
A

COMMENTARY

ON THE

BIBLE.

GENESIS.

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS ON THE BOOK
OF GENESIS.

THE first, and most important observation, to be made on this Book of God, is what our Lord himself declared, concerning the writings of the Author of it, in general; that *Moses wrote of Him*. John v. 46. And as the Redeemer did not say, in what part of this man's inspired writings, more particularly it is, that mention is made of Him, (perhaps with an intention to enforce a more diligent search through all,) it should seem to be our wisdom to keep this direction in view, through every part, in going over the whole of the *five* Books of Moses; that we may not overlook a single passage, in our search for Him, *of whom Moses and the prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth*.

Reader! I charge you to place these four words of the Lord Jesus, as a motto for remembrance, at the head of every Book, and every Chapter: *Moses wrote of Christ*. And as from this unquestionable authority, whenever we open any of the writings of Moses, we may with safety say, whether it be discovered by us or not, *Jesus is here*: conscious also that from our own blindness, untaught of the Holy Ghost, we shall never find Him; how ought we to look up, for light, and direction from above, and say with David; "Lord open thou mine eyes, that I may see the wondrous things of thy law!"

There is another general observation to be made upon this Book of Genesis, before the Reader enters upon the perusal of it; namely, how gracious, and condescending it was in God, to cause those Sacred Records to be made, and carefully handed down to us, for giving us information concerning those interesting points, without which, they never could have been known by us. May divine grace make us duly thankful for such distinguishing mercies!

In this first Book of Moses, we have brought before us the history of the creation; the original state of man as innocent; his fall, by reason of sin; the gracious promise of redemption; together with the Church's history, in the lives of the Patriarchs, comprising a period of about 2369 years.

Reader! in observing how short an account we have of the lives of the Fathers, during so long a period, contemplate with due seriousness, the fluctuating transitory state of man upon earth! And while the reflection suitably affects the mind, recollect no less, how sweet, and reviving the thought is, that amidst all the changing scenes of succeeding generations, in which one passeth away, and another cometh, our Covenant God in Christ, liveth and abideth for ever. Lord, grant to him that writes, and to him that reads these lines, that when their hour is also come, in which both will cease from their labors, be gathered to their fathers, and have seen corruption, they may find thee to be the strength of their heart, and their portion for ever.

CHAP. I.

CONTENTS.

As the very foundation of religion must be formed in the knowledge of God, and our relation to Him; the Sacred Historian opens this Book of God, with a general account of the glorious work of the Divine Persons of the Godhead, in Creation; and the particular recital of each day's work, in the progress of it: concluding the Chapter with an account of the Divine Complacency, in the review of the whole, as being all perfect in its kind, and very good.

IN the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.

In the beginning;—that is the beginning of time; for from eternity, Jehovah himself subsisted in his threefold character of Persons, revealed in Scripture, under the sacred names of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. In proof of this his eternal power and Godhead, see Gen. xxi. 33. Psm. xc. 2. Deut. xxxiii. 27. Isaiah xlv. 6. Rev. i. 8, 17, &c.—*God created*, &c. that is, the three Divine Persons in one God, here spoken of as *God* in the plural number, in the Hebrew. In proof of the Godhead of each person, *first* consult 1 Cor. viii. 6. John i. 1—3. Job xxvi. 13. And *then*, in further proof, that in this threefold distinction of Persons, there is but One in unity of the Divine Essence, consult 1 John v. 7. Matt. iii. 16, 17. xxviii. 19. 2 Cor. xiii. 14.

2 And the earth was without form and void; and darkness *was* upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.

Mark! what a resemblance there is between the empty void of nature, before the lights of heaven were introduced into the creation, and that of the human soul before the light of grace hath passed upon

it. No expression can more strikingly point out the state of an unawakened, unregenerated soul, than that of darkness covering it. Isaiah lx. 2.

3 And God said, Let there be light: and there was light.

2 Cor. iv. 6. Is it not a sweet thought, that the same Spirit which gave light to the old creation, gives light to the new.

