1-10, the title given to Messiah is 'a Branch,' the Hebrew word for which is *Naytser*. The town which in Greek was called Nazareth, old Jewish writers affirm was known in their language as *Naytser*, that is, Branch ; perhaps on account of its being young, small, and lightly esteemed. If we take this for the explanation, every time Jesus was called a Nazarene, or, of Nazareth, there was a repetition of His Messiah name 'THE BRANCH,' so would men, devils, and angels bear witness to Him, and even Pilate by the title on the cross proclaimed Him JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS, John xix. 19.

After their Lord, Christians were called, in contempt, 'Nazarenes,' Acts xxiv. 5. We must not be afraid of the world's hate or scorn, Rom. i. 16. We are called by Christ to be kings and priests with Him, Rev. i. 5, 6. We, like the Nazarites, must be a separate people, entirely consecrated to God. As Nazarenes, true followers of Jesus in all holy conversation, the world will observe that our 'speech agreeth thereto.'

As Jesus appointed a place in Galilee where His own should see Him, and went there before them, Matt. xxviii. 7, 10, 14, 20, following Him whither He is gone before, 'we shall see Him as He is.'

## LESSON VI

## ROCK—STONE.

In the Old Testament God is often called a Rock, Deut. xxxi. 3, 4, 15, 18, 30, 31; 2 Sam. xxii. 32; Isa. xxvi. 4, R. V., because a rock is high, strong, steadfast—a shelter, a place of defence, a refuge, and foundation on which to build, Ps. xxxi. 1-3; lxi. 2, 3; lxii. 5-7; Isa. xxxii. 1, 2.

For the same and other reasons Christ is called a Rock. The 'great rock' giving refreshing shadow is 'a king,' 'a man,' Isa. xxxii. 1, 2. The Rock which when smitten yielded streams of water, and which afterward needed only to be spoken to to give forth water, was a figure of Christ, who, crucified once, is not to be 'smitten' again, but gives to all, who ask in faith, the water of life, that is, the Holy Spirit, Ex. xvii. 6; Numb. xx. 8, with John vii. 37-39; 1 Cor. x. 4; Rev. xxi. 6; xxii. 17.

Christ is the Rock without 'shadow of turning,' 'the same yesterday and to-day and for ever,' Heb. xiii. 8; our defence and refuge, in whom we find safety from all enemies; and, as He said, if we do according to His teachings, we shall be like those who build 'upon a rock,' Matt. vii. 24, 25.

As Christ is called a Rock He is also spoken of as a STONE (which is of like nature with rock) and more particularly as the foundation stone on which is built the whole spiritual house or Church of God, Isa. xxviii. 16. Christ is the only 'sure foundation' or 'corner-stone,' 'tried' in every way, and found perfectly free from flaw and blemish, 'precious' to His Heavenly Father, and to all His believing people, 1 Cor. iii. 10, 11; Ephes. ii. 20-22; 1 Pet. ii. 3-5.

This 'precious' foundation stone is nevertheless 'a stone of stumbling, and for a rock of offence,' against which the Jews, first, then others, striking in unbelief, break themselves and fall. The chief men in Israel, priests, lawyers, rulers and others, called 'builders,' refused to have Jesus for the house of God; yet God has made Him the foundation and glory of the living Temple: thus our Lord interpreted, Ps. cxviii. 22, 23; in Matt. xxi. 1, 2, 4, and so did His apostles, Acts iv. 10, 12; Rom. ix. 33; 1 Pet. ii. 6-9. See also Zech. iii. 9; iv. 7; and Matt. xvi. 16-18.

The Prophet Daniel foretold that 'a stone cut out without hands broke in pieces a great image which passed away, while the stone became a great mountain and filled the whole earth,'

Dan. ii. 34, 44, 45, all which declares God's purpose that the kingdom of Christ will prevail over all powers opposed to God, will at last fill the world, and abide for evermore.

We have to beware of unbelieving objections against Christ and His Gospel put forth by men who may be learned in other things, but who stumble at God's truth, 1 Cor. i. 22-24; pride and conceit of learning has deceived many to turn away from the true wisdom.

As Christ is precious to God the Father, so should He be precious to us above all earthly things, so shall we be like-minded with God and have His blessing, John xiv. 23; 1 Pet. i. 7-9.

Hearing and learning without *doing* what our Saviour teaches will be only like building on sand; they who *do* as He enjoins, these alone build on the Rock.

We must take heed not to be deceived by new doctrines, nor by false charity to suppose that men are safe whatever they believe provided they be in earnest and sincere, for it is written, Acts iv. 12; and no apostle nor angel can take the place of Jesus Christ the 'sure foundation.'

We must pray and labour for the building up of others as well as of ourselves to be living stones in the living Temple of which Christ is the Corner-stone, the Temple which will never pass away, and in which God will for ever dwell, 1 Cor. iii. 9-17; vi. 19, 20. Only by the Holy Spirit can we so build and be builded.



LESSON VII.

A PROPHET LIKE UNTO MOSES.

(Deut. xviii. 15-19.)

THERE are several points to be considered in God's promise—(1) After Moses there is one to come ; (2) how long after Moses is not said ; (3) whom God will raise up for His people ; (4) who would be a prophet ; (5) one of themselves, *i.e.*, a Hebrew ; (6) who would be like unto Moses ; (7) who would speak all that God would give him to say to the people ; (8) and disobedience to whom would be judged by God.

After Moses came Joshua, who was a prophet, inasmuch as he foretold what is written in Josh. vi. 26 ; with 1 Kings xvi. 34 ; who was like Moses in authority, speaking God's words, and obeyed under pain of death, Josh. i. 16-18. Yet Joshua did not claim, nor was he taken to be the one promised, who was not considered even in John Baptist's time to have yet come, John i. 21, 25.

Jesus was regarded as being the one promised, so long expected, and indeed was 'that Prophet,' John i. 45 ; vi. 14 ; Acts iii. 20-23 ; vii. 37, 52. What Joshua was in part, the greater JOSHUA-JESUS is in perfection, given and exalted by God for His people, one of the chosen race, a Prophet, and 'like unto' Moses, *e.g.*, (1) Moses was brought out of Egypt, so was Jesus, Matt. ii. 15. (2) Moses was leader and commander of God's people, so was Jesus, Isa. lv. 4, who said, 'Follow Me.' (3) Moses was mighty in power to work signs and miracles before the people, that they might believe him and glorify God ; Jesus showed far more and greater mighty works. (4) Moses, though mighty, was 'very meek,' Num. xii. 3 ; Jesus most mighty was also most 'meek and lowly in heart,' Matt. xi. 29. (5) Moses was tried by the people's hardness of heart, unbelief, and rebellion, Ex. xvii. 2-4 ; Deut. ix. 23, 24 ; Num. xi. 10-15 ; xvi. 3, Jesus was tried in like manner, Matt. xvii. 17 ; Mark iii. 5. (6) Moses pleaded with God for the sinful people, Deut. ix. 24-29 ; Jesus made and ever makes intercession for the transgressors, Isa. liii. 12 ; Luke xxiii. 24 ; Rom. viii. 34 ; 1 John ii. 1. (7) Moses was mediator of the Old Testament-Covenant, Gal. iii. 19. The people in asking Moses to go near and hear God's words and then tell them His commands, Ex. xx. 19 ; Deut. v. 27, had 'well spoken,' so God

says, Deut. v. 28-31; xviii. 17, 18,\* because there was a real and confessed need of one to stand between God and men, *i.e.*, a Mediator, Deut. v. 5 (Job ix. 33, see 'Daysman'). Jesus is the Mediator of the New Testament-Covenant, Matt. xxvi. 28; 1 Tim. ii. 5; Heb. viii. 6; ix. 15-20; xii. 24. (8) To Moses alone God 'spake face to face,' Ex. xxxiii. 9, 11, 20; Numb. xii. 7; Deut. xxxiv. 10; Jesus alone could say, Luke x. 22; John vi. 46. (9) As the skin of Moses' face shone, Ex. xxxiv. 29-35, so Jesus was transfigured, and His 'face did shine as the sun,' Matt. xvii. 2. (10) Moses was a 'faithful servant in all God's house,' Numb. xii. 7, though after God so commended him he transgressed; Jesus was the perfectly ever faithful servant and Son, who never erred nor failed in the service of His Father, John viii. 29; 1 Tim. iii. 15; Heb. iii. 1-6.

Other particulars of likeness to Moses can be shown, but these suffice for the Lesson.

Let us always thank God for sending Jesus to be to us the Prophet and Mediator to speak to us all the words of God, to make atonement and intercession for us, and to lead us out of bondage to heavenly freedom, keeping in mind the judgment of God on those who despise the Son of God, Heb. x. 28-31. The Holy Spirit of God will, if we watch, pray, and strive in faith, teach and enable us to be faithful to the end.

\* See A. XIV. on Mediator.

## LESSON VIII.

## HIGH PRIEST.

UNDER the Law of Moses there were very many priests, some of whom were 'chief priests,' 2 Chron. xxxvi. 14 ; Matt. ii. 4 ; over them all was one, and only one, who was *the* priest, the 'high priest,' or, as the title means—the great priest, Matt. xxvi. 57, 58, 65 ; Acts xxiii. 2-5.

Under the Gospel all real Christians are priests, 1 Pet. ii. 9, over whom Jesus Christ is the one and only High Priest, Heb. iii. 1, and He has not appointed any one to be His deputy or vicar on earth over the Church of God.

All the Old Testament priests were of one family, Aaron and his sons, Ex. xxviii. 1 ; and the New Testament priests are all one spiritual family, of which our Lord Jesus is 'the Firstborn among many brethren,' Rom. viii. 29 ; Heb. ii. 11, 17.

According to God's law no man could set himself up as high priest, neither could the people make or unmake one. Aaron was chosen by God, so was Jesus, Heb. v. 4, 5.

Nothing was left for Aaron to invent or to alter ; all things which he and they had to do were described and commanded by God. So Jesus bound His disciples to teach what He had commanded them—that is, what God had commanded Him, Matt. xxviii. 19, 20 ; John xii. 49.

The high priest was washed and anointed before entering on his holy office, Ex. xxix. 4-7, 8 ; Jesus was baptized with water and anointed with the Holy Spirit before He began His ministry, Matt. iii. 13-16 ; Acts x. 38.

The priests wore plain white linen, Ex. xxxix. 27, 28, the high priest alone wore the 'holy garments for glory and for beauty' described in Ex. xxviii. 2-39 ; on his forehead was a plate of pure gold, engraved with 'HOLINESS TO THE LORD ;' in his 'breastplate of judgment' were the Urim and Thummin\* (*i.e.*, Lights and Perfections), by which God gave answers to solemn inquiries through the high priest, Numb. xxvii. 21 ; 1 Sam. xxviii. 6 ; 'upon his shoulders,' as well as in the breastplate 'upon his heart,' were graven, on precious stones, all 'the names of the children of Israel, (*i.e.*, of the twelve tribes), by which was signified that he represented all the covenant-people before the LORD, Ex. xxviii. 9, 12

\* As no description is written of Urim and Thummin, no sure account can be given.

29, 30. Jesus, whose 'glory and honour' are above all, is perfect in holiness; He bears the burdens of all His people on His shoulders of might, and all their names in His heart of love; He was our Substitute on earth, He is our sole and sufficient Representative in heaven.

The high priest alone made 'an atonement for the children of Israel for all their sins once a year,' and at that time entered with blood and incense into the most 'holy place within the veil before the mercy-seat,' Lev. xvi. 2, 12-14, 30-34. Jesus, by the sacrifice of Himself, made one perfect atonement for the sins of all, and thus 'having obtained eternal redemption for us,' 'He entered in once for all (R.V.) into the holy place,' 'into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us,' Heb. ix. 7, 8, 11, 12, 24-28; x. 1-3, 10-12.

Long before Aaron was Melchizedek, King of Salem, the priest of the most high God, Gen. xiv. 18, who was higher than Abraham and Aaron, being both king and priest, standing out in solitary greatness, without recorded earthly father, beginning of days, or end of life, and who in these respects was 'like unto the Son of God,' for Christ is not of Aaron's line, but is after the former and higher 'order of Melchizedek,' Ps. cx. 4; Heb. v. 1-6, 10; vii. 1-10, 11-15, 17, 21. The offices of king and priest filled by Melchizedek, afterwards divided, were again united in Messiah, Zech. vi. 12, 13.

Christ's high priesthood is for ever, unchangeable (*i.e.*, not passing from one to another); He is faithful, merciful, touched with the feeling of our infirmities, and He has been tempted as we are, having been 'in all things (except sin) made like unto His brethren,' Heb. ii. 17; iii. 1, 2; iv. 14, 15; v. 9.

As Israel was called to be 'a kingdom of priests,' Ex. xix. 6, God's people now are called to be 'a royal priesthood,' 1 Pet. ii. 9, 10, having Christ as their divine King-Priest, by whom and with whom they are kings and priests, Rev. i. 5, 6; v. 9, 10; xx. 6.

As priests we are to be holy; we have to offer spiritual sacrifices, prayers, praises, thanksgivings, and ourselves as living sacrifices to God, through Christ our High Priest, Rom. xii. 1; Heb. xiii. 15; 1 Pet. ii. 3.

Seeing the faithfulness, sympathy, and power of our High Priest, let us hold fast our faith, and come as we are called, Heb. iv. 14-16, trusting in His atoning blood, resurrection, and intercession. As the sons of Aaron were anointed with him, Ex. xxix. 21, so Christ's anointing by the Holy Ghost is given to all His faithful ones, Rom. viii. 11; 2 Cor. i. 21, 22; 1 John ii. 27.

## LESSON IX.

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**THE LAMB OF GOD—OUR PASSOVER—THE  
PROPITIATION.**

1. THE lamb, being clean according to the Law, Lev. xi. 1-3, was given to be man's meat, and moreover was appointed by God for offering to Himself; its gentleness and harmlessness made it most fit for sacrifice according to the principle that an innocent life must be given in place of the guilty.

God commanded that every morning one lamb, and every evening another, should be slain and offered on His altar 'day by day continually,' Ex. xxix. 38-42; the fire by which they were burned was never to go out, Lev. vi. 8-13. Thus it was showed that there must be perpetual presence before God of sacrifice between Him and His people.

Christ is 'the Lamb of God,' John i. 29, 36; Acts viii. 32-35; 1 Pet. i. 19, 20; Rev. v. 6, 8, 12, 13; vii. 14-17 (and many other places in Revelations). He is 'holy, harmless, undefiled,' Heb. vii. 26. His flesh is 'meat indeed,' John vi. 55. He offered Himself, once for all, 'the just for the unjust,' 1 Pet. iii. 18, and that perfect sacrifice is before God 'continually,' and always effectual for all believers, Heb. x. 12-14.

2. The Passover (or Paschal) lamb was a special ordinance appointed by God when He delivered His people from Egypt, and to be kept every year, Ex. xii. 3-24-27. The doors of the Israelites in Egypt were to be marked with the lamb's blood; by this visible sign were the dwellers in the house protected from the destroyer who smote the Egyptians. By those in the house (and no one was to go out of the door till morning) the lamb's flesh was eaten, without leavened bread, with bitter herbs, and in haste, as by those who were about to depart, and no foreigner or hireling might eat thereof, Ex. xii. all.

Christ is our Passover, 1 Cor. v. 7, 8, appointed by God for our deliverance from bondage. His blood is our only salvation from spiritual destruction; under the shelter of His atonement we must remain till the resurrection morning. His flesh we must eat, *i.e.*, Himself and His words we must believe and take into our hearts. We are also called so to eat as ready to quit this world for the true Holy Land: while we have the 'bitter' things we must put away 'the leaven of malice and wickedness,'

3. PROPITIATION means conciliating, making favourable, and Christ is our Propitiation, inasmuch as by the sacrifice of Himself He put away sin which the holy God hates, Heb. i. 13, and which kept us from His favour, 1 John ii. 2 ; iv. 10.

The word used by St. John in these texts is not quite the same as the one rendered *propitiation* in Rom. iii. 25, where St. Paul employs the word elsewhere put for what we call (in English) 'the mercy-seat,' which really was—as Ex. xxv. 17-22 will show—the golden *cover* of the ark in which were kept the two tables of stone on which God wrote the Law, Deut. x. 1-5. God promised to meet and commune with Moses 'there—from above the mercy-seat,' and on it the high priest once a year sprinkled the blood of atonement for all the sins of all the people, Lev. xvi. 13-15, 33-34.

Christ is our 'mercy-seat,' in Him God meets us, His blood is the covering of our sins, His atonement is between God and our transgression against His holy commands ; but Christ's blood will not be saving propitiation for our sins without faith, Rom. iii. 25. If we draw near with penitent faith then we have the blessed covering of all our iniquity, Ps. xxxii. 1 ; Rom. iv. 6, 7.

As Christ is 'the Lamb of God' and none other 'taketh away the sin of the world,' we must 'behold' Him, look to Him with all faith. If we do not eat of His flesh who is 'our Passover' we have no life, John vi. 53. God looks to see if we have the Passover blood-mark, and we must 'abide in' Christ, John xv. 4-7. We cannot by ourselves satisfy God's demands ; we must take Christ as *the* propitiation for our sins, by whose atonement and by that alone they can be 'covered.' We must count ourselves called to be 'in haste,' ready to go forth very soon as God may bid us depart hence.

## LESSON X.

**COUNSELLOR—ADVOCATE—WITNESS—AMEN.**

1. **COUNSELLOR** is one of the names given to the Messiah in Isa. ix. 6, *i.e.*, one who gives counsel or advice, especially in great matters. Examples of such are Ahithophel, 2 Sam. xvi. 23, Jonathan, 1 Chron. xxvii. 32, and Joseph of Arimathea, Mark xv. 43.

A counsellor is chosen for his wisdom, experience, and fidelity. In our own country we have our Privy Council, whose members are acquainted with greatest affairs of state. With Isa. xl. 13, 14 we should read Gen. i. 26, and iii. 22; to no man could God so speak; we may believe that the Father took counsel with the Son. Christ is our Counsellor, advising us with words of perfect wisdom how to direct our ways, our purposes, and actions to the best ends. He has the Holy Spirit of counsel, as foretold in Isa. xi. 2, and so He says, 'I counsel thee,' Rev. iii. 18.

2. **ADVOCATE**, in 1 John ii. 1, is the same word which in John xiv. 16 is translated 'comforter,' and means one who is called in to assist and plead for another who is engaged in a legal trial. Jesus Christ is our Advocate or Comforter, inasmuch as He it is who stands for us, helps us, gives us counsel, and makes intercession for us to God the Father, Rom. viii. 34. We have nothing to plead, except to confess that we are guilty; but our Advocate is 'righteous,' He pleads His obedience and death for us, He knows the mind and law of God, He cannot err in his counsel, He has perfect wisdom, understanding, memory, experience, sympathy, and faithfulness, and His heavenly Father always heareth Him, John xi. 42, so He cannot fail in any cause He undertakes.

3. 'The faithful witness,' Jesus Christ is called in Rev. i. 5, and He calls Himself 'the faithful and true witness,' in Rev. iii. 14. A witness has to know the facts of which he speaks. He must also declare, as in courts he is sworn to do, 'the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.' Jesus Christ is the witness who perfectly knew and faithfully declared all that His Father sent Him to testify concerning God, Himself, man, Satan's good and evil, life and death, John iii. 11, 32, 34; vii. 7; viii. 14, 18; xii. 49, 50.

4. **AMEN** is a Hebrew word meaning truth, true, verily, so be it. In Isa. lxv. 16, 'the God of truth' is actually 'the God of

*Amen.* Very often in His teaching Jesus said, 'Verily, Verily,' actually, '*Amen, Amen*;' by thus doubling the word He affirmed very solemnly the truth of His doctrine. He calls Himself '*the Amen*' in Rev. iii. 14, and St. Paul says that 'in Him all the promises of God are Amen,' *i.e.*, true and sure, 2 Cor. i. 20. It is a legal custom concerning important documents, beside signing them, to set a seal on them, which stamps the authority and confirms the certainty of that which is written and done; so this word Amen is like a divine seal to give full assurance of the truth and unchangeableness of the word of God, John ii. 33; 1 John v. 9-11.

Seeing that God has given us in Christ Jesus such a Counsellor, Advocate, and Witness, we must cease from all trusting in our own knowledge or skill, walking by the sight of our carnal eyes, and from putting our trust in the wisdom or ability of any man; for all these are hateful to God and ruinous to those who do such things.

(1.) Let us seek counsel of Christ, that being guided by Him we may walk in true wisdom, spiritual safety, and peace. The counsel He gives we must obediently follow (warned by Jer. xlii. xliii).

2. Turning from all pretended intercession of angels and saints, let us commit our cause to Him, calling on Him to plead His merits and sacrifice on our behalf, to make intercession for us, to help our infirmities by the Holy Spirit, and to make our cause His own before the throne of God.

3. Whatever He testifies that we must believe, and according to the word of testimony we must decide doctrines and duties, questions and difficulties, being confident that He can neither deceive us nor be deceived.

4. To His Amen we must say, Amen, so be it.



## LESSON XI

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**GOD'S SERVANT—GOD'S ELECT—GOD'S BELOVED**  
**—GOD'S HOLY ONE.**

1. **SERVANT.** When the Son of God became man He became the servant of God, bound to be obedient in all things even unto death, Phil. ii. 7, 8. He spoke of Himself as serving, Matt. xx. 27, 28; Luke xxii. 27, and He acted as a servant, John xiii. 4, 5.

In prophecy God calls Him 'My servant,' Zech. iii. 8; Isa. xlii. 1; lii. 13, and 'My righteous servant,' liii. 11. In like manner God calls Israel 'My servant,' Isa. xlix. 3-7; Christ was the perfect Israel, Gen. xxxii. 28.

Christ's being the Son of God was not against His being also the servant of God, Heb. v. 8; on the contrary, because He was God's only perfect Son, He was God's only perfect servant, for being perfect in love, wisdom, and power, He was perfect in service.

In acting as our servant He was acting as God's servant, because the work He did for us and for our salvation was the work His Father gave Him to do, John xvii. 4; thus He fulfilled perfectly the law of love to God and love to man, Matt. xxii. 37-40. He has made all real service honourable and beautiful by His example, which He calls us to follow, John xiii. 13-15.

2. **ELECT OR CHOSEN.** Christ was despised and rejected of men, but He was the Chosen One of God, 1 Pet. ii. 4, as David who was a figure of Christ had been God's chosen, 1 Sam. xvi. 6-12; Ps. lxxviii. 70; lxxxix. 3, 19, 20. That this title, given to Messiah in Isa. xlii. 1, belongs to Jesus, is plainly seen in Matt. xii. 15-18 (see also Luke ix. 35, R.V., 'This is My Son, My Chosen.') Even His enemies, while they mocked Him on the cross, gave Jesus this His title, 'the Chosen of God,' Luke xxiii. 35.

