

THE
MOTHER'S CATECHISM;
OR,
A FAMILIAR WAY OF
CATECHISING OF CHILDREN,
IN THE
KNOWLEDGE OF GOD, THEMSELVES, AND THE
HOLY SCRIPTURES.

THE
PREFACE TO THE READER.

CANDID READER,

THIS is the errand of this preface, to assure thee that this treatise was left under Mr. Baxter's own hand, which now is exposed to thy view from the press. It was Timothy's great commendation and advantage, "That from a child he had known the Holy Scriptures, which were able to make him wise to salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus." (2 Tim. iii. 15.) Early draughts from this spring will give us such a relish of the waters issuing from thence as will render our most diligent reading of them both profitable and delightful to us. This book at once may profit both the mother and the child: and the contents thereof may, with greater ease and pleasure, impress themselves upon their minds and memories, by frequent reading of them, and discourse about them, than if children were confined to get large portions of catechisms without book. At least the former would greatly prepare them for the latter. Had Mr. Baxter completed what he did design herein, the reader might have been more advantaged thereby.

All that the author left thou hast. And, if it be desired, the continuation may possibly be exposed to view hereafter, by another hand. Pray heartily for the publisher; for none more need and crave it, than

Thine, in the best of bonds and services,

MATTHEW SYLVESTER.

THE
FAMILIAR WAY
OF
CATECHISING CHILDREN.

MOTHER. Come, child, are you willing to be taught your catechism ?

Child. What is the Catechism, mother ?

M. It is those things which you must know above all other.

C. Why must I needs know them ?

M. Because God made you to know them, and without such knowledge you cannot be good, nor blessed of God.

C. Cannot I do as well without learning as other children do ?

M. Those that do not learn that which God would have them learn, are all naught, and miserable, worse than beasts.

C. But I find that I had rather play, and talk of somewhat else than learn my catechism : I do not love it.

M. That is because you are foolish and naught ; and it is by learning that you must become wise and better, or else you will become undone for ever, and wish that you had never been born.

C. What is it that I must learn ?

M. You must learn to be wise, and good, and happy for ever, and to escape hell, misery, and sin.

C. I would fain be wise, and good, and happy : how shall I learn that ?

M. Not by knowing how to eat and drink, laugh and play ; and those little common things which beasts and fools know : but it must be by knowing great, and excellent, and needful things.

C. What are those things ?

M. The first thing that you must know is, what you are yourself, and what you are made for : do you know how man doth differ from all sorts of beasts and birds ?

C. Yes, I know a man from a beast as soon as I see them.

M. You see how the shape of their bodies differ : but that is a small difference. It is their souls that differ, which you cannot see ; their flesh and ours little differ, but in shape : the soul is the man, or his chiefest part, the body is but like clothing to the soul.

C. What is a soul, mother ?

M. The soul is a spirit, and cannot be seen ; but it is that which hath all the power : the body is but earth, and water, and air, and when the soul is gone, it rots and turns to earth.

C. How do you know that we have souls ?

M. We know it by that which the soul doth in us : do not you know that you are alive, and that you hear me now, and that you feel when you are hot or cold, well or ill, hungry or thirsty ? It is the soul by which you live, and see, and feel.

C. Dogs and beasts do see and feel, have they souls ?

M. Yes ; they have souls, or else they would be but dead carcasses : but their souls and ours greatly differ. And this is the difference which you must know.

C. What is the difference between our souls and theirs ?

M. You may see some of the difference outwardly between our works and theirs. Beasts do not talk as we do, nor write books, nor study laws, and other learning, nor make ships, nor build cities, nor govern kingdoms as men do. But yet because they do somewhat like these, it is a greater difference than all these that you must know.

C. What is that greater difference ?

M. Beasts, and birds, and fishes, are all made but for the use of man, and therefore their souls can do nothing but feed and preserve their bodies, and serve us : they never think of God or another world ; they live not by a law, but by the inclination of their nature : they have no hopes of heaven, or fear of hell, nor any conscience within to tell them of duty to God or sin against him : nor do they knowingly worship, serve, and seek him. But the soul of man is made for all this ; even to know God and his law, and our duty, and to think of and prepare for another life after death, and to fear punishment then, and hope and prepare for everlasting happiness, and to serve and obey God that we may obtain it. This is the difference.

C. Are you sure that a man is made for all this ?

M. Yes : do you not see that good men do all this ? Do they not teach and learn God's law, and obey him, and worship

him, and hope for heaven hereafter? Good men could not do this if God had not made them fit to do it.

But I must teach you how to know all this better hereafter, when I come to tell you what God saith of it in his word: I cannot teach you all at once.

The Second Part of the Catechism.—To know God.

M. I have told you first what you must know of yourself, and what a man is: I must next tell you what God is: for if you know not God, it were as good you knew nothing at all.

C. What is God?

M. God is not a body, nor like any thing that we can see: you must have no such thought of him.

C. How then shall I know what he is?

M. You must know him by his works, and especially by knowing yourself, and the soul of man, which is called God's image.

C. How can I know him when I do not see him?

M. Nothing but the lowest or basest things are seen besides the light. You never saw the wind: and yet you see and feel what it doth; how it can overthrow trees and houses: and by that you know that it is strong. You see roses, and other flowers, and apple trees, and pear trees; and you see and taste how one differs from another in flower and fruit; but you do not see that within them which causeth all the beauty, and sweetness, and difference, that appeareth without. You do not see that inward soul of birds and beasts, by which they live and move: nor (as I told you) you do not see my soul, nor your own. But you may know much of things unseen by what they do.

C. What be the works of God, by which I may know him?

M. All that you see in the world: God made them all, and God doth preserve them all. Do you not see all the country about you? This earth is many thousand and thousand times bigger than you see; and it stands upon nothing, but it is round like a ball, and hangs in the air, and the heavens are round about it, as far as you see them over it. All England is as much less than the whole earth, as a pin is less than all this house: and you see how the ground doth bring forth all sorts of trees, and herbs, and corn, and flowers: how many thousand thousands of birds, beasts, sheep, and other living things, do live in all countries, and how many thousand thousand men. All these God made, and feeds and keeps them: and yet all this earth is next to nothing, in comparison of the heavens, and the rest of

the world. Yonder sun that you see doth give light and heat to all this earth, and yet it is many thousand miles from hence: it goeth round about the earth every day and night, and goeth many thousand miles every hour; and yet it is many thousand times bigger than all the earth: many of the stars seem little to you, because they are many thousand miles from us, and yet are many hundred times bigger than all this earth: and no man can tell how many thousand thousand miles there may be beyond all the stars which we can see. Do you not look up and wonder at all this?

C. O yes, I wonder at it: but how shall I know God by all this?

M. Are you not sure that he that doth all this must needs be great and almighty, and have more power than all the world? How could he make such a world, and give all this power to sun, and moon, and stars, and sea, and land, if he had not more than they all himself? No one can give more than he hath to give.

C. I know God must needs be great and powerful.

M. And do you not perceive that God is most wise, and knoweth more than all the world? How else could he make heaven and earth in such admirable order, and keep them in the same course through all generations? How could he make nights and days, winter and summer? Yea, the very body of every man and beast is so wonderfully ordered, that the wisest men in the world are posed in searching into the work of God therein. We know not how a man is made, nor how he digesteth his meat into blood and flesh, nor any such like. All the men in the world cannot make one flower, or grass, nor one bird or fly: and it is God that giveth all men and angels all the knowledge and wisdom which they have: and therefore he must needs have more himself: he must needs know all the secret thoughts of all men in the world, because they cannot think a thought without him. Do you not perceive, then, that God is infinitely wise and knoweth all things?

C. Yes; he that made all, must needs know all.

M. And you must know by his works that God is as good as he is great and wise, and that he is better than all the world besides, both heaven and earth. For all things are good that he hath made: the sun is good; without its light, and heat, and motion, what were the earth but a dungeon and a grave? The moon and stars are good, heaven and earth are good, sea

and land are good, all the fruits of the earth, and all living things are good, save that man's sin hath brought a curse on them for his punishment: and among men, learning and virtue are good; our food and clothing, our parents and friends, and all good people are good. And could God make the world good, if he were not good?

C. I know God must needs be powerful, and wise, and good, above all; but yet I do not know him.

M. I told you that God is not of a bodily substance and shape, like things seen. He is a Spirit, and the Maker of all bodies and spirits. And therefore I next told you, that you must know him partly by knowing yourself, that is, your soul.

C. Is God like me, or like a man?

M. God hath made the soul of man in his own image, in some little likeness to himself: and so you may know somewhat of God by yourself, as you may see one's face in a glass.

C. Wherein is man's soul like God?

M. In many things: 1. Our souls are spirits, and cannot be seen, and so is God. 2. Yet it is by the soul that the body liveth, and moveth, and feeleth. It can do nothing without the soul; nor can anything in the world without God: it is God that doth all that sun and moon, sea and land, wind and rain, men and beasts, and all things do. 3. Our souls have life to move us, and understandings to know good and evil, and wills to love the good and hate the evil: and in this they are God's image; for God is life itself, and knoweth all things, and loveth good, and hateth evil more than we. So that as our souls are unseen spirits, of life, and understanding, and will, in our bodies, so God is more than a soul to the whole world, to heaven, and earth, and sun, and moon, and stars, and to every soul and body that is.

C. I understand you that God is a Spirit, that hath more power, and knowledge, and goodness, than all the world besides, but yet methinks I do not know him.

M. No one in the world knoweth God perfectly, but we may know so much of him as may make us wise, and good, and happy: and you must increase in knowing God more and more as long as you live. If you are willing to learn, God will help you to know him a great deal better hereafter than you can do now while you are but a child. You do not know how to build houses, nor write books, nor do any other thing which you see men do, and how then should a child know as much of God as a man

may know? When you come to understand the Bible, which is God's word, you will know God better. Therefore I must next teach you to know what God's word is, that it may teach you more.

The Third Lesson.—To know God's Word.

C. What is it that you call the word of God?

M. Because we are dull, and cannot sufficiently know God and his will by his works alone; therefore God hath more fully and plainly told it us from heaven.

C. Did God speak it himself?

M. God is not like a man, nor doth he talk as men do: but God can many ways make known his mind to us. As your soul doth talk by your tongue, and not of itself without it, so God hath sometimes spoken by angels, and sometimes by prophets, to whom he inwardly maketh known his will, as you inwardly know now what you think or see. And some part of God's word he did write himself; that is, the ten commandments: and all this is written for us in the Bible, which is God's Book.

C. Who did God speak this to, and when was it?

M. Not all at once, nor all to one man; but by degrees, as I teach you some one day, and some another. He first spake to Adam and Eve, and after to others, especially to Noah, and after that to Moses, and he taught Moses to write down all that God had said to him, and all that he said from the beginning of the world, which was meet for us to know: and he wrote the ten commandments in two tables of stone, and gave them to Moses to keep, and many other laws he spake to him by angels: and after that in many ages, when he had any new thing to make known, or sinful people to reprove, he often sent some prophet to them: and, last of all, he sent his Son from heaven, to tell us more than all before had told us.

C. What is a prophet?

M. One that God tells his mind to, either inwardly himself, or outwardly by an angel, and then sendeth him to tell others as from God.

C. How were men sure that God sent these prophets?

M. God did bring to pass all that he sent them to foretell, and the laws which he commanded by Moses, and by Jesus Christ, he owned by many great miracles before all the people, such as none can do but by the power of God, which I shall tell you more fully when I tell you the history of the Bible. Besides

that, the Bible is such a book for matter and manner, as none could write, if God had not taught it them.

C. How come we to have this book ?

M. Those that God gave it to did give it to their children ; and so it hath been delivered from one generation to another, as the laws of this land are, by which men hold their estates ; and God made it the office of ministers to keep and preach his word.

C. Are no other books God's word but the Bible ?

M. That which our teachers do take out of the Bible and teach the meaning of it, is so far God's word as it is in the Bible whence they take it : and good books to expound this word of God to us, and help us to practise it.

C. Is all true that is written in the Bible ?

M. Some part of the Bible tells us what lies the devil and wicked men have used to deceive men with : it is true that such lies were told. And all that God saith must needs be true, for it is impossible for God to lie.

C. Why is it impossible ?

M. Because God is perfect ; all lying is either for want of knowledge of the truth, or because men are naught, and love not the truth : or for want of power to attain their wills without a lie. But God wanteth neither knowledge, nor goodness, nor power, and he hateth liars, and condemneth them, and therefore cannot lie himself.

The Fourth Lesson.—Of the Creation.

C. What is it that the Bible tells us ?

M. The first thing is, how God made the world.

C. I would fain know that. How was it ?

M. In the beginning, God made the heaven and the earth. And the earth was first like a great puddle of dirty water, without light or shape ; and God did take six days' time to shape it out of this confused heap, and to adorn it with all the creatures which it possesseth.

C. Why did God take just six days to do it ?

M. We must not ask why God doth it : his will must satisfy us : but this helpeth us the more distinctly to take notice of God's work.

C. What did God make the first day ?

M. The light.

C. How did God make it ?

M. As he did all the rest ; by the power of his bare will and word. He said, ' Let there be light,' and there was light.

C. What did God make the second day ?

M. He made the firmament, which is called heaven.

C. What did he make the third day ?

M. He gathered the waters by themselves, which is the sea, and made the land dry, which is the earth. And he made the earth to bear grass, herbs, and trees, with seed.

C. What did God make the fourth day ?

M. He made the sun, and moon, and stars, to be lights, and otherwise useful to the earth.

C. Had he not made light before ?

M. As he made earth, in one mass, before he shaped it : but now he formed it into all these parts which we call sun, moon, and stars.

C. What did he make the fifth day ?

M. Fishes and fowls, with power to beget more and multiply.

C. What did he make the sixth day ?

M. All sorts of beasts on the earth ; and, lastly, man.

C. How did God make man ?

M. He made his body of the earth, and then breathed his soul into it.

C. Did not God make woman ?

M. When he made the man, he took a rib out of his side, and made it a woman, to be his wife, to show that a man and his wife should be, as it were, one.

C. Who were the first man and woman ?

M. Adam and Eve.

C. Did God make them good or bad ?

M. He made all things good, and he made man in his own image, with life for action, understanding for knowledge, and free-will to choose good and refuse evil ; and he put them in a most pleasant garden, called Paradise.

C. What did he bid them do there ?

M. God being man's Governor, gave him, in nature, a law to keep : and also commanded him to dress and keep the garden, and gave him all lower creatures for his use ; only, to try his obedience, he charged him not to eat the fruit of one tree, which was called the tree of knowledge, on pain of death.

C. And what did Adam and Eve do then ?

M. God suffered the devil to tempt Eve in the shape of a serpent, to eat of that one forbidden fruit, and she did eat, and persuaded Adam to eat also, and so they broke the law of God.

C. How did the devil tempt her to it ?

M. He told her that eating of the tree of knowledge would make her wise, and to be like God himself in knowledge ; and that God forbade it them because he would not have them know so much ; and that God would not put them to death as he had threatened, but they might safely eat it. And so because the fruit was pleasant, and she thought it would increase her knowledge, she did eat, and gave it Adam to eat.

C. What did God do with them then ?

M. God reprov'd and judg'd them, and cast them out of Paradise, and curs'd the earth to them, and judg'd them to labour and sorrow, pain and death. But yet, in mercy, so far forgave them as that he promised them a Saviour to deliver them from hell and everlasting misery, if they would believe him and repent, and sincerely obey him for time to come.

C. Did eating of one tree deserve so great a punishment ?

M. Yes : for it was Almighty God that they sinned against. And they believed the devil before God, and took God to be a liar, and to be their envious enemy, and the devil to be more their friend : and this they did when they were new made good, and able to do better, and had all things given them by God to serve them.

C. But why did God curse the earth ?

M. For a punishment to man ; that it should bear briars, and be barren without his toil, and be a place of sorrow to him.

C. But must all men suffer and die because Adam sinned ?

M. All that were since born came out of Adam and Eve : and when they were guilty, and naught, we must needs be born so to, for they could beget no better than they were themselves : and hence it is that the nature of all mankind is become naught ; and turned from God ; and this is called our original sin.

C. But what did God do to the devil for deceiving them ?

M. The devils were once angels, and fell by sin themselves, and therefore did bear malice both to God and man ; and he would make all others as bad and miserable as himself : and ever since then he hath sought man's destruction ; but God promised a Saviour that should overcome him, and deliver us.

C. What did God do on the seventh day ?

M. Having made the world in six days, God appointed the seventh to be the Sabbath day, in which man should rest from his labours, and worship God in remembrance of the creation.

C. And what doth God ever since ?

M. He preserveth and governeth the world which he made,

both heaven and earth. And he enjoyeth himself, and needeth nothing; but all need him.

The Fifth Lesson.—More of the Scripture History.

M. Do you remember what I taught you last?

C. You told me how God made the world, and how Adam and Eve sinned by the devil's temptation, and how we are all born in sin, and how God judged man to suffering and death, but pronounced a Saviour to deliver believers. But what did men do after Adam's fall?

M. Adam had two sons, Cain, the elder, and Abel, the younger. Adam had taught them both to worship God; but Cain was a bad man, and did not serve God with all his heart, but as bad men do now; but Abel was a good man, and served God heartily with the best he had. And God accepted Abel's service, and refused Cain's; and therefore, Cain envied and hated Abel, and killed him: and God forsook Cain, and punished his posterity.

C. Did the first man that was born kill his own brother? What made him kill him?

M. God suffered this to tell us all ever after, that the world will still have two sorts of men; bad men, that are the servants of the devil, and good men, that serve God; and that the bad will hate and persecute the good, because they are like the devil, and the good are the children of God; and their hearts and lives are contrary to one another.

C. But if God loved Abel better, why would he not save him from being killed?

M. It was no loss to him to be killed, for God took his soul to heaven: he was the first man that went to heaven, and the first martyr: and God giveth the best place in heaven to the martyrs, that suffer and die by wicked men for serving God. God loveth all good men, and yet he will not keep them all from being hated, and persecuted, and killed by the wicked. This doth but try them, as gold is tried in the fire, and prepare them for greater glory in heaven than other good men have.

C. What did the rest of the world do after?

M. God gave Adam another good son in Abel's stead, called Seth; and many of his posterity served God; and especially Enoch was so holy a man, that God took him up to heaven without dying; but Cain's posterity, and most others, proved so

bad, that at last all the good men were worn out, saving one called Noah and his household : and then God would bear with them no longer, but drowned them all with a flood of rain from heaven.

C. I pray tell me how they were drowned, and how Noah escaped ?

M. God told Noah beforehand what he would do, and bid him prepare an ark, and taught him how to make it, like a ship with many rooms, and covered, and bid him take into that ark two of all sorts of beasts and birds, and meat for them, and for himself, and his wife, and his three sons, and their three wives. And Noah believed God, and made the ark as God bade him; and he preached to those about him, to persuade them to believe and repent a long time while he was making the ark; but they would not believe him, till the flood came and drowned all, both man and beast; but Noah, and his household in the ark, were carried about, as in a ship on the water, till all the rest were drowned, and the waters dried up, and then he came out.

C. And what came of him after ?

M. He was an husbandman, and planted a vineyard, and made wine; and once, by temptation, he was drunk with the wine, and laid himself naked in his drink; and one of his sons, called Ham, in mockage, told the other two, called Shem and Japhet; and they, in reverence to their father, would not see his nakedness, but covered him with their faces backward; wherefore Noah blessed Shem and Japhet, and their posterity, and cursed Ham and his posterity, and they proved wicked men.

C. It is strange that so good a man would be drunk ?

M. It was but once, and thereby we are warned to take heed of fleshly temptations, and to beg God's grace to keep us, and not to trust ourselves.

C. Did all the world come from Noah ?

M. Yes; and when they increased to great numbers, one great man, called Nimrod, would needs build a tower so high, that if another flood came, it should not reach the top of it to drown them. And when abundance of men had worked at it long, God derided them, and stopped them.

C. How did he stop them ?

M. He made them forget the language which they all spake before, and made them speak every man a language of his own,

so that they understood not one another : and hence came many languages into the world.

C. And what did they next ?

M. Most men grew worse and worse, and forsook God, and worshipped creatures and devils; but some of Shem's and Japhet's posterity served God ; but especially one called Abraham; but I must tell you his story the next time.

The Sixth Lesson.—The History of Abraham and his seed.

C. You told me, that you would next tell me the history of Abraham. I pray you, how was that ?

M. When the world grew worse and worse, Abraham being one of the posterity of Shem, was so good a man, that God singled him out for a special blessing.