4 And God saw the light, that *it was good*: and God divided the light from the darkness.

5 And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day.

Several sweet thoughts arise here. God's approbation of his work. The light was good: James i. 17. And how good and precious is Jesus, who cometh to us from the Father, and who is the light and the life of men. God divided the light from darkness. Yes: there is an everlasting separation, as in the natural world so in the spiritual, between light and darkness. 2 Cor. vi. 14. The first day of the world was a day of light: so the first day in the spiritual world, in the new life in Jesus, is light indeed from the dead. Thus there is a beautiful correspondence in both. Hail, thou holy Lord! As the sons of God shouted for joy when the light at creation sprung out of darkness: so angels celebrated thy victory when, by the glories of thy resurrection, life arose from the dead. And how ought thy people to adore thee, who are interested in this great salvation?

6 And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters*.

7 And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which *were* under the firmament from the waters which *were* above the firmament: and it was so.

8 And God called the firmament Heaven. And the evening and the morning were the second day.

9 And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry *land* appear, and it was so†.

10 And God called the dry *land* Earth; and the gathering together of the waters called he Seas: and God saw that *it was good*.

* Job xxxvii. 18. Psalm lxx. 1.

† Job xxxviii. 8.

11 And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, *and* the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed *is* in itself, upon the earth: and it was so*.

12 And the earth brought forth grass, *and* herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed *was* in itself, after his kind: and God saw that *it was* good.

13 And the evening and the morning were the third day.

14 And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years†:

15 And let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth: and it was so.

16 And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: *he made* the stars also.

17 And God set them in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth,

18 And to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness: and God saw that *it was* good.

19 And the evening and the morning were the fourth day.

20 And God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life, and fowl *that* may fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven.

21 And God created great whales, and every living creature that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly, after their kind, and every winged fowl after his kind: and God saw that *it was* good‡.

* Psm. civ. 14, 15.

† Psm. lxxiv. 16, 17.

‡ Acts xvii. 25.

22 And God blessed them, saying, Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let fowl multiply in the earth*.

23 And the evening and the morning were the fifth day.

24 And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind: and it was so.

25 And God made the beast of the earth after his kind, and cattle after their kind, and every thing that creepeth upon the earth after his kind: and God saw that *it was* good.

26 ¶ And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.

*And God said, Let us;—*Pause over this verse; and in confirmation that the creation of man is the result of the Sacred Three, see Eccles. xii. 1. where the word Creator, (Heb. *Creators*), being in the plural number, means Father, Son, and Holy Ghost: so again, Job xxxv. 10. where the word Maker, is *Makers*; see also Isaiah liv. 5. Colos. i. 16. Ephes. iv. 24.

27 So God created man in his *own* image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.

Reader! mark the peculiarity of expression. Here is not, as before, a command to create, but a council is first called. The Holy Persons of the Godhead consult, as it were, before the formation of man. ‘Let us make man in our image.’ What image? what likeness? I desire to speak with all possible reverence while I propose the question. I do not presume to say what that image or likeness is, but only most humbly to enquire. Not the likeness of the invisible God, I conceive. For what likeness can man, even in a state of perfection and innocency, bear to God? What likeness hath a body to a Spirit? What similitude is there between a creature and his Almighty Creator? But doth not the Holy Ghost, by his servant, the Apostle, give some information to this most interesting enquiry, when, speaking of the human nature of Christ, he saith, ‘he is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature.’ Colos. i. 15. Supposing, then, Adam to have been created

* Psm. cvii. 38.

in this likeness of the first-born, what a sweet and delightful view is then opened to our meditation on this subject. And when we call to mind what other scriptures have said concerning Jesus as set up from everlasting, and the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, it should seem that here, as in all things, Jesus hath the pre-eminence. Prov. viii. 22, 23. Rev. xiii. 8. Micah v. 2.

28 And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth*.

29 ¶ And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which *is* upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which *is* the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat†.

30 And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth, wherein *there is* life, *I have given* every green herb for meat: and it was so.

31 And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, *it was* very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day.

It is deserving our attention, that God's approbation of his work at the close of it, and after the creation of man, differs from what was said before. All was said to be good; but now it is said to be very good. Was this in consequence of his love to man? Was it as beholding his creature man in his Son Christ Jesus? Reader! remember, I ask it as a question: far is it from me to decide upon it. But, methinks, under this idea, it leads forth the soul of a true believer in Christ in sweet meditation from such a thought. If Adam was formed in the likeness of Him that should, in the fulness of time, appear in our manhood, and God, beholding Adam in Him, pronounced all his works on his account very good; doth it not lead us to look up and bless the Great Authors of all our mercies in creation and redemption, and especially for the personal interest every believer hath in Jesus? Lord! what is man that thou art mindful of him, or the Son of man that thou visitest him? Psm. viii. 4,

* Prov. x. 22. Psm. cxxviii. 1. 4. † Acts xvii. 25. Psm. civ. 14, 15.