Chosen, choice, excellent, precious—are words naturally connected, because, in choosing, our choice falls on the best, see this in 1 Sam. ix. 2; x. 24; 2 Sam. x. 9. Jesus Christ is the choicest, the most precious, who has no equal. God cannot err in His choice; but how great was the error and the sin of those who, having a choice offered them, cried out to Pilate—'Not this man, but Barabbas,' John xviii. 39, 40.

3. **BELOVED.** The Son of God was from eternity beloved of

the Father, John xvii. 23-26; when He took our nature He was also beloved as the perfect man; in heaven He was the beloved Divine Son, on earth He was the beloved human Son, of God, Eph. i. 6—beloved because He perfectly loved and did the will of His Father, John viii. 29; x. 17. God, speaking by the prophet, said of the Son, 'in whom My soul delighteth,' Isa. xlii. 1, and by a voice from heaven, at Jesus' baptism, and again at His transfiguration, called Him, 'My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased,' Matt. iii. 17; xvii. 5.

*Note.* David means beloved, and, as was said before, David was a figure of Christ.

4. **HOLY ONE.** God calls Himself Holy, Lev. xix. 2; xx. 26; xxi. 8, 'there is none holy as the Lord,' 1 Sam. ii. 2. The Holy One was an often used and well-known title of God, Isa. xl. 25; lvii. 15; Hos. xi. 9, and it is as plainly a title in the Old Testament of Messiah, Ps. xvi. 16; lxxxix. 18, 19, and of Jesus in the New Testament, Acts ii. 27-31; iii. 14; xiii. 35-37. Jesus was God's Holy One because He was conceived by the Holy Ghost, Luke i. 35, 'and in Him is no sin,' Heb. vii. 26; 1 John iii. 5. He calls Himself 'holy,' Rev. iii. 7, and even an evil spirit knew and declared Him to be 'Jesus—the Holy One of God,' Mark i. 24.

(1.) As Jesus is God's servant we are to take Him for our example, learning from Him how to do God's will, serving God and serving our neighbour in love; and so we are taught, Gal. v. 13, 14; Eph. vi. 6, 7. The noblest thing on earth is to so live as to be able truly to say, with St. Paul, who therein copied Christ, Acts xxvii. 23; Rom. i. 9; 2 Cor. iv. 5.

(2.) As God's chosen Jesus is to be our chosen, preferred above all the children of men. All real Christians are God's chosen ones, Eph. i. 4.

(3.) As God's Beloved He is to be our Beloved, of whom we can say, 'in whom my soul delighteth,' in all whose words and ways 'I am well pleased.'

(4.) As God's Holy One we are to consider Jesus our perfect standard, remembering that we are called with a holy calling, and that without holiness no man can see the Lord, therefore let us seek the teaching, sanctifying, and strengthening of the Holy Spirit, Rom. vi. 19, 22; 2 Cor. vii. 1; Eph. iv. 24; Heb. xii. 10, 14; 1 Pet. i. 15, 16; 2 Pet. iii. 11; Jude 20; Rev. xxi. 27; xxii. 10, 11.

## LESSON XII.

## ANGEL—MESSENGER—APOSTLE—SENT.

1. ANGEL. We read in the Old Testament of 'thousands' and 'ten thousand times ten thousand' angels, but there is frequent mention of one, generally called 'the angel of the LORD,' who spoke and acted as God; this great one (or archangel) appeared to Abraham, Gen. xviii. 1, 2-13, to Jacob, Gen. xxxii. 24, 30; Hos. xii. 2-4, to Moses, Ex. iii. 2, 4, 6, 14, 15; Acts vii. 30, 35, 38, to Joshua, to whom he described himself as 'Captain of the host of the LORD,' Josh. v. 13-15; vi. 1, 2, to all Israel, Judg. ii. 1-5, to Gideon, Judg. vi. 11-23, to Samson's parents, Judg. xiii. 3-32. Jacob said, 'The Angel which redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads,' Gen. xlviii. 15, 16; and Isaiah wrote, 'the angel of His presence saved them,' lxiii. 7, 8, 9, while Jacob and Isaiah knew there is no Redeemer and Saviour beside God, Isa. xliii. 1-3, 11, 12, 14; xlv. 6.

God said of the Angel whom the people were to hear and obey, 'My name is in him, Ex. xxiv. 20-22; He also says, Isa. xlii. 8. God said to Moses, 'My presence shall go with thee,' Ex. xxxiii. 14-16, which helps us to know why Isaiah calls this Angel 'the Angel of His presence,' Isa. lxiii. 9. (See also Ex. xiii. 21; xiv. 19; xxiii. 20-23; xxxii. 24; xxxiii. 2, 3.)

The angel in Rev. ix. 10 and xxii. 8, 9 would not allow himself to be worshipped, but 'the Angel of the LORD' in Ex. iii. 5, and 'the Captain of the LORD's host' in Josh. v. 15, spoke and acted as claiming and accepting worship.

That no man hath seen or can see GOD is affirmed in several texts, Ex. xxxiii. 20; John i. 18; v. 37; vi. 46; 1 John. iv. 12. Yet it is as plainly stated that God has appeared unto men, Ex. xxiv. 9-11; Numb. xii. 7; Deut. xxxiii. 11; Isa. vi. 1, 5, with John xii. 36-41.

2. MESSENGER. In Malachi iii. 1, beside the prophecy of 'My messenger (Elias, John the Baptist), who shall prepare the way before Me,' Matt. xi. 10-14, it is written—'and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to His temple, even the messenger of the covenant;' the word here for 'messenger' is the same word as that for 'angel' in the passages above quoted under that title. This Messenger or Angel has to do in a special and all important way in and for God's covenant with His people; He is called

'the Lord' as well as 'Messenger,' and the temple is called 'His temple,' which is called 'the temple of God' in Matt. xxi. 12, 13, and which Jesus called 'My Father's house,' John ii. 16. (See also Job xxxiii. 23, 'messenger,' same word again as for 'angel.')

The general belief of the early Christians was that all these facts of Holy Scripture, some of which *seem* to differ from others, are all to be sufficiently explained by taking 'the Angel of the LORD' to be 'the WORD,' John i. 1, 14, who in the Old Testament days appeared, from time to time, 'in the likeness of men,' in which He afterward lived on earth, died, and rose again, who was and is 'the express image of God's person,' Heb. i. 1, 2, 3, and who said of Himself, 'he that hath seen Me hath seen the Father,' John xiv. 9.

3. APOSTLE. Of His disciples Jesus 'chose twelve whom also He named Apostles,' Luke vi. 13; 'these twelve Jesus sent forth,' Matt. x. 5, and after His resurrection said to them, 'as My Father hath sent Me, even so send I you,' John xx. 21. Here, in seeing why the twelve were called Apostles, we see why Jesus is called 'the Apostle of our profession,' Heb. iii. 1. The meaning of Angel, Messenger, and Apostle is in all these names one and the same, that is—*sent*.

4. SENT. Jesus called Himself by this title, 'Him whom He (the Father) hath sent,' John v. 38; vi. 29. He was careful to teach and repeat that His coming, speaking, and working were not of Himself (apart from God), but were all of God, John v. 43; vii. 28, 29; viii. 42; xiv. 24. As Christ was God's sent One, so the Apostles were Christ's sent ones—they were to speak and act, not of themselves, but Christ's words and His name, Matt. x. 20, 40; xxviii. 19, 20, even as He spoke and worked, not of Himself, but, all the Father *sent* Him to speak and to do: thus all is of God, and from God, and unto God.

As God's Angel, Messenger, Apostle, whom in His love the Father *sent* to us, we must, for love and duty, hear Him, obey Him, looking on Him as on God, and trusting His wisdom to teach us, His faithfulness to keep us, His will and power to redeem us from all evil, to bless us in all things, and secure for us all the grace and mercies and everlasting blessings of God's covenant.

## LESSON XIII.

**SHEPHERD—BISHOP—FORERUNNER.**

1. **SHEPHERD.** God Himself is the Shepherd of His people, Ps. xxiii. 1-3, so said David who had kept his father's sheep, 1 Sam. xvii. 24, and God promised that His servant David should be the 'one shepherd over' God's flock, Ezek. xxxiv. 23, xxxvii. 24; but as David had died more than four hundred years before this prophecy was given, it is clear that by the name of David some greater king and shepherd must be signified, and such was Jesus Christ, the Son of David.

Jesus Christ is the 'one shepherd over' all the flock, *i.e.*, the people of God, Ps. xc. 7; c. 3; Ezek. xxxiv. 34; there are many under-shepherds or 'pastors,' as ministers of Christ are rightly called, but He alone is 'the Great Shepherd,' Heb. xiii. 20, or, as St. Peter calls Him, 'the Chief Shepherd,' 1 Pet. v. 2, 4.

The flock, which consists of all Christ's faithful followers, is so large that no man can number the sheep, yet all are but one flock, so it was prophesied not of several flocks but of one, 'My flock,' Ezek. xxxiv, and so Jesus said, 'there shall be one fold (R. V., one flock), and one shepherd,' John x. 16.

2. **BISHOP** is same as overseer, that is, one who has the oversight or superintendence of others, thus bishop is much the same as pastor; accordingly we find that those who are called 'elders'—presbyters, of the Church, are also called 'overseers'—bishops, in Acts xx. 17, 18; Tit. i. 5-8. There are many bishops, presbyters, deacons, and others, who minister in the one Church of Christ, but He alone is 'the Bishop of your souls.' He has not appointed any man on earth to be shepherd, pastor, or bishop over all the flock 'which He purchased with His own blood,' Acts xx. 28; Eph. i. 22; v. 23-27; 1 Pet. v. 2-5.

3. **FORERUNNER.** John the Baptist is often called our Lord's forerunner, and so he was in preparing the way for Christ's ministry, by preaching the baptism of repentance for remission of sins, Mark i. 1-4, 7, 8, 14, 15; but Jesus is 'The Forerunner,' as He is named in Heb. vi. 20, preparing the way for all His people, *i.e.*, His faithful followers.

In this country shepherds drive their flocks before them, and often very roughly, but in Palestine it is not so. There the custom was, and still is, for the shepherd to lead the sheep; he goes on

before them, calling them, and they follow him. Thus Jesus said of Himself and His flock, John x. 3-5; the lost sheep, too, when found, was not driven back, but laid by the shepherd on his shoulder, and so carried home, Luke xv. 4-6.

Our Forerunner, having finished what He had to do for us on earth, has gone on to prepare a place for us, John xiv. 2, 3, and as Israel's high priest entered alone into the most holy place, so ours has gone before us into the true Holy of Holies, into heaven itself, and calls us to follow Him, for His prayer taught us what He will bring to pass, 'that they whom Thou hast given Me be with Me where I am,' John xvii. 24.

(1.) Let us all say with faith, thankfulness, and gladness, 'The Lord is my shepherd;' we must take good heed that we do not stray from Him. 'All we like sheep have gone astray,' Isa. liiii. 6, each one of us has to confess as, Ps. cxix. 176. Those who follow Him He will lead in right ways, in His own footsteps, and will give all food, rest, and safety. We cannot keep ourselves, but He will keep us to the end, Ps. cxxi. 4-8; John xvii. 12; 1 John ii. 6.

(2.) Keep in mind that the Bishop-Overseer of your souls sees all our ways, words, and thoughts; that He watches over us, not to spy faults for which to condemn us, but for our correction, instruction, preservation, and good. With His oversight is foresight to provide for all our needs.

(3.) Look unto Him, who has gone before us, hoping to enter where He the Forerunner has entered, and as He went to prepare a place for His followers, ask Him by the Holy Spirit to prepare you for the place.

## LESSON XIV.

**SURETY—MEDIATOR—TESTATOR.**

1. A **SURETY** is 'one who is bound with and for another; one who engages to answer for another's appearance in court, or for payment of a debt, or for the performance of some act; he is also called bail, or bondsman. If the one for whom he is bound fail to pay the debt or do the act, the same must be paid or done by the surety; who is so called because he makes the matter sure by giving the security of his own bond. This is very ancient custom and law, see Gen. xliii. 9; xlv. 32, 33; Job xvii. 3; Prov. vi. 1-5; xi. 15; xvii. 18; xxii. 26, 27.

In the case of a covenant between two parties a surety would be responsible to both.

On account of the risk or liability, no man is forced by law to be surety for another; whoever becomes a bondsman makes himself such of his own free-will, out of kindness or friendship.

The law will not accept any one as a surety who is not fully able to do or to pay what he is bound for; he must satisfy the court that he is a real and sufficient bondsman.

In the new and better covenant between God and man, that is the Gospel, Christ is 'the surety,' Heb. vii. 22; and He is doubly such, being bound as bondsman with us and for us to satisfy all the demands of God's holy law, and also surety that this being done we shall receive from God all the benefits of such satisfaction.

Jesus undertook all this willingly, for love, so there is no injustice in the suretyship. What He engaged to do He is fully able to perform. We, for whom He is bondsman, could not satisfy God's law, rendering to Him perfect obedience, and paying our ten thousand talents of debt; but Christ could, He knew He would have to do this, and this He did even unto death in our stead, 2 Cor. v. 14, 15; Heb. ii. 9; and God accepted His thus fulfilling all the obligations of the surety.

2. **MEDIATOR** (see Lesson VIII.). Moses was the mediator of the Old Testament, the Law, Deut. v. 22-27; Gal. iii. 19; in his hands God placed the Law to be faithfully given to the people. Christ is the Mediator of the New and better Covenant, the Gospel, which was confirmed by His blood, Matt. xxvi. 28; Heb. viii. 6; ix. 15-20; xii. 24. The teaching and the carrying out of the Gospel in deed as well as word God has intrusted to Christ,

who does more than stand between God and us (Deut. v. 5). He has all authority and power to act fully for God and for man. Being one with His Father, He perfectly represents God to us, and being also one with man, He perfectly represents us to God. Being the Surety He is all the better qualified to be the Mediator of the New Covenant.

3. TESTATOR. The word, which means 'covenant,' that is, an agreement or contract between two, also means 'testament' or 'will,' by which one man, who is called the testator, gives his property to be, after his own death, possessed by others. This kind of document is described in law-language as a 'will and testament,' and it has no power until the death of him that made it, Heb. ix. 15-17.

Christ's Will and Testament in our favour to give us 'eternal inheritance' could not take effect without his death. He has died, and so now we get what he, the Testator, promised and gave us by Will, see also Luke xxii. 29, 30.

(1.) As our Surety Jesus deserves all thanks and love, for He giving bail for us has paid our debt, and delivered us from death at the cost of His own life. We are called to trust His suretyship with perfect faith; it is sufficient for us all; and having been accepted by God's justice we shall not be expected to do for ourselves what our bondsman has done for us. Our prayers should be in the spirit of Ps. cxix. 122 and Isa. xxxviii. 41.

(2.) As the Mediator we must confide all the interests of our souls to Jesus only, for God has given them and us into His hands alone, John iii. 35; xvii. 9-11; 1 Tim. ii. 5, 6.

(3.) As the Testator, what His Will binds us to do we must observe, otherwise as the Jews lost their inheritance, Heb. iii. 19 and iv. 1, we shall forfeit all the Testament promises.



## LESSON XV.

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**THE LAST ADAM—THE SECOND MAN—THE BRIDE-  
GROOM — THE HEAD OF THE BODY, THE  
CHURCH.**

1. ADAM is spoken of in Scripture as a 'figure of Him that was to come,' *i.e.*, of Christ, Rom. v. 14. As Adam was in the image of God, was the head of all mankind, was given dominion over all creatures on earth, and was 'Son of God,' Gen. i. 26; Luke iii. 38, so was Christ, who is called 'the last Adam,' 'the second man;' but He has the pre-eminence, in that whereas the first Adam was natural, a living soul, earthy, the last Adam is spiritual, a life-giving spirit from heaven, 1 Cor. xv. 45-47.

The first Adam sinned and by his disobedience died and brought sin and death on all his offspring; the last Adam was without sin, He put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself, He overcame death, and by His obedience and atonement became our righteousness and secured life for all who are 'in Christ,' Rom. v. 12-19; 1 Cor. xv. 21-23.

When the first Adam fell under sin and death, God's purpose in the creation of man *seemed* to be a failure, but 'in the fulness of time' there came 'the second man,' and in Him we see God's purpose triumphs over all enemies and obstacles, Ps. viii. 4-8; Heb. ii. 6-14; 1 Cor. xv. 25, 26.

3. BRIDEGROOM. God provided a help, 'meet for,' *i.e.*, answering or corresponding to—Adam, to be his wife; who was, as He said, 'bone of My bones, flesh of my flesh,' and whom He named Eve, as the mother of all living, Gen. ii. 18-24. God provided also for 'the last Adam,' one 'meet for,' or answering to Him, Matt. xxii. 1, 2. As Christ is 'the second man,' the Church is the second Eve, one with Him, Eph. v. 29-32, and is the mother of all living, the spiritual life: this woman (not the Virgin Mary) it is of whom we read in Rev. xii.

God compares Himself to a bridegroom and His people to a bride, Isa. liv. 5; lxii. 5; Hos. ii. 19; Ps. xlv. John the Baptist spake of Christ as 'the Bridegroom,' John iii. 28-30, and Jesus called Himself the Bridegroom, Matt. ix. 5; xxv. 1-13. In the parable of the wise and the foolish virgins we see the Eastern custom that after the betrothal of his bride 2 Cor. xi. 2,

perhaps long after, the bridegroom comes to take her home to his own house, by which it is shown that Christ will come again to take His beloved Church to be forever with Him where He is. 1 Thess. iv. 16, 17; Rev. xix. 7-9; xxi. 2, 9, 10.

3. THE HEAD OF THE BODY, THE CHURCH, is another title given to our Lord in Col. i. 18; Eph. i. 22, 23; iv. 15, 16; v. 23, 32. All Christians are regarded in Holy Scripture as members or parts of a living body, of which Christ is the Head.

The members of this body are many and have various offices, yet they are all united, and have but one life; so there are many Churches and many Christians in each Church; also there are some who are set over others for good ends, yet, as a head can have but one body, and a body can have but one head, so Christ has but one Church, and he is that one Church's one Head—the wisdom, the power, the life, and the glory of the whole, Rom. xii. 4, 5; 1 Cor. xii. 12-27; Eph. iv. 4-6.

Although the sovereign of this kingdom is sometimes called 'head of the Church,' what is meant is not authority like that of Christ, but chief governorship in matters of law and justice, rights and possessions over all persons and courses in the Church as well as in the State.

(1.) Our natural birth as children of the first Adam is in sin and death; we must be born again to have life in the last Adam, Jesus, so He taught, John i. 12, 13; iii. 3-8.

We must live as those who have put off the sinful nature of 'the old man,' and have put on the spiritual nature of 'the second man,' Rom. vi. 6; 2 Cor. v. 17; Gal. vi. 15; Eph. iv. 22-24; Col. iii. 9, 10.

(2.) The Bride of Christ means all His holy ones; we must be washed, clothed in the 'wedding garment,' and be ready with our 'lamps' to meet the Bridegroom and enter with Him to share His joy, Matt. xxii. 11-13; xxv. 10-13. And we should, while we work, wait, watch, pray for, and love His appearing, 1 Thess. i. 10; 2 Tim. iv. 8; Rev. xxii. 20.

(3.) We must beware of 'not holding the Head,' remembering that we can do nothing except we abide in Him, John xv. 5, 7; Col. ii. 18, 19.

## LESSON XVI.

## OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS—OUR HOPE.

1. OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS—'The righteous LORD loveth righteousness,' Ps. xi. 7; cxix. 142, 144; cxlv. 17. He requires righteousness in His people, He gave them righteous commandments which it would have been their righteousness to do, Deut. vi. 25, but they did not do the commandments of His law, which in fact required more than ever was or could be perfectly done by any one except our Lord Jesus; all others have sinned and come short, Ps. xiv. 2, 3; Rom. iii. 9, 10, 19, 23.

The Law (of the Commandments) showed men the righteousness they needed to have, but could not give it to them, nor work it in them; on the contrary, the Law convicted their consciences of sin, Rom. iii. 20; vii. 12, 13; Gal. iii. 21-23.

The Jews, and many like them, not knowing God's righteousness, have gone on trying to make up a righteousness of their own by good deeds, which never can be equal to what the awful holiness of God requires, Isa. lxiv. 6; Gal. iii. 10; Jas. ii. 10; and so they have missed the way by which they could become righteous before God, Rom. ix. 31, 32; x. 3, 4.

The perfect sinless obedience God required of man was yielded by the Son of man, 'Jesus Christ the righteous,' 1 John ii. 1, 2, whose righteousness was 'without blemish and without spot,' 1 Pet. i. 19.

Christ's righteousness was not for Himself alone, but in our behalf; by faith in Him we become one with Him, and so we get the benefits of His righteousness as if it were our own, He being 'our righteousness,' Rom. iii. 22-26.

God thus shows in a wonderful way His justice in not giving up His demand for perfect righteousness, and also His love in providing for us that His Son should become man and present for us the righteousness we could never produce; which righteousness of Christ is reckoned to us as ours when we by faith take it as God calls us in the Gospel to believe and receive this 'gift of righteousness,' Rom. iii. 21-26; v. 17.

God, who laid on Christ 'the iniquity of us all,' Isa. liii. 6, did no injustice to His beloved Son, who willingly took on Himself our sin, curse, and death, that we might have in Him righteousness, blessing, and life, 1 Cor. i. 30; 2 Cor. v. 21; Rom. vi. 10, 11.

This divine way of salvation is called 'justification by faith,' and, as St. Paul shows, it is no new doctrine, being as old as Abel, Noah, Abraham, and others before the Law was given through Moses, Rom. iv. 3, 6; Heb. xi. 4, 5, 7, &c. The prophets taught the same, Isa. xxviii. 16; Joel ii. 32; Hab. ii. 4; Rom. i. 17; x. 5-13; Gal. iii. 11.

'The righteousness which is of God' is perfect: this being given to us we have perfect acceptance in Christ, and we can by faith take to ourselves such words as Isa. xlv. 24; liv. 17; lxi. 10; and rejoice in the name 'THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS,' Jer. xxiii. 6; xxxiii. 16.

However moral and conscientious our lives may have been (as St. Paul said his life was, Acts xxiii. 1; xxiv. 16; Phil. iii. 6), we must put no trust in righteousness of our own making, but join with him in saying from the heart, Phil. iii. 8, 9.