C. Why, what did Abraham do ?

M. He forsook idols, and served and obeyed God : and yet he lived till he was an hundred years old, and his wife Sarah fourscore and ten, before he had any child by her. And then God told him that he would give him a son, from whom should spring a great nation, which should be God's special people, chosen before all the world; and that Christ the Saviour should be of his seed, in whom all the nations of the earth should be blessed. Abraham and Sarah thought this strange at first, that a man of an hundred years old, and a woman of fourscore and ten, should have a son, and a nation spring from him; but seeing God said it, he believed God, knowing that nothing is impossible to him: and God took this so well, that Abraham did so fully trust him, that he imputed it to him for righteousness, and renewed his promise to him, and gave him a son called Isaac : and Abraham having an elder son called Ishmael, by another woman, that son abused Isaac, and God bid Abraham cast him out of his house ; but yet a great nation sprung from Ishmael. When Isaac grew up, he had two sons by his wife Rebecca at a birth, Esau and Jacob ; and God chose Jacob, and not Esau, to be the heir of those great blessings which he had promised Abraham : and Esau hated and persecuted Jacob, because God preferred him. And when Jacob grew up, he had twelve sons, and a daughter; and ten of these sons fed sheep and cattle in the commons far off, and the two youngest, Joseph and Benjamin, being loved best by their father, stayed at home. And God revealed things to come to Joseph in his dreams; and when Jacob sent Joseph to see how his brethren did, he

told them his dreams. One dream was, that they were binding sheaves in the field, and Joseph's sheaf stood upright, and all their sheaves bowed to it; signifying that all they should bow to him. Another dream was, that the sun, and moon, and seven stars, (signifying his father, and mother, and brethren,) did bow to him: and his brethren hated him because of his dreams, and because his father loved him more than them. And once when his father sent him to see how they did, when they saw him, they plotted how to kill him; and Reuben, the eldest, desiring to save him, got them to cast him into a dry pit: and presently some merchant carriers passed by that way, who carried spices into Egypt to sell: and Judah, the fourth brother, got the rest to sell him to these carriers; and so they took his coat, and dipped it in blood, and sent it to his father, making him believe that some wild beast had torn and devoured Joseph; but while Jacob mourned, Joseph was carried into Egypt, and sold there to Potiphar, who was chief marshal to Pharaoh. And Joseph being Potiphar's servant, God blessed all that he was trusted with; so that his master prospered extraordinarily in house and field, so that he made Joseph his steward, and trusted him with all that he had. Now Joseph was a very comely, well-favoured man, and his mistress fell in love with him, and tempted him to lie with her; but he feared God, and still denied her. At last, when he was alone, she took hold of his coat, and said lie with me; but he ran away, and left his coat with her. When she saw this, to hide her own lust and sin, she called out to the servants, and told them that Joseph would have forced her to lie with him: and making Potiphar, her husband, believe it, he was angry, and put Joseph in a prison. When Joseph was in prison, God made the gaoler kind to him, so that he trusted him to keep all the rest of the prisoners, and he had the rule of all, and God prospered all that he did. At that time the king was displeased with his chief butler, and chief baker, and put them into the same prison where Joseph was: and at last both of them had a special dream, but they could not tell the meaning of them; and God gave Joseph the gift to expound dreams. And Joseph expounded their dreams to them, and told them that the baker's dream signified that he should be hanged; but the butler's dream signified that he should be restored to his place; and he prayed him then to remember him; and so it came to pass; but the butler did not remember Joseph. After this, king Pharaoh himself had a great dream, which troubled

him, and none could expound it. He dreamed that he saw in a meadow seven fat kine, and there came seven lean kine, and did eat them up : then he saw seven full ears of corn, and seven thin, blasted ears came and eat them up. Then his butler remembered Joseph, and told the king how he had expounded their dreams in prison. And the king sent for him, and brought him out of the dungeon, and told him his dreams. And Joseph answered him, that God had made known to him what he would do ; that there should be seven years of great plenty ; and next seven years of great famine in many countries ; and therefore he advised the king to choose a wise man, to set officers over all the land of Egypt, to take up the fifth part of all the food of the land, the first seven years, that there might be food enough for the seven years of famine. And the king believed him, and liked the motion, and thought no man so fit as Joseph, that had the Spirit of God. So he made Joseph ruler over all his house, and the next person to himself, and put his ring on his hand, and a gold chain about his neck, and made all men bow to him, and obey him, and made him ruler over all the land, and appointed him to gather up the fruit and corn into storehouses all over the land, till the famine should come, that they might not perish : and thus God began to fulfil Joseph's dream ; but his father and brethren dwelt in Canaan, another land, and knew none of all this ; but I must tell you the rest the next time, and not too much at once.

The Seventh Lesson.—The Rest of the History of Joseph and Jacob.

C. I long to hear the rest of the history of Joseph.

M. When Joseph had been seven years ruler, next the king, over all the land of Egypt, his old father, Jacob, thinking all the time he had been dead, the seven years' famine came next, as Joseph had foretold ; and when all the corn was eaten up, the people all lived on the stores that Joseph had laid up ; and they were fain to sell their cattle and lands to the king to buy them bread, that they might not famish, and after that to sell themselves to be the king's servants ; and so Joseph gave them corn to sow the ground : and ever after it became a law that the fifth part of all the fruit of the land should be the king's, except the priests' lands.

C. Were not they, and their cattle and land, the king's before ?

M. No; not till they sold it him, with themselves. The king was their ruler; but they, and their lands, and goods, and cattle were their own, and not his.

C. And what became of Joseph's father and brethren?

M. The famine was also in their land; and when it was so great that they were ready to famish, and they heard that there was corn in Egypt, Jacob sent his ten sons to buy corn there, keeping the youngest, Benjamin, whom he best loved, at home with him; and when they came into Egypt they were brought to Joseph to buy corn. Now Joseph was grown up, and the king had changed his name, and they knew him not, nor what was become of him; but Joseph knew all them when he saw them. And Joseph carried it sourly to them, and took on him that he did not know them, and asked them whence they came; and they bowed to him, and told him they came from the land of Canaan to buy corn; and he took on him to take them for enemies and spies; and they told him they were twelve brethren, the sons of one man, and one was dead, and the youngest was at home with his father. And he bid them send one and fetch their young brother, and then he would believe them. And he put them three days in prison: and at the end of three days he granted that they should all go home, and bring corn to their father, save one that he would keep in prison, as a pledge, till they returned; for he remembered how cruelly they had thought to murder him, and had sold him, and what his dream was, that they should bow to him. And when they were all in prison, and thus in danger, they remembered their sin against Joseph and repented, and said one to another, "We are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul, when he entreated us and we would not hear: therefore is this distress come upon us. And Reuben said, Did not I speak to you, and say, Do not sin against the child, and you would not hear: therefore his blood is now required." Thus God makes men's consciences condemn them for their sin, when punishment comes, that before would take no warning. All this while Joseph heard them, and they thought that he understood not what they said, because he spake in the language of Egypt: and he turned away from them, and wept to hear them bewail their sin, and then came to them again.

C. And what did those that he sent home?

M. He kept Simeon prisoner; and when the other nine were to go, he made his servants fill their bags with corn, and give

them provision for the way, but secretly to put every man's money into his bag, to the corn. And when they came to their inn, and opened their bags for provender for their asses, they found their money, and then their hearts sunk yet more, for they feared God did it to punish them; but they went home to their father Jacob, and told them all that had befallen them, and how the ruler of the land took them for spies, and spake roughly to them, and kept Simeon prisoner till they should bring Benjamin to him. And Jacob lamented, and asked them why they would tell him that they had another brother. And they said, Could we know that he would say, Bring your brother?

C. And did they bring him?

M. Jacob resolved that he should not go, till the famine was so great that they must send to Egypt for more corn, or die, and there was no remedy; and they durst not go without their brother, for Joseph said, "Ye shall not see my face, unless you bring your brother with you." And when there was no remedy, Jacob let him go, and sent them for more corn, with double money, to restore that which was put into their bags again.

C. And how did Joseph receive them next?

M. They took a present of balsam and spices with them, beside their money. And when they came to him, Joseph told his steward that those men should dine with him, and bid him make full provision for them. And when he came home at noon they gave him their present, and bowed to the ground. He asked them how their father did. And when they saw they must dine with him, they were afraid lest he would charge the money on them that they had, and keep them prisoners; and they told the steward what had befallen them, and how they had found their money in their bags; but the steward bid them fear not, for he had their money. And when Joseph saw his young brother Benjamin, he spake kindly to him, but was fain to get away into his chamber to weep; and when he had wept awhile he washed his face, and came out to them again. And at dinner he set them by themselves, every one according to his age, and they marvelled at it; and he sent every one of them of the best from his own table, but twice as much to Benjamin as to the rest: and because he would keep them longer, and affect them more, he made his steward fill all their sacks with corn, and again put their money into their sacks; and into Benjamin's sack he put his own silver drinking cup. And when they were

gone out of town, in the morning, he sent his servant after them, to charge them with stealing his cup, and to bring them back. At this they were sore amazed, and said, "God forbid that we should do so: let him die that hath the cup, and let us be my lord's servant's:" but when they were searched, the cup was found in Benjamin's bag. Then they were all confounded, and came back to Joseph; and when he accused them for stealing his cup, they fell to the ground and said, "God hath found out our iniquity; we are all thy servants." But he said, No; none shall be my servant but he with whom the cup was found: but Judah told him how hardly he had got his father to consent that Benjamin should go with them, and that he was fain to undertake to bring him back, and that his father would die with grief if he returned not; and therefore besought him that the lad might go home, and that he might be a bond servant in his stead. Then Joseph could no longer refrain, but made all his servants go forth, and he wept so loud that the king's house heard him: and he opened himself to his brethren, and said, I am Joseph; doth my father yet live? But they could not answer him, for they were troubled at his presence, remembering their sin against him. But he comforted them, and said, "I am Joseph, your brother, whom you sold into Egypt; but be not grieved nor angry with yourselves, for God hath sent me hither before you to preserve life:" and he told them all that God had done for him, and that there were two years of famine yet to come; so he wept over them, and kissed them, and bid them make haste home, and tell his father all this; and bid him come away with all his children's children, and his flocks, and he would give them the best place in Egypt, because of the famine that was yet to come. And when the king heard that Joseph and his brethren were there, he commanded also that their father and they should come and dwell in Egypt, in the best place that Joseph would choose for them. So Joseph gave them wagons and provision, and a present to his father, and sent them all away.

C. Sure Jacob would be very glad of this.

M. You may easily think how it would transport him with joy; but at first he could not believe it, that Joseph was Lord of Egypt, who, he thought, had been many years dead; but when he saw the wagons, and that all was true, the old man's heart revived in him with joy and thankfulness to God; and so

he and all his children's children went into Egypt, and there Pharaoh welcomed them; and Joseph placed them in Goshen; the best part of the land.

The Eighth Lesson.—The History of Sodom and Lot.

C. I would fain know what God did with all the other countries all this while?

M. We can know no more of that than God hath told us in his word. But this we know, that God had every where some righteous men whom he loved; and in every nation, they that feared God, and did righteously, were accepted of him. But the most proved wicked men, and idolaters, and hated them that were good. And to show this, I will next tell you the history of Sodom and of Lot, which should have gone before, but that I would put Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob's history together.

C. What was the case of Sodom?

M. In Abraham's days there were four kings joined together, and made war on many countries, and destroyed many people near the place where Abraham dwelt: and there were five kings went out to fight against them, the king of Sodom, and of Gomorrah, and of Admah, and of Zeboim, and of Zoar: and the four kings conquered these five, and carried away the people and their goods. In Sodom, Abraham had a brother's son dwelt, called Lot, and he was carried away prisoner with the rest. When Abraham heard of it, he armed all his servants, (who were three hundred and eighteen,) and got some neighbours to join with him, and by night followed the four conquering kings, and overtook them, and fought with them, and destroyed them, and rescued Lot, and all the persons and goods that they had taken; and when he had done, he gave them all back to the kings that had lost them, and would keep nothing of it to himself. Then there was one Melchizedek, that was king of Salem, and priest of the most High God, that came out and blessed Abraham, and Abraham gave him tithes of all; yet after this great deliverance, Sodom and Gomorrah, and the other cities and kings that were delivered, continued very wicked men, till God destroyed them.

C. How did God destroy them?

M. As Abraham was sitting in his tent door, three angels, in likeness of travellers, passed by; and Abraham being used to entertain strangers, bowed to them, and entreated them to stay and eat with him. They consented; and he killed a calf, and made

them a feast : upon this the Lord renewed his promise to him, to give all that country to his seed ; and told him what he would do to Sodom, and said he would not hide it from Abraham, because he would command his children, and his household after him, to keep the way of the Lord : so he told him that in Sodom and Gomorrah were so very wicked men, that he would destroy them all. Abraham remembered his cousin Lot in Sodom, and he humbly made his prayer to the Lord, that he would not destroy the righteous with the wicked, but would spare the city for the righteous' sake, if there were but fifty righteous in it : and the Lord promised to spare it, if there were but fifty. Then Abraham prayed that he would spare the city, if there were but forty-five ; and the Lord granted it. Then Abraham prayed that he would spare it, if there were but forty ; and again, if there were but thirty ; and again, if there were but twenty ; and the Lord still granted it. Then Abraham begged of God not to be offended, if he once more asked, that he would spare it, if there were but ten righteous ; and the Lord promised that also. Then Abraham knew that there was no remedy.

C. And what became of Lot in Sodom ?

M. Two angels, like men, came to Sodom, to Lot's house ; and the men of Sodom were so unnaturally wicked, that they commanded Lot to bring out the two strange men, that they might abuse them like women ; but Lot humbly entreated them not to do so wickedly with strangers ; but they reviled Lot, (just as the wicked do godly men now,) and said, " This one fellow came in to sojourn, and he will needs be a judge : now will we deal worse with thee, than with them." And as they crowded towards the door to break in, the angels pulled in Lot, and struck them all with blindness ; and yet this miracle did not stop them, but they groped to find the door. Then the angels told Lot who they were, and that they came to destroy the city ; but God had mercy on him ; and therefore bid him take his wife, and his children, and his two sons-in-law, and presently fly out of the city for his life ; but his sons-in-law would not believe the danger, but took it for a fanatic mockage. And while Lot lingered, the angels took hold of him, and his wife, and two daughters, and brought them out of the city, and bid them fly for their lives to the mountains, and look not back behind them ; but Lot prayed the Lord to let him escape to Zoar, the least of the five cities ; and God heard him, and saved that city for his sake. But God rained fire and brim-

stone upon Sodom and Gomorrah, and consumed all the cities and the people there, and round about; but Lot's wife that was forbidden did look behind her, and God turned her into a pillar of salt, to warn us not to disobey God. But Abraham stood afar off, to see what would become of Sodom and Gomorrah, and saw the smoke of it like a great furnace, rise up toward heaven. And the place where these cities stood, and all the plain about them, remaineth ever since to this day, a dead sea, or stinking, pitchy lake, which nothing can live in; and travellers familiarly see it that go that way.

Thus you see, by the example of Sodom, how God hateth sin, and how he will use the wicked at the last; and yet that in this very wicked city of Sodom, Abraham thought there might have been fifty righteous persons; and that one man's family that was righteous, and mourned for their wickedness, God would not forget, but saved him.

The Ninth Lesson.—The Israelites' Deliverance out of Egypt.

C. Will you tell me what became of the children of Jacob and Joseph in Egypt?

M. When they were planted in Goshen, God did so greatly prosper them, that they increased more than the Egyptians, and were so many, that after some ages, when the old ones were all dead, another king arose, that knew not Joseph: and he was afraid lest in time they should grow too strong for him, and he endeavoured to destroy them.

C. What did he do to them?

M. First he gave the midwives command to kill all the sons that were born to them at their birth; but God put his fear in the midwives, and they made excuses, and said that the women (then called Hebrews and Israelites) were delivered before they came, and so did not obey the bloody king. Then the king made them to be his slaves and drudges, and he made them daily labour in making brick, with which he built great, stately monuments; and he set taskmasters over them, that should beat them, if they made not as many bricks as he required of them; and thus they were used cruelly, like beasts, and cried, in their bondage, to God for deliverance; and God did hear, and did deliver them.

C. How did he do it?

M. One of the Hebrew women to keep her new-born son from being murdered, made a basket of bulrushes, and daubed

it with slime and pitch, and put the child into it, and put it into the flags by the river's brink ; (when she had hid it three months, and could hide it no longer ;) and his sister stood afar off to see what would become of him. And God so ordered it that the king's daughter came that way with her maids to wash herself in the river, and they saw the basket, and opened it, and found a comely child, and he wept. The king's daughter said, " This is one of the Hebrews' children : " the child's sister said, " Shall I go and call a nurse of the Hebrew women to nurse it for thee ? And she said, Go." So his sister ran and called his own mother ; and so she nursed her own child for king Pharaoh's daughter, and she called his name Moses, and he was bred up as her son : and when he was a man, God made him the captain and deliverer of the Hebrews called Israelites.

C. How did he deliver them ?

M. God stirred him up ; and one day, when he saw an Egyptian abuse an Israelite, he killed the Egyptian, and saved the Israelite. The next day two of the Israelites were striving, and Moses said to him that did the wrong, " Why strikest thou thy fellow ? " And it being a bad man, he said to Moses, " Who made thee a prince and a judge over us ? Wilt thou kill me as thou didst the Egyptian ? " Thus bad men cannot endure to be reprov'd. And when Moses heard that it was known, he was fain to fly out of the land, for fear of Pharaoh and the Egyptians, till that king died. And Moses married a daughter of Jethro, priest of Midian. And when he kept his father-in-law's flock in the wilderness, an angel of God appeared to him in a flame of fire, in a bush, which burned and was not consumed ; and God by the angel spake to him out of the fire, and said, " I am the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob ; I have seen the affliction of my people in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their task-masters, and am come to deliver them, and to bring them out of Egypt into a good land which I promised Abraham. And I will send thee to Pharaoh that thou mayest bring them out." And Moses said, " Who am I, that I should go to king Pharaoh, and bring them out ? " But God charged him to go and tell the Hebrews, and tell the king, that the Lord God had sent him to bid them come and sacrifice to him in that wilderness. And God told him, " I am sure that Pharaoh will not let them go ; but I will smite Egypt with all my wonders, and then he will let them go." And Moses said, " They

will not believe me, that God appeared to me." And God said, "Cast down the rod that is in thy hand;" and he did, and it became a serpent; and Moses was afraid of it. And God said, "Take it by the tail;" and he did, and it became a rod again. And God said, "Put thy hand in thy bosom," and he did; and when he took it out it was all leprous. And God said, "Put thy hand in thy bosom again;" and he did, and it was whole as before. This was to encourage Moses to trust God's power and word, and that he might do the same, and other miracles, before the people, to make them believe. But Moses made excuses, and said he was slow of speech, and prayed God to send some one else. And God reprov'd him, and said, "Aaron thy brother can speak well, and he shall be thy mouth, and thou shalt speak from God to him, and take this rod in thy hand, and with it thou shalt do signs (or wonders)." So Moses took his wife and children, and the rod of God, and went back into Egypt; for they were all dead that sought his life. And Moses told his brother Aaron all that God had said; and Moses and Aaron called all the elders of Israel together, and told them; and they believed, and were glad that God would deliver them.

C. But what said the king to them?

M. Moses and Aaron went to king Pharaoh, and said, "Thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel, Let my people go, that they may hold a feast to me in the wilderness." And the king said, "Who is the Lord, that I should obey his voice to let Israel go? I know not the Lord, neither will I let them go."

C. Why would he not let them go?

M. Because they were his servants, and did his work, as our horses and oxen do for us. And the king reviled Moses and Aaron for hindering the people from their work, and bid the taskmasters lay more burdens and work upon them; and whereas before they had straw given them to burn their brick with, he bid them gather stubble themselves, and they should make all their task of brick, and have no straw; for they talked of going into the wilderness to serve God, because they were idle. And now their case was far worse than before; for they were beaten when they could not make as much brick as they did before. And when the people complained to the king that they were beaten for not making brick without straw, the king said, "Ye are idle, ye are idle, and therefore talk of going to serve God; you shall have no straw, and yet have none of your task abated." And when the people found themselves in so bad

a case, they were impatient with Moses and Aaron, and laid the fault on them, as making the king abhor them. And Moses complained to God for sending him to make the people more miserable than before. But thus doth God often use to make his servants' sufferings greater, when he is about to deliver them.

C. Why doth he so ?

M. To humble them, and try their faith and patience, and to try their enemies; and to show his power the more in their deliverance.

C. And what did they do next ?

M. Then God said to Moses, " Now you shall see what I will do ; " and bid him go tell the Israelites, that the Lord doth promise to deliver them. But the anguish of their hearts was so great, that they would not hear Moses and Aaron.

C. What did they then ?

M. Then God bid Moses go again to Pharaoh the king, and say, " Let my people go ; " and if he ask for a sign, cast down thy rod, and it shall become a serpent. And they did so ; and the king had some enchanters, or witches, about him, and they did so too, and their rods turned into serpents ; and therefore the king refused to obey God and let the people go.