The faith by which we get the benefits of Christ's perfect righteousness is known to be real faith by its fruits; it must be like Abraham's faith, obedient, practical, Gal. v. 6; Jas. ii. 22, and marked by purity of life, 1 John iii. 3.

2. OUR HOPE. God is the hope of His people, Ps. lxxi. 5; Jer. xiv. 8; xvii. 7, 13. St. Paul, who told the Jews he was chained for 'the hope of Israel,' Acts xxviii. 20, tells us that 'Christ is our hope' 1 Tim i. 1. We read in the New Testament many things concerning the Christian hope, as 'good,' 'better,' 'blessed,' 'lively,' 'laid up in heaven,' 'hope of glory,' 'of salvation,' 'of eternal life;' all these are true in Christ, who is the object and the security of our hope, 1 Pet. i. 21.

Hope is much like faith, so we read that 'we are saved by hope,' Rom. viii. 24, 25. God's Holy Spirit puts this hope in our hearts, and by it cheers us in all trials, and makes experience ripen our hope.

Let us make sure that we can say, Heb. vi. 18, 19, 'The God of hope' calls us to enjoy this hope, He would have us be steadfast, patient, and abounding in hope, Rom. xv. 13, and be able to tell others the 'reason of the hope,' 1 Pet. iii. 15.

## LESSON XVII.

LEADER AND COMMANDER—CAPTAIN OF SALVATION—  
AUTHOR AND FINISHER OF THE FAITH.

1. By whatever names or titles they who lead may be called, all peoples feel their need of leaders, and willingly follow them. A leader should be one who excels in knowledge, experience, strength, courage, and general ability, so as to be looked up to and trusted to lead wisely and successfully those who follow him, who take his example for guidance and encouragement.

The better fitted a leader is to direct, the more reasonable it is that he should command, for their profit, his followers.

God gave His people such a leader and commander when He set David over them, who had God's authority not only to show, but also to command the people what to do; in this capacity he is called prince, ruler, captain over Israel, 1 Sam. xiii. 14; 2 Sam. v. 2; vi. 21.

God, speaking by His prophet, said, 'David—I have given him for a leader and commander to the peoples,' Isa. lv. 3, 4; now, as David had died about three hundred years before Isaiah wrote these words, we see that by 'David' is meant Messiah, the Son of David, who is called in Dan. ix. 25, 'Messiah the Prince,' the word for Prince being the same as that for 'Leader.' Clearly, then, Christ is the one whom God has given to be the Leader and Commander, and as such Jesus both spoke and acted, going before His people as their Leader, Matt. iv. 19-22; x. 24; Mark x. 32; and giving them His orders as their Commander, Matt. xxviii. 20; John xv. 10, 14, 17.

2. The word for Leader and Prince is also used for Captain, and Jesus is called 'the Captain of their salvation' in Heb. ii. 10, as He is also called 'the Author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey Him,' Heb. v. 10. Every captain is both a leader and a commander, and is to be obeyed. All the commands of Christ Jesus our Captain are in order to our obtaining the salvation He came to win for us over all our enemies.

3. The word for Captain in Heb. ii. 10 is the same as for Author in Heb. xii. 2, and also means Beginner. 'The faith' here taken, as in Gal. i. 3; Jude 3, for the whole Christian belief. Jesus is the Author of it, inasmuch as He first taught the doctrine, Heb. ii. 3, and founded 'the faith' on Himself, John xiv. 1. He

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is also the Finisher or Perfecter of 'the faith,' since all that He began to preach, to work, and to suffer (all which we include in 'the faith' we hold), He also finished, John xvii. 14; xix. 30; Eph. iv. 11, 12; Heb. x. 14.

Moreover Jesus showed to us, in Himself, the whole life of faith, in its beginning, continuance, and completion, a pattern for all His followers, who are called to 'walk by faith, not by sight,' 2 Cor. v. 7. He is, in fact, the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End, 'of the Christian faith,' Rev. xxi. 6.

God having given us His beloved Son to be and to do all these things for us, we are called—

(1.) To follow with all watchfulness and diligence Jesus as our Leader, wherever He may go before us.

(2.) To obey all His commands, whatever they may be, whether we can or cannot see the reasons and the uses of them, John xiv. 21.

(3.) To be faithful in loyal service to Him as our Captain, that by Him we may win the victory, 1 Cor. xv. 57; 2 Tim. ii. 4.

(4.) To regard Him as the first and the last, the sum and substance of our faith.

(5.) To pray, strive, and trust that what the Lord has begun in us He will also perfect by His Holy Spirit unto the end, Ps. cxxxviii 8; Phil i. 6; Gen. xxviii. 15.

## LESSON XVIII.

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**THE FIRSTBORN—THE BEGINNING AND  
THE END.**

JESUS was His mother's 'firstborn son,' Luke ii. 7, but before the foundation of the world He was His heavenly Father's firstborn, Heb. i. 6, R.V. We must not suppose that He was God's firstborn in the same way as His mother's firstborn, we are to take the title as meaning that as the firstborn son in a family is older than the other sons and takes rank above them, Gen. xlv. 33; Deut. xxi. 17; 2 Chron. xxi. 3, so Christ was before and is above all the sons of God, both angels and men, Ps. lxxxix. 27.

He is 'the firstborn of every creature' (or, R.V., of all creation), Col. i. 15, which does not mean that He is a creature or part of creation, but, that He is first, before every creature and all creation, 'not made, nor created, but begotten,' being from eternity one with the Father, and all creation was by Him, and is upheld by Him, John i. 1-3; Col. i. 17; Heb. i. 2, 3.

He is 'the firstborn among many brethren,' Rom. viii. 29, that is among the adopted sons of God, spiritual brethren, Matt. xii. 50; Heb. ii. 10-13.

He is also 'the firstborn from (of) the dead,' Col. i. 18; Rev. i. 5, 'the firstfruits of them that slept,' 1 Cor. xv. 20, 23. From the grave He was *born*, so to speak, to a new life, begotten of His Father on the day of His resurrection, to be henceforth the everliving Son of the everliving God, Acts xiii. 33; Rom. i. 4; vi. 4, 9-11; 1 Pet. i. 3, as in their resurrection, the saints are called in a new sense the children of God because death hath no more dominion over them, Luke xx. 35, 36.

Christ is called 'the beginning,' Col. i. 18, and 'the beginning of the creation of God,' Rev. iii. 14, which words are to be taken as meaning not that He had a beginning, as every creature has, but, as declaring Him to be the origin of all created things, by whom they began to be, and in whom they exist, Col. i. 16, 17; Eph. iii. 9. An illustration is the well-head or spring from which a long river flows: that spring may be truly called the beginning of the river, but it is such, not as the first part of the proceeding stream, but, as the source in which the stream commences to be, and by which the river is maintained, Rev. xxii. 1.

As Christ is, in the sense now explained, the beginning of the

creation of God, He is likewise the beginning of the spiritual creation of God, the making us new creatures in Christ Jesus—as we may learn from 2 Cor. v. 17; Gal. vi. 15; Eph. ii. 10; iv. 23, 24. In Him we have the beginning and the maintaining of our spiritual life, Gal. ii. 20; Col. iii. 3, 4.

Moreover, we may gather from Holy Scripture that the new heaven and new earth which, according to God's promise, He will create to remain when the heaven and earth which are now shall have passed away, will have Christ as the beginning of that new creation of God, Isa. lxv. 17; lxvi. 22; 2 Pet. iii. 10; Rev. xxi. 5.

Christ is 'the end of the creation of God,' by which is to be understood, not the ceasing of God's works natural and spiritual, but, the *object* of them. 'End' is often used to mean object or purpose—see examples John xviii. 37; Rom. x. 4; xiv. 9; 2 Cor. ii. 9; 1 Tim. i. 5. Christ is in this sense 'the end,'—in Him all created things have their purpose, the reason for their existence, God having made them not only 'by Him' but also 'for Him,' Col. i. 16. (The sense is practically the same in R.V., 'through Him, and unto Him.')

(1.) We must give the Firstborn the honour which is due to Him, while we rejoice that He is not ashamed to call us brethren.

(2.) As we are created by Him, and for Him, we are bound to live, not to ourselves nor to the world, but to Him, Rom. xiv. 7-9.



## LESSON XIX.

## HEIR OF ALL THINGS.

A RICH man may make any one his heir, but a son is the natural heir, and if there be more sons than one, the firstborn is, by general law and custom, the chief heir, Gen. xv. 2-4 ; xxv. 5, 6 ; 2 Chron. xxi. 3.

Although in most cases of heirship the son comes into possession at the death of his father, it is not necessary that the father should die before the son can obtain the inheritance ; the father may, if he think fit, give all he has, in his own lifetime, to the son, Luke xv. 31 ; Gal. iv. 1-3.

God is 'the possessor of heaven and earth,' Gen. xiv. 19, 22 ; Deut. x. 14 ; 'the earth hath He given to the children of men,' Ps. cxv. 16.

God, of His own sovereign will, and according to His eternal counsel, appointed His Son, the Firstborn, to be 'Heir of all things,' and this without possibility of dispute or failure.

By 'all things' we must understand everything in heaven, and earth, and under the earth—past, present, and to come ; there is no limit to the range of 'all things,' Col. i. 16.

All things that were God's before the world was made—the hosts of angels, the hosts of stars, the powers and splendours of heaven,—all are given to Christ, who is the Heir, being 'the Son of God.'

And the earth with all things therein, life, wealth, beauty, all that God gave to man, they are all Christ's, who is the Heir, being also 'the Son of man.'

God has declared 'all souls are mine,' Ezek xviii. 4, therefore all souls are Christ's ; by Him they were made, they are His by right of redeeming them, and by Him they will all be judged. All nations, peoples, thrones, and authorities are Christ's, whether they know Him and obey Him or do not—to Him they must bow as their King and Judge, Ps. ii. 6-8-12.

Noah, by his obedient trust in God, 'became heir of the righteousness which is by faith,' Heb. xi. 7, now Christ is the Heir of that same righteousness. Abraham, by his obedient trust in God, was counted righteous and received from Him 'the promise that he should be the heir of the world,' Rom. iv. 13 ; that promise and heirship God causes to be fulfilled in the seed of Abraham, which is Christ, the heir of 'the inheritance,' Gal. iii. 16-18.

Isaac and Jacob are spoken of as 'the heirs with Abraham of the same promise,' Heb. xi. 9, as in Abraham's case so their heirship is in Him, secured and made effectual by His heirship.

Jesus spoke of Himself as being God's only Son, and His Heir, and at the same time showed that reverence was due to Himself, but that rebels and murderers would cast Him out of His inheritance (for a time only) and kill Him, all which as we know came to pass, Mark xii. 6-9; and He declared the same in plainest language when He said, 'All things that the Father hath are Mine,' John xvi. 15.

God, who appointed His Firstborn, the only begotten Son, to be Heir of all things, has of His grace ordained and declared in the Gospel that the brethren of Christ shall 'be made heirs,' Tit. iii. 7.

Believing in Jesus as the Son of God, believing that He died and rose from the dead for us, we receive the Spirit of adoption, we become spiritually born again to be obedient children of God, becoming sons we became at the same time heirs, 'heirs of the kingdom,' 'heirs of promise,' 'heirs of the grace of life,' 'heirs of salvation,' Jews and Gentiles all, by faith, 'fellow heirs,' 'heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ,' Jas. ii. 5; Heb. vi. 17; 1 Pet. iii. 7; Heb. i. 14; Eph. iii. 6; Rom. viii. 14-17.

Seeing that we are called to such an inheritance, how careful ought we to be to walk as is fit for the 'heirs of God.' Whatever our condition may be here, high or low, rich or poor, all is as nothing when compared to our 'inheritance' as 'joint heirs with Christ,' and we are to keep in mind the exhortation, 1 Cor. iii. 21-23.

## LESSON XX.

**THE BRIGHTNESS OF GOD'S GLORY AND THE EXPRESS IMAGE OF HIS PERSON.**

'The effulgence of His glory, and the very image of His substance.'  
(Heb. i. 3, R.V.)

GLORY means honour or splendour, often both honour and splendour, Ps. xix. 1; Acts xii. 23; Acts xxii. 11; 1 Cor. xv. 41; 2 Cor. iii. 7-10.

God is 'the God of glory,' 'the King of glory,' Ps. xxiv. 10; Acts vii. 2. Light contains in itself all the colours of the rainbow, but we cannot see them without the raindrops of which the bow is formed; so God has all glory in Himself, but we could never know His glory if it had not shone out in His words and works; by these we see His character, power, wisdom, holiness, and love, all which are glorious, that is, worthy of honour, and for these we glorify Him, that is, give Him honour, Ex. xv. 11; Ps. lxvi. 2; cxi. 3; John xvii. 4.

Christ is the brightness, effulgence, shining forth of God's glory, as the sunshine is the brightness of the sun, without which the sun itself could not be seen. Before He took our nature Christ was the brightness of God's glory, John xii. 41; xvii. 5, 24; and when He was made flesh and dwelt among us He was *seen* to be the brightness of God's glory, showing in all His life, words, works, death, resurrection, and ascension the glorious nature or character (attributes) of God, Luke ix. 31, 32; John i. 14, 18; ii. 11; xi. 40; 2 Cor. iii. 18; iv. 6, with Ex. xxxiii. 18.

Christ was the brightness of God's glory, in that He was the manifestation or shining forth of His honour to the eyes of men's minds, and of His splendour to the eyes of their bodies.

For 'person' the R.V. reads 'substance,' which is the better word. By 'substance' is often intended that which we call substantial, solid to the touch, but such is not the meaning here; by 'His substance' is meant the real being, essence, or nature of God, of whom Jesus said, 'God is spirit,' John iv. 24.

'Express image' or 'very image.' The word so translated means the stamp of a seal. Here now is an illustration. Suppose a seal of precious stone on which is engraved God; this being pressed on proper wax or clay gives an exact likeness of itself,

letter for letter, mark for mark, so that although we have never seen the stone we do in effect see the seal in seeing its impression. As the impression is to the seal, so Jesus is to God, Job xxxviii. 14. Every man is partly in the likeness of God, James iii. 9; the Man Christ Jesus is the very (express) image of His substance; accordingly we find He said, John xiv. 7, 9, and St. Paul called Him 'Christ, who is the image of God,' 2 Cor. iv. 4. Thus in seeing the character or spiritual nature of Jesus we see the spiritual character or nature of God.

God's commandment forbids the making of any image to bow down to. He does not allow men to make any pretended likeness of Himself for worship. It is impossible to make a likeness of God, for He is a spirit, invisible and immortal, while images are of matter, visible, and without life. Yet men have always desired an image of God, as idolatry in all ages and countries proves; and even some Churches, in spite of God's commandment, bow down to images and pictures.

God has given us the only true and perfect Image of Himself, His only begotten Son; to Him we bow in worship, and glorify God in Him. Thus God gives us in His own way the satisfaction of that desire which idolaters seek in their sinful and foolish way.

God's giving us Jesus, the express image of Himself, does not allow us to make any pretended likeness of our Saviour—image, picture, or any such thing; and no man can make a likeness of Him either as He was on earth or as He is in heaven, Rev. i. 16, 17.

Our looking to Jesus is not with bodily eyes, but with faith; our likeness to Him, and His likeness to God, is not in flesh but in spirit, John vi. 40; 2 Cor. v. 16.

## LESSON XXI.

THE POWER OF GOD AND THE WISDOM  
OF GOD.

(1 Corinthians i. 24.)

SIN, the world, the flesh, the devil, and death are strong now, but they were much stronger before the coming of our Saviour. The best men then living felt their own weakness to be such that they were helpless against the prevailing evils, Mic. vii. 2-7; Rom. vii. 18. Even God's holy Law was weak—it condemned but could not cure sin and the effects of sin, Rom. viii. 3.

In Luke xi. 21, 22, our Lord describes the condition of mankind before and after His work; the enemy of our souls was strong and no one was able to deliver those whom he held in his evil power, then did 'a stronger than he come upon him,' *i.e.*, the Son of God came and delivered us.

'The power of God.' Jesus was conceived by 'the power of the Highest,' Luke i. 35; He began His ministry 'in the power of the Spirit,' Luke iv. 14; 'anointed with power,' Acts x. 38; His word was in every case 'with power,' Luke iv. 36; His resurrection was 'by the power of God,' Rom. i. 4; 2 Cor. xiii. 4; Phil. iii. 10.

By 'the power of God' Christ overcame the world, Satan, death, and all the power of the enemy, Luke xi. 20; John xvi. 33; Heb. ii. 14; 1 John iii. 8; and what was said falsely of Simon (Magus) is true of Jesus Christ and of Him alone, 'this man is the great power of God,' Acts viii. 10.

Jesus had all authority and power not only for Himself, He gave a measure of the same to His disciples by the Holy Spirit, Luke x. 17-19; Acts i. 8, and all believers in Him can say, 2 Tim. i. 7. We read Isa. xl. 29-31 with 2 Cor. xii. 9, 10, and we rejoice in knowing the certainty of Rom. i. 16; 1 Cor. i. 18, and in being able to say, 1 Cor. xv. 43, 57.

Whatever knowledge men may have it is vain without wisdom, *i.e.*, the knowledge and fear of God, Job xxviii. 12-28; Prov. ix. 10. In all ages there has been more or less of knowledge which has been mistaken for wisdom, but the boasted wisdom of the world was in reality foolishness, Isa. xlii. 25; Jer. viii. 8, 9; ix. 23, 24; Rom. i. 22; 1 Cor. i. 19-21; ii. 6-8; iii. 18-20.

The knowledge of God and Jesus Christ is life eternal, John xvii. 3 ; but the world's wisdom knows Him not nor how to conquer death, heal broken hearts, or cure the evils within or around us.

As Christ is 'the power of God,' the Almighty, so is He (Luke xi. 49) 'the wisdom of God,' the only wise. When but a child Jesus was 'filled with wisdom,' Luke ii. 40, 47, 52, and afterward men wondered at His having such wisdom and power, Matt. xiii. 54.

Christ was 'the wisdom of God,' in that by Him God proved Himself wise to know how to save the lost, how to bring to nothing the subtle devices of Satan, how to reconcile justice against sin with mercy to sinners. We also see that Jesus knew, with such wisdom as none other man possessed, the nature of God and man, of the devil, of angels, of evil spirits, of the past and the future, Matt. xi. 27 ; John ii. 24, 25 ; viii. 44 ; Matt. xviii. 10 ; Mark ix. 25-29 ; John xvii. 5 ; Matt. xxiv ; Col. ii. 3.

As Jesus gives a measure of His power, so He gives to all His faithful disciples by the Holy Spirit some of His wisdom, John xiv. 26 ; 1 Cor. i. 30 ; Col. iii. 16 ; 1 John ii. 20, 27.

Our strength can be only in Christ the power of God, our wisdom can be only in Christ the wisdom of God ; our own merely natural strength is weakness, and our worldly wisdom is foolishness. We have all encouragement to ask in faith and God's promises, that so asking we shall receive power and wisdom in Christ, by the Holy Spirit, Col. i. 9 ; James i. 5, 6. Let us take to ourselves and act on the exhortations, Eph. vi. 10 ; 2 Tim. ii. 1 ; 1 John ii. 14 ; and also these, Eph. v. 15-17 ; 2 Tim. iii. 15, then by the grace of God we shall be able to say, Phil. iv. 13 and Ps. cxix. 98-100.

## LESSON XXII

## THE WORD.

IN Genesis i. 3, 11, 24, &c., we read of the Creator, 'God *said* let there be light, God *said* let the earth bring forth grass, God *said* let the earth bring forth the living creature, God *said* let us make man in our image . . . and it was so.' It is also written, 'by the *word* of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth,' Ps. xxxiii. 6. Of the Word we find it written in the New Testament, 'All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made,' John i. 3, 10. See also Ps. cvii. 20.

That 'the Word' in this passage is a name for Christ is certain by verse 14. See also 1 John i. 1-3, and Rev. xix. 13.

St. John did not invent a new name for the Messiah when he called him 'the Word.' The most ancient Jewish writers after the Old Testament speak of 'the Word' (*Logos* in Greek, *Memra* in Hebrew), as they do of God; for example, we find them giving Genesis xxviii. 20 thus, 'And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, If the *Word* of the Lord will be my help, and will keep me, the *Word* of the Lord shall be my God.'

The doctrine taught by St. John is—the Word was, *i.e.*, existed, 'in the beginning' before the world was, that the world and all things were made by the Word, that *the Word* was with God, and *was* God.

Word comes between thought and action, joining them with itself three (thought, word, and action) in one. While God's thought is only in His mind none can know what that thought may be, by the coming forth of the *Word* the thought can be known. The purpose of God to create all things went forth by His *Word* into the acts of creation; and, so going forth, showed 'the power of God, and the wisdom of God,' 1 Cor. i. 24.

The Lord Jesus Christ knew Himself to be the Word of God, 'the Word of life,' 1 John i. 1-3, and He took care to say that the words He spoke were those of the Father who sent Him, John xiv. 24, so that, just as in seeing 'the express image' of God we see God, in hearing Him who is '*the Word*' of God we hear God. See also Isa. lii. 6, with John viii. 25.

*The Word* came forth from God to us, for us, to dwell in us, that we may know God, and be 'a kind of firstfruits of His creatures,' Jas. i. 18; 1 Pet. i. 23-25.

The Old Testament speaking of Messiah, says, 'He shall smite the earth with the rod of His mouth, and with the breath of His lips shall He slay the wicked,' Isa. xi. 4; and the New Testament following Isa. xlix. 2, says, 'Out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword,' Rev. i. 16; ii. 10, 16; xix. 15, 21. See also Heb. iv. 12.

We have this wonderful gift the Incarnate Word, *i.e.*, 'the Word made flesh,' given to us by our Father in heaven, that we may know His good thoughts toward us, and His great work for us; therefore we are to hear the Word with meekness and faith, as being indeed not the word of man, but the Word of God, John v. 24; 1 Thess. ii. 13.

The Word dwelling in us gives us wisdom to know God's will, and power to do what He requires of us; therefore we must be diligent to learn, to remember, and to act according to the Word, Deut. iv. 2; Col. iii. 16; Jas. i. 21; ii. 22; 1 Pet. i. 2.

The Holy Spirit will show us, if we pray for His help, how to understand the Word, John xiv. 26; xvi. 13. We ought also to remember, with holy fear, that while the Word brings salvation to all who receive the same in faith, the Word will judge and condemn those who, having heard it with their ears, would not so hear in their hearts as to believe and obey, John xii. 48. None can stand against, much less prevail against, the sharp two-edged sword of the sentence of Him who is '*the Word*,' Rev. xix. 19-21.



## LESSON XXIII.

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**WONDERFUL—MIGHTY GOD—EVERLASTING  
FATHER.**

(Isaiah ix. 6.)

1. **WONDERFUL** is that which passes our understanding, causes astonishment or admiration.

God is wonderful in His being, which is too high for us to comprehend, Job xi. 7, 8; Ps. cxxxix. 6. He is wonderful in wisdom and counsel, Isa. xxviii. 29. His commandments are wonderful, Ps. cxix. 18, 129. His works are wonderful, Ex. xv. 11; Job xxxvii. 5, 14; Ps. lxxii. 18; Isa. xxv. 1; xxix. 14.

The angel of the Lord who appeared, in the likeness of a man, to Samson's father and mother, is considered by many to have been the Son of God. When Manoah asked his name this mysterious one said, 'Why askest thou after my name, seeing it is *secret*?' or '*wonderful*' (as in Margin and R.V.) And he 'did wondrously,' going up toward heaven in the flame from the altar; in the same chapter he is called man, angel, and God, Judg. xiii. 6-22.

Jesus Christ is wonderful in the mystery of His being both God and man, Luke ii. 18; x. 22; wonderful in wisdom, iv. 22; Mark vi. 2; John vii. 46; wonderful in His works, Matt. xxi. 15; Luke xxiv. 12, 41; Acts ii. 22; and, as the angel 'did wondrously' in ascending from the altar, Jesus 'did wondrously' in ascending from the Mount of Olives to heaven whence He came.

The salvation of a sinner by faith in Christ is wonderful in counsel, wonderful in work, wonderful in simplicity, in power, and in blessing, Rom. xi. 32, 33.

2. '**Mighty God.**' Some who do not believe that our Lord Jesus Christ is what He said He is—the Son of God, one with His Father, try to explain away this title **Mighty God** as meaning no more than strong hero, or some such thing; because judges, princes, great ones are sometimes called gods, *e.g.*, 1 Sam. xxviii. 13; Ps. lxxxii. 6, 7; John x. 34-36; but it is certain that no case can be found in the Bible of any man except the Messiah being spoken of as '**Mighty God,**' while we do find the Lord Almighty is so called in the next chapter, Isa. x. 20, 21, and in Jer. xxxii. 18 (Ps. xxiv. 8). Jesus Christ is mighty in deed and in word, Ps. lxxxix. 19, 27; Luke xxiv. 19.

3. 'Everlasting Father.' Christ is the Eternal Son of God, He is also the Everlasting Father of all His faithful ones, given to Him by His Father, who are described as His brethren and at the same time His children, Isa. viii. 18, with Heb. ii. 12-14; John vi. 39. These real disciples of Jesus are spoken of as 'His seed,' *i.e.*, children, in Isa. liii. 10 (Ps. xxii. 30). Masters, teachers, and benefactors were also addressed as 'father,' 2 Kings ii. 12; v. 13; xiii. 14; Job xxix. 16; Isa. xxii. 21.

(1.) We are to regard with reverence the wonderful mystery of our Lord's being both God and man, devoutly believing it although we cannot explain the fact; and to study the wonderful wisdom displayed in His doctrines, discourses, parables and other sayings; and to consider His miracles with other wonderful works He did; and to take pleasure in all these things, speaking of them so as to stir up those who hear us to do likewise that He may be praised who is in all things 'wonderful,' Ps. xxvi. 7; l. 23; cv. 2, 5; cvii. 8, 15, 21, 31; cxl. 1-4; cxix. 27; Luke xix. 37.

He who is wonderful in words and works of love will come again to do 'wondrously' in salvation and in judgment; for this coming we must watch and prepare, 1 Thess. iv. 16-18; 2 Thess. i. 7-10.

(2.) We are also to worship and glorify the Lord Jesus Christ as 'Mighty God,' to whom every knee shall bow, John xx. 27, 28; Phil. ii. 10, 11.

(3.) We are called to learn of Christ to be like Him, to live as becomes those who are His brethren and spiritual children, looking up to Him, trusting, loving, and obeying Him as Master, Teacher, Brother, and also as His prophet, speaking by the Holy Spirit, called Him, 'Everlasting Father,' taking heed that we do not, by any disobedience or neglect of duty and honour due, displease Him, and bring on ourselves such a rebuke as that of Malachi i. 6.

## LESSON XXIV.

## A LIGHT TO THE GENTILES.

(Isaiah xlix. 6.)

## THE GLORY OF THY PEOPLE ISRAEL.

(Luke ii. 32.)

## MY SALVATION UNTO THE END OF THE EARTH.

(Isaiah xlix. 6.)

I. THE condition of the world before the coming of Christ had been foretold by Isaiah in a few words, lx. 2. Arts, science, philosophy, learning, literature, flourished in Greece, Rome, and among many races of men, but moral and spiritual darkness covered them all. The wisest knew not the truth, horrible cruelties were practised, abominable vices were excused and even commended; the multitudes were as sheep without a shepherd, no man cared for their souls. The words in Job v. 14; xii. 25, express the state of the Gentiles (see also Rom. i.), and that of the people of Israel, who had the lamp of God's Word but did not walk by that light, was little better, as their prophets showed, Isa. viii. 20-22; lix. 9-11; Jer. viii. 8, 9.

God always had some if only 'a very small remnant' in Israel who feared Him, and walked in the light of His law and prophecy; to them He gave a promise of greater light to arise, even 'the Sun of righteousness,' Mal. iii. 16; iv. 2. That Sun did arise, as Isaiah foresaw when he said, ix. 1, 2, 6, with Matt. iv. 12-16.

It had been prophesied that Messiah should be a light, not only to God's one chosen people, but, to the Gentiles all, Isa. xlii. 6; xlix. 6; lx. 3, with Luke ii. 29-32; Acts xiii. 46-48; xxviii. 28; and Jesus showed this while He was on earth by preaching in Galilee *of the Gentiles*, by His healing the Syrophenician woman's daughter, Mark vii. 24-29, by His teaching in Nazareth concerning God's favours to Gentiles, Luke iv. 25-27, by His mention of other sheep, John x. 16, and by His commission to His apostles, Matt. xxviii. 19, 20.

On us Gentiles the Sun of righteousness now shines, and His light is spreading though slowly to many far-off lands and peoples who lay in darkness and the shadow of death.

2. The Lord God is the glory of His people, He will not allow them to glory in any other, Isa. xlv. 25 ; lx. 19, 20 ; Jer. ix. 23, 24 ; 1 Cor. i. 29-31. The people of Israel 'changed their glory,' Jer. ii. 11, forsook God, and when the Son of God came to them, 'manifested forth His glory,' John i. 14 ; ii. 11, preaching 'the glorious Gospel,' 2 Cor. iv. 4-6 ; they despised His glory to their own shame. Yet He is their glory, and when they turn to Him in repentance and faith, they will glory in Him and He will glory in them, Zech. ii. 4, 5 ; 2 Cor. iii. 7-18 ; Rev. xxi. 10, 11, 23.

3. 'Salvation is of the Jews,' so said the Saviour, John iv. 22. In their pride the Jews thought that salvation was for them alone, they despised others, and understood not the prophecies which declared that all believers would be saved : yet this truth was set forth in the Old Testament, see Isa. xi. 9, 10 ; Acts iii. 25, as by St. Paul is pointed out, Acts xiii. 46-48 ; Rom. iii. 29 ; ix. 24, 25 ; x. 11-13 ; xv. 9-12 ; and so our Lord Himself spoke according to the Old Testament, Isa. ii. 3 ; xlix. 6, when He said, Luke xxiv. 47, and Acts i. 8.

To us the exhortations are—1 Jer. xiii. 16, and 'A little while is the light with you. Walk in the light while ye have the light,' John xii. 35, 36 ; Eph. v. 8, 11, 14 ; 1 Thess. v. 5-8.

2. Glory in the Lord alone. Pray for the conversion of the Jews that all Israel may be restored, and, believing in Jesus as the Messiah the Son of God, may rejoice in Him as their glory.

3. While we rejoice in Christ whose salvation has come to us we should remember what we were, and what we are, Gal. ii. 11-13. By prayer, gifts, and efforts help others to go forth as missionaries to carry the free Gospel to 'the end of the earth,' that all nations as well as we may hear and live. Thus God will be glorified in the fulfilling of His gracious purposes toward all mankind, Gal. i. 16 ; 1 Tim. ii. 3-6.

## LESSON XXV.

## CONCLUSIONS.

PERSONS who know not or who refuse to believe that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God, may argue that the names and titles given to Him in the Bible are not to be taken as anything more than (1) high sounding flattery or compliment, which was and still is common in Eastern countries, or (2) as the figurative language of a poetical style of writing, or (3) as the expression of hopes and desires felt by Hebrews, who knew their nation's need of some great man to be a reformer, a restorer of the people, to do for them again as Moses and Joshua did at the beginning of their history; and that, (4) wishing for such a man, these poets and patriots came at length to the persuasion that there would arise one to be and to do all that was longed for, and Him they called Messiah.

We can reply—1. Although Eastern peoples do give flattering titles, it is remarkable that in the Bible we do not find such; on the contrary, kings and others of highest rank are spoken of and spoken to in plain terms, even plainer than we use in this country. We find flattery condemned as a form of lying, Ps. v. 9; xii. 2, 3; lxxviii. 36; Prov. xxvi. 28; xxix. 5; Ezek. xii. 24; Dan. xi. 21, 33, 34. Of the Bible may be said as it is written in Job xxxii. 21, 22, and in 1 Thess. ii. 5, for these words are true both of the Old Testament and of the New.

2. Although there is much poetry in the Scriptures, these names and titles are plain and sober; moreover, the poetry itself is not of airy fancies, but of past, present, and future *facts*, as can be shown.

3. The Hebrew authors make it clear that they did not invent these names and titles. Prophets and apostles were too much in awe of God to give such names and titles without the certain authority of His direction so to do, Deut. xviii. 20; Jer. xiv. 14; xxvii. 15; xxix. 21, especially when these names and titles were so great as to go far beyond the utmost that could be truly said of any one who was only man or angel, or any created being.

Long before there was felt any need of a reformer, restorer, deliverer for men, God had promised the One who was to come; the expectation of such an One existed in the minds of the Hebrews, because they were told of Him in great promises, with

added warnings as to obeying and disobeying Him, Deut. xviii. 18, 19; Ps. ii. 10-12.

In age after age, prophet after prophet repeated in one form or another the promises concerning the Coming One, calling Him by divers names, describing His character and His doings in language so varied that it was most difficult to see how all could be accomplished in any *One* however great and wonderful He might be.

It is also certain that the kind of Messiah the Jews expected was not such as Jesus proved to be; they looked for a worldly one, who would deliver them from the Romans and restore an earthly kingdom to Israel; but when Jesus was found to be, not what they fancied Messiah would be and ought to be, but, meek and lowly of heart, poor, a friend of sinners and sufferers, shunning those who sought to make Him a King, John vi. 15, they fulfilled the prophecies by casting Him out, and causing Him to be put to death, Acts xiii. 27-30.

They would not have imagined any sort of Messiah if it had not been that the Word of God contained the promises of Him who was indeed the Christ. Since He returned to heaven there have been many false Christs as He foretold, Matt. xxiv. 5, 23, 24, but as no mock-suns would ever be if the true sun did not exist, so there would have been no false Christ if there were not in prophecy and in history the very Christ 'the Sun of righteousness.'

## LESSON XXVI.

## CONCLUSIONS.

THESE names and titles (of our Lord Jesus Christ) were chosen by God; they are full of meaning, rich in lessons for our instruction. The prophets, apostles, evangelists, who recorded them in the Scriptures did so under the direction of the Holy Spirit, 1 Pet. i. 10-12; 2 Pet. i. 21.

He who chose and commanded the names, Ishmael, Gen. xvi. 11, Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, xvii. 5, 15, 19, and Israel, xxxii. 27, 28, appointed the name Jesus, Luke i. 31. All the other names and titles given to Messiah in the Old Testament and in the New Testament have likewise the authority of God, therefore we are to receive the same with reverence, not presuming to set aside or to alter what God has been pleased to make known as His appointment, and we ought to study their meanings that we may the better know Him of whom they tell so much for our learning and profit, John xvii. 3; 2 Pet. iii. 18.

It is clear that no devout man would dare to give such names and titles without the direction of God, that they are so great, so much too great for any sinful mortal, that nothing less than the will and word of God could give them authority; they are, in fact, what God the Father (who alone knows His Son Jesus Christ) thinks of the Messiah and desires us to think of Him, Matt. xi. 27; xxii. 42.

Looking back over the foregoing lessons, consider these names and titles, how many and how various they are,—Jesus Christ, Immanuel, Seed of the woman, Seed of Abraham, Shiloh, Son of David, Nazarene, Branch, Rock, Stone, Prophet like Moses, High Priest, Lamb of God, Our Passover, Propitiation, Counsellor, Advocate, Witness, Amen, God's Servant, Elect, Beloved, Holy One, Angel, Messenger, Apostle, Sent, Shepherd, Bishop, Forerunner, Surety, Mediator, Testator, Last Adam, Second Man, Bridegroom, Head of the Body the Church, Our righteousness, Our hope, Leader, Commander, Captain of salvation, Author and Finisher of faith, Firstborn, Beginning and End, Heir of all things, Brightness of God's glory, Express image of God's person, Power of God, Wisdom of God, the Word, Wonderful, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Light to the Gentiles, Glory of Israel, God's salvation to end of the earth.

It is indeed marvellous that all these (and many more which

are to be gathered from Holy Writ), although widely different in meanings, suit one person. The more they are, and the more various they are, so unlike as to seem contrary one to another, the more evident it is that neither art nor chance could make them all agree in pointing to one Person, *i.e.*, to Jesus Christ and only to Him: they are like the many rays of light all meeting, but only in the one sun from which they all shine forth.

As only One, that is God, could give such names and titles, so only One, and He one with God, can take them as intended for Himself, fit and proper for Him, His own by divine right. No man, no angel could give to himself or take from a fellow-creature such names and titles, much less could any other than Jesus Christ act up to them; they are like a king's robes, crown, sceptre, orb, and jewels, which no subject, however high his rank, may presume to put on, to bear, or to make the like of for himself. Or, to employ an illustration from Scripture, we may compare these names and titles of the Lord Jesus Christ to the 'principal spices' and 'sweet spices' of which the 'holy ointment compound' and the 'perfume, a confection tempered together pure and holy,' were made, and of which God said, 'Upon man's flesh it shall not be poured, neither shall ye make any other like it, after the composition of it: whosoever putteth any of it upon a stranger shall even be cut off from his people,' and 'Ye shall not make to yourselves according to the composition thereof: it shall be unto thee holy for the Lord,' Exod. xxx. 22-38.



# PROPHECIES CONCERNING OUR LORD AND THEIR FULFILMENT.

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## LESSON I.

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### THAT HE SHOULD BE BORN OF A VIRGIN.

AT the time of Christ's birth—and long after, as well as before He was born—there prevailed in all the East an ancient and constant persuasion of its being fated, and written in sacred books, that from Judæa would come forth some great one, who would obtain sovereign power. This we learn from heathen historians, Tacitus and Suetonius, and the Hebrew writer Josephus.

The Jews, possessing the Old Testament Scriptures, were expecting deliverance from their Roman oppressors to be won for Israel by the promised Messiah, their own King and Saviour; and they reckoned the time for this the great Coming One's appearance to be near at hand.

We have the best evidence in the Bible itself, as to their looking for one who is called 'He that cometh,' or 'He that should come,' Gen. xlix. 10; Num. xxiv. 17; Matt. ii. 2; iii. 11; xxi. 9, with Ps. cxviii. 26; Luke ii. 25-38; iii. 15, 16; vii. 19, 20; xxiv. 21; John i. 15, 17; vi. 14; Acts i. 6.

Many and various things concerning the coming Christ had been foretold by prophets whom God raised up among His people to repeat in age after age the promises till the birth of Jesus. These holy men were like lamps lighted hour after hour through a long night till the rising of the sun, Mal. iv. 2; Luke i. 68-70; Acts iii. 20-24; vii. 52; x. 43; Rom. i. 1-3; 1 Pet. i. 10-12. They did not speak their own thoughts, 2 Pet. i. 20, 21, and Rev. xix. 10.

We shall study several of these prophecies, and our first lesson in them is what Isaiah wrote, between seven and eight hundred years before Christ came, that He who was to come would be born of a virgin, Isa. vii. 14.

By 'virgin' we are not to suppose the prophet meant merely his own wife, or some other young married woman, that would be unworthy of Isaiah's grand language, but what the word

strictly and properly means. The words of St. Matthew i. 18-25, of St. Luke i. 26, 27, of Mary herself, and of the angel, Luke i. 34, 35, make this plain and certain. Note. It is probable that what St. Luke wrote in his first and second chapters concerning our Lord's birth and childhood he had learned from 'Mary, the mother of Jesus,' read Luke i. 1-4 with Acts i. 14.

Joseph was 'supposed' to be the father of Jesus, Matt. xiii. 55; Luke iii. 23, and by Mary was called so, Luke ii. 48, but that was only as among us a stepfather is commonly called 'father,' for an easy and courteous way of speaking. By His reply to His mother in verse 49, Jesus at once showed that He owned no earthly father, knowing that His only Father was God, John v. 17, 18.

That Jesus was the son of Mary is as certain as that He was not the son of Joseph; but it is to be observed that although some of the unbelieving Jews called Him (as Mahometans do now) 'the son of Mary,' Mark vi. 3, our Lord never spoke of Himself, nor did any evangelist or disciple speak or write of Him by that description. These facts should guide us in our way of speaking and praying.

As Isaac who was a figure of Christ, Gal. iii. 16, was, after long expectation, born in a wonderful manner out of the common course of nature, Gen. xvii. 17-19; xviii. 13, 14, so Jesus, the heir of promise, had a more wonderful, a miraculous birth, 'that in all things He might have the pre-eminence,' Col. i. 18.

The one Catholic or universal faith of Christians, which is never to be altered or explained away, is given once for all in the Scriptures here referred to, and is repeated in the ancient creed—'I believe in Jesus Christ, who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary.' She was a good and blessed woman, yet she needed a Saviour, and this her own words show, Luke i. 46, 47. Romanists have invented a new and a false notion that she was born without sin.

Jesus, and He alone, was without sin, being one with His Father perfect God, and at the same time perfect man of the substance of His mother; thus He was perfectly fit, as none other man ever was or can be, to act as Mediator between God and men, sharing the two natures, Divine and Human, man 'in all things like unto His brethren,' Heb. ii. 17, to represent us, and to sympathise with us, God over all mighty to save us, Rom. i. 1-4; ix. 5.

## LESSON II

## THAT CHRIST SHOULD BE BORN IN BETHLEHEM-JUDAH.

BETHLEHEM, a village or small town about six miles to the south of Jerusalem (and sometimes called Bethlehem-Judah, to prevent its being mistaken for the other Bethlehem near the sea of Galilee, Josh. xix. 15, 16), was a very ancient place, Judg. xvii. 7, 8, formerly called Ephrath, Gen. xxxv. 19, xlviii. 7; it was also known as 'the city of David,' because He was born there. He spoke of Himself as a 'son of Jesse the Bethlehemite,' 1 Sam. xvi. 1-4-18; xvii. 12, 58.

More than seven hundred years before our Saviour's birth, the word of the Lord foretold, 'But thou, Beth-lehem 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, He shall stand and feed (His flock),' Micah v. 2-5.

That Messiah would be the Son of David, and must be born in Bethlehem, the city of David, according to the Scriptures, was well known to the Jews and firmly held by them, Matt. xxi. 9-15; xxii. 41, 42; John vii. 42.

That 'Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judæa in the days of Herod the king' is certain, Matt. ii. 1; Luke ii. 4-15. Herod, having heard of His birth, consulted the chief priests and scribes as to 'where Christ should be born.' They answered him with the words of the prophet Micah, showing that whatever unbelieving Jews may say now their learned men had no doubt on the subject then, Matt. ii. 3-6.

That Jesus was born in Bethlehem came to pass by what looks like a matter of chance, but was, in reality, by the working of God's providence, that His own word of prophecy might thus be fulfilled.

The Roman Emperor, Cæsar Augustus, who was master of the world, ordered an enrolment or census of all nations to be made for the purpose of taxation. See R.V. of Luke ii. 1-15. The care with which this enrolment was made ensured the registering of Jesus in the official government records as born in Bethlehem 'of the house and lineage of David.' Justin Martyr, a native of Samaria, writing to the Roman Emperor, Antoninus Pius, about A.D. 150, says, 'Now, there is a village in the land of the Jews, thirty-five stadia from Jerusalem, in which Jesus Christ was

born, as you can ascertain from the registers of the taxing made under Cyrenius, your first procurator in Judæa.'

The Son of God had come into the world, and being made man was numbered in the world's census among the sons of men; and, although poor, He was born a prince of the royal house of David.

In the book of Ruth, i. 2-6-19; ii. 4; iv. 11, we find mention of Bethlehem, and in St. Matthew's Gospel, i. 5, 6, Ruth is named as one of those from whom the Son of David was descended. Bethlehem means 'house of bread,' and such it proved to be to Ruth, i. 6, 19; ii. 1, 14; iii. 16, 17.

Bethlehem had a well, for the water of which David longed when he was fighting with the Philistines, 1 Chron. xi. 16, 17. It is interesting to note that bread and water are particularly connected with Bethlehem, remembering at the same time that Jesus who was born there gives us the 'living bread' and the 'living water,' John vi. 51; vii. 38, 39.

When the shepherds were told by the angel that Christ was then born in 'the city of David,' they said, 'Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which the Lord hath made known to us. And they came with haste,' Luke ii. 10, 11-15. So should we, in great joy because of the tidings, come with haste to see Jesus, and to know all we can learn concerning Him, and all that He has done for us since He was born in Bethlehem.

## LESSON III.

THAT MESSIAH SHOULD BE WORSHIPPED BY GREAT ONES, COMING TO HIM WITH PRECIOUS GIFTS.

IN Psalm lxxii., which describes the reign and glory of 'the King's Son,' who is to 'have dominion unto the ends of the earth,' and whose 'name shall endure for ever,' that is Messiah; it is foretold verses 10, 11, 15, that kings shall fall down before Him and offer gifts to Him. A like prophecy is written in Isa. lx. 1-6, where among the gifts particular mention is made of gold and incense. Midian, Ephah, and Sheba there named are the descendants of Abraham; of these we read in Gen. xxv. 1-6, that Abraham sent them away 'eastward, unto the east country.'