C. By what power did the witches do this ?

M. By the devil's power, which God suffered, to show his own the more ; for when they were all turned to serpents, Moses and Aaron's rod devoured all theirs.

C. And what did they after this ?

M. The first plague was this : God bid Moses put forth his rod, that was turned to a serpent, over the river, in the sight of the king; and the waters were turned to blood, and the fish died and stunk; and their ponds were turned to blood, and the people had no water. Yet the king's heart was hardened, because his conjurers did the same; God suffering it to make his power yet more known.

The second plague was this: God bid Moses stretch forth his rod over the waters, and it should fill the land with frogs; and he did so, and the frogs swarmed over the land, and in the king's house and bed-chamber; and the conjurers did the like. Then the king called Moses and Aaron, and said, " Entreat the Lord to take away the frogs, and I will let the people go." So Moses prayed, and God heard them, and the frogs died; but the dead heaps made the land to stink. And when the king

saw that he was delivered of them, his heart was hardened again.

Then God sent the third plague: Aaron stretched forth his rod in the dust of the land, and the dust turned all to lice, which swarmed over all the land: and the conjurers tried to do the same, but could not; and therefore told the king, "This is the finger of God." And yet his heart was hardened, and he would not let them go.

Then God sent a fourth plague, even such swarms of flies as destroyed all the fruit of the land. But in Goshen, where the Hebrews dwelt, there were none. Then the king called Moses, and bid them go and sacrifice to God in Egypt. But Moses said, "Nay; but they would go out three days' journey." The king bid them go, so they would not go far off. So they prayed to God, and God took away all the flies. But the king's heart was hardened still; and God sent the fifth plague, which was a great murrain upon the cattle, that all the horses, oxen, and sheep, &c., of the Egyptians died; but not one of the Israelites' cattle died. And yet the king would not let them go.

Then God sent the sixth plague: Moses and Aaron took a handful of ashes before the king, and sprinkled it in the air, and it turned to boils upon men and beasts, even on the conjurers themselves. And yet the king would not let them go.

Then God sent the seventh plague: Moses told the king, "To-morrow I will send hail that will kill all the cattle that are not fetched home out of the field." And those Egyptians that believed God fetched home their cattle; and the rest were killed with hail, fire, lightning, and thunder. But there was none in Goshen, among the Israelites. Then the king repented, and said, "I and my people have sinned, and the Lord is righteous, I will let you go: pray God to cease the hail and thunder." But when the thunder ceased, his heart was hardened again, and he would not let them go.

Then God sent the eighth plague: they told Pharaoh, that locusts, or caterpillars, should so swarm as to darken the land, and eat up every green thing that was left. Then the Egyptians petitioned the king to let the Hebrews go, before all the land was destroyed. And the king consented that the men should go, but not their wives and children; but they would go all or none. And then he reviled them, as if they made religion a cloak for rebellion to be gone. But God sent the locusts, and

they eat up all that was green in the land. Then the king called Moses and Aaron, and said, "I have sinned; pray God to deliver me this once;" and they did; and God sent a wind that carried away all the locusts. Yet the king's heart was hardened, and God sent the ninth plague, and darkness came upon all the land, that for three days they could not see or stir. Then the king bid them go, with children and all, so they would leave their cattle behind (for death or darkness was not in Goshen); but they would not leave a hoof behind. Then Pharaoh bid Moses come near him no more, for if he came again he should die. And Moses said, "Content, I will see thy face no more." Then God said to Moses, "I will send but one plague more, and then they will thrust you out. Therefore let all the people borrow silver, and gold, and jewels, of their neighbours, and take them with them."

C. But was not that stealing?

M. Yes, if God had not bid them; but all things are God's, and he may give them to whom he will.

C. And what was this last plague?

M. About midnight, God killed the eldest sons in all the houses of Egypt, even the king's and all. And there was a great cry all over the land, and they came and entreated the Israelites to be gone. And this was the night of their deliverance, which God commanded them to keep in remembrance to all generations.

C. How were they to keep it in remembrance?

M. By a feast and sacrament, which God appointed. For God, by Moses, bid all the Israelites make ready that night, and every house was to kill a lamb, and with hyssop strike the blood on the door posts without, and to eat the flesh roasted with unleavened bread and bitter herbs; they must eat it girded and shod, with their staves in their hands, in haste, as ready to be gone. And every door that had this blood on, God's angel passed by, that night, when he killed all the first-born of Egypt. And that all generations should keep this great deliverance in remembrance, God commanded them to do this again in the same manner once a year on that same day, for ever.

C. And how and whither did they go?

M. When every house had one dead, the king and people thrust them out, and they lent them their jewels. And they

carried dough unleavened, and all their cattle: six hundred thousand men went, besides children, and a mixed multitude. God had before told Abraham that his seed should sojourn four hundred and thirty years, and then he would give them deliverance, and the land of Canaan; and the very day when the four hundred and thirty years were accomplished, God brought them out. And they had a great wilderness to go through, and the Red Sea between them and it, before they could come to the promised land.

C. How, then, did they get over?

M. God was resolved to make this deliverance so great, that they and their children should never forget it: and though there was a nearer way than over the sea, God would not let them go that way. But his angel caused a pillar of fire by night, and of cloud by day, to go before them all the way, to show them which way they should go. And when they were gone, Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and he repented that he let them go from serving him: and he made ready his chariots and armies, and followed after them, and came near them; so that the sea was before them, and the king and his army at their backs, to kill them.

C. What did they do then?

M. This new danger made the Israelites again, in fear and unbelief, to cry out against Moses and Aaron for bringing them out to die in the wilderness, but God did it to show his power. For Moses cried to the Lord, and the angel of God that went before Israel, removed, and went behind them, and was a dark cloud between them and Pharaoh, so that he could not see them. And God bid Moses hold his rod over the sea, and the sea divided to the right hand and to the left, and was as a wall of water on either side, and dry ground between; and God made the Israelites go through it on foot: and Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and he followed them into the sea; and the angel took off their chariot wheels and stopped them, and then they would have fled back, but could not: for as soon as the Israelites were over, Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and it came to its place, and drowned the king and all his army, so that one man of them did not escape.

C. Sure the people would never forget this, nor displease or distrust such a God any more.

M. They presently made a psalm of praise to God; but how they behaved themselves in the wilderness I shall tell you next.

The Tenth Lesson.—Israel's Travels in the Wilderness.

C. What did Moses with them when they were got through the sea?

M. For all the power of God that they had seen, Moses could not quiet the people, nor get them to trust God in any danger, want, or difficulty. And God purposely tried them whether they could trust him.

C. How did he try them?

M. First when they came into the wilderness, they went three days and found no water; and when they found water at Marah, it was bitter, and then they murmured again against Moses, and God showed him a tree, which he cast into the water; and it made the water sweet to drink.

C. How were they next tried?

M. When they had no meat in the wilderness, and they murmured again against Moses, and wished they had died in Egypt, where they had meat enough. And God said to Moses, I will rain bread from heaven for them, and they shall go out and gather it every day; but on the sixth day they shall gather for two days, and none shall go out to gather on the Sabbath-day. And God's glory appeared to reprove them for their murmuring; and God said at evening, you shall eat flesh, and in the morning you shall be filled with bread, that you may know that I am the Lord. So at evening abundance of quails fell among them, and they had flesh enough: and in the morning a dew fell and left a little round thing behind it like coriander seed, called manna. And this God gave them for bread: but he forbade them to keep it till morning, that they might receive it every day from God. But some would needs try, and that which they kept till morning had worms, and stunk. And when God bid them gather enough for two days before the Sabbath, it did not stink on the Sabbath-day. And some of them did not obey God, but went out to gather manna on the Sabbath-day, but they found none, and God reproved them. This bread God fed them with in the wilderness forty years: the taste of it was like wafers made with honey.

C. What was their next trial?

M. They came to another place where was no water, and they murmured against Moses for bringing them thither to kill them with thirst: and Moses was too much troubled himself at their murmurings, and said to God, What shall I do with this

people, they are ready to stone me? And God was displeased with them, and with Moses himself, for trusting him no better, and showing it by his impatience and complaint: and God bid him go, and with his rod strike the rock of Mount Horeb before the people: and he did, and water flowed out enough for them all.

C. And what was their next trial?

M. Next a people, called Amalek, came and fought against them; and Moses sent Joshua and his men to fight with them. And Moses stood on the hill with the rod of God in his hand, and (he being above fourscore years old) when his hands fell down Amalek prevailed, and while his hands held up Israel prevailed: and Aaron and Hur set him a stone to sit on, and they two held up his hands till sunset, and so Amalek was overthrown by Joshua.

C. What did they next?

M. Next Moses's father-in-law, Jethro, priest of Midian, came to see him, and Moses told him all that God had done; and he saw how Moses was overwhelmed with judging all the people alone, and he advised him to choose able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness, and set them over thousands, and hundreds, and fifties, and tens, to judge the smaller matters, while Moses inquired of God, and told them his laws, and judged of greater matters, (if God commanded this,) and so Moses did.

C. And what did they next?

M. Next God, by Moses, called all the people, to know whether they would make a covenant with God to obey him for ever, and he would be their God, and take them for his peculiar people above all others on earth. And the people consented, and God and they made a solemn covenant. And when they had promised to obey him, God called Moses up to Mount Sinai, and came, by his angel, in fire and thunder, and the mountain trembled and smoked, and God forbade the people to come near it, but they trembled at the sight and noise: and there God spake to Moses the ten commandments, and then spake to him many other particular laws by which he would rule the people of Israel, which were presently written down. And the people saw as it were the glory of God, and promised to be obedient to all his laws; and so became a settled commonwealth, of which God himself was the lawgiver, and chose him that should be chief commander under him, and entailed the priesthood on

Aaron and his line, and the tribe of Levi. And the Lord kept Moses forty days in the mount, and wrote in two tables of stone the ten commandments.

C. What were these ten commandments ?

M. I will tell you the rest of the history first, and then I will tell you what they are afterward.

C. Sure the people durst not break God's law after such a terrible sight as all this ?

M. No : they did not forbear sinning so long as Moses was in the mount with God : because he stayed forty days, they said we know not what is become of him. And they brought gold to Aaron, and compelled him to make an idol of it in the shape of a calf, and called that their God that brought them out of Egypt, and worshipped it : so bad is man, if God leave him to himself.

C. What became of them for this ?

M. God was offended, and would have destroyed them all presently, but that Moses prayed for them. And when Moses came down and saw their sin, his anger kindled, and he cast down the tables of stone that God had written, and brake them ; and he chid Aaron, and he caused three thousand of the people to be presently killed : and God plagued the people for this golden calf ; and Moses burned it, and cast the dust on the water, and made them drink it. And God made the two tables to be written out anew.

C. And what did they next ?

M. Moses desired to see God, and God hid him in a rock while he showed him a glimpse of his glory at his back parts ; and as he past by, proclaimed his name by which he would be known to all.

C. What was that ?

M. " The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, and transgression, and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty ; visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation."

C. What did they next ?

M. Next God taught them to make a tabernacle, like a tent, which they could carry about, to be as a temple, a place where God would still be sought : and it was made with great art and cost ; and a cloud stood before it ; and there God was sought

by Moses and the priest, and there he told them his mind, and answered them. And in an ark in that tabernacle God made them keep the two tables of stone that were the ten commandments, and a pot of the manna with which God fed them, and Moses' rod with which he did his miracles, that their children after them might see that all those things were true.

C. What did they next?

M. When God, by Moses, had delivered them all his laws, a wilderness life was hard; and the people complained, and God was offended, and sent a fire that burnt up some of them, till Moses prayed.

But after this they grew weary of eating manna, having no other meat, and their appetite longed for flesh, or other meat; and they again murmured against Moses: and Moses grew impatient of their murmurings, and prayed God to set some other over them, and not leave all this burden upon him; and God bid Moses call threescore and ten of the elders, that had been officers over the people, and bring them to the door of the tabernacle, and there God spake to Moses, and took of the spirit (of power) which was on Moses, and put on them, and so made them partners with Moses in the government. And then God gave the people flesh, but with his wrath, because they lusted, and were not content with his provision.

C. What was it he gave them?

M. He told them they should have flesh a whole month together, till they loathed it: and Moses said, they are six hundred thousand men, and whence shall they have flesh? And God said, is my hand shortened? And God made a wind from the sea bring quails, that fell all about them, and a day's journey round them, and they lay a yard thick upon the ground, and the people gathered them for meat. But while the flesh was in their mouths, God sent a plague among them, which killed many of the murmurers.

C. What did they next?

M. Moses married an Ethiopian woman (a black), perhaps to typify that the God of the Israelites would also be the God of other nations, and call them. And Miriam, Moses' sister, and Aaron his brother, murmured, and spake against him for it: and God was offended, and struck Miriam with a leprosy, but Moses prayed, and God restored her in seven days.

C. What did they after this?

M. When they drew towards the land of Canaan, which God

had promised to give them, Moses chose twelve men out of the twelve tribes, to go as spies unknown, and see what a land it was, and to bring the people word. So they were forty days searching the land, and when they returned, ten of them discouraged all the people, and told them it was a good land, but the cities were walled, and the people many and strong, and giants among them, and they should never be able to overcome them. But two of them, Caleb and Joshua, brought of the grapes, and told them it was an excellent land, and the people of it would be but as bread to them, and bid them fear not God would deliver them into their hands. But the people believed the other ten, before these two, and were frightened, and mutinied more than ever, even against God himself, for bringing them, and their wives, and children to be destroyed by the sword; and wished they had died in Egypt; and they consulted of making them a captain to go back to Egypt; and when Caleb and Joshua would have encouraged them, they cried out, "Stone them." And in this rebellion the glory of God appeared at the tabernacle; and God said, "How long will this people provoke me, and not believe me for all the signs that I have done among them?" and God was about to destroy them all with the plague, had not Moses stopped it by earnest prayer. But God decreed that never one of them should enter into that land, save Caleb and Joshua, and their children that were but twenty years old, but that they should all die in the wilderness for their unbelief, and murmuring; yea, even Moses and Aaron: but their children should possess it.

And the ten men that had searched the land, and disheartened the people, all died presently of the plague.

C. What did the people then?

M. When they heard God's sentence, that all above twenty years old should wander forty years in the wilderness, and there die, then they mourned, and repented of their mutiny, when it was too late, and then they would needs go suddenly, and fight to get the land. But Moses forbade them, and told them, now God was against their going, and if they went they should be overthrown: but they obeyed not God (for they would go when God forbade them), and they were beaten by their enemies.

C. What did they then?

M. Worse and worse: then Korah a Levite, with Dathan, and Abiram, two great men, got two hundred and fifty chief men to join with them; and they drew the people into rebellion

against Moses and Aaron, and accused them of deceiving and destroying the people; and said they took too much upon them for Moses to make himself their prince, and Aaron priest, when all the congregation were God's people, as well as they: and said they promised them a good land, and performed nothing, but brought them to perish in the wilderness; and would put out the people's eyes. When Moses heard this, and saw the rebellion, he bid Korah, and his Levites, come and offer incense to God, and Aaron should do so too, and God would show which of them he had chosen.

Then God offered to destroy them all, but Moses prayed to him to spare the people: then God sent him to tell Dathan and Abiram what God would do to them, and to charge all the people to get far enough from them, unless they would die with them: and as soon as Moses had spoken, the ground opened, and swallowed up these leaders, and their wives and children, and all that belonged to them; and then the earth closed up again. And the people ran away at their cry, lest the earth should also swallow up them. And the two hundred and fifty that were to offer incense were all burnt up as they offered, by a fire from the Lord.

C. Sure they would take warning after all this?

M. No, the next day all the congregations got together against Moses, and said, you have killed the people of the Lord. Then God again offered to kill them all, and sent a plague, but Moses prayed to God and stopped it: but the plague first killed fourteen thousand and seven hundred rebels.

C. What a wicked people was this; had God no better people in the world than these?

M. No; all the rest of the nations were worse: by them we may see what a blind mind, and naughty heart, is in us and all men, till God's grace sanctify us: they judged by their own blind reason, and their selfish interest, as most men do.

C. Did this quiet them, and make them obedient?

M. When they saw that there was no remedy, they cried out 'We all die, we perish; God kills us all that come near the tabernacle;' instead of bewailing their own sin.

And to convince the murmurers, whom God had chosen to rule them, God bade Moses call twelve chief men of the twelve tribes, and bade every man bring a rod (or wand) and lay them all in the tabernacle, and Aaron's rod had his name written on it: and in the morning they found that Aaron's rod (and no other) did

spring forth with buds, and blossoms, and almonds; to show them whom God did choose.

C. Were they quiet after this?

M. Then God made them turn back into the wilderness, and they came again to a place that had no water; and they again murmured against Moses and Aaron, as promise-breakers, and said they had brought them to a place that had neither seed, fruit, nor water; and wished they had been killed with the rebels, or died in Egypt: so hard is it to be patient in suffering, and to trust God when no outward help is seen.

Then God bade Moses strike the rock as formerly, and plenty of water gushed out. But Moses and Aaron did not there honour God, by so strong a faith as they should have done; for God to'd them that they should die in the wilderness; and Aaron died shortly after.

C. What did they then?

M. The Edomites would not let them pass through their country, so that they were fain to go a great way about. And then some Canaanites fought with them; but God gave Israel the victory, and they destroyed king Arad, and his cities.

But again, they were impatient with the long way, and having so many years no bread but manna, and they murmured against Moses for bringing them out of Egypt, to die by famine, in a wilderness. Then God sent fiery serpents among them, that stung many of them to death; and then they repented and begged for mercy: and God bade Moses make the likeness of a serpent in brass, and set it upon a pole; and every one that was stung was cured, when he looked upon the brazen serpent, which was a type of Christ.

C. What did they next?

M. When they had long travelled, Sihon, king of the Amorites in Heshbon, and Og, king of Bashan, would not let them go through their country, but fought with them; and God delivered them and their cities to the Israelites, and they killed them, and possessed their land: and now they had some place besides a wilderness to dwell in: but this was in the way to the promised land, the river Jordan being between it and them.

C. What did they next?

M. The land of Moab was near them, and the king called Balak, was afraid of the Israelites; and there was a man called Balaam, not far off, that could prophesy, and king Balak sent some lords to him to entreat him to come and curse the

Israelites, that he might hope to overcome them ; and he would give him great rewards. Balaam bid them stay all night, and in the morning he would answer them. And in the night God charged Balaam not to go with them, nor curse Israel, for God would bless them. So Balaam gave them their answer, and sent them away. But king Balak sent other greater men, and offered him greater things if he would come. He told them, that if they would give him a house full of silver and gold, he could not go beyond the word of the Lord ; but bid them stay till morning for their answer. And in the night God bid him go with them, but be sure to say nothing but what God put into his mouth ; so he went with them. But because his heart was to have got the money and honour by cursing Israel, if God would suffer him, therefore God sent an angel that stood with a sword in his way : his ass saw the angel, and Balaam did not ; and the ass went out of the way to pass by the angel, and Balaam beat his ass : then the angel stood in a narrower way between two walls, and the ass hurt his foot up to the wall, to go by the angel ; and Balaam beat the ass again. Then the angel stood in so narrow a way that there was no passage by ; and then the ass lay down, and Balaam beat him again, and God made the ass to speak, and reprove Balaam for striking him. And God opened Balaam's eyes to see the angel, and when the angel reprov'd him, he offered to turn back again ; but God bid him go on, but be sure to say but what he bid him. And when he was come, king Balak met him, and told him his desire, and took him to a high hill, that he might see Israel and curse them. And Balaam caused seven altars to be there built, and offered sacrifice on every one, to hear what God would bid him say. And God made him pronounce a blessing on Israel, instead of a curse. And king Balak was angry with him for blessing them that he called him to curse. And he brought him to another hill, and built seven altars also there, and sacrificed ; and God made him bless them from thence yet more. And king Balak took him to another hill, and there they built seven altars, and sacrificed ; but there God made Balaam prophesy of all the prosperity of Israel, and bless them more. And the king was in a rage and bid him be gone ; God had kept him from honour.

C. What did the people after this ?

M. They sinned again : when they saw the women of Moab, they began to commit whoredom with them ; and these women tempted them to come to the service of their idols, or false

gods; and so the Israelites were tempted to do as they saw the idolaters do: and God was offended, and commanded to kill them: and Phinehas, the priest's son, killed one man and woman; and the plague ceased when it had killed four-and-twenty thousand. Yea, God made Moses make war against the Midianites, whose women had tempted the people to whoredom and idolatry; and they killed five of their kings, and burnt their cities, and took all that they had, and brought away the women and children. And Moses made them kill all the male children, and every woman that had lain with a man, and so revenge that sin.

C. What else was done by them?

M. God made Moses to set Joshua to be chief ruler in his place when he was dead; and gave commandment that all the Canaanites, whose land God would give Israel, should be killed; because they had been idolaters, and committed all manner of wickedness, which God would revenge, and not forgive.