That by 'the King's Son' a greater than Solomon is meant is plain from the words of Ps. lxxii. 7, 11, which foretell a longer reign, and a wider kingdom than his.

The fulfilment of these prophecies began as soon as Jesus was born, for we read in Matt. ii. 1-12, 'there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, saying, 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. They saw the young child, and fell down and worshipped Him; and when they had opened their treasures they presented unto Him gifts—gold, and frankincense, and myrrh.'

These wise men, *Magi* they are called in the Greek (see R. V. Margin, Esth. i. 13, Dan. ii. 2-12), were learned, wealthy, and of great authority in the East. We do not know how many of these Magi there were, nor that they were kings (although in old pictures and stories they are often called 'the three kings,' and even their pretended names are given as Gaspar, Melchior, and Balthasar).

Perhaps they came from Persia; why they came was because, as they said, 'we have seen His star in the east.' The wise men of the East had always paid great attention to the stars, and as about the time when our Saviour was born there was a general expectation in eastern countries (so heathen historians tell us) that some world-ruling power was then to appear in Judea, these Magi, having seen a new star shining in the sky, took it for a sign that the expected King was come, and set out for Palestine there to pay Him due homage.

It is an interesting fact that astronomers have found a new

star did appear at that time, and ancient Chinese writings record that such a star lasted for seventy days.

The gifts, 'gold, frankincense, and myrrh,' remarkably agreeing with Isa. lx. 6, were costly and honourable; they have been thought also to have meanings, *gold* signifying Messiah's being *King*, *frankincense* His being *God*, Mal. i. 11, and *myrrh* foreshowing His *death*, Mark xv. 23; John xix. 39.

This visit of the Magi to Jesus was the first sample or earnest of all nations as well as all kings coming to Him to worship and to serve Him; and is therefore called 'the Epiphany, or the manifestation of Christ to the Gentiles.' It is worth noticing that every year at that season the reigning king or queen of England makes an offering in the Chapel-Royal of 'gold, frankincense, and myrrh' in token of homage to Him who is 'the Prince of the kings of the earth.'

The full, perfect, world-wide fulfilment of the prophetic words in Ps. lxxii. and Isa. lx. must come to pass, see also Rev. xxi. 23-26; meanwhile as the Magi did so we are to do, that is, show our faith by word and by deed, seek Jesus till we find Him, confess Him as King and ourselves as His worshippers, bow down body, mind, soul, and will before Him, giving Him our best, our wealth, our life, our all. So seeking Him, led by the star of God's holy Word, we shall be guided safely to Him, we shall see Him, and with our gifts we shall be accepted, and we shall be reckoned among the truly wise.

## LESSON IV.

## GOD'S CALLING HIS SON OUT OF EGYPT.

IN Hos. xi. 1 it is written—'When Israel was a child then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt.' It is easy to see that this is true of Israel's early history, the days of the nation's infancy, Hos. ii. 15, when God called that people to be His in special sonship, Ex. iv. 22, 23 (Jer. xxxi. 20), and when He brought them forth out of Egypt.

But the words contain prophecy as well as history, they apply not only to Israel the people but also to Israel the Messiah (see Lesson XI., p. 21). Christ is the *Prince* who has power with God and with men and has prevailed, Gen. xxxii. 28, He is God's *servant* Isa. xlix. 1-3, and He was God's holy *child*, Luke ii. 43-49; Acts iv. 27, 30.

The full bearing of these words in Hos. xi. 1 cannot be seen without the light thrown upon them by Matt. ii. 13-15, which tell us that Jesus, when a child, was taken into Egypt, kept there for a time, and brought back again to His own land, all according to the warning, direction, and call of God.

After the 'wise men from the east' were departed (not from the 'manger' in Bethlehem, but from 'the house'), Joseph, in obedience to a message from God, 'arose, took the young child and His mother by night, and departed into Egypt; and was there until the death of Herod.' There were thousands of Jews settled in Egypt, especially in Alexandria, who had their synagogues, and the Old Testament Scriptures both in Hebrew and in a Greek translation which had been made there about 280 or 250 years before under the king, Ptolemy (II.) Philadelphus.

Herod (I.) the Great died in the end of March or beginning of April next after the birth of Jesus, so that after a sojourn in Egypt of perhaps not more than seven weeks, Lev. xxv. 8-10, Joseph was bidden by 'an angel of the Lord' to 'take the young child and His mother, and go into the land of Israel; for they are dead which sought the young child's life,' v. 20.

Jesus Christ was thus made to be like Israel in the going down to Egypt, Gen. xlvii. 2-4, sojourning in Egypt, Ex. xii. 40-42, and being called out of Egypt, Ex. xii. 50, 51. Not by any design of Joseph or Mary, but by the will and providence of God, these acts were done and these events came to pass in such wise that the history of Jesus was conformed in a remarkable manner

and degree to the history of Israel, and 'that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt have I called my son,' Matt. ii. 15.

This history of our Saviour's infancy shows us the enmity of the wicked against the holy Son of God. As soon as Herod heard of Messiah's birth he sought to slay Him whom the wise men came to worship, Ps. ii. 2; Matt. ii. 2, 3, 8, 13, 16.

All Herod's cunning, cruelty, and soldiers could do nothing against the holy Child, who was protected by the wisdom, love, and power of His Father in heaven.

The little children 'from two years old and under' whom Herod caused to be slain could not have been many in so small a place as Bethlehem, but they were enough to show that the coming of Christ into this world would be for, not peace, but, a sword, Matt. x. 34; and they were the first sufferers for Jesus' sake.

Jesus, the King of Israel, was obliged to take shelter in a foreign land, yet in so doing His life became connected with Gentiles, who thus gave Him shelter when 'His own received Him not.'

Joseph's ready obedience to God's commands concerning the holy Child is an example to us, and in this obedience he found safety from all enemies and dangers. We likewise have spiritual if not also bodily enemies and dangers, but God does not leave us without words of warning and guidance enough to enable us to say in faith, 2 Cor. i. 10; 2 Tim. iv. 8. Moreover, the day is coming when of all those who hated Jesus and His saints it will be true 'they are dead which sought the young child's life.'



## LESSON V.

THAT A MESSENGER SHOULD GO BEFORE THE LORD, TO PREPARE HIS WAY.

IN Bible lands and times it was usual to send a herald or messenger on ahead to give notice of the king's coming, also to cause a road to be made or cleared and put in good order for the royal journey, Isa. lvii. 14; lxii. 10, 11.

God foretold by His prophets that He would send a messenger before the King of kings, one who would give warning to the people, and make ready the way for Messiah's appearing among men, Isa. xl. 3-6; Malachi iii. 1; and in the closing words of the Old Testament this messenger is marked out by the name of the former great prophet '*Elias*'—Elijah, Malachi iv. 5, 6.

As the Old Testament ends with this prophecy, so the New Testament begins with another like prophecy concerning this Elias, Luke i. 13-17, that is, John the Baptist, of whom it may be said that he is the silver link as Jesus Messiah is the golden link by which the Old Testament and the New Testament are coupled together in one.

That John Baptist was the herald or messenger of whom Isaiah and Malachi had prophesied is made certain by many witnesses. 1st. The angel who announced the birth and appointed the name of 'John,' Luke i. 11-13-17. 2d. John's father, Zacharias, who 'was filled with the Holy Ghost and prophesied, saying,' Luke i. 67-77. 3d. The evangelists, St. Matthew iii. 1-3. 4th. John himself who, being a prophet, said when asked 'What sayest thou of thyself?' 'I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Esaias,' John i. 23. 5th. Jesus Christ, who declared concerning John that he was 'a prophet, and more than a prophet.' For this is he of whom it is written, 'Behold I send My messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee. . . And if ye will receive it this is Elias which was for to come,' Matt. xi. 7-10-14; xvii. 10-13; Luke vii. 19-27-33.

John Baptist was a 'voice crying in the wilderness,' for he 'came preaching in the wilderness of Judæa,' Matt. iii. 1; and his voice was lifted up (and he was only a voice, he had no worldly arm or power, and he did no miracles) for God's truth, and to tell men their duty to God and to neighbour. This crying aloud was also in a spiritual wilderness where weeds and wild

grapes, *i.e.*, evil things, abounded, but which ought to have been kept by the 'husbandmen,' as the vineyard of the Lord, Isa. v. 1-7; Jer. xiii. 10.

He was God's messenger in that he spoke the words of God, especially in preaching repentance toward God, and belief in the Son of God, Acts xx. 21.

He went before the Lord inasmuch as he began to preach before Jesus did; and he prepared the way of the Lord by preaching repentance, for the remission of sins, which Jesus afterward taught and joined with believing the Gospel, Mark i. 4-14, 15; Acts xix. 3, 4. Also he bore witness to Jesus as the Son of God, the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world, John i. 20, 34.

John Baptist, as we have seen, was before the Lord in preaching, he was also about six months older than Jesus, yet he said of our Saviour, 'He that cometh after me is preferred before me; for He was before me,' John i. 15, 27, 30, which is a testimony agreeing with what Christ said of Himself, 'Before Abraham was I am,' John viii. 58; Rev. i. 17.

Of course John was not actually Elias, but he came 'in the spirit and power of Elias,' Luke i. 17, and it is worth notice that as to clothing and appearance he was *like* Elijah, 2 Kings i. 8, with Matt. iii. 4.

Every Christian can be, by the grace of God, a 'voice,' a 'messenger,' to speak the words of God, the duty of man, and can do a little to prepare the way for the coming again of the King; and, while believing in Jesus Christ for the salvation of his own soul, can say if not in preaching, yet in teaching, warning, and entreating, 'Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world,' John i. 29.

## LESSON VI.

THAT MESSIAH SHOULD BE ANOINTED BY THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD  
RESTING UPON HIM, TO PREACH GOOD TIDINGS UNTO THE MEEK.

IN Isa. xi. 1-5 it is prophesied of the Branch out of the roots of Jesse, that is Messiah, 'the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him;' and again it is written in Isa. lxi. 1-3, 'the Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek.' (See also Ps. xlv. 7; Heb. i. 9.)

The fulfilling of these scriptures is contained in all the four Gospels, Matt. iii. 16, 17; Mark. i. 9-12; Luke iii. 21, 22; John i. 32-34. When Jesus was baptized 'He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon Him,' and as John Baptist, who saw the same, adds, 'and it abode upon Him.' The form 'like a dove,' and the 'voice from heaven' were tokens to eyes and ears (as at Pentecost, Acts. ii. 1-3, were the 'sound as of a rushing, mighty wind,' and the 'tongues like as of fire') of the Holy Spirit's presence. Note the exact agreement of Isaiah's words, 'rest upon Him,' Isa. xi. 2, with John's account 'abode upon Him,' 'remaining on Him,' John i. 32, 33; Acts x. 38.

In the synagogue at Nazareth, Jesus read from Isa. xi. 1-2, and, taking the words as concerning Himself, said, 'This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears;' this He spoke 'in the power of the Spirit,' Luke iv. 14-21.

We see at least nine witnesses here give evidence to the fulfilling of these Old Testament prophecies in the Branch of Jesse, Jesus Christ, *i.e.* the Anointed. (1) Isaiah, (2) Matthew, (3) Mark, (4) Luke, (5) John, (6) Peter, (7) John Baptist, (8) Jesus, (9) God, by the 'voice from heaven.'

The effect of Messiah's being anointed by 'the Spirit of the Lord, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord,' was to make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord (see R. V.), perfect in wisdom, righteousness, faithfulness, equity, and judgment, Isa. xi. 1-5; such was Jesus in heart, mind, words, and works.

The purpose or object of Messiah's being thus anointed by the Holy Ghost was, as he said in the words of Isa. lxi. 1 and Luke iv. 18, 19, 'to preach the Gospel' and do the works of love; for 'the Gospel' has the same meaning as 'good tidings,' and 'the

meek' are the same as 'the poor' or 'the poor in spirit,' and the Evangelists record how the Lord Jesus taught, fed, healed, and cheered all such who came to Him in faith.

From His earliest days Jesus was 'led by the Spirit,' Rom. viii. 14, yet the fact that the Holy Spirit specially and visibly lighted on Him and abode on Him immediately after His being baptized is full of meaning and instruction. St. Luke writes that then 'Jesus began to be about thirty years of age,' iii. 23 (or R.V. 'when He began to teach'). Thirty was the age at which 'every one came to do the service of the ministry, . . . in the tabernacle of the congregation,' Numb. iv. 47. Moreover, before Aaron entered on his duties as high priest, God gave this command, 'Aaron and his sons thou shalt bring unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and shalt wash them with water, . . . then shalt thou take the anointing oil and pour it upon his head, and anoint him,' Ex. xxix. 4-7.

All which was fulfilled spiritually in Jesus, who at the age of thirty, before entering on His ministry as High Priest, 'a minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle,' was washed with water in Jordan, and 'anointed with the Holy Ghost and with power,' Acts x. 38; Heb. ii. 17; Heb. iii. 1; viii. 1, 2.

Not Aaron alone but also his sons, priests under him, God commanded to be washed as He was washed, and anointed as He was anointed, Ex. xxix. 4, 21; xl. 12-15. All Christ's disciples, men and women, are priests under Him, 1 Pet. ii. 5, 9, they likewise must be washed in baptism, and anointed with the Holy Spirit, for their spiritual service of God, John iii. 5; Acts i. 5-8; ii. 38; iv. 31; v. 32; x. 44, 47; 2 Cor. i. 22; v. 5; Eph. i. 13, 14; iv. 30; Tit. iii. 5; Heb. x. 21, 22; 1 John ii. 20, 27.

With these texts now quoted we must take for our warning Rom. viii. 9, and for our encouragement Luke xi. 13.

## LESSON VII.

## THAT MESSIAH SHOULD BE HATED WITHOUT A CAUSE.

IN Psalms xxxv. 19 and xxxviii. 19, David speaks of 'them that are mine enemies wrongfully . . . that hate me without a cause . . . they that hate me wrongfully are multiplied.' Like words occur in Ps. lxi. 4, 'They that hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of mine head.' In many other places of the Psalmist's description of the persecution he endured it is as good as said that he had given his enemies no just cause for their hatred against him, Ps. xxv. 2, 3, 19; cxix. 161; cxl. 1-5; cxli. 9, 10; cxlii. ; cxliii. 3.

The books of Samuel give the main facts of David's life, of his trials and triumphs, dangers and deliverances. We know that he did indeed suffer from the hatred and persecution of Saul whom he had not injured, 1 Sam. xxvi. 17, 18, and from the unnatural rebellion of his son Absalom, 2 Sam. xv. 10-30, and from the behaviour of Shimei, 2 Sam. xvi. 5-13; but the passages first quoted go beyond all that we read in Samuel, Kings, and Chronicles, of David's actual condition and personal experience. The haters described appear to be more cruel, and more in number than Saul, Absalom, Shimei, and the followers of these three men. Also the heathen peoples who fought with David did not behave to him as did those who hated him without a cause.

That the words agree to some extent with David's experience and sufferings is easily seen, and where this is the case it is to be remembered that David was in many respects a type or figure of Messiah. On the whole we have scriptural reasons for regarding those first quoted words as partly history and partly prophecy, as telling in the first place how David was hated by those who were his enemies wrongfully, thence passing on to foretell by their strongest language how the 'Son of David' would have to say, 'they hated Me without a cause,' and that He did say as is recorded in John xv. 25.

That Jesus was hated, more hated by the Jews than was any other man, so hated that nothing less than His most cruel death would satisfy them—is evident from the history in the Gospels. Not only while He was on earth, but ever since both Jews and Gentiles, more in number than the hairs of His head, have hated Him with a 'perpetual hatred,' Ezek. xxxv. 5.

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'Without a cause' is especially true of the hatred with which the Son of David was pursued even to the cross, for while none could convict Him of sin, John viii. 46, and He had done no harm to any one, He had kept all God's laws, and done good to multitudes by gifts of miraculous healing which He alone could bestow, Ps. cix. 2-5. That His enemies hated Him without a cause was practically confessed by Judas who betrayed Him, by Herod, by Pilate, by Pilate's wife, by one of the malefactors who was crucified with Him, and by the centurion at the cross, Matt. xxvii. 3, 17, 18, 19, 23, 24; Luke xxiii. 14, 15, 22, 41, 47.

There was a cause for the hatred, but not a just cause. Jesus explained why it was He was hated, John iii. 19, 20; vii. 7 (Amos v. 10); He also declared that the words quoted from the Psalms were, by this hatred, fulfilled in Himself, John xv. 23-25.

As Christ was hated so were His disciples. He prepared them, by warning and encouragement, to meet the world's hatred; and soon after they had seen Him go into heaven, they felt that hatred in full force, Matt. x. 22; xxiv. 9; Luke vi. 22; John xv. 18, 19; xvii. 14; 1 John iii. 1, 13.

One thing we must remember with Christ's precepts, which is—to take heed that we give no occasion to any one to speak evil of us, 1 Pet. ii. 12, 19; iii. 16. The persecuted, and those who are spoken evil of are 'blessed' only if they be so dealt with 'falsely, for My sake;' that is, if the world hate Christ's disciples, they must be able to say with a clear conscience, 'They hated me without a cause.'

## LESSON VIII.

THAT PEOPLES, KINGS, AND RULERS WOULD SET THEMSELVES AGAINST  
THE LORD AND HIS MESSIAH.

IN the second Psalm, which sets forth the power and victory of Him who is the Lord's anointed, His King, His Son, there is also a description of a great conspiracy in which heathen peoples, kings, and rulers set themselves to rebel against the Lord and against His anointed, on purpose to 'break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us;' *i.e.*, let us get rid of the laws and duties which are laid on us by the Lord and His Messiah.

The Psalm goes on to show that this rebellion is 'a vain thing,' bringing destruction on those who imagine they can prevail against God and His all-ruling Son. See also Ps. xxi. 11; xxxi. 13; Prov. xxi. 30.

That this prophecy was not fulfilled in the history of David, or Solomon, or any one of the Hebrew kings is clear, for not one of these had such enemies, such possessions, 'the uttermost parts of the earth,' nor such victories; David had rebellion to put down, and had wars with divers heathen nations whom he subdued, 2 Sam. viii. 1-11, 12, but never on such a great and terrible scale as this Psalm describes.

Moreover, although David was God's chosen king, the words 'this day have I begotten thee,' could not properly be said of the 'son of Jesse.' The prophecy in its several parts and in its fullness will fit but One, that One is the Son of David, God's only-begotten Son, the King, Messiah.

Turning to Acts iv. 25-28, we find the fulfilment as it was seen by the first Christians; they repeated the opening words of the second Psalm, and then added—'For of a truth against Thy holy child Jesus, whom Thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever Thy hand and Thy counsel determined before to be done.' See also 1 Cor. ii. 8.

Observe the particulars of the agreement between the Psalm and the New Testament history—'heathen'—'Gentiles' (Romans), 'people'—'people of Israel' (Matt. xxvii. 20-25), 'kings'—Herod the First (Matt. iii. 1-16), Herod the Second (Luke xxiii. 11), 'rulers'—'Pontius Pilate the governor,' 'the chief priests and the rulers' (Luke xxiii. 13). All—high and low, kings, rulers, Jews, Gentiles, priests and soldiers, the leaders of the people and the

multitude—all set themselves against the Lord and against His Christ, to destroy Jesus, and, in so doing, to cast off God's laws and the doctrines of the Gospel which were counted troublesome 'bands and cords' by those who knew not, and by those who would not obey the Word of God.

Yet what these rebels imagined and conspired to do was 'a vain thing,' for the Lord's anointed Son lives, and, sitting at His Father's right hand, will see all enemies put under His feet, Ps. cx. ; 1 Cor. xv. 25-28.

All these things the Lord Jesus Christ showed in a parable concerning Himself as one whose 'citizens hated Him, saying, We will not have this man to reign over us . . . when He was returned having received the kingdom' His enemies were to be slain before Him, Luke xix. 12-27.

Now, there are many who imagine the same 'vain thing,' and try to cast away the bands, the restraints, of God and of Christ's holy religion, saying in their rebellious hearts—'We will not have this Man to reign over us.'

It is our wisdom and will be our happiness to yield reverent obedience to God's anointed King, knowing that of Him it can be truly said in the words of Hosea xi. 4, 'I drew them with cords of a man, with bands of love.' 'His commandments are not grievous,' 1 John v. 3, and as He said, 'My yoke is easy, and My burden is light,' Matt. xi. 30.

We cannot change the hearts and minds of sinners who disobey God's law and despise His love, but whether He convert or confound them, we can have, by faith, the last sentence of the Psalm (ii. 12) as our portion, 'Blessed are all they that put their trust in Him.'



## LESSON IX.

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THAT MESSIAH THE KING WOULD MAKE HIS ROYAL ENTRY INTO  
JERUSALEM RIDING ON AN ASS.

A PROPHECY in Isa. lxii. 11, 'Say ye to the daughter of Zion, Behold thy salvation cometh,' is repeated and enlarged thus in Zech. ix. 9, 10: 'Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: He is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass. And I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim, and the horse from Jerusalem, and the battle bow shall be cut off: and He shall speak peace unto the heathen: and His dominion from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth.'

Zion's King, the Prince of peace, would not take chariot or horse, these were used in war, Ex. xiv. 9; Ps. xx. 7, He would ride on an ass, and the most gentle of creatures on which to ride is 'a colt the foal of an ass.' On the other hand, an ass was not despised as fit only for persons of low estate, Judg. v. 10; x. 4; xii. 14, and this text in Zechariah.

The words of the prophet are simple, and their bare meaning is plain enough, but there is no king of Judah, or of Israel, to whom they can be said to point; not one such can be shown as answering to the description: and to ride on an ass would not be sufficient, there must be one of whom it can be said, 'His dominion is from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth,' Zech. ix. 10, with Ps. ii. 6-8.

It is not until we turn to the New Testament that we see the coming to pass of the prophet's words. In Matt. xxi. 1-11; Mark xi. 1-11; Luke xix. 28-38; John xii. 12-16, we read that His disciples, as He directed, found a young ass, whereon never man sat (therefore fit for the most sacred use, compare Numb. xix. 2; Deut. xxi. 3; 1 Sam. vi. 7). 'They brought the colt to Jesus—they cast their garments upon the colt, and they set Jesus thereon . . . and Jesus entered into Jerusalem,' . . . while 'they who went before, and they who followed, cried Hosanna, Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord.'

St. John adds, 'These things understood not His disciples at the first: but when Jesus was glorified, then remembered they that these things were written of Him, and that they had done these things unto Him,' xii. 16. Jesus showed that He knew

and declared Himself to be the King of whom the prophets had written, and so afterward His disciples understood the matter.

The prophecy was fulfilled, not by the mere fact that Jesus rode into Jerusalem on the young ass, while the people hailed Him as the King of Israel, but by this together with the other facts that He was the Son of David, that He was 'meek and lowly,' Matt. xi. 29, 'having salvation' for the bodies and for the spirits of men, and that He did 'speak peace' to His disciples and for all nations, John xiv. 27; Eph. ii. 17.

He accepted the homage of the multitudes as His due of right, and although asked to do so, would not rebuke His disciples for what they then said and did, Luke xix. 39, 40. This shows His claims to be of the very highest, especially when we consider that '*Hosanna*' means '*Save now*,' as may be learned from Ps. cxviii. 25, 26, so that when the multitudes cried '*Hosanna to the Son of David, Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord,*' they were applying to Jesus the very words of that Psalm, in which '*Hosanna*' is addressed to God, '*Save now, I beseech Thee, O Lord.*'

For a contrast, which throws light on the subject, see Rev. xix. 11-14, where Christ and the armies which followed Him coming forth to war against His enemies, appear on horses.

He who came at first meek and lowly, having salvation, speaking peace to the nations, when He comes again will appear in power and great glory, to speak the sentence of His judgment and to smite the nations.

If we be His faithful disciples, obeying and praising Him now, we shall join in the Hosannas with which 'a great multitude whom no man can number,' will greet Him when He makes His glorious entry into 'the holy city, New Jerusalem,' Rev. xxi. 2.

## LESSON X.

## THAT MESSIAH SHOULD BE SOLD FOR THIRTY PIECES OF SILVER.

THE prophet Zechariah showed, by the figure of a staff cut asunder, that on account of their sins, the covenant made with all the people was broken. Then the prophet, speaking as the shepherd of God's flock, said unto them, 'If ye think good, give me my price; and if not, forbear. So they weighed for my price thirty pieces of silver.' For such benefit as the people had received under the covenant, so small a price was but a mockery, and in reality it was God, whose covenant they despised, that the people thus insulted.

'And the Lord said unto me, Cast it unto the potter: a goodly price that I was priced at of them.' That is—God mocks those who mocked Him in their so undervaluing His shepherd-like care of them, and orders the prophet to show how God scorned the scornful price, 'And I took the thirty pieces of silver, and cast them to the potter in the house of the Lord.'

These things were said and done as tokens or signs of spiritual realities, and as such could be only in part understood before that came to pass which was the fulfilling of the whole.

Judas Iscariot, although one of the twelve disciples of Jesus, 'was a thief,' John xii. 4-6 (see R.V.); he, knowing how the rulers of the Jews longed to get Jesus put to death, and being greedy for money, went unto the chief priests, and said, 'What will ye give me, and I will deliver Him unto you? And they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver,' Matt. xxvi. 14-16.

It is most likely the pieces of silver were *shekels*, one of which is worth about two shillings and eightpence, so thirty shekels would be equal to four pounds of our money. Turning back to Ex. xxi. 32, we see the worth of a manservant or a maidservant (a slave) was 'thirty shekels of silver,' so that was the value the people of Israel put on 'the Good Shepherd!' Well might it be said with Moses, 'Do ye thus requite the Lord, O foolish people and unwise?' Deut. xxxii. 6, and with Zechariah, 'A goodly price that I was priced at of them.'

Then was the covenant broken, then were the inhabitants of the land given over by God to themselves and to their enemies, to die, and to be cut off, as it was written, Zech. xi. 6, 9. Refusing

Jesus the Son of David, they were left to Titus and the sword of Rome.

When Judas, driven by the remorse of his guilty conscience, brought back the thirty pieces of silver, 'he cast them down in the temple,' and with them was bought 'the potter's field,' 'the field of blood,' Matt. xxvii. 3-10; Acts i. 16-19. Thus, whether the priests and Judas thought of it or not, that which had been written by the prophet between five and six hundred years before, was then and there fulfilled. No chance nor cunning device could have brought these things to pass, nor was it a matter of imagination, 'it was known to all the dwellers at Jerusalem,' Acts i. 19.

Three small points have troubled some minds, viz. (1.) How to reconcile the account in Matt. xxvii. 7, that the priests bought the potter's field, with that in Acts i. 18, that Judas purchased the field? It is not unreasonable to suppose that when Judas (before the passover, Luke xxii. 1-6) made his covenant with the priests for thirty pieces of silver, he made another bargain to buy the potter's field, but had not paid its owner the price, and that the priests carried out the agreement. In any case, the field was bought with the money of Judas, so it might be considered as bought by him.

(2.) Matt. xxvii. 9 says, 'Jeremiah (Jeremy) the prophet' instead of Zechariah? Some think that Jeremiah wrote parts of Zechariah, including chapter xi.; yet if he did not, a small mistake of half a name might easily be made in copying, when there was no printing.

(3.) The words quoted in Matt. xxvii. are not exactly the same as those in Zech. xi. The New Testament writers quoted sometimes from the Hebrew, at other times from a Greek translation, and often giving the sense and meaning of the original in slightly different words, just as we all do in writing or speaking.

Reflection. Consider what force is given by the sin and ghastly end of Judas to St. Paul's warning against the *love* of money, 1 Tim. vi. 10, 11.

## LESSON XI.

THAT MESSIAH SHOULD BE BETRAYED BY A FALSE FRIEND, AND BE FORSAKEN BY HIS FOLLOWERS.

DAVID'S counsellor Ahithophel turned traitor, and joined himself to the conspirators with Absalom against the king, 2 Sam. xv. 12, 31; xvi. 23; xvii. 1, 2, 14, 23. David may have had this base treason in mind when he wrote, 'Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me;' yet the words, while partly fitting Ahithophel, go beyond him, pointing to some worse traitor than he, and to a greater sin than his. See also Ps. lv. 12, 14, 20, 21.

As David was a figure of Messiah, so a false friend of the Psalmist may well foreshadow a false friend of the 'Son of David.'

There is no one to be found in all history who fully agrees with the whole description given in the Psalms except Judas Iscariot, who was not only an 'acquaintance,' but a 'familiar friend,' who had 'walked unto the house of God in company' with Jesus, had heard His 'sweet counsel,' and 'did eat of His bread' up to the very night when he 'was guide to them that took Jesus,' John xiii. 18-27.

Judas was like Ahithophel in treason, treachery, hypocrisy, and in the manner of his end; for as Ahithophel so also Judas 'hanged himself,' bringing on himself the curse in Deut. xxi. 23; and the awful declaration of the Lord, 'Woe unto that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! it had been good for that man if he had not been born,' Matt. xxvi. 24; Mark xiv. 18-21. 'Those that Thou [God] gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but *the son of perdition*; that the Scripture might be fulfilled,' John xvii. 12. In this last text and in John xiii. 18, we have Christ's own authority for taking the treachery of Judas in betraying Him as fulfilment of the Scriptures.

Turning now to the second portion of the present lesson, we read another prophecy concerning one whom God calls 'My shepherd, the man that is My fellow,' 'Smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered,' Zech. xiii. 7.

Of whom this was written the prophet does not explain, nor could the application be certain before it was made clear in the New Testament by the Evangelists, Matt. xxvi. 31, 56; Mark xiv. 27, 50. Jesus the Chief Shepherd was smitten, then His sheep,

'all the disciples forsook Him and fled,' as He knew and foretold they would. Here again we have Christ's authority for taking the scattering of His disciples in flight from their Master as fulfilling the Scripture ; He knew the Scriptures too well to be mistaken as to their meaning, and He revered them too much to apply them to Himself if He had not known them to be, as He said, 'written concerning Me,' Luke xxiv. 44.

They who suppose that Jesus was in error when He spoke of the Scriptures as being written concerning Himself are actually supposing themselves to be wiser than He ; and if they think He said that any Scripture was fulfilled in Himself while He did not know it to be so, then they consider Him guilty of profanity and lies.

From the treachery of Judas, and from the cowardly desertion of Jesus by the other disciples, there are lessons of warning to be learned. Judas saw the miracles and heard the preaching of Christ, he had the greatest opportunities and advantages, yet he perished after all. The eleven disciples had all, especially Peter, said they would never be unfaithful to their Master ; yet, only a few hours later, they all forsook Him, while Peter with curses and oaths denied that he even knew Jesus, Matt. xxvi. 69-74. By these things we see our weakness, our need of watching and prayer, and of His grace who said, 'Without Me ye can do nothing,' John xv. 5 ; 'My grace is sufficient for thee,' 2 Cor. xii. 9. Many, like Peter, are in the greatest danger while they boast and think themselves able to keep themselves in safety. Let us take to ourselves the warning, 1 Cor. x. 12, and our Lord's words, John vi. 67, remembering also 2 Pet. ii. 20, 21 ; Jude 23, 24.

## LESSON XII.

THAT MESSIAH WOULD BE ACCUSED BY FALSE WITNESSES, AND,  
ALTHOUGH INNOCENT, BE CONDEMNED.

DAVID complains not only of being hated without a cause (see Lesson VII., p. 13), but more particularly, 'false witnesses are risen up against me, and such as breathe out cruelty,' Ps. xxvii. 12. 'False witnesses did rise up, they laid to my charge things that I knew not,' Ps. xxxv. 11. Possibly David referred to the false charge that he was lying in wait to kill Saul, 1 Sam. xxii. 9-14; xxiv. 9-11. The sin of bearing false witness (ninth commandment) is a grievous trespass against any man, and is one especially trying to himself and hurtful to others when committed against a king and judge, Job xxxiv. 17-19.

Whatever David suffered thus in his own person was but a shadow of the sin committed against the righteous King and Judge of all men. The enemies of our Saviour, knowing that they could not, by honest and true witnesses, convict Him of any sin against God or man, John viii. 46, and being determined nevertheless to get Him murdered after a mock trial, under the forms of law, 'sought false witness against Jesus to put Him to death,' Matt. xxvi. 59, 60. He was accused of saying He was able to '*destroy this temple* that is made with hands, and build it in three days,' Matt. xxvi. 60, 61, with Mark xiv. 57, 58, but see John iii. 19-21, for what he really did say and mean. The chief priests, who were themselves the chief false witnesses, accused Him of *blasphemy* because He declared, on oath, the truth of His being the Son of God, Matt. xxvi. 63-66; Luke xxii. 66-71; John xix. 7. He was by these false witnesses accused of '*perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute unto Cæsar*, Luke xxiii. 2-5, whereas he had bidden them '*render unto Cæsar the things which be Cæsar's*, xx. 19-26. They accused him moreover '*of many things*,' Mark xv. 3, 4, beside the old accusations that He was '*a man gluttonous, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners*,' Matt. xi. 19, that he was a Samaritan, had a devil, and was mad, John viii. 48; x. 20.

That the witnesses were false ones was plainly showed by the fact that '*their witness agreed not together*,' Mark xiv. 56-59; but the chief priests and members of the great council cared not for that so long as by any means they could prevail to silence—

as they hoped, for ever, 'Jesus Christ the faithful witness,' Rev. i. 5; iii. 14.

It is remarkable that the innocence of Jesus was declared by one who had fully known for years his public and his private life, his character, his words, and his acts; that witness was not called by the chief priests to come into court, but in the temple he gave his evidence before them, saying when he brought back the thirty pieces of silver, 'I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood,' Matt. xxvii. 3, 4. Other testimonies to the innocence of 'that Just One,' have been pointed out in Lesson VII., p. 13.

The conspiracy of the chief priests and elders against Jesus was singularly like the wicked plan of Jezebel against Naboth, as described in 1 Kings xxi. 7-13. She caused false witnesses to accuse him, saying, 'Thou didst blaspheme God and the king;' so Jesus was falsely accused of blaspheming God, and speaking against Cæsar. Again we read that false witnesses were suborned against Stephen to accuse him of blasphemy. Naboth and Stephen, though innocent, were stoned to death, and Jesus, who 'had done no violence, neither was any deceit in His mouth,' was 'cut off out of the land of the living,' Isa. liii. 8, 9.

Now there are many false witnesses who accuse Christ and the word of Christ of many things, but the witness of these unbelievers, haters, and despisers of the Son of God, agree not together.

We may be accused by false witnesses, we may not be able to prove that the testimony is false, but if we have thus to suffer for righteousness, or for the name of Christ, we must commit ourselves to God, and then, if not in this world, yet in the great day our innocence will be declared before angels and men by 'the Judge of all the earth,' Ps. xxxvii. 5, 6; Mic. vii. 8, 9.



## LESSON XIII

THAT MESSIAH WOULD BE PATIENT AND SILENT BEFORE HIS ENEMIES.

A PERSECUTED and forsaken sufferer, speaking by the mouth of David, says of Himself in presence of His enemies, 'But I, as a deaf man, heard not, and I was as a dumb man that openeth not his mouth. Thus I was as a man that heareth not, and in whose mouth are no reproofs,' Ps. xxxviii. 13, 14. The prophet Isaiah, speaking of Him, *i.e.*, Messiah, on whom 'the Lord hath laid the iniquity of us all,' adds, 'He was oppressed and He was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth: He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so He openeth not His mouth,' liii. 6, 7.

In Acts viii. 27-35 we are told how 'a man of Ethiopia' was reading this 'place of the scripture,' and asked Philip, 'of whom speaketh the prophet this? Then Philip began at the same scripture and preached unto him Jesus.'

The prophetic description of Messiah's patience and silence we see fulfilled by Jesus. (1.) When put on His trial, accused by false witnesses, and urged with many questions, Matt. xxvi. 62, 63; xxvii. 12; Mark xiv. 60, 61; xv. 3, 4; Luke xxiii. 8, 9; John xix. 7-11. (2.) When smitten, scourged, crowned with thorns, and otherwise cruelly and shamefully treated, we only find that He said, John xviii. 23, beside that meek saying He uttered no threat, no rebuke, no voice of anger, nor one cry of pain. He groaned and wept at the grave of Lazarus, but not when going to His own. (3.) While hanging on the cross from 'the third hour' (9 A.M.) till 'the ninth hour' (3 P.M.), during those six hours of agony, mocked by those who gazed on Him, the only word like a complaint, although it was not one, was, '*I thirst*,' Pa. lxix. 21, with John xix. 28.

His patient silence was a cause of wonder to Pilate and others, who could not understand such strange unlikeness to the behaviour of other prisoners guilty or innocent, Matt. xxvii. 14.

As the enemies of Jesus knew not how to account for His silence, they could easily pervert the fact, and make it look like an unspoken confession that He had nothing to say in His own defence, that the accusations brought against Him could not be disproved: that, in fact, He knew Himself to be guilty, and, in presence of so many accusers, He would not because He could not make out any case on His own behalf. Because—they might go

on to argue—because no man who knows himself to be innocent would be silent under accusations if they were false, or refuse or neglect to answer questions if it were in his power to give a satisfactory reply which would clear him from the charges before the court, especially in a trial for his life or death.

We can see some, if not all of the reasons for Christ's continued silence. (1.) He knew that His answering those who accused Him and questioned Him would have no effect, they being bent on His death, Luke xxii. 67, 68. (2.) He was 'meek and lowly in heart,' by nature and habit gentle and patient as became one of whom it was written, 'He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause His voice to be heard in the street,' Isa. xlii. 1, 2, 3, who was 'the Lamb of God,' and was to be 'brought as a lamb to the slaughter,' liii. 7. (3.) He came to do the will of God, Ps. xl. 7, 8, He knew that will to be that He should give 'His soul an offering for sin,' Isa. liii. 10; Matt. xx. 28; xxvi. 42; Phil. ii. 8. (4.) He had taken on Himself 'the sin of the world,' and being by His Father's will and His own free act 'made sin for us,' 2 Cor. v. 21, He bore the burden patiently, silently, and at last, without voice of murmur or lament, 'bowed His head' to death as the just sentence of the holy God. See Lam. iii. 27-30, 39; Acts xxv. 11; John xix. 30.

Our Master is also our Pattern. Whatever we may have to suffer, the words of Luke xxiii. 41 suit us. St. Peter, who had his own martyrdom in prospect, John xxi. 17-19; 2 Pet. i. 14, exhorts thus, 'Because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow His steps,' 1 Pet. ii. 20-23.

## LESSON XIV.

## THAT MESSIAH WOULD BE SMITTEN, SPIT UPON, AND SCOURGED.

It was foretold by the prophets Isaiah and Micah that Messiah would be smitten, spit upon, and scourged, 'They shall smite the judge of Israel with a rod upon the cheek,' Mic. v. 1. 'I gave My back to the smiters, and My cheeks to them that plucked off the hair : I hid not My face from shame and spitting,' Isa. l. 6. 'He was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and with His stripes we are healed,' liii. 5.

He was esteemed to be 'stricken, smitten of God,' liii. 4, and He was thus smitten by 'wicked hands,' *i.e.*, by the hands of wicked men, who, although they knew it not, were carrying out 'the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God,' Acts ii. 23. The 'foreknowledge' of God did not hinder the free will of those wicked men, nor did his 'determinate counsel' make them less guilty.

Our Lord Jesus Christ knew that these prophecies were written concerning Himself, and must be fulfilled ; so He declared—'Behold we go up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of man shall be accomplished. For He shall be delivered unto the Gentiles, and shall be mocked, and spitefully entreated, and spitted on : and they shall scourge Him,' Luke xviii. 31-33 ; Matt. xx. 17-19 ; Mark x. 32-34.

That all these things written by the prophets were accomplished as He said they must be, is fully proved by the four evangelists. First, those in the high priest's palace buffeted him, smote him with the palms of their hands (or with rods, margin), and did spit in His face,' Matt. xxvi. 67, 68 ; Mark xiv. 65 ; Luke xxii. 63, 64 ; John xviii. 22. This was before He was tried by Pilate, but again—after he was sentenced and delivered to be crucified—'then the soldiers of the governor spit upon Him, and took the reed, and smote Him on the head,' Matt. xxvii. 27-30 ; Mark xv. 19.

Pilate caused Jesus to be scourged, Matt. xxvii. 26 ; Mark xv. 15, that was to have His hands tied, to be bound to a post, and to be flogged with whips which it was usual to arm with pieces of bone, iron nails, leaden balls, or brass rings knotted in to the leather, or even with hooks at the ends of the lashes ; such scourges so bruised and tore the flesh as in some cases to cause death on the spot, and so horrible was the punishment that even

Pilate thought the Jews might be satisfied if they saw it inflicted on Jesus, Luke xxiii. 16-22.

It seems that after the scourging Jesus was in such a state of pain and weakness that He had not strength enough left to carry His cross all the way to Golgotha, as it was intended He should do, John xix. 17, so 'they laid hold upon one Simon a Cyrenian, who passed by, coming out of the country, and on him they laid the cross, that he might bear it after Jesus,' Matt. xxvii. 32 ; Mark xv. 21 ; Luke xxiii. 26.

Turning back again to the Old Testament prophecy, we see all these and other sufferings of Christ were to be *for us*, 'Surely He hath borne *our* griefs, and carried *our* sorrows ; He was wounded for *our* transgressions, bruised for *our* iniquities : the chastisement of *our* peace was upon Him, and with His stripes *we* are healed,' Isa. liii. 4, 5, 6, 8.

Note 1. Our Lord's humiliation is illustrated by that of Job who describes the insults heaped on himself, xxx. 10-14. Note 2. It is remarkable that the word used by the prophet Isaiah, '*chastisement*' liii. 5, is so repeated by the Roman governor, 'I will *chastise* him,' Luke xxiii. 16, 22.

Compared with the chastisement the Son of God endured, our chastening is but light indeed. We have 'not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin.' Such chastening as our Father may lay upon us we are to bear with patience and meekness, after the example of Christ. He who is the Captain of our salvation was made 'perfect through sufferings ;' we must remember His words, 'the disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his Lord,' Matt. x. 24. When we are chastened by our heavenly Father it is 'for our profit, that we might be partakers of His holiness,' Heb. ii. 10 ; xii. 3-11.

## LESSON XV.

THAT MESSIAH WOULD BE MOCKED, REVEILED, REPROACHED, AND BE PUT TO OPEN SHAME BY WICKED MEN, WHO WOULD GIVE HIM GALL AND VINEGAR IN HIS DISTRESS.

THESE are among the 'all things written by the prophets' which the Messiah would have to suffer: *mocking*, Ps. xxii. 6, 8; xxxv. 16, 21; *reviling, reproaching*, Ps. xxxi. 11-13; lv. 12, 13; lxix. 7, 9, 19, 20; cix. 25; *putting to shame*, Ps. lxix. 7, 19; Isa. l. 6; *giving Him gall and vinegar*, Ps. lxix. 20, 21. See Deut. xxix. 18.

There is no reason to think that David had ever been mocked with gall and vinegar. His words cannot be understood unless regarded as being spoken, 'in the spirit,' of Messiah, then all is clear.

These very things were fulfilled in Jesus Christ, and the particulars gathered from the Gospels are here arranged thus—*Mocking*, by those about the high priest, Matt. xxvi. 67, 68, by Herod and his men of war, Luke xxiii. 11, by the soldiers of the governor, Pilate, in 'the hall called the Prætorium,' Matt. xxvii. 27, 31; Mark xv. 16-20, and at the cross, Luke xxiii. 36, 37; by the chief priests, scribes, and elders, Matt. xxvii. 41, 42; *reviling* (= *railing*), *reproaching*, by them 'that passed by,' Matt. xxvii. 39; Mark xv. 29, by one of the malefactors crucified with Him, Matt. xxvii. 44; Mark xv. 32; Luke xxiii. 39; *putting to open shame*, by spitting on Him, Matt. xxvi. 67; xxvii. 30, by all the other insults and injuries they heaped on Him, and, above all, by the shameful death of the cross, that most disgraceful punishment which was deemed fit only for the vilest and most infamous malefactors, Heb. vi. 6; xii. 2.

The mournful words of Ps. lxix. 20, 'I looked for some to take pity, but there was none; and for comforters, but I found none,' were accomplished, when of all who knew Him not one *man*, Jew or Gentile, came forward to plead for Him—to show by deed or word any compassion on Him who had pitied and comforted so many, Ps. cxlii. 4. We do read 'of *women* which also bewailed and lamented Him' on the way to Calvary, and their sympathy Jesus returned with words of mingled prophecy and pity for them, Luke xxiii. 27-31.

*Giving Him gall and vinegar in His distress.* Before they cruci-

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fied Him, 'they gave Him vinegar to drink mingled with gall,' Matt. xxvii. 34, or 'wine mingled with myrrh,' Mark xv. 23: myrrh is bitter like gall. Again, about six hours later, just before He 'gave up the ghost,' He said, 'I thirst.' 'Now there was set a vessel full of vinegar, and they filled a sponge with vinegar, and put it upon hyssop (a reed), and put it to His mouth,' John xix. 28-31.