C. And what came next?

M. Last of all, Moses repeated God's laws, and left them written for the people, and gave to two tribes and a half their inheritance in the land that he had taken on that side Jordan; and God called him up to mount Nebo, to die, at six-score years old, and God buried him; and Joshua was to bring them over Jordan, into the rest of the promised land.

The Eleventh Lesson.—Joshua's Conquest of Canaan.

C. What did God do with them when Moses was dead?

M. God made Joshua their captain, and charged him to be courageous, and obey his law, and promised to be with him. Jericho being the first city that Joshua was to take, he sent spies to search it: and a woman called Rahab, believing that God would give it them, hid them; and she and all her friends with her were therefore spared. But they must first pass over the river Jordan, where God confirmed their faith by a miracle, like that at the Red Sea: as soon as the priests that bare the ark touched the waters, they divided, and stood on an heap, till the Israelites were all past over on dry ground. And Joshua set up twelve great stones, that their posterity might believe it.

C. And how did they take Jericho?

M. First, Joshua and all the people renewed their covenant with God, and circumcised all the males; (for they had not been circumcised in the wilderness, of forty years, that were born there;) and celebrated the passover, and then they had

manna no more, but eat of the corn of the land. And God sent an angel to Joshua, to bid him go round about the city six days with the ark, by seven priests, and blow trumpets made of rams' horns; and the seventh day go seven times, and the walls should fall down: and so they did. And God made them kill all the people, save Rahab and her company, and burn all their goods, save the gold, silver, and brass, for God's treasure; and they did so.

But one man, called Achan, was covetous; and when he saw a wedge of gold, and a rich garment, he stole and hid them, which cost them dear.

C. Why, what came of it?

M. They went next to take a city called Ai, but God left them, and the men of Ai beat them; and then their hearts were down, and Joshua lamented, and prayed to God; and God told him there was sin among them, and he would be with them no more till the sinner were destroyed. So Joshua called them together, and cast lots, and the lot found out Achan; and he confessed it, and he and his sons and daughters, his cattle, the stolen gold and silver, and all that he had, they burnt, when they had stoned him; and so God's wrath was turned away.

C. This seemed but a little fault?

M. It is no little fault to break the law of God wilfully. Afterward they conquered Ai. But the Gibeonites saved themselves by craft: they sent ambassadors to Joshua with old shoes and clothes, who told him they dwelt in so far a country, that their clothes were worn out in coming to him, and that they came to make a league with him; so Joshua believed them, and swore a league with them. And when he knew that they were Canaanites that had deceived him, he durst not break his oath, but made them servants. And after this many kings, for fear, joined together, and fought against Joshua and Gibeon, and Joshua overcame them; and God rained great hailstones on them, and killed many. And Joshua prayed that the sun might not go down till they had been avenged on their enemies; and so the sun and moon (or the light at least) staid a whole day extraordinary: and Joshua killed the five kings, and took many cities. Then many other kings joined to fight against Israel (for most great cities had their kings in those times), and God gave them all, and their cities and lands, into Joshua's hands; and then Joshua divided the land among

them, to every tribe their part by lot. And at Shiloh they set up God's tabernacle, where they were to inquire of his will: but much of the promised land was much unconquered. And Joshua rehearsed to the people all God's mercies, and exhorted them to obey his laws, and so died at an hundred-and-ten years old. And Israel obeyed God, and prospered, all the days of Joshua, and while the elders lived, that with Joshua had seen the wonders of God.

The Twelfth Lesson.—The History of the Judges after Joshua.

C. What did they when Joshua was dead?

M. God sent them to conquer and possess the rest of the land, but commanded them to drive out all the Canaanites, and other old inhabitants, and make no league with them, lest they should draw Israel to worship their false gods, and learn their wicked customs. But the Israelites did not obey God, but were contented to make most of the Canaanites tributaries to them, and suffered them to dwell among them, because they met with difficulties in conquering them. For this, God was offended, and sent an angel to tell them that these Canaanites that dwelt among them, should henceforth be thorns in their sides, and a tempting snare to them. And so it proved.

C. Why, what came of it?

M. When the old men were dead, another generation sprung up, that knew not the Lord, nor the wonders that he had done for Israel. And they were tempted by the Canaanites to worship their idols, and forsake the Lord; and God forsook them, and gave the Canaanites power against them, to overcome them, and make them servants. But when affliction made them repent, then God sent a judge to deliver them. And when the judge was dead, they turned to idolatry and sin again.

C. Who were these judges?

M. First God gave the king of Mesopotamia a victory over the Israelites, and they were eight years his servants. Then they cried to God, and he sent Othniel, Caleb's brother's son, to be their captain; and he delivered them, and they had quietness forty years. Then they fell to sin again, and God gave them up to Eglon, king of Moab, eighteen years. Then they cried to God for help, and he raised up one Ehud, who took on him to bring the king a present, and stabbed him, and escaped, and raised the Israelites in arms, and killed ten thousand Moabites; and after this they were quiet fourscore years. And after him

rose up Shamgar, and slew many of the Philistines that had afflicted them. When Ehud was dead they fell to sin again ; and God gave them to Jabin, king of Hazor, who oppressed them twenty years. Then Deborah, a woman prophetess, judged them, and she called Barak to be their captain : and she and Barak conquered Sisera's general ; and he fled and hid himself in the tent of Jael a woman, who spake him fair, and laid him to sleep, and then struck a nail in his head, and killed him. Then they were quiet forty years.

But they turned to sin again, and God gave them up to the Midianites and Amalekites, that destroyed their fields, and took their cattle : then they cried to God again, and God sent first a prophet to reprove them, and next an angel to deliver them ; and the angel appeared to Gideon, and made him captain : but Gideon was afraid, till God wrought a miracle to encourage him ; and God gave him a victory with a very few men. The Midianites fled, and killed one another ; and Oreb and Zeeb, two of their princes, were slain, and an hundred-and-twenty thousand, and Zeba and Zalmunna, their kings. Then they had rest forty years. But when Gideon was dead, they worshipped the idol Baal again.

C. Who ruled them next ?

M. Gideon had threescore-and-ten sons, by several wives, and one (Abimelek) by a concubine. This one son enticed the men of the city of Shechem to make him their king ; and he went and killed all his brethren, except Jotham, who escaped. But God revenged the murder, and the men of Shechem turned against him, and one Gaal led them, and he destroyed them that made him king, and their city : and when he attempted to burn them that fled to a tower at Thebez, a woman cast down a piece of a millstone on his head ; and when he saw he must die, he made his armour-bearer kill him.

After him Tola judged Israel twenty-and-three years. After him Jair twenty-two years. But the Israelites forsook God, and served the idol gods of all the countries about them. And God gave the Philistines and Ammonites power to oppress part of them eighteen years. Then they cried to God for help, and God reprov'd them for their sin, and threatened to deliver them no more, and bid them go cry to their idols to help them. But they confessed their sins, and put away their idols, and begged God this once to save them : and God raised

up Jephtha, and he was their captain, to fight ~~again~~ the king of Ammon, and had the victory. But a ~~vow~~ vow troubled him.

C. What was that ?

M. He vowed to God, if he would give him the victory, that he would offer as a sacrifice the first thing that met him out of his house ; and his daughter came with joy to meet him, which grieved him ; but by her consent he kept his vow. And a greater mischief followed than this : when the men of Ephraim saw that Jephtha had conquered the Ammonites, they mutinied against him in pride, because he had not called them with him, insomuch that it came to a war, and forty-two thousand Ephraimites were killed.

C. What came next ?

M. When Jephtha had ruled six years, he died. Then Ibzan ruled seven years, and died. Then Elon ruled ten years, and died. Then Abdon ruled eight years, and died. Then Israel fell to sin again, and God gave the Philistines power over them.

C. How were they delivered then ?

M. Then there was a man named Manoah, and his wife was barren ; and God sent an angel to promise her a son that should deliver Israel. The Angel appeared twice to them ; and when they sacrificed, he went up from them in the flame : so God gave them a son called Sampson, who had the strength of many men ; and he judged Israel twenty years, and slew many of the Philistines, but at last was betrayed into their hands by an harlot that he fell in love with : and they took him and put out his eyes ; and at one of their great meetings they sent for him to make sport with him. But he prayed to God for strength, and pulled down two great pillars of the house, near which they set him, and the house fell and killed their lords, and more people with him than he had killed in his life.

C. Who judged them next ?

M. They were long after this without any judge, but not without sin and punishment ; for a Levite and his wife lodging in Gibeah, a city of Benjamin, some wicked men abused his wife to death : and he cut her body into twelve pieces, and sent them to all the tribes of Israel, to summon them to come and revenge her death ; and the foolish Benjamites revenged the malefactors, and the rest of the tribes went to war against

them, in which were slain forty thousand Israelites, and twenty-five thousand Benjamites, and the city burnt: such is the fruit of sin.

C. Who judged them after this?

M. They had long no king or judge, but were in much subjection to the Philistines; but they had priests, that in Shiloh waited at the tabernacle and sacrificed, and inquired for them of God. And Eli being then chief priest, he had two sons, called Hophni and Phinehas, priests under him, that were very wicked men, and oppressed and robbed the sacrifices, and lay with the women that assembled at the tabernacle door, so that God's worship grew contemptible, and the priests and offerings were loathed by the people: and Eli their father reprov'd his sons, but did not punish them as God required; and God was greatly displeas'd with him and them. And there was a woman named Hannah, the wife of Elkanah, that had no child, and earnestly begged for a child of God, and vowed to dedicate him to God. So God gave her a son called Samuel; and she dedicated him to serve God at the tabernacle: and God sent a prophet to old Eli to denounce God's judgment against his sons, and against him for suffering them. And while Samuel was yet but a youth, God in a vision called to him by his name, and he thought it had been Eli, and went to him; and when he told him that he called him not, he lay down again; and God called him again; and he went to Eli, and said, "Thou didst call me:" then Eli perceived that it was a vision, and bid him next say, "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth." Then God told Samuel of all the punishment he would bring on Eli and his sons, and how he would cast out his house. And Samuel was loth to tell it to Eli till he urg'd him. Then Eli said, "It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good." And shortly after God destroyed them as he had threaten'd.

C. How did he destroy them?

M. The Philistines fought against Israel, and killed at first four thousand of them. Then the Israelites fetch'd God's ark from Shiloh, and took it with them when they went to fight, thinking that God would deliver them for his ark's sake; like foolish people now, that think God will save wicked men for the outside of religion: but the Philistines killed thirty thousand of them, and also took the ark of God; and the two wicked priests, Hophni and Phinehas, were killed. And when old Eli

heard all this, especially that the ark was taken, he fell off his seat with grief, and broke his neck, and died at ninety-eight years old, when he had judged Israel forty years.

C. And what became of the ark after this ?

M. The Philistines carried it away in triumph, and set it up by their idol called Dagon (which was an image). But in the morning Dagon was fallen on his face before the ark ; then they set up their image in its place again ; but the next morning they found him fallen again, and the head and hands broken off, And God smote the men of that city with a sore disease ; and they would keep the ark no longer, but sent it away to another city. Then God struck the men of that city also with the same disease, called the emerods ; then that city sent it away to another city ; but that city was afraid, and durst not keep it ; and when it had been seven months, they advised with their wizards what to do with it ; and they bid them send it home again to Israel, but send it not empty, but gold cast into the shape of the emerods and mice that afflicted them. And they bid them take two kine that had calves, and had never been yoked, and put them to draw the ark in a new cart, and keep the calves at home, and leave them to go which way they would ; for if they went from their calves towards Israel, then they might be sure it was God that afflicted them : and so they did ; and the kine went straight to the Israelites with the ark, but lowing as they went, for their calves. And the men of Bethshemesh (a town of Israel) rejoiced when they saw the ark, and they offered the two kine in sacrifice to God. But the men of Bethshemesh did irreverently presume to look into the ark, which they ought not to do, and God killed many thousands of them ; and they were afraid, and sent away the ark to another city, where it stayed twenty years.

C. Who judged Israel all this while ?

M. Samuel : for God made him a holy prophet, and all the people saw that God had chosen him. And Samuel called them all to fast and pray, and put away all their idol images, and God was reconciled to them ; and the Philistines came again to fight against them, and Samuel prayed, and God destroyed the Philistines with thunder and with the sword ; and they came no more against Israel all the days of Samuel.

C. And who ruled them after Samuel ?

M. When Samuel was very old, he made his sons judges, and

they proved not like their father, but were covetous, and took bribes; and the people were weary of them, and they desired to have a king, like other countries, which displeased God.

C. Why was God displeased at this?

M. It was their happiness, above all other nations, to be ruled so by God himself, that as he made their laws, so he chose their rulers and judges by prophets, or visions, or heavenly revelation, or inspiration, as it pleased him: but the people would needs have a king that should have greater power than the judges, and should rule them by force, and leave the crown to his successors, like other nations: so that it was a departing from God's prophetic and extraordinary government, and this on their own heads, without God's call or warrant. They should have made no such change without God's consent and conduct. It was he, and not they, that should appoint their government. But of their kings I will tell you more the next time.

The Thirteenth Lesson.—The History of King Saul.

C. Who was the first king of Israel?

M. Saul.

C. How came he to be king?

M. The people rebelliously, without God, came and told Samuel they would have a king like other nations: and Samuel was displeased at it; and he prayed to God, and God said, "They have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them:" yet God bid him hearken to them, and let their own will be their punishment, and tell them what should be the manner of their king, that he would make their sons and daughters his servants, and make them do his work, and take tythes of them for his servants, and that then they should cry out, because of the king which they had chosen, and the Lord will not hear them. But the people were set upon it, and would have a king.

C. Why? Should there not be such kings as these?

M. While they might have been free, they should have chosen it rather, and continued under God's prophetic government, without such servitude. But where God appoints such, they must be obeyed.

C. And how was Saul chosen?

M. Saul was the goodliest proper man in Israel, higher from the shoulders upward than any of the people. And his father's

asses being lost, he came to Samuel the prophet, to know of him what was become of them : and God told Samuel, "This is the man that shall be king, and fight against the Philistines." And Samuel anointed Saul, and told him who should meet him in the way, and what signs he should see, and how he should prophesy among the prophets ; which all came to pass. And he bid Saul go to Gilgal, and tarry seven days, till he came to him to offer sacrifice. And God gave Saul another spirit. Then Samuel called the people together, and told them, that they had rejected God in choosing to have a king, but bid them all come and see whom God would choose by a lot : and the lot chose Saul, but he hid himself, and they found him out, and made him king ; and God moved the hearts of many to follow and obey him. After this the king of Ammon came in war against them, and would not make peace with them, unless they would have their right eyes put out for a reproach and mark of servitude. But God stirred up Saul, and he called all Israel together, and fought with the Ammonites, and destroyed them. Then they settled Saul in the kingdom. But Samuel called them, and appealed to God and them, whether ever he had taken ox or ass from them, or defrauded or oppressed any, or taken any bribe ; and he preached to them, and told them, that if they would not keep God's commandments, his hand would be against them : and that they might know God spake by him, they should suddenly see it witnessed by thunder and rain (at an unusual time) : so it did so thunder and rain, that the people were humbled, and believed him, "That their wickedness was great in the sight of the Lord," in asking a king. And they feared, and desired Samuel to pray to God not to destroy them, confessing that they had added this to all their sins, to ask a king. And Samuel promised to pray for them, though they had done this wickedness, and told them God would not yet forsake them, if they would fear God, and serve him with all their heart : but if they would still do wickedly, both they and their king should be consumed.

C. And how did Saul rule them ?

M. When he had been king two years, he kept three thousand soldiers with him, and his son Jonathan ; and Jonathan smote a garrison of the Philistines, who thereupon gathered so huge an army against Israel as put the people into great fear ; so that they hid themselves in caves, and thickets, and rocks ; and they that were with Saul trembled : and Samuel not com-

ing, as he appointed, in seven days, to offer sacrifice and prayer to God, Saul ventured to do it without him, when he saw the people scattered from him. And then Samuel came and re-proved him, and told him God would choose another king, because he had thus disobeyed God ; for it did not belong to him to sacrifice.

C. Sure Saul thought he did well : was not this a little fault ?

M. God must be carefully obeyed ; and thinking we do well will not save us, if we will venture to do ill. So there did but six hundred men stay with Saul ; and the Philistines had so mastered Israel, that they let them have no smith in all the land, and no one but Saul and Jonathan had so much as a sword or spear.

And one day only Jonathan and his armour-bearer went up to a garrison of the Philistines, and killed twenty men ; and God sent a terror among all the rest, and they trembled, and fought against each other ; and the Israelites that were hid came out and fell upon them. But Saul, in a blind zeal, said, " Cursed be the man that eateth any food till evening, that I may be avenged of mine enemies." And the people were all faint ; and Jonathan heard not when his father charged the people with the oath ; and he saw some honey, and, eating some, was refreshed. But the people were so hungry that, after the victory, they ran upon the spoil, and did kill and eat things raw, with the blood ; and Saul reproved them for the sin. And he inquired of God whether they should again pursue the Philistines, and God answered him not : then he thought that some one had broke the oath of fasting, and he cast lots to know who it was, and the lot took his son Jonathan : and Saul vowed he should die, to keep his oath ; but the people swore he should not die, and so delivered him. After this, God sent Samuel to command Saul to go fight against the country called Amalek, and to kill man and woman, oxen and sheep, camels and asses, because they were wicked men, and had fought against Israel coming out of Egypt ; and Saul obeyed not : he went and conquered the Amalekites, and took their king, Agag, prisoner, and brought away the best of the sheep and cattle, and killed none but the worst. And for this disobedience God sent Samuel to reprove him, for saving the king, and the sheep, and the oxen, which he should have killed : but Saul said he had done as God bid him, save that the people saved the best of the sheep and oxen to

offer to God in sacrifice. But Samuel told him that obedience was better than sacrifice, and rebellion against God's command was as the sin of witchcraft and idolatry; and he told him for this God had taken the kingdom from him, and would give it to one that was better than he. So Samuel killed Agag; and he came no more to Saul, but mourned for him to the last.

C. Was it not better to save the sheep and oxen than kill them: why should they be lost? Sure this was a very little sin: would not God forgive thus much?

M. It is not a small sin for a man to set his reason and will against God's: God is the owner of all things, and may do what he will with his own; and he knows what is good or evil better than we do. We must not do what we think best, but what God thinks best. And kings must be examples of obedience to God, to all their subjects, or else their sin is worse than others.

C. And what became of Saul after this?

M. God sent Samuel to anoint one of the sons of Jesse, of Bethlehem; and he was to cover it with going thither to sacrifice, lest Saul should know it, and kill him. Jesse had eight sons; and when Samuel called seven of them, one by one, God told him that none of these were the man that he had chosen. There was no more but the youngest, keeping sheep, which was David; and when they sent for him, God said to Samuel, "This is he:" so Samuel anointed him to be king afterward. Upon this, the Spirit of the Lord came upon David; but it departed from Saul, and an evil spirit had power from God to terrify and trouble him, as a melancholy man. And Saul's servants persuaded him to seek out a good musician, that could play well upon the harp, to drive away the trouble of his spirit; and they chose David (not knowing that Samuel had anointed him) and when the evil spirit troubled Saul, it departed when David played on the harp; and Saul loved him, and made him his armour-bearer a while.

C. And what did he with him after?

M. David went home again to keep sheep, till Saul had forgot him. And after this the Philistines came to fight against Israel; and when the two armies were near, Goliath, a Philistine giant, that was stronger than many men, dared the Israelites to send a man to fight with him, and he that got the better should carry the day with the whole armies. And the Israelites feared him, and none of them durst fight with him. And Saul offered to give his daughter to wife, and great riches,

to him that could conquer Goliath: and David's brethren being in the army, he brought them provision; and hearing what was said, he offered to fight with Goliath; but Saul told him he was not able, being but a youth, to fight with a giant bred up to war. But David answered him, "That while he kept his father's sheep, there came a lion and a bear, and took a lamb, and he went after him, and killed the lion and the bear, and rescued the lamb; and he believed that God would make this Philistine like one of them, seeing he had defied the army of the living God." So Saul bid him go, and put on him his armour, a helmet of brass, and a coat of mail, and his sword; but David put them off, and said, "I cannot go with these, for I have not proved them." And he took his staff and sling, and took five smooth stones out of the brook, and drew near Goliath, who despised him, and said, "Am I a dog, that thou comest to me with staves?" And he cursed him by his gods, and told him he would give his flesh to birds and beasts. But David said, "I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts, and the Lord will deliver thee into my hand." And David did sling a stone, which sunk into his forehead, and he fell down dead; and David, with Goliath's own sword, cut off his head; and the Philistines fled; and David brought the head to Jerusalem, and kept the armour.

C. And what reward had David for this?

M. Saul took him to his house, and would let him go home no more; and Jonathan, Saul's son, loved David as his own soul, and gave him his very garments, his sword and bow; and they two made a covenant of dearest friendship. And Saul set him over the men of war; but women in their songs said, "Saul hath killed his thousands, and David his ten thousands." And this turned the proud heart of Saul into envy and jealousy against him, (for he did not know that Samuel had anointed David,) and from that day Saul sought to kill him. And when he next fell into his mad fit, by an evil spirit, and David played on his harp, Saul sought to kill him with his javelin; but David avoided him. Then Saul made him captain of a thousand, that he might fall by the enemies; and he gave him Michal his daughter to wife, to be a snare to him, on condition he would bring him an hundred foreskins of the Philistines. And David and his men killed two hundred, and he married Saul's daughter.

Then Saul was more afraid of David, and spake to Jona-

than, and to all his servants, to kill David; but Jonathan awhile appeased his father's wrath, till more war arose, and David got more honour by slaying the Philistines; and then Saul in his disturbed fit of melancholy, attempted again to kill David, as he was playing before him; and when he escaped, he sent after him to kill him in his own house; but Michal, his wife, let him down through a window, and put an image in his bed; and when Saul bid them bring him to him, that he might kill him, he saw how his daughter had deceived him. Then David fled and dwelt with old Samuel in Ramah; and Saul sent men to fetch him thence; and when they came, they found Samuel, and many prophets, prophesying, and the Spirit of God came on the messengers, and they prophesied with them. Then Saul sent other messengers to fetch him; and when they came, they prophesied as the first. Then he sent others the third time, and those prophesied too. Then he went himself, and before he came thither, the spirit of prophecy fell upon him, and he stripped himself naked, and prophesied among them.

C. I thought none had been prophets, and had God's Spirit; but good men?

M. None but good men are made good and godly by God's Spirit; but others may prophesy, and do miracles.

C. And what did Saul and David then?

M. David fled to Jonathan, who pleaded for him to his father, till his father reviled him for defending David against his own hope of the kingdom, as his heir. And Saul sought to kill David again; but Jonathan told David of all his father's purposes, and saved him. Then David fled to Ahimelech, the priest, and made him believe he was sent of business by the king: and Ahimelech, having no other, gave him of the consecrated bread, and Goliath's sword, and he fled to a Philistine king, to Gath. But Doeg, a servant of Saul, saw all this, and told Saul; and Saul sent for the priests, and charged them of confederating with a rebel, or not telling him when David fled, and commanded his guard to kill the priests; but they would not do it. But Doeg, when the king bade him, killed fourscore and five of them for this.

C. And what did David among the Philistines?

M. He heard them tell their king how many of them he had killed, and he was afraid, and took on him to be a mad man, and the king turned him away. And he got again into Israel; and his kindred, and all that were in debt, and discontented,

came to him, and he became their captain, and had about four hundred men. And he got the king of Moab to receive his father and mother, and being warned by a prophet, he went into the country of Judah. And Saul destroyed the whole city of Nob, men, women, and children, where the priests dwelt, because Ahimelech gave David bread; but Abiathar, one of Ahimelech's sons, escaped to David, and was his priest. After this the Philistines fought against a town called Keilah, and God bid David go and deliver them; and he went and conquered the Philistines, and delivered Keilah. Then Saul thought to besiege, and take David in, Keilah; but David inquired of God, by the priest, whether the men of Keilah would give him into the hands of Saul; and God said, "They will." So David, with six hundred men, fled from thence to a wood in the wilderness, and Saul hunted after him; but Jonathan came secretly to David, and encouraged him, and made a covenant with him, knowing he would be king. Then the men of Ziph told Saul where David was, and offered to deliver him to him, and Saul was glad, and pursued him hard; but then the Philistines invaded the land, and Saul was fain first to go fight with them. And after that he pursued David again; and as he hunted him on the craggy mountains, Saul found a great cave, into which he went for his ease, and David and his men were in the inside of the cave; and David's men persuaded him now to kill Saul, but he said, "God forbid that I should lay my hand on the Lord's anointed!" only he secretly cut off some of his robe. And when Saul was gone out, he called to him from the hill, and showed him how his life was in his hand, and pleaded with him why he sought his life, that intended him no hurt. Then Saul relented, and confessed his fault, and said, now he knew David would be king after him; and made him enter into an oath, that he would not cut off his seed after him; and so they parted.

C. What did David then?

M. He durst not trust Saul, but kept with his men in the wilderness, where they wanted food; and there was near a rich man, called Nabal, that had a great feast for his sheepshearers, and David sent his men to ask him for some part of his provision; but Nabal answered them with reproach, and asked why he should give his provisions to fugitives, whom he knew not. And David at this was over angry, and rashly swore that he would destroy him and all his; but his wife Abigail was a dis-

creet woman, and perceived their danger, and went out with some servants, and met David with provision, and appeased him; and David thanked God, and her that had kept him from rash shedding blood. And when she came back to Nabal, he was drunk at his great feast, and she told him nothing till the morning, and then she told him all; and it struck him to the heart, and ten days after he died; and David took Abigail to be his wife. After this, Saul again pursued David in the wilderness, near Ziph; and David from a mountain saw Saul's camp, and where he lay, and in the night, he and Abishai came secretly into the camp, and they were all in a deep sleep; and David came to Saul, and took away his spear and cruse, and went his way. Abishai would have had leave to kill him, but David said, "God forbid; let us stay till he die; let God's hands do it, and not mine."

Then David again pleaded with Saul from the hill; and Saul again relented, and confessed his fault.

But David being weary to be thus hunted, went again with his six hundred men to Achish, a Philistine king of Gath. And he received him, and gave him a town called Ziklag, where he dwelt a year and four months. And David went out with his soldiers, and smote many places of the Amalekites, and other people, and killed them all, and brought away their cattle, and made king Achish believe he had smitten the Israelites, and so was hateful to his own country, that he might trust him.

C. Was it well done of David to tell so many lies?

M. No; he did ill, and we must not imitate him in this. God forbade it by his law, and did not justify David in it, though he had mercy on him. After this, the Philistines gathered an army against Saul, and David was to go with them, and Saul was afraid of them, and Samuel was dead; and Saul inquired of God what he should do, but God gave him no answer. And Saul heard of a witch, or conjuring woman, at Endor, and he masked himself, and went to her unknown, to know his fortune. And he desired her to raise up Samuel; and she caused the shape of Samuel to appear to him, which told him that he and his sons should to-morrow be with him, and Israel be overthrown; and so it came to pass Saul and Jonathan were killed.

C. What did David do the while?

M. He would have gone out with the Philistines, but the Lord durst not trust him, but sent him back; and so God kept him out of that battle. But when David was absent, the

Amalekites took Ziklag, and burnt it, and took David's wives, and his soldiers' wives and children, which so grieved their hearts that, in their rage, his men talked of stoning David; but he pursued the Amalekites, and overtook them, and recovered all the captives again, and took all the spoil, and destroyed all the Amalekites. But David's kingdom must be told you next.

The Fourteenth Lesson.—The Kingdom of David.

M. When the battle was over, an Amalekite came to David, and thought to please him by telling him that Saul and Jonathan were dead; and that Saul, leaning on his spear, wounded, prayed this man to kill him; and that he did it, and brought his crown and bracelet to David. But David, instead of rewarding him, caused him to be put to death, for killing the Lord's anointed. And he greatly lamented that overthrow, and made a song of lamentation, especially for Jonathan. And God bid David go to Hebron, in Judah, and there they made him king of Judah; but Saul's captain, Abner, and the most of Israel, made Ishbosheth, a son of Saul's, their king. And thus some years the kingdom was divided, till, after long war, Ishbosheth angered Abner, the general, and he vowed to deliver up the kingdom to David: and he came to him to do it; but Joab, David's captain, killed Abner, because he had killed a brother of his: but David detested and lamented the fact. Then two other of Ishbosheth's captains murdered him, and brought his head to David, thinking to be rewarded by him; and he charged them for the murder. Then all Israel made David king. He reigned over Judah only seven years and a half, and over all Israel thirty-three years.

C. And what did he after he was king of all?

M. First, he took Mount Zion from the Jebusites of Jerusalem. Then he twice overthrew the Philistines that came against him in battle: and then he fetched the ark of God from the house of Abinadab, in Gibeah, where it had long stayed; and oxen drew it on a cart; and when the oxen stumbled, Uzzah, one of Abinadab's sons, put forth his hand to hold the ark, and God struck him dead in the place for his rashness.

C. Why, what great harm was that?

M. The ark was holy, and God would have none presume to meddle with it, but by his appointment. And by this God teacheth us that he will be trusted himself with his worship; and men must not pretend to save it from supposed dangers by their

own wit, and will, and way, but only by his appointed means and way.

C. And what did they then with the ark?

M. David was displeased that God killed Uzzah, and was afraid, and durst not receive it, but brought it to the house of Obed-Edom. But when he heard that God blessed Obed-Edom's house because of the ark, then he sent again, and with great music, and dancing, and joy, brought it to Mount Zion. And when David lived in peace, he purposed to build an house, or temple, for the tabernacle and ark, and the solemn worship of God. But God forbade him, by the prophet Nathan, but promised to build him an house, and that his seed should succeed him on his throne, and not be cut off as the seed of Saul was, and that his son should build a temple for God. After this, David conquered the Philistines, the Moabites, the Ammonites, the Edomites, the Syrians of Damascus, the king of Zobah, and made them tributary, and set garrisons among them, and took their gold and silver, and dedicated it to God. And when they again renewed the war, he conquered the Ammonites and Syrians again: and he found out a lame son of Jonathan's, called Mephibosheth, and gave him all Saul's land, and made him sit at his own table. And yet, after all this, temptation drew him into an heinous sin, which blotted all his glory.

C. What was that?

M. While Joab, his general, was conquering the Ammonites, and besieging their city Rabbah, David, being at the top of prosperity, stayed idle at home; and one day, walking on the top of his house, he saw a beautiful woman washing herself, and he suffered lust to possess his heart; and he sent to know who she was, and lay with her, and she was with child by him, while her husband, Uriah, was at the siege in the war. And because adultery was a heinous sin, which God would have punished with shame and death, to hide his own crime, David sent for Uriah, as it were to know the news, and bid him go to his house, thinking that, by laying with his wife, the thing should be concealed; but Uriah lay among the king's servants, and said, while the king's captains lie on the ground and in tents, he would not go eat and drink, and lie with his wife. Then David made him drunk, hoping that then he would have gone home; but still he refused. Then David sent him with a letter to Joab in the army, bidding Joab set him in a place of danger, that he might be killed; which Joab did, and Uriah

was killed, and divers with him ; and David took his wife to be his wife. So that here he was guilty of lust, adultery, hypocrisy, drunkenness, and murder.

C. Sure he was a very bad man that would do all this ?

M. His sad example tells us what a good man may come to, by temptation, if he be not watchful, and God do not save him from himself ; and it tells how dangerous it is to let in temptation at the first, and to have an ungoverned eye, and to look upon any tempting thing or person in an immodest manner : for when one spark of lust taketh fire on the heart, the flame soon grows great, and is hardly quenched ; and one sin draweth men on to another, and another to hide it, and escape the shame and punishment, when all do but increase the mischief which they would avoid.

C. But what did God do with David for this ?

M. He sent Nathan the prophet to him, to open the greatness of his sin, and to tell him that for this the sword should never depart from his house, and that God would raise up evil against him out of his own house, even one that should take his wives, and lie with them in the sight of all the people. And then David was struck with deep repentance, and confessed his sin, and begged God's mercy ; and God so far forgave him as not to damn, or kill, or depose him ; but he killed his child that was begotten in adultery ; and he followed him with affliction for it, which brought him low.

C. How did God afflict him ?

M. By his own children. First, his son Absalom had a beautiful sister, and Amnon, her brother, by another wife, fell into lust, called love, with her : and when he could not tempt her to lie with him, he forced her ; and when he had forced her he hated her : and in revenge for this, her brother Absalom killed his brother Amnon, and fled into another land three years. And when his father pardoned him at last, he flattered the people, and stole their hearts from David, and rebelled against him, and was proclaimed by them king in Hebron. So that David was fain to fly from Jerusalem into the wilderness, from his son Absalom. And Absalom got David's chief counsellor, Ahithophel, on his side, who advised him to follow David suddenly, and destroy him before he gathered strength. But David had a friend called Hushai, that took on him to be for Absalom, and gave him contrary counsel, to stay till all Israel could be gathered together, to make sure work of the battle.

And God overruled the rebels' hearts to follow this counsel of Hushai. And when Ahithophel saw that his counsel was not followed, he hanged himself. And when the day of battle came, David's men conquered Absalom's; and Absalom's mule carried him under a thick oak, where he was hanged by the head, and Joab killed him. But David loved him, and mourned for his death. This rebellion of Absalom showed God's justice in punishing David for his sin against Uriah; and it showed the inconstancy and untrustiness of the multitude, that so suddenly, for nothing, would forsake that king that had ruled them with extraordinary success, and sought his life whom they had valued above all men. Yea, after this battle was over, one Sheba rebelled, and the people followed him till he was killed,

C. And what befel them after this?

M. After this God sent a famine on the land three years together. And David inquired of God what was the cause; and God told him that it was because Saul would have destroyed the Gibeonites, to whom Joshua had made a covenant of peace, and so would break the oath of Joshua. And David asked the Gibeonites what satisfaction they would have; and they demanded the lives of seven of Saul's posterity, whom David gave them, and they hanged them up. And after this David had many battles with the Philistines, in which he overcame them.

Lastly. God being offended with Israel for sin, left David to the temptation of Satan, to take the number of all the people, in a carnal confidence in human strength: for which sin and the people, God's angel, by a plague, destroyed threescore and ten thousand.

C. Was not the Book of Psalms written by David?

M. Most of them were; by which it appeared that he was a prophet and a holy man, devoted to God and his service.

C. For what use was the book of Psalms written?

M. First, to exercise the writer's zeal towards God, by confession of sin, prayers for mercy, thanksgivings and praises unto God; and, next, to be an help for others in the same cases; but especially to be the public liturgy of the Jewish church, in their worship of God in the synagogues and temple.

The Fifteenth Lesson.—Of the Reign and Writings of Solomon.

C. Who was king next after David?

M. Adonijah, a son of David, sought it, which cost him his life; and Joab and Abiathar helped him; whereupon Joab was

killed for his former murders of Abner and Amasa, and Abiathar was put from the priesthood. For David, before he died, made Solomon, his younger son, king, by the advice of Nathan the prophet.

C. Did not the kingdom belong, by right, to the eldest?

M. No: for God kept the choice in his own hand, and it was in the people's under him; and he turned the hearts of the people to follow whom he chose. God preferred Solomon before his elder brethren, as he had done David before his elder brethren, and before the sons of Saul; and Moses, the younger, before Aaron, the elder brother; and Judah and Joseph before Reuben, and Jacob before Esau, and Isaac before Ishmael, and Shem before Ham, and Seth and Abel before Cain; and so of many others.

C. What did Solomon do?

M. When he prayed to God, God bade him ask what he should give him, and he asked wisdom. And it pleased God that he preferred that before riches, and honour, and long life; and God gave him greater wisdom than any king of Israel had before or after him; and he gave him with it all the rest. And he abounded in riches and honour, and he built a most rich and beautiful temple at Jerusalem, to be the chief place of God's public worship for all the land, where prayer was made, and sacrifices offered, and priests and Levites employed about them as their officers.

C. How could all the people out of all the countries come so far, and meet in one place?

M. It was a small country, so that they had not very far to travel, and they were to come but very seldom; at some great feasts, and they were not to be all at once in the temple. And their ordinary worship was performed in lesser assemblies at home.

C. What else did Solomon?

M. He governed wisely, and prospered greatly, being the only king that reigned over the twelve tribes in full prosperity and peace. But his prosperity proved a dangerous temptation to him, and he lived in all sorts of fleshly pleasure, and especially had multitudes of wives and concubines; and when he grew old, his wives drew him into the guilt of idolatry; for they were women of several other nations, and worshipped their several idols. And Solomon built, or allowed them, high

places for the worship of these idols, and so provoked God against him.

C. Did not you say, that he was the wisest of all the kings of Israel? And could a wise man do so bad?

M. He had more knowledge than any of them, as many great scholars now know more than better men; but it appeareth by their lives, that David, Hezekiah, and Josiah, had more than he of that practical wisdom which consisteth in holiness. And 2. Wise men may, by temptation, be drawn to folly; and as the wisest man is a fool when he is drunk, so he is when temptations prevail against his wisdom.

C. What books did Solomon write, to show his wisdom?

M. He wrote many: of which God hath preserved us three in the Bible. First, the Book of Proverbs, which containeth the praise of wisdom, and many excellent lessons, especially for young men. Secondly, the Song of Solomon. Thirdly, the book called Ecclesiastes, which seemeth to speak his repentance after his fall; in which he showeth, from his own experience, that all the profits, honours, and pleasures of this world are mere vanity and vexation, and all can give men no more than to eat and drink, and be merry; that so the flattering world may not deceive us when we should prepare for God's judgments and the life to come.

C. Did not God punish Solomon for so great a sin?

M. Yes, he cut off ten of the twelve tribes from the kingdom of his son; who foolishly followed the counsel of rash and bad young men, and had not learned his father's wisdom.

The Sixteenth Lesson.—Of the other Kings of Judah and Israel.

C. How did God cut off the ten tribes from Solomon's son?

M. His son Rehoboam was proud and foolish; and because Solomon, by his great buildings and pomp, had laid great burdens of service, and taxes, on the people, and they now desired to be eased of them; the old counsellors advised Rehoboam to speak kindly to them, and to ease them, and win their hearts. But the young counsellors advised him to speak roughly to them, and rule them by fear, and keep up his power. And he hearkened to these; whereupon the ten tribes all forsook him, and chose one Jeroboam king.

C. And how did Jeroboam reign?

M. He thought, that if the people went yearly up to Jerusalem to worship, they would be in the power of Rehoboam, and would turn to him again. Therefore he made new places for worship, and made two golden images, like calves, and set them to represent their God; and made priests for them of the basest of the people, who were not of the tribe of Levi. And thus he drew the ten tribes into a course of sin which was their ruin, and for which God at last forsook them.

But God sent a prophet, to prophesy to them, that the altar made for their idol should have their priests burnt on it, and men's bones, by Josiah by name. And when king Jeroboam heard him, he stretched out his hand, and said, "Lay hold on him;" and his hand was dried up, so that he could not pull it to him; and he entreated the prophet to pray for him, which he did, and his hand was restored; and the altar rent, to verify his word: and the king invited him home, and would have rewarded him; but he refused, because God had bid him not to eat or drink in that place. But an old lying prophet went after him, and told him, that God bid him call him back, to eat and drink with him; and he believed him, and did so. But because he disobeyed God, a lion killed him as he returned home. By which we see that all men must not be believed that take on them to be sent of God; and that they that preach to others may be destroyed, if they disobey God's word themselves.

C. Did the kingdom continue thus divided?

M. Yes, to the last. Israel had one king, and Judah another. And there was war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam all their days; and both of their people lived in wickedness and idol worship. And the king of Egypt came against Jerusalem, and took away all the rich vessels of gold, that Solomon made.

C. Who were the next kings after them?

M. Rehoboam's son, Abijam, a bad man, succeeded him. And Asa, his son, a better man, succeeded him. And Jehoshaphat, a good king, succeeded him. And Jehoram, a bad man, succeeded him. And Ahaziah, a bad man, was next him; and he being killed, his mother, Athaliah, killed all the royal line, save Joash, that was secretly saved, and she usurped the kingdom; and she was killed. And Joash, a good king, reigned next; and he was murdered. And Amaziah reigned next, and did well; yet he was murdered. And his son, Azariah,

reigned next (called also Uzziah); and God made him a leper, for invading the priest's office, by offering; and his son Jotham ruled, and, when he was dead, reigned next; and Ahaz, a bad man, succeeded him; and Hezekiah, a good king, came next him. Manasseh, a most wicked man, was next. Amon, a bad man, was next him; and he being murdered, his son Josiah, a good king, was next. Jehoahaz was next him; he was wicked, and the king of Egypt took him, and set his brother Eliakim, called Jehoiakim, in his stead: he was bad, and made subject to Nebuchadnezzar: and his son Jehoiakim was next. He was wicked; and Nebuchadnezzar carried him, and all the chief of the people, captives to Babylon; and over the rest, he made his uncle, Mattaniah, king, called Zedekiah. He was wicked, and rebelled against Nebuchadnezzar, who took him, and put out his eyes, and killed his sons, and destroyed Jerusalem; and carried him, and all the chief of the people left, to Babylon; and set one Gedaliah over the poor in the country, who was presently murdered. And thus ended the kingdom of Judah, by captivity.