The vinegar or sour wine mingled with gall or myrrh, 'when He had tasted He would not drink,' Matt. xxvii. 34; 'He received it not,' Mark xv. 23, but He did receive of the vinegar in the sponge. It appears from ancient Jewish writings that it was a custom to give one about to be crucified a draught, sometimes provided by 'pitiful women' (such as those who lamented Jesus), which, being drugged, would stupefy the sufferer and so make him less sensible of pain; the doing this was thought to be warranted by Prov. xxxi. 6, 7. 'Give strong drink to Him that is ready to perish.' Such wine mingled with gall or myrrh our Saviour 'would not drink,' He would with unclouded mind endure all even unto death, drinking meanwhile to the dregs the cup His Father had given Him, John xviii. 11; but the unmixed vinegar put to His lips at the last, this He did take 'that the scripture might be fulfilled,' xix. 28-30.

It is to be observed that Jesus Christ was thus mocked, reviled, railed on, reproached, and put to shame by Jews and Gentiles, high and low, in courts and outside the city gates, with words, and acts, and signs, by mock royal robes, sceptre of reed and crown of thorns, by bended knees and scoffing salutations of Hail, King of the Jews (and by the traitor with a kiss, and Hail, Master), by blows and jeering cries of—Prophesy unto us, by spitting, by nailing, by gall and vinegar, by the cross and title over His head—(1) as Prophet, Matt. xxvi. 68; (2) as King, Matt. xxvii. 11, 29, 37, 42; (3) as Christ-Messiah, Matt. xxvi. 68; Luke xxiii. 35; (4) as Saviour, Matt. xxvii. 42; (5) as He who is to come, Matt. xxvi. 64; (6) as the Son of man, Matt. xxvi. 64; (7) as the Son of God, Matt. xxvi. 63, 64; xxvii. 43; Luke xxii. 70.

As He was not ashamed to bear such suffering and shame for us, we must not be ashamed to take up the cross, and, if called so to do, to suffer or bear shame for Him, Mark viii. 38; Acts. v. 41; Rom. i. 16; 2 Tim. i. 8, 12, 16; Heb. ii. 11; 1 Pet. iv. 16; 1 John ii. 28.

## LESSON XVI.

THAT MESSIAH'S ENEMIES WOULD PIERCE HIS HANDS AND FEET, PART HIS GARMENTS AMONG THEM, AND CAST LOTS FOR HIS VESTURE.

IN Psalm xxii. there is presented one who speaks of Himself as in a state of extreme distress and suffering, drawing near to 'the dust of death.' His condition is marked by such singular particulars, so unlike the experience of David or of any one known to us as living in the Old Testament days, that it would be useless to look for their accomplishment in the person of any man save in Jesus of Nazareth, who claimed to be the Messiah, of whom it was written in the law, the prophets, and the psalms.

The whole description in this Psalm, verses 1-18, is wonderfully like an account of the crucifixion told by the sufferer Himself. Verse 1, the opening words were quoted by Jesus on the cross, Matt. xxvii. 46. Verses 7, 8, so the mockers of Jesus did and said, Matt. xxvii. 39-43. Verses 12, 16, bulls and dogs compassing about, such were the fierce and brutal council and multitude who shut Him in and surrounded Him. Verse 16, the soldiers, who executed the sentence of death, pierced (or digged) the hands and feet of Jesus, by driving through them the great nails which fastened Him to the cross; and it is to be carefully noticed that there is no other sort of putting to death in which the hands and feet would be pierced except by crucifixion. Verses 11, 13, 17 point out those who sat, and those who stood gazing on Him as He hung, feasting their eyes on His helpless misery, Matt. xxvii. 36; Mark xv. 35; Luke xxiii. 35, 48. Verses 14-17, so the racking of His body by its own weight on the cross stretched the limbs to disjuncting, and made the bones, especially the ribs, stand out with such a strain that they might, so to say, be counted. Verses 14, 15 mark His exhaustion, faintness, and parching thirst after fasting, scourging, bleeding, and hanging for hours on the cross, and, in the last hour, the giving way of His heart, broken with reproach, Ps. lxix. 20. Verse 16, parting the garments among them, and casting lots for the vesture, the soldiers fulfilled to the letter, after they had stripped Jesus and crucified Him, Matt. xxvii. 35; Mark xv. 24; Luke xxiii. 34; John xix. 23, 24. Matthew and John quote the words of Ps. xxii. 18, as *thus* fulfilled.

It is written in another prophet, 'They shall look upon Me (Him) whom they have pierced,' Zech. xii. 10 (see also xiii. 6). The only piercing with which this can be connected is that in

Ps. xxii. 16 ; the apostle John, who wrote as an eyewitness of the crucifixion, affirms, 'When they came to Jesus, and saw that He was dead already . . . one of the soldiers with a spear pierced His side, and forthwith came there out blood and water.' This evangelist then quotes these words of Zechariah as fulfilled. Another scripture saith, They shall look on Him whom they pierced,' John xix. 33-35, 37. See 1 John v. 6, and Rev. i. 7.

The soldiers acted freely according to Roman law and custom in all that they did as to crucifying Jesus and dividing among themselves His garments, nevertheless they exactly fulfilled the Scriptures which they knew not. St. John adds, 'These things therefore the soldiers did,' xix. 24.

Another remarkable thing to be observed in Ps. xxii, is that the Righteous Sufferer, although forsaken and helpless, about to be brought by God into the dust of death, verses 1-15, is heard by God, and He looks forward to praise God's name and declare it unto His brethren, and speaks of a time when all the ends of the world shall turn to God and all kindreds of the nations shall worship before Him, verses 21-27. This agrees with no one and with nothing except with Jesus Christ, His resurrection, and the preaching of God's name and Gospel to all the world by the authority of Him who sent His apostles to every creature, Acts ii. 24 ; Heb. v. 5-7 ; Matt. xxviii. 19, 20.

The prophet Zechariah and the apostle John agree again in their testimony, for as the former wrote, 'They shall look on Me (or Him) whom they have pierced,' so the latter wrote, 'Every eye shall see Him, and they also which pierced Him,' Rev. i. 7.

We, every one of us, must appear before Him, see Him, and be seen by Him as we are, Rom. xiv. 10 ; 2 Cor. v. 10. How can we meet Him unless we have believed Him, loved Him, obeyed Him ? Looking unto Him now in faith we shall be accepted in Him, and, loving His appearing, we shall not be ashamed before Him at His coming, 1 John ii. 28 ; iii. 2 ; Rev. xxii. 12.



## LESSON XVII.

‘THE SUFFERINGS OF CHRIST’ SHOWED THE HOLY GOD’S HATRED OF SIN, AND SINFUL MAN’S ENMITY AGAINST GOD.

SUCH a thought as this may come into the mind of one who has not learned the teaching of Holy Scripture. If God knows all things He must have foreseen what wicked men would do to Jesus, and if He is able to do all things He could have prevented them from acting as they did; then, why did He not use His power to keep them from putting to death His beloved Son?

Answer—God is both allwise and almighty, but He cannot set His power against His wisdom, or ‘deny Himself,’ 2 Tim. ii. 13, by contradicting His own purpose: His plan of salvation contained Christ’s death and resurrection, therefore He could not save from death His Son, whom He sent into the world to die for our sins, and who willingly came to carry out that plan by obeying God His Father even unto death.

It is written, ‘The Lord hath laid on Him (*i.e.*, Messiah) the iniquity of us all,’ Isa. liii. 6; and again, ‘He hath made Him (*i.e.* Christ) to be sin for us (Him) who knew no sin,’ 2 Cor. v. 21. When Christ, in oneness of will with His Father, took on Himself the iniquity of us all, it followed that bearing the sin He must bear the curse for God’s broken law, Deut. xxvii. 26; Gal. iii. 10, and the punishment of sin which is death, Rom. v. 12–21.

By ‘the law,’ with its commandments and sentences of death, Heb. x. 28, God showed sin to be a deadly and an accursed thing, Rom. vii. 13; but by the cross of Christ God set forth this truth before all the world in the most awful manner, when, although Jesus Christ was His beloved Son—when that Son, taking upon Himself our sin, was ‘made sin for us,’ *i.e.*, although He was without any sin of His own, He stood in our stead as if He had been our very sin itself—then even He, the holy and beloved one, must die, He ‘bare our sins in His own body on the tree,’ 1 Pet. ii. 24, and so He ‘redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree,’ Deut. xxi. 23; Gal. iii. 13, 14.

Thus God showed openly His holiness and His mercy, so hating sin that when Christ took it upon Himself, He left even Him to suffer shame, agony, and death on the accursed cross: and at the same time so loving the world that, rather than we all should sink under the curse and perish, ‘He spared not His own Son but delivered Him up for us all,’ Rom. viii. 32.

Christ's words and works were known, His character could be known, and the only reasonable opinion to be formed concerning Him was that expressed by the blind man to whom He gave sight, and by Nicodemus, John iii. 2 ; ix. 30-33 ; His words were the words of God, His works were by the power of God, so that hearing Him was hearing God, seeing Him was seeing God, John xiv. 9, 10, and hating Him was hating God.

The old enmity between that which is of God and that which is of the wicked one, marked in Gen. iii. 15 ; iv. 8 ; Gal. iv. 29, &c., came to the full between Jesus, God's Holy One, and those who hated and killed Him, John viii. 40-44 ; xv. 23, 24.

They who make light of sin should look unto Jesus dying under its burden and curse. They who think little of God's love should learn its greatness as measured by the cross of Christ. They who flatter human nature, and imagine that only a few men are disposed to do evil, might learn how true the saying is, 'the carnal mind is enmity against God,' Rom. viii. 7, by the fact that after all Jesus Christ's works of mercy and of might, in return for His love, and in spite of His innocence, high and low, leaders and multitude cried, 'Away with Him, crucify Him,' John xix. 15 ; 1 John iii. 10-13.

We are called of God to hate sin as He hates it, and to desire the salvation of sinners even as He does, in love : thus we shall both hate and love by the Spirit of God dwelling in us, making us like Christ, who is the express image of God.

## LESSON XVIII

THAT MESSIAH WOULD BE NUMBERED WITH THE TRANSGRESSORS, AND WOULD MAKE INTERCESSION FOR THE TRANSGRESSORS.

IN Isa. liii. 12 there are two things foretold concerning Messiah ; the one is, 'He was numbered with the transgressors ;' the other is, 'He bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.' These two prophecies are remarkable for three things, viz., their clearness of statement, the unlikeness of the one to the other, their being, notwithstanding this unlikeness, so closely coupled together as they are in the text.

The Lord having laid *on* Christ the iniquity of us all, v. 6, and 'made Him to be sin for us,' 2 Cor. v. 21, He was by the appointment of God *as if* a sinner, and although '*in* Him is no sin,' 1 John iii. 5, He was thus 'numbered with the transgressors.'

Besides this Jesus was by wicked men called 'a sinner,' John ix. 16-24, 'a malefactor,' xviii. 30, and other evil names meaning a transgressor. He was numbered, reckoned, classed with transgressors in His trials and condemnations, Matt. xxvii. 38 ; Mark xv. 27, 'And the Scripture was fulfilled, which saith, And he was numbered with the transgressors,' v. 28, Luke xxiii. 32, 33 ; John xix. 18.

The intention of those who crucified Him *between* two thieves was to mark Him as a transgressor *with* transgressors : while they did this out of scorn and hatred of Jesus, they were, without intending to accomplish the Scripture, actually bringing the words of prophecy to pass.

He was put to death as a transgressor even as one doubly deserving death, viz., as guilty of blasphemy against God, and of sedition or rebellion against the earthly sovereign, Cæsar, Matt. xxvi. 65, 66 ; John xix. 7, and Luke xxiii. 2 ; John xix. 12.

The other prophecy, 'He bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors,' was also fulfilled by the Lord Jesus. We may take as an illustration or figure of this what is written in Numb. xvi. 47, 48. As Aaron the high priest offered incense and made atonement for the people, standing between the dead and the living, so Jesus, who by His death made atonement for us, did also set forth His prayer as incense, Ps. cxli. 2, and, between the two malefactors, one dead in sins, the other living by faith, He made intercession for the transgressors, saying, 'Father, forgive them ; for they know not what they do,' Luke xxiii. 33, 34.

This prayer our Lord said aloud; thus all who heard *might* have known His meekness, and *might* have called to mind these words of prophecy which are our present study.

If Jesus had been indeed a transgressor then He would not have been fit or able to 'bear the sin of many'; moreover, if He had transgressed the law of God as His enemies accused Him of doing, His prayer would have been abomination, Prov. xxviii. 9; but He prayed in all confidence of faith and love to His Father as when He said, 'I know that Thou hearest Me always,' John xi. 42.

That one of these prophecies (in Isa. liii. 12) was fulfilled as we have seen is a wonderful fact, that the other was as clearly accomplished is equally marvellous, that both these prophecies, so unlike in meaning, were fulfilled together at the same time even as they were delivered together in the same verse, more than seven hundred years before, this is if possible a more surprising evidence of the foreknowledge of God, of the certainty of His word, and of the truth that Jesus is the Messiah whom the prophets foretold.

We have good cause to bless Him, love Him, serve Him, who bore our sins, made atonement for us, and now 'maketh intercession for us,' Rom. viii. 27, 34; Heb. vii. 25. All men are transgressors, some are the 'dead in trespasses and sins,' Eph. ii. 1, others are 'alive unto God,' Rom. vi. 11; our High Priest, between these two, can give pardon, assurance, and life everlasting to every one who will call on Him in confession, repentance, and faith, as He did to that one who said, 'Lord, remember me when Thou comest in (or into) Thy kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, to-day shalt thou be with Me in paradise,' Luke xxiii. 42, 43.

## LESSON XIX.

'A BONE OF HIM SHALL NOT BE BROKEN.'

AMONG the rules for 'the ordinance of the passover,' it is written, 'Neither shall ye break a bone thereof,' Ex. xii. 43, 46, and 'They shall leave none of it unto the morning, nor break any bone of it: (i.e., of the paschal lamb) according to all the ordinances of the passover they shall keep it,' Numb. ix. 12.

If we look only to the lamb, whose flesh was to be eaten at the feast of the passover, this part of the Law does not appear to have much reason or meaning; but when we consider the whole ordinance of the passover as 'a shadow of good things to come,' Heb. x. 1, a prophetic figure of a greater deliverance for the people of God than that of Exodus when they were brought out of Egypt, then this command 'neither shall ye break a bone thereof,' is found to possess wonderful signification and value.

It is written in another place, 'Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the Lord delivereth Him out of them all. He keepeth all His bones: not one of them is broken,' Ps. xxxiv. 19, 20.

These two passages, one from the Law, the other from the Psalms, are far apart, yet they are much alike in wording, and, as they are 'given by the inspiration of God,' 2 Tim. iii. 16, their similarity cannot be an accident.

It was not lawful that the body of Jesus should 'remain all night upon the tree,' Deut. xxi. 22, 23, 'the Jews therefore . . . that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the Sabbath day . . . besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away,' John xix. 31.

Death by crucifixion was very slow. The crucified might linger for a day or two or even longer; breaking the legs was to hasten the end. Jesus died so soon that 'Pilate marvelled if He were already dead,' Mark xv. 44.

'The soldiers brake the legs of the first, and of the other which was crucified with him. But when they came to Jesus, and saw that He was dead already, they brake not His legs . . . these things were done that the scripture should be fulfilled. A bone of Him shall not be broken,' John xix. 32-36.

Thus it came to pass that, although it was intended by the Jews and by the soldiers that the bones of Jesus should be broken, not a bone of Him was broken, for 'the scripture cannot be broken,' John x. 35.

It is worthy of notice that, as it was written of the passover lamb, 'ye shall let nothing of it remain until the morning,' Ex. xii. 10, so the body of Jesus was taken down from the cross, almost as soon as He was dead, on Friday evening, and by Pilate's order, given to Joseph of Arimathæa for burial, Mark xv. 42-46.

The death of Christ was at *the Passover*, Luke xxii. 1, 2, 7-13; John xviii. 28; xix. 14. By the agreements between God's prophecy and providence in fulfilment of the Scriptures, Jesus was openly set forth as 'the Lamb of God,' 'the very Paschal Lamb,' 'Christ our passover sacrificed for us,' 1 Cor. v. 7. And, although 'He was numbered with the transgressors,' Mark xv. 28, and condemned to die between two malefactors, He was marked as the truly Righteous One, in many afflictions, yet saved out of them all by the Lord, who 'keepeth all His bones, not one of them is broken,' Ps. xxxiv. 18-20.

As Jesus was scourged and wounded but not a bone of Him was broken, so 'the Church which is His body,' Eph. i. 22, 23, although exposed to many sufferings and injuries, is 'kept by the power of God,' 1 Pet. i. 5, not one of His spiritual members is 'broken,' 1 Cor. xii. 12, 27, they are 'complete in Him,' Col. ii. 10.

As Christ is 'our passover' we are called and warned to 'keep the feast' in purity and sincerity, putting away all things contrary to the holiness of God, Ex. xii. 15-20; 1 Cor. v. 6-8. Christ Himself is our spiritual food, by faith we eat of His flesh, which is meat indeed, John vi. 53-56, 63. As the people of Israel, after they had eaten the first passover, were led out of Egypt by Moses, so, as we follow our leader, Jesus Christ, He leads us from the bondage of sin and death to the true holy land of promise.

## LESSON XX.

THAT MESSIAH'S GRAVE WOULD BE WITH THE WICKED (MEN), AND WITH THE RICH (MAN) IN HIS DEATH.

By Roman custom the bodies of the crucified were left on the cross, to be destroyed by corruption or beasts and birds; but Pilate granted the Jews their request that the bodies of Jesus and the two malefactors might be taken away according to Jewish law, Deut. xxi. 22, 23.

We learn from Josephus (a Jew who lived in the time of the apostles) how the body of Jesus was to have been buried, 'He that blasphemeth God, let him be stoned; and let him hang upon a tree all that day, and then let him be buried in an ignominious and obscure manner.' Note Josephus gives this as the direction of Moses. ('Antiquities of the Jews,' Book iv., chapter 8, § 6.)

The bodies of the two robbers were doubtless cast into the earth out of sight as soon as possible, and as it was written of Jehoiakim, so the enemies of Jesus might have expected it would be with Him, 'Buried with the burial of an ass, drawn and cast forth beyond the gates of Jerusalem,' Jer. xxii. 19.

In Isa. liii. 9, concerning the Messiah, is a prophecy having two parts, most closely connected, yet curiously differing in statement; the one being that His grave would be (or be appointed) with the wicked men, and the other that it would be with the rich man.

One might have said before the whole was made clear, If His grave is to be with the wicked men, how can it be at the same time with the rich man, who certainly is not said to be a wicked one?

The four Gospels show us how these two predictions were fulfilled to the letter in the burial of Jesus. 'He was numbered with the transgressors,' was put to death with malefactors, His body was taken down from the cross with their bodies, and with these *wicked men* it was appointed and commanded that He was to be put in the grave that same night; thus the first part of the prophecy was accomplished. Before the body of Jesus could be buried with disgrace in some pit, as the Jews desired and expected, something took place of which they had not thought, 'there came a *rich man* of Arimathæa, named Joseph, . . . and went in boldly unto Pilate, and besought Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus; and Pilate gave him leave. He came therefore and took the body of Jesus. And there came also Nicodemus

. . . and brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound weight ; then took they the body of Jesus, and wound it in linen clothes with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury. Now in the place where He was crucified there was a garden, and in the garden a new sepulchre wherein was never man yet laid. There laid they Jesus therefore because of the Jews' preparation day ; for the sepulchre was nigh at hand,' Matt. xxvii. 57-60, 66 ; Mark xv. 42-47 ; Luke xxiii. 50-53 ; John xix. 38-42.

Observe, Matthew calls Joseph '*a rich man* ;' Mark, 'an honourable counsellor, which also waited for the kingdom of God ;' Luke, 'a good man and a just, the same had not consented to the counsel and deed of them ;' John, 'a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews.'

The body of Jesus, though given by Pilate as that of a malefactor, whose grave was to have been with the wicked men, received from Joseph and Nicodemus honourable burial, such as was given to the great and the wealthy, being wrapped in linen clothes, with a large quantity of myrrh and aloes, costly spices, and then laid in a new tomb which Joseph had hewn out for himself in the rock, and which must have been an expensive work, fit only for the rich.

Note. After Jesus had given up His spirit to God, no injury or insult was ever again offered to His sacred body.

That these things came to pass as they did, simply, naturally, reasonably, does not make it less wonderful that thus the Scriptures were fulfilled concerning His burial.

We cannot do as Joseph and Nicodemus did, but we can care for Christ's members and treat with reverence the dead ; remembering that it is written, 'Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints,' Ps. cxvi. 15.



## LESSON XXI.

THAT MESSIAH WOULD BE DESPISED AND REJECTED OF MEN, A MAN OF SORROWS, ACQUAINTED WITH GRIEF; AND THAT HIS SOUL, WHICH HE WOULD POUR OUT UNTO DEATH, GOD WOULD MAKE AN OFFERING FOR SIN (Isa. liii. 3, 10, 12).

THAT all these things were written by the prophet concerning Messiah is easily seen, and that they were fulfilled in Jesus Christ can be as easily shown; while it cannot be made out that they came to pass in the person and experience of any other man.

Jesus was 'despised.' If He had come with wealth and worldly grandeur, if He had offered to break the power of Rome and to restore the kingdom to Israel, the chief priests would have honoured Him; but 'they derided Him,' Luke xvi. 13, 14, for His doctrines, and thought of Him as we find wicked men said of the first king of Israel, 1 Sam. x. 26, 27.

Herod, Annas, Caiaphas, Pilate, soldiers, priests and people showed by mocking, spitting, injuries and insults how they despised Him; most of all, when on the cross, they esteemed Him 'stricken, smitten of God,' helpless and forsaken, He was by them 'despised.'

Jesus was 'rejected,' publicly, and in the plainest, fullest manner as the Son of God, the Son of man, Messiah, Prophet, and King. 'Pilate saith unto the Jews, Behold your King! But they cried out, Away with Him, away with Him, crucify Him. Pilate saith unto them, Shall I crucify your King? The chief priests answered, We have no king but Cæsar. Then delivered he Him therefore unto them to be crucified,' John xix. 7, 14-16.

Jesus was above all men 'a man of sorrows:' to Him the words of Lam. i. 12 are more suitable than to any suffering one; in body, in mind, in soul and spirit He had pains, anguish, and agony, Matt. xxvi. 37, 38; Luke xxiii. 43, 44.