C. And who succeeded Jeroboam, and what became of the kingdom of the ten tribes of Israel?

M. All that came after Jeroboam followed him, in his sin of idolatry, to keep the people from going to Jerusalem. Nadab came next Jeroboam. Baasha murdered him, and came next. Elah was next. Zimri murdered him, when he found him drunken, and reigned next; he killed also the king's kindred, and reigned but a week, before Omri was chosen king by the people; who besieged Zimri, and made him set fire to his house, and burn himself. Omri, a wicked man, was next. And Ahab, more wicked, next him. Ahaziah was next. His brother, Jehoram, was next. Jehu killed him, and was next. Jehoahaz was next. Joash was next. Another Jeroboam was next. Next him, was Zachariah. Shallum murdered him, and was next. Menahem killed him, and was next. Then Pekahiah. Pekah killed him, and was next. Hoshea killed him, and was next; and in his days Shalmanesar, king of Assyria, carried him, and all the chief people, away, and sent men of other countries into the land; who together feared God, and worshipped their own idols. And so ended the kingdom of Israel, before that of Judah.

C. But what great things fell out in all this time?

M. The greatest thing for our notice was, the many prophets that God sent to warn them, and what they did, and how they were used by these kings.

C. Who were these prophets?

M. 1. Ahijah was sent to prophesy Jeroboam's reign against Solomon, when he sinned. 2. Shemaiah was sent to forbid Judah to fight against Jeroboam, for Rehoboam. 3. A man of God was sent from Judah to foretel Jeroboam that Josiah should destroy his altar, and burn his priests on it. 4. When Jeroboam's son, Abijah was sick, Ahijah, the prophet, foretold his death, and the destruction of Jeroboam's wicked house. 5. Azariah is sent to Asa, to rid Judah of idols. 6. Hanani was sent to reprove Asa, for trusting to Syria for help; and, though otherwise he had done well, he was in a rage against the prophet, and imprisoned him, and oppressed some of the people; and in his sickness sought not to God, but to the physicians. 7. Jehoshaphat sent his princes and Levites, to teach the law of the Lord in the cities of Judah; and when he joined with Ahab in war, the prophet Jehu was sent to reprove him. 8. The same Jehu is sent to prophesy against king Baasha. 9. Elijah, in Ahab's days, prophesieth, that Israel should have no rain, but famine, three years. And when he fled to a brook-side, God sent ravens, to carry to him bread and flesh twice a-day. Then the brook was dried up; and God sent him to Zarephath, near Sidon, to a widow woman, to be fed. And the woman had nothing left but a little meal and oil, to make one cake for herself and son, before they died. And Elijah bid her make one for him first, and told her from God, that the meal and the oil should not waste and fail till rain came. And the woman believed him, and they all lived on that meal and oil a full year, and it wasted not, for God secretly renewed it. Then the woman's son died: and Elijah prayed to God, and laid himself upon the child, and God restored the soul and life of the child.

And the third year, God bid Elijah go show himself to Ahab; and wicked Ahab had a more wicked wife, Jezebel, who killed the prophets of the Lord. But yet he had a governor of his house, called Obadiah, who greatly feared God, and hid two hundred prophets, by fifties, in a cave, and fed them. To this Obadiah Elijah appeared, and bid him go tell Ahab of him; and promised to appear to him. And the king met Elijah, and said, "Art thou he that troubleth Israel?" And Elijah said,

“ I have not troubled Israel, but thou and thy father's house, in that you have forsaken the Lord, and followed Baalim.” And to convince him, he bid him gather Israel and Baal's prophets to Mount Carmel. So he gathered eight hundred and fifty false prophets, that Jezebel maintained. And Elijah said to all the people, “ How long halt ye between two opinions? If the Lord be God, follow him; but if Baal be God, follow him.” And he said, “ I only remain a prophet of the Lord, and Baal's prophets are four hundred and fifty;” the other four hundred belonged to the groves. So he bid them take a bullock, and cut him in pieces for a sacrifice, and lay it on wood without fire, and he would do the same by another bullock; and let each call on his God, and let him that answereth by fire be their God. And they did so; and Baal's prophets cried, “ O Baal, hear us !” and Elijah mocked them, and said, their god was talking, or pursuing, or in a journey, or asleep, and must be awaked. And they cried, and cut themselves till they bled, as their manner was, but no fire came. Then Elijah repaired God's altar, and laid on the wood and sacrifice, and made a trench about the altar, and he made them pour water on the sacrifice and wood three times, till the trench was full; and he prayed to God, and a fire came and consumed the flesh and the wood, and the stones, and the water. And when the people saw it, they fell on their faces and cried, “ The Lord he is God! the Lord he is God!” And Elijah bade the people kill all the prophets of Baal; and they obeyed him, and killed them. Then Elijah bade king Ahab haste up, for rain was coming, and it rained plentifully.

C. But how did the king take the death of his prophets?

M. He told his wife Jezebel, and she swore that she would take away the life of Elijah the next day: and Elijah fled into Judah, and went into the wilderness, and prayed God to end his life; and he fell asleep, and an angel awoke him, and bid him arise and eat. And he saw by him a cake baked on coals, and a cruse of water, and he did eat and drink, and slept again: and the angel came again, and bid him eat and drink, for he had far to go. And he went to Horeb, the mount of God, forty days, in the strength of that meat: as he was there in a cave, God spake to him and said, “ What dost thou here, Elijah?” and he said, “ I have been very jealous for the Lord, because the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain the prophets, and I only am left, and they seek

my life also." And after a wind, that tore the rocks, and an earthquake, and a fire, had passed by him, God spake in a still voice, and bid him go and anoint Hazael, king over Syria, and Jehu king over Israel, and Elisha to be a prophet in his stead; and God told him, he had yet seven thousand in Israel that had not bowed to Baal. So Elijah went, and did but cast his mantle on Elisha, and he left, and followed, and served him.

C. But what became of king Ahab, and Jezebel ?

M. Shortly after, Benhadad, king of Syria, raised an army against him, and commanded him to surrender to him all that he had : Ahab was ready to yield, but the elders of Israel were against it ; and though Ahab was wicked, God, in mercy, sent a prophet to him, to bid him not fear that great multitude, for God would deliver them into his hand ; and he told him how to order the battle : and so the Syrians were overthrown. And the prophet told Ahab, that at the return of the year they would come again, and bid him prepare. And so it came to pass, for the Syrians told their king, that the gods of Israel were gods of the hills, but, if he would fight in the plains, he should be too hard for them. But God would not put up that reproach, but sent a prophet to bid Ahab fight with them again, and he should conquer ; which he did, and then the Syrians fled into a city, and a wall fell upon twenty and seven thousand of them that were left. And Benhadad and his servants came in sackcloth, with ropes on their heads, to beg for life of Ahab ; and he let him go : whereupon God sent another prophet to tell Ahab, that because he had dismissed one whom God had appointed to destruction, his life should go for his life.

After this Naboth, a subject of Ahab, had a vineyard, which lay near to Ahab's house, and Ahab desired it, to make him a garden, and offered him money, or a better, for it. But Naboth refused, because it had been the inheritance of his fathers. This so offended Ahab that he took to his bed, (and would not eat) in discontent. But his wife Jezebel told him that this was unmeet for a king, and bid him be merry, and she would give him Naboth's vineyard. So she wrote letters to the nobles and elders of the city where Naboth dwelt, in Ahab's name, and sealed them with his seal, requiring them to proclaim a fast, and set up Naboth, and get two wicked men to swear that he blasphemed God and the king, and so to stone him to death as guilty. And they did all that was required of them.

C. Could not the king have taken it without this ?

M. No ; God had given the people their inheritances, and they knew that the king might not take them from any that did not forfeit them : and they that were so wicked as to obey the king in perjury and murder, yet would not give him an arbitrary power over their inheritances and lives. But God sent Elijah to Ahab, when he went to take possession of the vineyard : and he said, " Hast thou killed, and taken possession ?" and Ahab said, " Hast thou found me, O my enemy ?" And Elijah said, " I have found thee, because thou hast sold thyself to work evil : " and, he told him, that in the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth, they should lick his blood, and all his house should be destroyed ; and that the dogs should eat Jezebel by the wall of Jezreel, and dogs and birds should eat his household. And when Ahab heard this, he humbled himself in sackcloth, with fasting : and God so far suspended his judgments as to tell Elijah that, because he humbled himself, this destruction of his house should not come till he was dead.

C. And how did God execute this judgment ?

M. After three years, Ahab had a mind to recover Ramoth, a bordering city, from the Syrians ; and Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, coming to visit him, he persuaded him to join with him in the war, which he did : and Jehoshaphat desired him first to inquire of the Lord, what they should do ; and king Ahab gathered four hundred of his own prophets, and inquired of them, and they bid him go, for God would deliver the city into his hand. But Jehoshaphat asked whether there were never a prophet of the Lord to inquire of and Ahab said, " There is one Micaiah, but I hate him, for he doth not prophesy good of me, but evil." Jehoshaphat said, " Let not the king say so : " so the two kings sat in their robes, and all the prophets prophesied good to them ; and said, " Go and prosper : " and one of them, Zedekiah, made iron horns, and said, " With these shalt thou push the Syrians till thou hast consumed them." And they that went to call Micaiah, told him what all the prophets said, and persuaded him to be conformable, and say as the rest did : but he protested that he would speak the word of God, whatever it should be. And when the king demanded it of him, he said, " I saw all Israel scattered on the hills, as sheep without a shepherd ; " and the Lord said, " These have no master, let them return in peace." And Ahab said to Jehoshaphat, " Did not I tell thee that he would prophesy no good of me, but evil ? " And Micaiah told him, that he saw the Lord on his throne, and the host of heaven about

him, and that he gave leave to an evil spirit to be a lying spirit in the mouth of all Ahab's prophets, to persuade him to go and fall at Ramoth. And Zedekiah struck Micaiah, and said "Which way went the Spirit of the Lord from me to speak to thee?" And Micaiah told him, that he should see in that day when he should go into an inner chamber to hide himself. And king Ahab said, "Put this fellow in prison, and feed him with the bread and water of affliction, till I return in peace:" and Micaiah said, "If thou return in peace, the Lord hath not spoken by me;" and bid the people all to hear this. So Ahab and Jehoshaphat went out to war, and Ahab was mortally wounded with an arrow, and was carried to Samaria, and died there, and the dogs licked his blood, but Jehoshaphat escaped. But Jehu the prophet was sent thus to reprove him, "Shouldest thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate the Lord? therefore is wrath upon thee from before the Lord."

10. After this, divers nations joined in war against Jehoshaphat, and he prayed earnestly to God, and God raised a prophet, Jehaziel, to bid them not fear, for God would deliver them without fighting; and they believed the prophet, and went towards their enemies with songs of praise to God; and God made their enemies fight with one another, so that the Jews found them dead on the ground, and were three days gathering all the spoil: and they returned home with psalms of praise, and Jehoshaphat set just judges and teachers through all the land.

11. Yet did this good king after all this, join himself with Ahaziah, king of Israel, who succeeded Ahab, in sending out a fleet of ships to sea: and God sent Eliezer, a prophet, to tell him that for this God would break his ships; and so it came to pass.

12. Ahaziah, king of Israel, fell from an upper chamber; and was sick; and he sent to inquire of idols whether he should recover; and Elijah met his messengers, and bid them tell him that for this he should die, and not come down from his bed. And the king sent a captain, with fifty soldiers, to fetch Elijah, and at the word of Elijah, God sent down fire from heaven, which consumed the captain and all his soldiers. Then the king sent another captain with fifty more, and fire from heaven consumed them also. And the king sent yet another captain with fifty more; and this captain fell on his knees, and entreated Elijah to spare his life. And the angel of God spake to Elijah, and

bid him go to the king and fear not. And he went and told him, that for inquiring of Baal, and not of God, he should die : and so he did ; and Jehoram reigned in his stead.

13. After this came the time that Elijah must depart from earth, and he prayed Elisha to tarry where he was, for God had sent him to Bethel. But he would not, but went with him : and the sons of the prophets told Elisha that God would take away his master that day, and he said, " I know it ; hold your peace." And Elijah said to Elisha, " Tarry here, I pray thee, for the Lord hath sent me to Jericho ;" but he would not leave him. And the prophets of Jericho told him, that the Lord would take away his master that day, and he said, " I know it, hold ye your peace." And Elijah said, " Tarry here, I pray thee, for the Lord hath sent me to Jordan ;" but he would not leave him. And fifty prophets followed them at a distance, to see the issue : and Elijah, with his mantle, smote the waters of Jordan, and they divided, and they two went over dry. And Elijah said to Elisha, " Ask what I shall do for thee before I be taken away from thee :" and he asked that a double portion of his Spirit might be upon him. Elijah said, " Thou hast asked a hard thing ; but if thou see me when I am taken from them, it shall be so to thee, else not." And there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them ; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven, and Elisha saw, and cried out, " My Father, my Father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof." And he saw them no more ; and he rent his own clothes, and took up the mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and with it he struck the waters of Jordan, and said, " Where is the Lord God of Elijah ?" and the waters parted, and he returned over dry. And when the sons of the prophets saw it, they said, " The Spirit of Elijah resteth on Elisha ;" and they bowed to him. And they entreated that fifty men might go to see whether God had not cast Elijah on some mountain : and Elisha forbade them, but after yielded to their importunity. And they went and searched, but found him not. And so Elisha became like him.

14. The first miracle that Elisha did after the dividing of the waters of Jordan was this : the city Jericho was pleasantly situate, but the waters were naught, and the land barren. And he cast salt into the water, and said, " Thus saith the Lord, I have healed these waters ;" and they were forthwith healed.

15. And as he went from thence, little children mocked him, and said, " Go up, thou bald-head." And God moved him to curse

them, and there came two bears out of the wood, and tore forty-and-two children.

C. Was not that too cruel a revenge ?

M. It was God that did it, who can do no wrong, and knoweth what he doth. And it is like he did it rather to be a warning to children afterward, to take heed of mocking any, but especially holy men.

16. After king Ahaziah, Jehoram reigned, and in his days Moab rebelled against Israel, and the king of Israel got Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, and the king of Edom, to help him in war : but when they passed seven days through the wilderness, the three kings and their armies, and horses, were like to perish, because they found no water. But Jehoshaphat asked for a prophet of the Lord to enquire of, and king Jehoram called Elisha : and Elisha said to him, "What have I to do with thee, get thee to the prophets of thy father and mother. Surely were it not that I regard the presence of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, I would not look toward thee, nor see thee : then Elisha said, make this valley full of ditches : for thus saith the Lord, you shall not see wind or rain, yet the valley shall be filled with water : and also God will deliver the Moabite into your hand."

And so it came to pass : water came from towards Edom, and filled the country ; and they overthrew the Moabites, and destroyed much of their country. And the king of Moab sacrificed his son and heir to his idol god, on the wall before them, and so they left him.

17. After this a prophet's widow was in debt, and the creditors came to take her two sons as bondmen for the debt ; and she sought to Elisha : and he asked her what she had in the house ; and she said "Nothing, save a pot of oil:" and he bid her go borrow empty vessels enough, and pour out the oil into them : and she did so, and the oil ran as long as she had ever a vessel to receive it : and he bid her go sell the oil and pay the creditors, and live on the rest.

18. Then Elisha went to Shunem, where was a great woman, who constrained him to come in, and eat with her, which he did as oft as he passed by : and she said to her husband, " I perceive that this is a holy man of God that oft passeth by us : let us make for him a little chamber on the wall, and set a bed, and a table, and a stool, and a candlestick, that he may turn in hither : " and they did so. And he called the woman, and asked her what he should do for her : but she said that she lived

among her own people, and wanted nothing : but Gehazi, his servant, told him she had no child, and her husband was old : and the prophet told her that " at that season she should bear a son ;" and she did so. And when the child was grown up, as he went to his father to the reapers, he was taken with the head-ach, and shortly died ; and she laid him on Elisha's bed, and rode speedily to Elisha, and constrained him to go home with her ; but he sent his man Gehazi before with a staff, and bid him lay it on the face of the child, but he revived not : and when Elisha came he went up and lay on the child, and put his mouth on his mouth, and his eyes on his eyes, and his hands on his hands, and the flesh of the child waxed warm : and he walked awhile, and then did so again, and the child revived, and he gave him to the mother.

19. After this in a dearth, many sons of the prophets came to him, and he bid his servant make pottage for them : and he ignorantly gathered wild gourds (a horrid, bitter, violent plant), and they cried out, " There is death in the pot !" and he bid them cast in meal, and the pottage after had no harm in it.

20. After this, he multiplied a little food, to satisfy many people.

21. The king of Syria had a great man, captain of his army, called Naaman, but he had the leprosy : and a little maid of Israel, whom they had taken among the captives, waited on his wife : and she said, " Would my lord were with the prophet that is in Samaria ; for he would recover him of his leprosy :" and Naaman was told what she said, and the king of Syria bid him go to Samaria, and he would write a letter from him to the king of Israel : which was that he would cure Naaman of his leprosy. But the king of Israel thought he did it to pick a quarrel with him : when Elisha heard of it, he sent to the king, saying, " Let him come to me, and he shall know that there is a prophet in Israel." Now Naaman brought with him ten talents of silver, and six thousand pieces of gold, and ten changes of raiment : and he came to the door of Elisha, and Elisha sent a messenger to him, and said, " Go wash seven times in Jordan, and thy flesh shall come again, and thou shalt be clean." But Naaman went away in rage, and said, " I thought he would have come out to me, and called on his God, and moved his hand over the place, and recover it : are not the waters of Damascus better than all the waters of Israel ?" but his servants humbly appeased him, saying, " If the prophet had bid thee do some great thing,

wouldest thou not have done it? How much rather when he saith to thee, wash and be clean." So he went and dipped himself seven times in Jordan, and was healed. Then he returned to the prophet and said, "Now I know that there is no God in all the earth but the God of Israel." And he urged him to take a gift of his money; but the prophet utterly refused it. And Naaman desired to have two mules' load of the earth of Israel, that on it he might sacrifice to God when he came home. But when he was gone, the Prophet's servant, Gehazi, coveted his money, and thought it was his master's weakness to refuse it from so great a man; and he ran after him with a lie, and told him that even now two young men, sons of the prophets, were come to his master, and he desired him to give them a talent of silver, and two changes of raiment: and Naaman made him take two talents. And when he came in to his master, he asked him where he had been; and he lied again, and said he went no whither. But Elisha said, "Went not my heart with thee when the man turned again from his chariot to meet thee? Is this a time to receive money, &c. The leprosy of Naaman shall cleave to thee, and to thy seed for ever: and he went out from his presence a leper."

22. After this the young prophets desired him that they might go to Jordan, and make there a larger house for them and him to dwell together in; and he went with them; and as they cut down wood by the river side, one man's axe-head fell into the water; and he said, "Alas, master! it was borrowed;" and Elisha made the iron to rise and swim, and they took it up.

23. After this, the king of Syria oft attempted a war against the king of Israel: and Elisha still told him which way the king of Syria would come, so that he still avoided him. Then the king of Syria thought that some of his servants betrayed him; but they said, "It is the prophet that tells the king of Israel what thou sayest in thy bedchamber." And the king of Syria sent spies to know where to find and take Elisha: and finding him in Dothan, they beset the city in the night with an army, and in the morning his servants rose and saw them, and cried out, "Alas, master! what shall we do?" And Elisha said, "Fear not, fear not: for they that be with us, are more than they that be against us:" and he prayed God to open his men's eyes, and he saw mountains full of horses and chariots of fire about Elisha: and Elisha prayed God to strike the Syrian army with blindness, and it was done. And Elisha went to them, and told them they

were out of the way, and bid them follow him, and he would bring them to the place where the prophet was. And he led them into the midst of Samaria, the king's chief city; and then prayed God to open their eyes, and they found themselves in Samaria: and the king of Israel would have killed them; but the prophet made him set them meat, and send them home.

24. After this, the king of Syria besieged Samaria so long, till the famine was so extreme, that a woman cried to the king for justice, because another woman and she agreed to kill, and boil, and eat, their sons by turn; and when they had eaten hers, the other woman hid her son. This put the king of Israel past patience, and he vowed to kill Elisha, because God did not deliver them. And Elisha was sitting in his house with the elders, and he said to them, "This son of a murderer hath sent to take away my head: but shut the door when the messenger cometh:" and the king said, "This evil is of the Lord; why should I wait any longer?" And Elisha said, "Thus saith the Lord, to-morrow about this time shall a measure of fine flour be sold for a shekel, and two measures of barley for a shekel." And one of the king's lords said, "If the Lord would make windows in heaven how could this be?" And Elisha said, "Thou shalt see it with thine eyes, but shall not eat of it." And there were four lepers at the gate of Samaria, and they agreed to cast themselves on the mercy of the Syrians, having no other hope of life. And when they came where the camp was, there was no one there, for God had made them hear as the noise of many armies, and they thought the Israelites had hired the Egyptians against them, and they all fled in fear, and left their provisions behind them. And when the four lepers had eaten and drunk their fill, they brought the news into the city (having taken and hid as much silver and gold as they would :) and when the king heard it, he thought the Syrians had retired in craft to entice them out and take them: and he sent a few horsemen to see; who found all the way to Jordan where they fled, spread with garments cast away; so the city went out, and had all their treasure and provisions; and all was as cheap as the prophet had foretold. And the king set that lord that spake against the prophet's words, in the gate of the city, and there the crowding trod him to death.

25. After this, the woman of Shunem, whose son Elisha restored to life, was told by him the famine would continue seven years, and he bid her go sojourn elsewhere; and she went

among the Philistines till the seven years were expired ; and her house and land, in the mean time, were possessed by others, and she went to petition the king that they might be restored : and just when she came, Gehazi was telling the king how Elisha restored her son to life, and he said, " This is the woman, and this is her son : " and the king caused all to be restored to her.

26. After this, Elisha went to Damascus, in Syria ; and king Benhadad heard of it, and he lay sick, and he sent Hazael to the prophet to know whether he should recover. And the prophet said, he may recover (as to his disease) but he shall surely die : And he looked on Hazael, and wept : and he asked him why he wept ? " And he said, I know the evil thou wilt do to Israel : thou wilt kill men and children, and rip up the women : and Hazael said, Am I a dog, that I should do this ? And Elisha said, God hath showed me that thou shalt be king of Syria ; " and when he heard this, he went home, and killed the king (stifing him by spreading a wet cloth on his face). And he reigned in his stead.

27. After this, Jehoram, king of Israel, was wounded in a war at Ramoth, against Hazael, and he went to Jezreel to be healed ; and Elisha called a young prophet, and said, " Go to Ramoth, to Jehu, (one of the king's captains) and call him into an inner chamber, and pour this box of oil on his head, and say, Thus saith the Lord, I have anointed thee king over Israel ; and when thou hast done, flee away : " and he did so, and told him he must cut off all the house of Ahab for their sin. And the rest of the captains made Jehu tell them what he said, and when they heard it, all their hearts were turned to fulfil the prophecy ; and they set up Jehu, and marched with him against his master Jehoram, and he met him at Naboth's vineyard and killed him, and cast his carcass there, as God had foretold : and he killed Ahaziah, king of Judah, that had come to visit Jehoram ; and he went to Jezreel, and made them throw down Jezebel, through a window, where she died, and the dogs eat her flesh, all save her palms of her hands, and her feet, and skull ; and caused all Ahab's sons to be killed, even seventy persons, and all his kindred and priests, and great men ; and he killed forty-two of the brethren of Ahaziah, king of Judah, that were going to visit king Jehoram's sons ; and he took on that yet he would worship Baal, and made all Baal's prophets come to sacrifice ; and he killed them all, and made Baal's house a draught house,

and burnt all their images with the fire. But he yet continued in Jeroboam's sin of false worship.

28. Before this, Jehoram, king of Judah, was wicked, and worshipped Baal, and killed his brethren ; and Elisha sent a letter to him to tell him that God would cut off his dominions by Hazael, and would strike him with a sickness, so that his bowels should fall out ; and so all this came to pass.

29. And in Judah, when king Ahaziah was killed, and his wicked mother, Athaliah, killed his brethren, that she might reign, his sister, that was wife to Jehoiada, the priest, had a young son, Joash, six years old ; and in the seventh year Jehoiada, the priest, got many on his side, and killed Athaliah, and made Joash king at seven years old : but the high priest ruled in his name, and put down the idols, and set up the worship of God : and Joash did well all the days of Jehoiada : but when he was dead, the princes about him drew him from God to idolatry. And God sent Zechariah, the son of Jehoiada, to say to them. " Why transgress ye the command of the Lord, that ye cannot prosper ? because you have forsaken the Lord, he also hath forsaken you." But they stoned this prophet to death by this unthankful king's commandment, even in the court of the house of the Lord ; and when he died, he said, " The Lord look upon it, and require it." And so he did : for at the end of the year the Syrians came with a small army, and destroyed all the princes from among the people, and sent away the spoil : and the king was diseased, and his servants killed him, who had turned from God, and murdered the son of him that saved his life, and made him king ; God avenging his cruel ingratitude.

30. And when his son, king Amaziah, preparing for a war with Edom, trusting to numbers, hired an hundred thousand Israelites for an hundred talents, to help him, and God sent a prophet to bid him send home the Israelites, for God was not with them : but the king was loth to lose his hundred talents : but the prophet prevailed, and he sent them home : and he went with his own men, and conquered and destroyed the Edomites : yet was he so sottish as to carry home the idol gods of Edom, and worship them as his gods : and God sent a prophet to ask him why he would seek to the gods that could not save their own people ? But the king proudly answered him, " Art thou made of the king's counsel ? forbear, why shouldest

thou be smitten?" and the prophet forbore, but told him that he knew God had determined to destroy him, because of this his sin and disobedience. And so it fell out; for he provoked the king of Israel to fight with him (for the soldiers which he hired and dismissed had, in anger, plundered his country). And he was conquered, and Jerusalem pillaged, and the walls broken down; and after this his own servants murdered him.

31. In Israel, the Syrians grievously oppressed them; and when Elisha lay dying, Josiah the king came to visit him, and lament over him. And he bid the king open the window and shoot an arrow, and strike the ground, and he struck thrice. And the prophet was angry, and told him now he should conquer the Syrians but thrice; but if he had struck six or seven times he should have consumed them. And when Elisha was dead and buried, the Moabites invaded the land, and being burying a dead man in haste, they put him into Elisha's sepulchre, and when the dead body touched his bones he revived, and stood up.

32. When Uzziah (called Azariah) was king in Judah, and did well and prospered, at last his heart was puffed up, and he would needs burn incense to the Lord: and when the priests told him it belonged not to him, but was their office, he was wroth them; and suddenly God struck him with a leprosy, and they thrust him out, and he hastened out himself, and was shut up as a leper to the day of his death.

33. Before Israel was carried away captive by the Assyrians, in the reign of Hoshea, all the prophets called them from their sin, and foretold God's judgments, but they would not hear them.

34. In the reign of good king Hezekiah, the king of Assyria sent an army against Jerusalem, where Rabshakeh blasphemed God, and bid the people not to trust in him, for no God could save his people from the Assyrian power. And God sent Isaiah the prophet to tell Hezekiah, that as he prayed to God, and trusted in him, God would deliver him, and put his hook in the nostrils of the Assyrian king. And that night the angel of the Lord killed an hundred and fourscore and five thousand of the Assyrian army, and in the morning they were all found dead. And shortly after, when their king, Sennacherib, at Nineveh, was worshipping in the house of his idol god, his own sons killed him.

35. After this, Hezekiah was dangerously sick, and he earnestly prayed to God to spare him, and God sent Isaiah, the

prophet, to tell him of a medicine to cure him, and to promise him fifteen years' longer time to live. And when Hezekiah desired a sign to confirm his belief, God made the dial's shadow go backward ten degrees to satisfy him. But after this God was not pleased that Hezekiah showed the king of Babylon's ambassadors all his treasure; and he sent Isaiah to tell him that all that, with his posterity, should be carried to Babylon.

36. When his son, Manasseh, proved a wicked bloody idolater, worse than the heathens, God sent his prophets to tell them that he would cast them off as he had done the Israelites. Yet this wicked king, when he lay a prisoner in the fetters of the Assyrians, humbled himself to God, and repented, and God heard his prayers, and delivered him.

37. When his son Ammon, a bad man, was killed, his son Josiah, reigned, and restored the true religion. And Hilkiah, the priest, sent him the book of Moses' law, where, reading God's threatenings, he humbled himself, and made all the land reform and pray. And God sent him word by Huldah, a prophetess, that for the great sins that had been done, God would give up the Jews into captivity, but because he had humbled himself, it should not be done in his days. Yet after this, even this good Josiah would needs rashly go out to war against the king of Egypt, against God's warning of him, and was killed, on which occasion, Jeremiah wrote his lamentation.

38. In the reign of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, Hezekiah, the prophet Isaiah reproved the sins of the Jews, and prophesied of their punishments, and of Christ and his kingdom.

39. In the reign of Josiah, Jehoiakim, and Zedekiah, did Jeremiah prophesy, against their sin, and of their punishment, and captivity, and was cruelly used for it, till the Babylonians delivered him.

40. In the captivity, Ezekiel prophesied: and Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi, some before, and some in the captivity.

The Seventeenth Lesson.—The History of the Captivated Jews.

C. What became of the Jews after that they were carried captives to Babylon?

M. The most that we are concerned to know of them is contained in the books of Daniel, Esther, Ezra, Nehemiah, and in

the Apocryphal Book of the Maccabees, and other common history.

C. What saith the Book of Daniel of them?

M. 1. When Nebuchadnezzar carried them to Babylon, he gave order to Ashpenaz to choose some of the most comely and ingenious children of the Jews, and teach them the Chaldean tongue, and nourish and breed them, to be fit to stand before the king. So he chose Daniel, and Hananiah, and Mishael, and Azariah; but the Jews being forbidden by God to eat some such meat as the king sent them, they refused them, and the king's wine, and craved leave to feed on pulse and water; and by this they became fairer and fatter than all the rest. And God gave to Daniel an extraordinary spirit to prophesy, and interpret dreams: and the king having an extraordinary dream, required all his soothsayers and wise men to tell him both what the dream was and what its interpretation was, or else he would destroy them. And when none of them could do it, Daniel undertaketh it, and telleth the king both; and for this the king advanced him to be chief in government over his sages, and the other three were made rulers also at his request.

But the king, being an idolater, made a golden image, and commanded all to worship it. But these three religious Jews refused, though he threatened to burn them in a furnace. They told him that the God whom they served was able to deliver them out of his hand; but if he would not, yet be it known to him, they would not worship his image. Upon this, he caused a furnace to be made extraordinary hot, and them to be cast into it. And the flame caught and burnt up those that cast them in. But God kept the flame from hurting them; and the king saw them walk unburnt in the flaming furnace, and one with them that was glorious, like an angel, called the Son of God. And he being astonished, called them out, and made a decree, that all his subjects should honour the true God, that had saved them; and whoever would speak against him should be cut in pieces, and their houses made dunghills. After this, Nebuchadnezzar had an extraordinary dream, which did portend his own fall, and that he should be cast out of his kingdom, among brutes. And Daniel expounded it to him, when no other could. And accordingly it came to pass; for a year after, as he was proudly boasting of Bahylon, and the glory of his king^d

voice from heaven told him, that the kingdom was departed from him; and his understanding was taken from him, and they drove him among the beasts. But his reason returned to him, and he was restored, and praised God.

After this, Belshazzar, another king, made a great feast for his lords; and as they were drinking riotously, in the holy vessels that were taken from God's temple, at Jerusalem, a hand appeared, writing upon the wall, signifying that his kingdom should be taken from him, and given to the Medes and Persians. And none but Daniel could expound the words; and that very night Belshazzar was killed, and Darius took the kingdom.

After this, Darius set an hundred and twenty princes over his kingdom, and, over these, three presidents, of whom Daniel was chief. And these princes envied Daniel, and sought to find some accusation against him, to destroy him; but he was so blameless, that they could find none. Therefore they resolved to fetch somewhat against him for his religion, concerning the law of God. And they saw that he was much in prayer; and they got the king, by importunity, to pass a decree, that no man should put up any petition to God, or man, save only to the king, for thirty days, on pain of being cast to the lions, in their den. When Daniel knew that the decree was signed, he opened his window; and thrice a day prayed in his house, as he was wont. Then these lords accused him to the king, for breaking the law; and the king was sorry, and would have saved him, but upon their importunity he yielded, and Daniel was cast into the lions' den; but they hurt him not. The king passed the night in trouble, and early in the morning went to the den, and cried, "O Daniel, is thy God, whom thou servest, able to deliver thee from the lions?" And Daniel said, "My God hath sent his angel, and shut the mouths of the lions, that they have not hurt me, because before him I was innocent, and before thee have done no hurt." Then the king was glad, and caused Daniel to be taken up, and those to be cast in that accused him, with their wives and children; and the lions broke their bones in pieces, ere they came to the ground. And the king made a decree, that all should fear and honour the God of Daniel.

Daniel was a holy man, and spent much of his time in prayer; and God sent an angel to him, that told

him of the great changes of the kingdoms of the world that were to come, and told him the very time when Christ was to come, and to be put to death.

C. What saith the book of Ezra of the Jews?

M. It tells us how king Cyrus, before named by Jeremiah, was stirred up by God, to rebuild the temple at Jerusalem; and how he restored the captive Jews to their own land; and how Zerubbabel and Joshua set upon the work; and how malicious enemies hindered them; and how Darius prosecuted the work, though the enemies accused the builders, as contriving a rebellion: and how the building was finished; and how king Artaxerxes after sent Ezra, with the rest of the captives, who, by fasting, and prayer, and confession of sin, and teaching the people the law of God, restored religion, which was almost lost in the captivity.

C. What doth the book of Nehemiah tell us?

M. It tells us how king Artaxerxes sent Nehemiah to build up the wall of the city of Jerusalem; and how he and the people unweariedly carried on the work; and how malignant enemies accused and hindered them; and how he, with Ezra and the chief of the people, by fasting, and prayer, and repentance, engaged all in a covenant with God to keep his law; and how they informed the people, and instructed them, and restored religion.

C. What doth the book of Esther tell us?

M. It tells us how King Ahasuerus, putting away his Queen, chose Esther, a Jew, in her stead; and how Mordecai, her kinsman, that bred her up, was preferred hereupon; and how proud Haman, who was greatest with the king, hated him, because he bowed not to him; and how Haman, that he might destroy Mordecai, made the king believe, that the Jews were a rebellious people, against the king's profit, and got a commission to destroy them all: but Esther petitioned the king, and obtained their deliverance. And Mordecai, having discovered a conspiracy against the king, the king resolved to advance him more, and asked Haman how that man should be used, whom the king did delight to honour? And, Haman, thinking it could be none but himself, said, "Let the royal apparel be brought which the king useth to wear, and the horse that the king rideth upon, and the crown royal that is set upon his head, and let them be delivered to the hand of one of the king's most noble princes, that they may array the man with them, and be on horseback, through the streets of the

before him, Thus shall it be done with the man whom the king delighteth to honour:" and the king commanded Haman himself to do all this to Mordecai, whom he hated, which broke his heart, but he dared not disobey. After this, queen Esther told the king, how Haman had got his commission to destroy all the Jews, and the king's wrath was kindled against him, and he caused him to be hanged on a very high gallows, which Haman had made to hang Mordecai on. And also the queen procured a commission from the king, giving power to the Jews to kill all their malicious enemies that would have destroyed them; which they executed.

C. What is it that the history of the Maccabees tell us?

M. It tells us the state of the Jews that returned and dwelt in Judea, and how they were governed by the high priest, and what wars they had with many great princes: but because this book is no part of the Bible, I will say no more of it: though you may profitably read it, to know the state of the Jews, till the birth of Jesus Christ.

C. But why must I know all these stories? What are they to me any more than any other history?

M. I shall tell you that the next time: all this is to prepare you to know one that is God and man, Jesus Christ; and what he hath done, and will do for the salvation of man.

The Eighteenth Lesson.—The History of Christ's Incarnation, Life, and Death.

M. You must know that all the Jewish and Old Testament history is but preparatory to the history of the gospel of Jesus Christ; as all the types and ceremonies were but preparatory to his revelation, mediation, and kingdom. The Jews were themselves a small and sinful people; but their state of peculiarity, as under a more special government of God, made them a fit type, and preparatory to the catholic church of Christ. The law of Moses was just, but rigorous; and burdensome in multitudes of ceremonies: but its purity and divinity made it fit, as a schoolmaster, to lead them to Christ, who is the end of their policy and law.

Who is Jesus Christ?

the Eternal Word, Wisdom, and Son of God, who became man, and so is God and man in one person, the mediator between God and man, to reconcile the man to God, and save his

church from sin, and death, and hell, and bring them to glory in the heavenly kingdom.

C. Is there more Gods than one ?

M. No: but in God there are three persons, called the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

C. How can three persons be one God ?

M. As well as one sun can have light, and heat, and motion. For a person in the Godhead is not like the persons of men, which are so many substances divided from one another; but this is the greatest mystery, which you must learn better hereafter, when you are riper, and more capable.

C. And how can God be made a man ?

M. As well as our souls can dwell and act in our bodies; (though there be difference;) not by any change of God, but by uniting himself to the human nature of Jesus.

How doth the fire become a candle? The fire or flame is not the wick or tallow; but yet it is so united to them, that it is with them one and the same candle.

C. Hath God a Son ?

M. Yes: but not begotten, as we men are, by our parents.

C. How then ?

M. No similitude can show us clearly these great, unsearchable mysteries; but some may a little help us to understand somewhat of them. Do you know how the sun begetteth, or causeth, the beams of light? or do you know how a man begetteth, or causeth his own thoughts? This showeth us a little how God the Father begets his Son, which is called his Word and Wisdom, from all eternity: and then when this Son, or Word, became a man, that was another begetting.

C. Was Christ begotten of his Father ?

M. Yes: the first was before all time and worlds, from eternity. This is Christ's Godhead, by which he and his Father are as truly one God as the sun and its light are one sun, or as a man's soul and his understanding are one soul.

C. And what was the other begetting of Christ ?

M. God by his Spirit did beget Jesus Christ, without any other father, in the womb of the Virgin Mary, in which the Eternal Word, or Son of God, did take to himself the substance and nature of man, and so was made and born a man.

C. Did he take only the flesh and body of a man, or the soul of a man also ?

M. He took both body and soul of man; and his God-

head was as nearly united to his soul (and more than a soul to that soul) as our souls are to our bodies. And so as we have a soul and body, Christ had a Godhead, and a soul, and a body.

C. Was he born as other men are ?

M. Yes : but not begotten nor conceived as others.

C. Where was he born, and how ?

M. He was born at Bethlehem, a little city in Judea, in a common inn, and that in a stable.

C. How came that to pass ?

M. His mother, after she was with child of him by the Holy Ghost, was married to a man called Joseph, who was taken for his father, and was but a carpenter ; but both he and Mary his mother, were of the blood royal, descended from King David : and at that time the Romans had conquered a great part of the world, and also conquered Judea, and were rulers there ; and their emperor Augustus made a decree, that the names of all his subjects must be taken, and enrolled in the places where they were born ; and so Joseph, who was gone to live in Galilee, far off, was put to travel with his wife to Bethlehem, to be enrolled ; and there was no room in the inn, and so Mary was delivered of her son Jesus in the stable.

C. But if Jesus was God, why should he be born of so poor a woman, and in so poor a manner ?

M. Oh ! This was part of the reason of his coming into the world : he came to suffer for our sins, and not to live as earthly kings, in pomp and pleasure ; and therefore he began his life in a low and suffering state, and so he passed it on to the end. And also he came to teach us all how to suffer, and to live above the love and vanity of this world, that we may obtain a better world after we are dead, and not to make us great men on earth, or to pamper and pleasure our flesh.

C. But how was it known that God begat Jesus ?

M. God did many ways reveal it. He sent an angel to Zachary, a priest, to tell him that his wife should bear a son, which was John the Baptist, who should be a prophet, to prepare men to believe in Christ ; and Zachary hardly believing it, the angel told him, that he should be dumb till the child was born, and so he was ; and when John was born Zachary's tongue was loosed, and he prophesied of Christ. Also God sent his angel to Mary, to tell her, that she should be with child by the Holy Ghost ; and she believed and prophesied, praising God. Also, at the time of Christ's birth, angels appeared to some

shepherds, that were watching their flocks in the field by night, and told them that Christ was then born at Bethlehem, and they might find him laid in a stable. And the angels sung this praise to God, saying, "Glory to God in the highest; on earth peace, and to men good will." And the shepherds came and found him there.

Also there were three wise astronomers of another country, in the East, that by a new star were taught, by God, to know it; and the star went before them, and led them to the very place where they found him, and offered gifts, as to a new-born king. It is likely an angel was the conductor of that star.

C. How was Christ received when he was born?

M. King Herod, being told by these wise men that he was born king, intended to murder him, and bid the wise men find him out, and then come and tell him that he might worship him; but God bid them go home another way. And when Herod saw that he was deceived, he sent and murdered all the children about Bethlehem, that were but two years old. But God first told Joseph, and bid him fly, with Mary and the child, to Egypt, till Herod's death.

C. What did Christ do when he was a little child?

M. He obeyed his supposed father and his mother, to be an example to all children, to teach them to obey their parents. If he that was God in flesh would obey, how much are all children bound to obedience?

C. But why would Christ become so weak at first, as an infant, and not be made a man first, as Adam was?

M. He that came to redeem all ages, young and old, would sanctify all, by taking both childhood and riper age upon himself, and show us that children are saved by him.