Jesus was fully 'acquainted with grief' (or sickness, R.V. Marg.), knowing it all with the knowledge of sympathy, and, moreover, taking on Himself and taking away our sins, the cause of our sicknesses and grief, verse 4; Matt. viii. 16, 17; 1 Cor. xi. 29, 32; 1 Pet. ii. 24.

Jesus 'poured out His soul unto death.' The word for *soul* is not the same as the one for *spirit*—soul in Hebrew is rather the bodily life, 'the life of the flesh.' The life-blood of Jesus was poured out when 'one of the soldiers with a spear pierced His

side, and forthwith came there out blood and water,' John xix. 34. This pouring out of His soul unto death was by the acting consent of His own will, for He had said, 'Therefore doth My Father love Me, because I lay down My life. . . . No man taketh it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself,' John x. 17, 18.

The death of Jesus was not only that of a martyr for the truth, nor only as an example for us; but of Him that is true which was not and could not be true of any other man, viz., His soul was made by God 'an offering for sin.'

Turning to the Law, we find this most important doctrine, 'The life of the flesh is in the blood; and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul' (or by reason of the life, R. V.), Lev. xvii. 11. Reading this verse of Leviticus along with Matt. xxvi. 27, 28 (see also Ex. xxiv. 8), we see that Jesus knew His life-blood to be an offering for sin.

God appointed the sacrifices of the Law, and accepted them, when offered aright; He appointed the soul of Christ Jesus to be 'an offering for sin,' and accepted that sacrifice, on behalf of us, once for all offered. Note. The word in Isa. liiii. 10, 'offering for sin,' is the word for 'trespass offering,' see the Law, Lev. v. 15-19; vii. 1-7. Jesus paid the penalty of death for sin, and made satisfaction for the trespass or wrong done against God, His atonement was for all sins of knowledge and of ignorance, both of evil done, and of good left undone.

'By the sacrifice of Himself,' Heb. ix. 26, Jesus has fulfilled all that was required under the Law and taught by figures in the 'whole burnt-offering,' the 'sin-offering,' the 'trespass-offering,' the 'peace-offering,' and other offerings appointed to be with 'shedding of blood,' Heb. ix. 11, 12-14, 19-22, 28; x. 8-14.

Moreover, the blood of Jesus Christ is to us what the blood of the Passover lamb was to the people of God in Egypt; we are safe only if we obey the word concerning the blood, and as long as we keep under the shelter of that blood till the time of judgment be past, Ex. xii. 21-23; Heb. xi. 28. See also Rom. iii. 24, 25; v. 9; Eph. ii. 13; 1 Pet. i. 18, 19; 1 John i. 7; Rev. i. 5; v. 6; xiii. 8.

## LESSON XXII

THAT GOD WOULD NOT LEAVE MESSIAH'S SOUL IN HELL (SHEOL), NOR SUFFER HIM, HIS HOLY ONE, TO SEE CORRUPTION.

THE place of souls after death is called in Hebrew *Sheol*, in Greek *Hades*, and in English *Hell*. The meaning of 'Sheol' is *asking*, Prov. xxvii. 20; xxx, 15, 16; Hab. ii. 5; of 'Hades,' *unseen*; of 'Hell,' *covered*. The place of condemned souls is often called Hell, but it is more properly named *Gehenna*. See in R.V. Marg., Matt. v. 22, 29, 30; x. 28; xxiii. 33.

In Psalm xvi. 10, the words are 'Thou wilt not leave my soul in Sheol' (or to Sheol).

Of whom the words in Ps. xvi. were written, and how they were fulfilled, is declared by St. Peter in Acts ii., speaking, not after his own merely natural judgment or opinion, but with the wisdom and authority of God's Holy Spirit.

While the body of Jesus lay in the sepulchre His soul was in the place appointed for souls which have departed from their bodies, but the prophecy in this verse (Ps. xvi. 10) is that God would not leave Messiah's soul there to remain, Luke xxiii. 43-46; 1 Pet. iii. 18, 19.

As Jesus was 'in all things made like unto His brethren,' Heb. ii. 17, therefore, where their souls went His soul went; but, as He was 'the Holy One of God,' death had no power to keep Him, Acts ii. 24, and, as He said, He had power to lay down His life, and 'power to take it again,' John x. 18.

Jesus did 'for every man taste death,' Heb. ii. 9, 14, or 'see death,' John viii. 51, 52; but He did not 'see corruption,' that is, His body did not become corrupt as do other bodies when laid in the grave. It was intended by Joseph and Nicodemus to preserve the body of Jesus as long as possible by the myrrh and aloes, spices used in embalming, but by the power of God the flesh of His 'Holy One,' was saved from corruption. As 'Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego came forth of the midst of the fire . . . upon whose bodies the fire had no power,' Dan. iii. 26, 27, so Jesus came forth from the grave, upon His flesh corruption had no power, He was dead and is alive for evermore, Rev. i. 18.

The apostle Peter declares, in the most solemn manner, that in the words of Ps. xvi. 8-11, 'David speaketh concerning Him,' (i.e. Christ), and that 'David, being a prophet, spake of the resurrection of Christ, that His soul was not left in hell, neither

His soul did see corruption,' Acts ii. 4, 14, 25-32. In like manner the apostle Paul, quoting Ps. xvi. 10, affirms that 'David . . . fell on sleep, and was laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption: but He whom God raised again (*i.e.*, Jesus) saw no corruption,' Acts xiii. 33-37.

As to the exact words of the prophecy, 'Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell,' note the precise statement, 'this Jesus hath God raised up,' 'whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death,' Acts ii. 24, 32; and again, 'He raised Him up from the dead, no more to return to corruption,' Acts xiii. 33, 34.

All real disciples of Christ are 'buried with Him by baptism into death,' and 'if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him,' Rom. vi. 4, 8. They can take for themselves the words of Ps. xvi. 9-11, 'My flesh also shall rest in hope. For thou wilt not leave *my* soul in Sheol. Thou wilt show *me* the path of life.' Christ's death was our death *in Him*, and His resurrection is our resurrection *in Him*, 2 Cor. v. 14, 15.

If Christ had not risen from the dead, *i.e.*, if His soul had been left in Sheol, if His flesh had seen corruption, then there would have been no resurrection for us; death and corruption would have triumphed over all; praying, preaching, striving would have been in vain, 1 Cor. xv. 12-19.

'But now is Christ risen from the dead,' verse 20, and in Him we are assured of life, John xiv. 19. 'This corruptible must put on incorruption,' 1 Cor. xv. 42, 50-54. 'God that raised Him (Jesus) up from the dead, hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled,' 1 Pet. i. 3-5, 21.

In this faith, hope, joy we are to live, as those who are *in Christ* dead to sin, and *in Him* risen to new life of holiness unto God, by the Spirit of God, Rom. vi. 11, 12; viii. 10, 11; 1 Cor. vi. 14; Phil. iii. 20, 21; Col. iii. 3.

## LESSON XXIII.

## THE CERTAINTY OF CHRIST'S RESURRECTION.

BEFORE considering the ascension of Jesus Christ into heaven, it is well to study with more attention the certainty of His resurrection, and to notice some objections made by those who do not believe that He rose from the dead.

He foretold His resurrection, Jonah i. 17, with Matt. xii. 40 ; xvi. 21 ; xx. 19 ; and, afterward, referred to it as written in the Old Testament, Luke xxiv. 25, 26, 46.

His resurrection is recorded by the four Evangelists, Matt. xxviii. ; Mark xvi. ; Luke xxiv. ; John xx. ; and by all 'the eleven' apostles, Acts ii. 14, 32 ; iii. 15 ; iv. 10, 20 ; v. 29-32. We have another independent witness in St. Paul, who more than once asserts that he *saw* the Lord Jesus, Acts ix. 17 ; xvii. 2, 3, 31 ; xxii. 8-15 ; xxvi. 13-16 ; Rom. i. 3, 4 ; I Cor. xv. 3-8, 15-20.

Objections made by those who do not believe the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

(1.) The oldest is found in Matt. xxviii. 11-15. *Answer.* The Roman soldiers would not dare to sleep at their post, but according to their falsehood they were all asleep. If they had slept they would not accuse themselves. If they were asleep they could not know that the disciples came and stole the body. The disciples were too timid to come and try to steal the body from armed soldiers, in the light of the full moon, for it was Passover time, which is always at full moon. The 'great stone' could not have been rolled away and the body carried out of the sepulchre without awaking the soldiers if they had been asleep, and who would have killed the disciples on the spot. The disciples had no motive for taking away the body of Jesus, they could not keep it unburied, and they could not give it a better burial-place than it already had. If they took the body away it could have been easily found by the chief priests and the soldiers.

(2.) That the disciples, hoping Jesus might rise from the dead, persuaded themselves that He was risen. *Answer.* One must be most foolish who can think these eleven plain men were all so silly as not to know the difference between a wish and a fact ; and it is clear that they did not expect their Lord's resurrection, Luke xxiv. 4-11, 41.

(3.) That they saw some one, and took him for Jesus. *Answer.*

They *could* not have made such a mistake, there was no man who could pass himself off for Jesus, the wounds in whose hands, feet, and side were 'infallible proofs,' Acts i. 3, which convinced even Thomas, Luke xxiv. 36-40; John xx. 24-29.

(4.) That Jesus was not dead, but only in a deathlike swoon or faint when taken down from the cross; and that He recovered when lying in the sepulchre. *Answer.* The soldier settled that objection with his lance. If Jesus had not been dead before the spear reached His heart, through a gash large enough for Thomas to thrust his hand into, that was enough to insure, and the soldier knew how to make sure, that any lingering spark of life would be quenched.

(5.) That the resurrection of Jesus was the rising of His doctrine in new life and activity after His death. *Answer.* The fact to which all the apostles bear witness is, not that, but, the *bodily* resurrection of Jesus, 'flesh and bones,' as He said of Himself, Luke xxiv. 39; Acts x. 40, 41.

(6.) That the eleven apostles being 'unlearned and ignorant men,' Acts iv. 13, might easily have been deceived. *Answer.* Plain men of common sense, in possession of their faculties, are as good witnesses to plain matters of fact as great scholars, philosophers, and men of science: this is a truth well known and acted on in all our courts of law where evidence is given as to truth and falsehood in matters of life and death.

(7.) That the apostles were not deceived, but deceivers. *Answer.* That is to say, they all conspired to frame a lie, and live a lie, for an advantage to themselves—a lie which exposed them to the 'loss of all things,' persecution, and death; a lie which they stood to before rulers and people who all knew, as well as they knew, that it was a lie, Acts iv. 13-20; v. 28-32; xxvi. 23-26; Phil. iii. 7-10.

We have the fullest, clearest, strongest evidence for the fact that Jesus was dead and buried, and that He rose from the dead. All objections against this truth are but as dust thrown by unbelievers into their own eyes while they try to cast it into the eyes of others. Be it our part to believe, confess, and worship with Thomas, taking to ourselves the special blessing left for us by our risen Lord, when He said, 'Blessed are they who have not seen, and yet have believed,' John xx. 29-31.

## LESSON XXIV.

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THAT MESSIAH SHOULD ASCEND INTO HEAVEN, AND SIT AT THE  
RIGHT HAND OF GOD.

THE ascension of Messiah into heaven, there to sit at the right hand of God, is written in the Psalms, '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,' lxxviii. 18. 'The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool,' cx. 1. Note. By 'at right hand' we understand the meaning to be—in honour and power.

How these prophecies were accomplished in Jesus Christ is fully shown in the New Testament scriptures. Ps. cx. 1 was applied to Him<sup>self</sup>, in reasoning with the Pharisees, to show that Christ is David's Lord, Matt. xxii. 41-46. It is quoted again of Jesus in Acts ii. 32-36, and of 'the Son of God' in Heb. i. 8, 13 (see also 1 Cor. xv. 25). The other passage, Ps. lxxviii. 18, is quoted of Christ in Eph. iv. 7-12, of His having 'ascended up far above all heavens,' and of the 'gifts for men,' which He has given to His Church, 'the body of Christ.'

Our Saviour's victory over death, proved by His resurrection, was completed by the triumph of His ascension, when 'He was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God,' Mark xvi. 19; Luke xxiv. 50-52; Acts i. 1-9, 12. With these let the following references be studied, John xiv. 2, 3; xvi. 28; Acts iii. 20, 21; Col. iii. 1; 1 Tim. iii. 16; Heb. iv. 14; vi. 19, 20; vii. 26; viii. 1-9, 12, 24; x. 12, 13.

The certainty of Christ's ascension into heaven is proved by the testimony of all 'the apostles,' with whom He walked and talked (as Elijah did with Elisha, 2 Kings ii. 9-11) up to the moment when 'while they beheld ('as they were looking,' R.V.) He was taken up; and a cloud received Him out of their sight.' Not in darkness did He depart, nor while there were no eye-witnesses, nor while men slept; but in the light of day, from the 'mount called Olivet,' 'while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up,' until, when they could see Him no more, 'two men in white apparel' (compare John xx. 12) said, '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,' Acts i. 9-12, with Zech. xiv. 3, 4.

An objection may be made, that no mention is made by Matthew

nor by John of Christ's ascension. *Answer.* It is as good as mentioned by Matthew in xvi. 27, 28; xxvi. 64, and is distinctly spoken of by our Lord Himself in John iii. 13; vi. 62; xx. 17.

When the Lord appeared to St. Paul and to St. John His light was 'above the brightness of the sun,' Acts xxvi. 13, 'and His eyes were as a flame of fire,' Rev. i. 13, 16-18. This heavenly glory of the ascended Christ was foreshown at His transfiguration, Matt. xvi. 28; xvii. 1-9; Mark viii. 38; ix. 1-10; Luke ix. 26-36.

Note. As we have seen in the foregoing lessons, some of the prophecies concerning Messiah foretell His afflictions, humiliation, sufferings, and death; while others declare His victories, exaltation, joy, and life for evermore. The Jews, not seeing how such unlike things could be all fulfilled in any *one* person, have, in their ignorance of unbelief, imagined that there are to be two Messiahs; one they call *Messiah, the son of Ephraim* (or son of Joseph), who will be the first to appear, and who is to suffer and be killed. The other they name *Messiah, the Son of David*, who, coming after the first one's death, will reign victoriously over all, and in Him will be accomplished all the glorious promises. This notion shows how perplexed the Jews are and 'do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God,' Matt. xxii. 29.

We, who know that Jesus Christ 'was delivered (unto death) for our offences, and was raised again for our justification,' Rom. iv. 24, 25, 'who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us,' viii. 34; Eph. ii. 5, 6, we are called to set our 'affection on things above, not on things on the earth,' Col. iii. 1, 2, and our hope is described in Phil. iii. 20, 21, in 1 Thess. i. 10, with iv. 14-18, 'Wherefore comfort one another with these words.'



## LESSON XXV.

## CONCLUSIONS.

## THE UNREASONABLENESS OF UNBELIEF.

THESE prophecies, with their fulfilment, so many and so remarkable as we have seen them to be, cannot be passed over by an unbeliever, as of no importance; he has to try how he may explain them *away*, *i.e.*, put forth something which, while professing to be an explanation of them, will really deny that the prophecies and their fulfilment were anything more than common natural words and events, giving no evidence of God's miraculous foreknowledge. We shall notice some of these pretended explanations:—

(1.) *Guesses.* That the wise men of Israel did, by accident, hit upon those things which did also, by accident, come to pass ages after the guesses were dead. *Answer.* Let any one try to guess, *correctly*, some uncommon things which will happen to a man who will be born some 700 years hence, say in A.D. 2586.

(2.) *Forecasts.* That is—the said wise men, understanding how things were going, and what other things were likely to follow, framed, as men do about the weather, an opinion of what it was most likely would be the effect of causes whose working they watched. *Answer.* All the practical men in science and in seafaring experience cannot make a *sure* forecast about next week's wind or rain, much less can any men forecast the circumstances of a man's life and death which are to turn out three centuries after they have left the world.

(3.) *Longings.* That is—Hebrew poets imagined a grand hero, who would be wonderfully great and good, a beautiful character, who would come up to the highest, purest desires of the nation's best minds. *Answer.* All the longings in the world could not make such a perfect man come, and when God sent His perfect Son, Messiah, He proved to be as a prophet foretold, 'a man of sorrows' whom the nation 'despised and rejected,' Isa. liii.

(4.) *Expectations.* That is—Hebrew patriots looked for a deliverer, one who should drive out the Romans, and restore the kingdom to Israel; they pictured to themselves such an one to come. *Answer.* Jewish patriots and politicians then and ever since would not look forward to a prince of the house of David

who would draw no sword for his father's throne, but would die by Roman hands on the infamous cross.

(5.) *Coincidences.* When two or more distant or different things come together, without any known cause or reason why they should do so, we say that is a 'coincidence;' e.g., Oliver Cromwell gained the battle of Dunbar on *September 3, 1650*, the battle of Worcester on *September 3, 1651*, and died on *September 3, 1658*. Now no such *accidental* agreements can be found in the history of any man as the agreements between the prophecies in the Old Testament concerning Messiah, and the accounts in the New Testament of Jesus Christ.

(6.) *Devices.* That is—crafty and clever persons contrived to bring about events which could be made to look like fulfilments of prophecy. *Answer.* If the disciples of Jesus had been the most artful and successful impostors who ever lived, they could not, and they would not, have conspired with Jews and Romans to get Christ 'smitten,' 'spit upon,' 'pierced,' and put to death, with the chief priests to say, *Matt. xxvii. 41-43*; *Ps. xxii. 8*, with the soldiers to do, *John xix. 23, 24*; *Ps. xxii. 18*.

(7.) *Mistakes.* That is—the prophets, so-called, were only speaking their own thoughts concerning things not far off, but that Christians have made the mistake of supposing that prophets spoke by the 'inspiration of God' concerning things He had ordained to come to pass, in particular concerning Christ. *Answer.* If the prophets had only their natural powers they could not have foretold the things which we have seen were fulfilled in Jesus, hundreds of years afterward. Also, to say that Christians have made such 'mistakes' is as much as to say prophets, apostles, and Christ Himself have all been mistaking the Scriptures.

(8.) *Imposition.* By this it is intended to say that forgers or impostors made up the writings called Prophets, Psalms, &c., also those others called Gospels, Acts, &c., so that one set should seem to be *foretellings*, and the other set should seem to be *fulfillings*. *Answer.* No scholar would deny that all the Old Testament Scriptures were in existence centuries before the birth of Jesus, and we can trace the New Testament back to the apostles. There never were forgers or inventors able to make up such a history as that of Jesus Christ.

*Conclusion.* The real unreasonableness is in those who refuse to believe what has the fullest evidence, while they profess to believe one or other of the eight notions we have looked at, notions without reason, and against reason. Be it further observed, that an unbeliever cannot hold all these eight notions; if he take up one he must reject another or all the others, *Luke xxiv. 25-27*.

## LESSON XXVI

## CONCLUSIONS.

## THE REASONABLENESS OF BELIEF.

IF we have to give answer to some one who asks a reason concerning our faith that Jesus is the Christ, or if we have to teach this faith to others, we can point out many facts and use many weighty arguments, among which are the following—

(1.) *The number of prophecies* concerning Messiah which it is easy to show have been fulfilled in Him, in His birth, life, ministry, sufferings, death, resurrection and ascension. In this set of Lessons, which does not profess to gather all the prophecies concerning Messiah which are contained in the Old Testament, we have studied about forty predictions and their accomplishment in Jesus Christ.

(2.) *The number of prophets*, and their many generations, from Jacob and Moses to Malachi, not less than twenty prophets; covering, at the shortest reckoning, more than a thousand years, or, if we include Jacob (who prophesied of 'Shiloh'), about thirteen hundred years. Yet these writers, living at different times and in divers places, left behind them many and various predictions, all which came to pass long afterward, in a space of about thirty-three years, in the life and history of Jesus.

It is as if twenty men, living here and there, had made among them about forty pieces of watchwork, taking many years to do so; at last, the parts, being all put together, were found to fit and make a complete watch, which, if such a thing could be, would prove that the artificers, whether they knew it or not, must have been working according to a plan prepared for them beforehand.

(3.) *The diversity of these prophecies.* To see how various they are it will be enough to look at the headings of the lessons, where the subjects are given as nearly as possible in the words of Scripture. Some of the things are so unlike other things foretold concerning Messiah that, as was mentioned in Lesson XXIV., some Jewish writers have said there must be two Messiahs, one to suffer, the other to triumph. The 'diversity' of predictions makes it the more wonderful that they are all fulfilled in Jesus, and the more convincing that Jesus is Christ, Acts xvii. 2, 3.

(4.) *The minuteness of prediction and the exactness of fulfilment.* See, for instance, the 'thirty shekels,' the 'smiting,' the 'spitting,'

the 'gall and vinegar,' the 'casting lots for vesture' (Lessons X., XIV., XV., XVI.).

In a great lock for a treasury there are many wards, and the key must have as many notches to correspond with them: the more and the more curious the wards are the more unlikely it is that any key, except the one made for the lock, will suit them; while the smaller the parts are the finer is the fit, and the clearer is the proof that he who made the lock made the key likewise.

(5.) *The prophecies cannot be so fulfilled twice*, but having been fulfilled, as we have seen, in Jesus, reason demands that we accept Him as the one concerning whom these things were written by the 'inspiration of God;' reason also forbids the thought that the same things can ever be fulfilled again in another, Heb. ix. 26, 28.

(6.) *The sufficiency of the witnesses.* Twelve men are held to be enough, as a jury, to decide on any question of fact, even for life or death. The twelve apostles were sufficient witnesses, John xv. 27; Acts i. 8, 21-26.

(7.) *The competency of the witnesses.* That is, their fitness and ability to give evidence concerning things within their own certain knowledge; inasmuch as they had senses, faculties, reason, memory, and power to make themselves fully understood.

(8.) *The honesty of the witnesses.* The twelve apostles had nothing to gain but all to lose in this world by giving their evidence as they did. They tell what they *knew*, not what they *thought*, and they do this with all simplicity, without art, concealment, excitement, fear, or favour, and without any change of material points, John xxi. 24; Acts ii. 32; iv. 19, 20, 33; 1 John i. 1-3.

*Conclusion.* When God calls on us to believe He gives us good reasons for believing. In this case, after hearing the evidence and examining the witnesses, reason and faith come to one and the same conclusion, which is best expressed in the words, 'We have found the Messiah . . . Him of whom Moses in the law and the prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth,' John i. 45, 49; vi. 68, 69; xi. 27; xx. 30, 31.

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