C. How could Christ be our Teacher, King, and Saviour, when he was an infant?

M. The work of our redemption was not to be done all at once, but by degrees and parts. His infant humiliation, next his incarnation, was a part, but the great part was to be done at age, in its proper season. A child may be a king, or a lord, though he cannot do that which a king, or lord, at age, can do. An infant may be the owner of an inheritance, or lands, in right, though he be not capable of knowing or using it. And as Christ was the head of the church in his infancy, so infants may be infant members of it, though they know it not.

C. What did Christ do after, when he came to fuller age?

M. He grew up in wisdom as he grew in age, as to his bodily manner of knowing; and he disputed with the doctors; but he did not openly declare himself to be Christ, and exercise his office, till he was thirty years old.

C. How did he do it then?

M. He was first baptised by John Baptist, who was his har-binger, to show that the kingdom of Christ was now coming, and to prepare the Jews, by preaching, repentance, and baptising the penitent, to be fit receivers of this heavenly King. And God, by a voice from heaven, proclaimed him to be his beloved Son, in whom he was pleased, commanding us to hear him; and the Holy Ghost descended on him visibly, as in the likeness of a dove.

C. What did he when he was baptised?

M. He went into the wilderness, and fasted forty days and nights, as Moses did when he received the law; and then Satan was permitted to tempt him, that if he could have drawn him to any sin he might have hindered our redemption.

C. What did the devil tempt him to?

M. To break God's order, and tempt God, by commanding stones to be made bread, to satisfy his hunger, and to cast himself headlong from a pinnacle of the temple, to show that God could preserve him; and to worship the devil upon promise that he would give him all the kingdoms of the world.

C. How did the devil find any means for such foul temptations?

M. By citing some texts of Scripture falsely perverted.

C. Did Christ yield to any of his temptations?

M. No; he never sinned in thought, word, or deed.

C. How did Christ answer the tempter?

M. By Scripture, rightly alleged; and, at last, by detesting his motions, and commanding him to be gone.

C. Why would Christ be tempted to such odious sins?

M. The world was overthrown, and Paradise lost, by the devil's overcoming Eve and Adam by his temptations: and Christ, that came to recover sinful man, was to conquer the tempter, who, by temptation, had conquered man.

C. What did Christ after that?

M. He went abroad preaching to sinners, to prepare them, by repentance, to believe that the promised Redeemer was come, and joyfully to receive the heavenly King that came to save them. And before he told them that he was the Christ, he

proved it by his works, going about to do that which none could do, but by the power of God. He healed the blind, the lame, the palsy, the lepers, and all diseases, by his bare word or touch. He did, by command, heal those that were mad and possessed by devils. He raised the dead to life again; and then he declared that he was the Christ. And he sent forth twelve chosen chief messengers, and seventy other disciples, to preach the same doctrine, and to work such miracles as he had done; which they did.

C. And how was he received; did they believe him?

M. The multitude admired him, and cried him up, and followed him to see his miracles, and to be healed of their diseases: but none but those that were ordained to eternal life did so believe in him, as to forsake their sin, and to be saved; for he came to preach repentance and holiness.

C. Who were they that believed him not?

M. Especially the rulers, and great men, and priests, and Sadducees; and next the wicked sort of the rabble.

C. Why were the rulers and priests against him?

M. The Roman empire had conquered the Jews, and ruled over them, and were the most powerful in the world; and Christ was called the King of the Jews, because he came to be their Saviour; and they thought that if the Romans did but hear of a king risen up among them, they would send their armies and destroy them: and the common people, seeing Christ's miracles, would have made him a king, but that he refused it, and therefore the rulers plotted to kill him.

C. And how did they use him at last?

M. The priests and the rabble joined together to persuade Pilate, the Roman governor, to put him to death: and they called him a blasphemer, because he told them that he was the Son of God. And when Pilate told them he found no fault in him, they cried out with rage, instead of reason, "Crucify him, crucify him!" And when they could no otherwise prevail with Pilate, they told him that if he did not crucify Christ, he was an enemy to Cæsar, the Roman emperor, whom the Jews were subject to, because Christ called himself the King of the Jews. And then Pilate durst forbear no longer, but judged him to be crucified.

And then when he was in their power, King Herod, and the soldiers, and the rabble, abused and scorned him, and put a crown of thorns on his head, and a purple robe on him, and a

reed in his hand, as a sceptre, and bowed to him in scorn, and blindfolded him and struck him, and bid him read who struck him; and after much scorn and scourging they crucified him.

C. What is crucifying?

M. It was the manner of the Romans putting malefactors to death, like our hanging men. They set in the ground a long piece of timber, and nailed a cross piece near the top; and they nailed men's hands, spread out on the cross-bar, and the feet to the lower part of the upright piece, that they might so hang in pain till they died: and so they did by Jesus, writing over his head "Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews."

C. What did his disciples do, when they saw him hanged on a cross?

M. Peter himself denied him, and foreswore him, and the rest forsook him and fled, save that John and his mother, and some women, or few others, stood mourning by him.

C. I doubt if I had seen him crucified and dead, I should not have believed that he was the Son of God?

M. But what, if you had seen the proof that followed? He was crucified between two thieves. One of them reviled him; and so did the people, for not saving himself that had saved others; but the other was converted, and believed in Christ, and prayed him to remember him when he came into his kingdom; and Christ promised him, "This day shalt thou be with me in Paradise." And as he hung on the cross, the sun was darkened, the earth trembled, the veil of the temple was rent from the top to the bottom, and many dead bodies rose, and appeared to many.

C. It is wonder, then, that they did not all believe?

M. The captain of the guard of soldiers was convinced; but a wicked, hardened heart resisteth reason and sense.

C. What did they, then, with the body of Jesus?

M. Two of the rulers, that had secretly believed him, now owned him, Joseph of Arimathea, and Nicodemus. And Joseph begged his body of Pilate, and buried it in a grave hewn in stone, in a garden, which he had prepared for himself; and they wrapped the body with spices, to keep it.

C. What day of the week died Christ?

M. On a Friday, so called now, that is, the fifth day; on the yearly day commonly called Good Friday.

C. What became of him after this?

M. His soul went to Paradise, and to ———, that is, among

departed souls, and his body lay in the grave till the third day, which was the first day of the week, now commonly called Sunday. And then he rose from the dead, of which I shall speak to you the next time.

C. But could not Christ have saved himself from death ?

M. Yes : very easily, as he saved others. But he came into the world on purpose to die, and not only to die, but to suffer in his soul the greater pain of the displeasure and justice of God, for the sins of man, which he voluntarily undertook to bear : of which I must also further teach you, but will not load you with too much at once.

The Nineteenth Lesson.—The History of Christ's Resurrection, and his Commission to the Apostles, and his Ascension.

C. When did Christ rise again from the dead ?

M. Early in the morning, on the first day of the week, now called, by Christians, the Lord's day ; which is kept in remembrance of it ever since.

C. How did Christ rise ?

M. His Godhead was Almighty, and his soul, which was in Paradise, by and with his Godhead, again entered into his body.

C. How was his rising known ?

M. Because Christ had often told them that he would rise again the third day, the rulers set a seal on the stone that was at the entrance of the sepulchre, and set a guard to watch it. And an angel came and frightened away the soldiers, and rolled away the stone ; and the rulers hired the soldiers to say, that Christ's disciples came by night and stole him away, while they were asleep, and the people believed this.

C. Who saw him when he was risen ?

M. First Mary Magdalene, and some other women ; and after, five hundred at once, on a mountain in Galilee. And he oft appeared to his disciples, on the first days of each week, when they were met with doors shut on them. And Thomas once being absent, he told the rest that he would not believe it, unless he saw the wound in his side, (which the soldiers had made with a spear,) and those in his hands and feet, and might put his finger into them. And the next time he bid Thomas come and put his finger into his side, and wounds, and not be faithless, but believing. And Thomas cried out, " My Lord and my God ! " At another time, he appeared to two of them on the

way, and opened to them the old Scripture, which foretold his sufferings, and his glory.

And another time he came to them at the seaside where they were fishing, and brought a huge draught of great fishes into their net, and then did eat with them on the shore.

C. How long stayed he on earth when he was risen ?

M. Forty days ; from Easter day to Ascension day.

C. What did he all that while on earth ?

M. He appeared to men, not constantly, but at certain times : and before he went, he gave his apostles their commission what to do when he was gone.

C. What were they appointed to do ?

M. To go as far as they could into all the world, and preach the gospel to all nations, and to make them Christ's disciples, and to baptise them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. And, having baptised them, to teach them to observe all that he had commanded them, and live after his laws.

C. What is baptising ?

M. It is a solemn covenant made between God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and him that is baptised ; which is signified by washing the person with water.

C. How were they washed ?

M. The minister brought them to some water, and dipped them over head, and then they rose up : which was to signify that they trusted in Christ, that had been dead and buried, and risen again : and that they did now, by covenant, become as dead men to the world, and to their fleshly, sinful life, and did enter upon a new life of faith and holiness, [in] hope of heaven.

C. Must they be so baptised now ?

M. They must be so washed to the same signification and covenant : but the same quantity of water, and dipping over head is not necessary in our cold country, where it may destroy life, as was used in that hot country where it was a pleasure : for it is the washing, and signification, and covenant, that is necessary ; and God will have mercy rather than sacrifice and outward ceremony.

C. What is the covenant that is made by baptism ?

M. God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, doth consent and promise to the baptised, to be his God and Father, his Saviour, and his Sanctifier and Comforter, if he will consent, unfeignedly

and practically, so to take him ; and forsaking the devil, the world, and the flesh, so far as they are against him, will consent to live in faith, love, and holy obedience, to him ; in which he will strengthen him, and will forgive his sin, and give him an everlasting life of blessedness in heaven.

C. Were little children to be baptised ?

M. Yes, if the parents were baptised Christians, and, desiring it, did dedicate them to God in Christ : for nations were to be made disciples, and baptised ; and children are parts of nations.

C. What did Christ after the forty days on earth ?

M. He ascended up into heaven.

C. How did he go up ?

M. By the power of his Godhead, in the sight of his disciples. He called them together, and gave them his commands and his blessing, and promised to send down the Holy Ghost on them and on other believers, and to enable them to speak those languages (to propagate the gospel) which they had never learned ; and to work miracles, to confirm their doctrine and testimony of Christ. And he commanded them to stay at Jerusalem till the Holy Ghost was sent down upon them. And then he went bodily to heaven, while they looked up and gazed after him : and an angel stood by them, and said, " Why stand ye gazing up into heaven ? This same Jesus shall come again as you have seen him go."

C. But did Christ ever come again ?

M. That is to be done at the end of this world, when Christ shall come to judgment.

C. Did Christ take up his body that he had on earth ?

M. Yes : but it is changed from corruptible flesh into a spiritual, incorruptible, glorious body.

C. And what doth Christ do now in heaven ?

M. He is above all angels and men, the Lord of all, and all power is given to him to gather and save his elect, and to subdue his enemies, and punish the ungodly.

C. Why did Christ stay forty days before he ascended up ?

M. To leave men a full proof that he was risen.

C. But why did he not show himself to all the Jews, as well as to his disciples ?

M. We must take heed of asking God a reason of his doings : he doth all things in perfect wisdom, but maketh not us his counsellors, or judges, of his doings. But we may conceive that

the malignant, self-cursed Jews were unworthy and unfit to be the witnesses of his resurrection : and seeing the witnesses of it were to be sent abroad through the world, to testify what they had seen themselves, none were so fit for this office as those that had been with him, and heard his doctrine, and seen his miracles, and by sanctification were fitted to be his messengers, and by self-denial and patience to propagate his saving gospel to the world.

Chapter Twenty.—Of the coming down of the Holy Spirit, and the Works of the Apostles thereby.

C. What is that Holy Ghost that Christ promised to send down ?

M. He is the Spirit of God the Father, and the Son, sent to do those strange works on men which no man or angel was able to do, to fit men to further their own and other men's salvation, and propagate the grace and kingdom of Christ in the world.

C. What were those strange gifts and works ?

M. The Holy Spirit filled them with a lively belief of that they were to preach : and brought all to their remembrance that Christ had taught them, and taught the apostles infallibly that which they were to deliver as Christ's truth, by word or writing to the world. And he enabled them to speak the languages which they had never learned, that they might be able to preach to men of divers languages and nations. And to convince all men that they were sent by God, they had the gift of doing miracles, to heal the sick, and lame, and blind, and raise the dead to life again. And with these gifts they were sent to preach the gospel to the world.

C. Could they heal all the sick, and raise all the dead ?

M. No : but the same Holy Spirit that gave them the power, told them when to use it : it was not to be common, nor at their own will ; but when God, by miracles, would have unbelievers convinced, that would not be convinced by other means, and so Christ and his gospel proved to be true.

C. Had not good men the Spirit of God before ?

M. Yes, in a lower measure, agreeable to that measure of means that God then afforded them : but they had this eminent, extraordinary gift of the Spirit, which Christ gave after his ascension, for the proof and success of his gospel.

C. When and how did they receive this gift of the Spirit ?

M. On the Lord's day, which we call Whitsunday, when all the believers were assembled to worship God, suddenly a noise, like a rushing, mighty wind from heaven, filled all the house; and there appeared like cloven tongues of fire, and sat upon each of them, and they were filled with the Holy Ghost, and spake with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance, the works and praise of God: so that the people of many nations that were then at Jerusalem, wondered to hear them speak in all their several languages.

C. Did this convince the Jews?

M. The most of the priests and rulers were hardened, and believed not: but Peter made a speech to them to prove that this miraculous gift of the Spirit was sent from Christ as the witness to his word: and three thousand were converted, and were baptised that day.

C. What more did the apostles do to prove the gospel to be true?

M. There was a poor man born lame, and had so lived above forty years, that was carried to beg at the gate of the temple, and he asked an alms of Peter and John, that were going in to prayer. And the Spirit of God moved Peter to say, "In the name of Jesus, stand up and walk;" and he was presently healed, and walked, and leaped, praising God: and the people wondering, Peter preached another sermon to them, and the converts were then five thousand.

C. Did not this convert the rulers and priests?

M. No: but being in a rage to see so many converted, they laid hold on the apostles, and the next day examined them, by what power they did this miracle: and when Peter told them that it was by the name of Jesus, they knew not what to say, but commanded them to preach Christ no more.

C. And did they obey them, and give over preaching?

M. No: but they came to the rest of the believers, and gave God thanks for his wonders of mercy. And the Holy Ghost again fell on the hearers, and they magnified and praised God. And they went on preaching, and the rulers put them in prison, and the angel of God opened the prison doors, and let them out, and bid them go and preach in the temple; which they did.

C. Did not this convince them?

M. No: they did but rage the more, and threatened the Apostles for preaching, when they forbade them; and were

plotting to kill them ; but one of them, Gamaliel, stopped them, by telling them what it is to fight against God.

C. But did none believe them after these miracles ?

M. Yes, those whose hearts God changed ; many thousands joined with the apostles as a church, in their doctrine and communion and prayer : and were, by the Spirit, so filled with love, that they sold their inheritances, and brought the money to the apostles, and all lived and fed together on the common stock : and no one called any thing his own.

C. But what did they when the stock was spent ?

M. This was not to continue ; but to show the power of the Spirit of love at first. God, that moved them to it, knew that they would quickly be persecuted out of the land, and could not carry their inheritance away with them.

C. Were all willing thus to part with their estates ?

M. God made them willing by love : but one called Ananias, and his wife, Sapphira, brought but part that they sold their land for, and lied, and said, that it was all : and, by the Spirit of God, Peter pronounced the sentence of death on them for lying, and thinking that the Holy Ghost in the apostles knew it not ; and for keeping that which they took on them to devote to God.

C. Did not this frighten men from being Christians ?

M. It frightened men from being hypocrites, and from coming with a false, divided heart. But the good that the apostles did, drew abundance the more to them.

C. What was that good they did ?

M. They rejoiced sinners with the glad tidings of pardon and salvation by Christ ; and they healed them of all diseases : insomuch that men carried the sick on the beds and couches into the streets, that at least the shadow of Peter, passing by, might overshadow them ; and multitudes of the sick, and possessed with devils, were brought out of other cities about ; and they were healed every one. And men love their bodies so well, that this turned to the good of their souls, and winning them to believe.

C. What did the apostles next ?

M. They made seven good men deacons, to distribute the church's stock, and take care of the poor. And one of these, called Stephen, was full of the Holy Ghost, and confounded the unbelievers, by proving the truth of Christ ; which filled them so full of rage, that they brought false witness against him, as for

blasphemy, and stoned him to death : and this was the first martyr that was killed for the faith of Christ.

C. How did he die ?

M. Praying for his murderers that God "would not lay that sin to their charge," (that is, not so as to deny them repentance, and the further tenders of his grace,) and he prayed the Lord Jesus to receive his spirit. For before they killed him, he saw heaven opened, and Christ sitting on the right hand of God : no wonder, then, that he died with joy.

C. Who were they that did this cruel murder ?

M. One of the leaders of this malignant rabble was Saul ; who did not stop here, but went on to persecute the rest ; and make havoc of the church, and entering into every house, haled out men and women, and committed them to prison : and so scattered the Christians from Jerusalem into other parts.

C. What did they when they were driven away from Jerusalem ?

M. They went abroad several ways, preaching the gospel. Philip went to Samaria, the chief city of the ten tribes, where were a mongrel sort of erroneous Jews ; where he so preached, that the generality of the city gave heed to him, and after were baptised as believers, both men and women ; for his miracles convinced them : he cast out devils from many that were possessed by them ; and he healed palsies, lameness, and other diseases, and convinced Simon that had bewitched them.

C. Who was that Simon ?

M. He was a famous wizard, that, by the power of the devil, had done such strange things among them, that they called him the great power of God, and were commonly deluded by him.

And when he saw the miracles of Philip, he himself believed, and was baptised as a Christian ; but yet his heart was false, and not truly converted and sanctified.

C. How was that known ?

M. Though Philip, that was but a deacon, and many others, worked miracles, yet God made it a special gift to the apostles, that, by laying on of their hands, the Holy Ghost should be given to others, to enable them to work miracles. And when the Samaritans believed, Peter and John came to them, and laid their hands on them with prayer, and they had presently this miraculous gift of the Holy Ghost. And when Simon the conjuror saw this, he wondered, and offered them

money, if they would give him the power to give the Holy Ghost to others, which showed a proud, ungodly heart.

C. And what answer did they give him ?

M. Peter said to him, "Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God might be bought with money;" and he told him that his heart was not right, and that he had no part in that matter; but for all his believing and baptism, he was yet in the gall of bitterness, and bond of iniquity, and bid him repent and pray, if, perhaps, he might be forgiven. And Simon being afraid of this threatening, entreated them to pray for him, lest it should fall upon him. And thus the great city Samaria joyfully received the christian faith.

C. What other miracles followed this ?

M. When Philip had converted the Samaritans, an angel of God bid him go toward the South, for further work, which God had thus to do. There was a great man that was a treasurer to a queen of Ethiopia, who, being a proselyte, had been worshipping at Jerusalem, and going home, was reading in his chariot part of Isaiah liiii., which is a prophecy of Christ's sufferings, but understood it not: and God bid Philip go to him and teach him. And the great man took Philip into his chariot, and Philip expounded it to him, and preached Christ to him, and he was converted, and baptized.

C. But what became of bloody Saul, that persecuted the Church ?

M. Oh! God made him the greatest example of his mercy that ever was heard of; while he raged against the church in his blind zeal, he was not content to drive them from Jerusalem, but he got letters from the high priest to pursue them to Damascus, the chief city of Syria, and to bring them bound to Jerusalem; but as he journeyed and came near to Damascus, (a famous city in Syria,) suddenly, at midday, a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shone round about him; whereupon he fell to the earth, and he heard a voice (but they who were with him only heard the noise) saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks." Saul, trembling and astonished, said, "Who art thou, Lord?" And, being informed that it was Jesus of Nazareth whom he was persecuting, by this same Jesus he was ordered to arise, and to go into the city, (Damascus,) where he should know more. He, lodging there, in the street called Straight, in the house of Judas, remained blind

three days, fasting and praying. Thither the Lord, in a vision, sent Ananias, a disciple at Damascus, who, having heard of Saul's fury, and errand to Damascus from the high priest, was loth to go, till better satisfied by the Lord concerning him. But when he understood that Christ had fixed on him to be a chosen vessel to himself for extraordinary service, he goes to Saul; and telling Saul what Christ told him, Saul is baptised by him, and recovers his sight: and, after some days' abode with the disciples at Damascus, he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he was the Son of God: and thenceforward he became the most eminent of Christ's servants and apostles, converting souls, edifying churches, and ordering things and persons to their greatest advantage: and his Lord all along owned and prospered him, till he at last sealed his doctrine with martyrdom.

But the course of his ministry, the substance of his doctrine, the dates and occasions of his epistles, with their main scope, sense, and force, his sufferings, with his wisdom and behaviour upon all accounts, as the New Testament informs us, require good time, and close thought.

END OF THE EIGHTEENTH VOLUME.