REFLECTIONS.

AMIDST many other precious instructions arising out of this Chapter, which I pray God the Spirit to unfold to the mind of the Reader, there are some which I venture to suggest to his more immediate attention.

And first. Is it not a very refreshing thought to the true believer in Christ, to behold, in the very opening of the Bible, in the first verse of it, and almost in the very first word of the verse, that the glorious doctrine of the Holy Trinity, which is the foundation of faith, is so strikingly set forth? What an exalted thought is this for the human mind to dwell in contemplation upon, that the God with whom we have to do, and from whose goodness we originate, is so widely distinguished, in the nature of his own existence, from all his creatures! And with what veneration, humility of soul, and the most profound homage, ought we at all times to be looking up to this first, greatest, and best of Beings!

But this is not all. It is not enough to look up to the Great I AM, as he is in himself; but we are authorized, nay enjoined, to contemplate and adore the Divine Majesty, as he stands revealed to his creatures. In the 26th verse of this Chapter, we behold the Sacred Three in One, conferring together for our creation: *Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.* As if by this act, they called upon the human mind to admire and adore the Godhead in this threefold character of Persons, as the united source of all our mercies. Well might *David* exclaim, and so may you and I, *fearfully and wonderfully am I made!* Wonderfully made, indeed, when our *creation* thus occupied the joint agency of the Sacred Three! Wonderfully redeemed, also, when the *redemption* of our nature engaged their joint concern! and wonderful will be that joy, which is *unspeakable and full of glory*, when their joint praises will employ the innumerable host of the faithful before the throne; when that hymn shall be sung: *Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive all glory, and honour, and power; for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.*

CHAP. II.

CONTENTS.

This Chapter is remarkable for the events recorded in it, which took place immediately after creation-work was finished. In it is contained, also, the first institution of the sabbath, the blessings God pronounced upon it, and the sanctification of it. A description of the garden of Eden; of the tree of life; and of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. A more particular account of the formation of the first woman; and of the sacred institution of marriage.

THUS the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them*.

2 And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made†.

* Eccles. iii. 14.

† Exod. xx. 11.

3 And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it; because that in it he had rested from all his work, which God created and made.

Deut. iii. 14. How beautiful is it to behold the first institution of the Patriarchal sabbath. God rested from his work. Not from fatigue, but complacency. Beholding his creation and expressing his approbation, and then sanctifying it in a sabbath. Reader! think how delightfully recommended in this view, is the sabbath to man. How ancient, how honourable, how dignified, and how endeared it ought to be. And yet more if possible to the believer in Jesus, since by his glorious resurrection the Redeemer rested from his work of salvation, and thereby commended its observance. Well may we cease from our work as God did from his. Heb. iv. 10.

4 These *are* the generations of the heavens and of the earth when they were created, in the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens.

The LORD God made the earth, &c. As this is the first verse in the Bible, in which we meet with the sacred name of LORD GOD, joined together; the Reader would do well to pause over it, with profound reverence, and to seek grace from God, who alone can impart information, concerning Himself, to the mind, that he may have a proper conception of the meaning of the expression; so that, both in this passage of the Divine Word, and in every other, where it occurs, he may be brought under suitable impressions. And in order to help the Reader; in this most interesting subject, I would, once for all, beg of him to observe, that in what part soever of the Bible, he meets with the name of the Lord, in large letters, thus; LORD; it always means JEHOVAH. And wherever the name of the Lord is expressed in small letters, thus; Lord; the original is not JEHOVAH, but *Adonai*. The translators of our English Bible, by this method, meant to shew that there is a difference in the word itself: but have not pointed out, in what that difference consists. Perhaps they could not exactly do it. Neither, therefore, shall I attempt it. All I shall venture to do upon the occasion, by way of help to the humble Reader, is to give him my observations upon the subject, and which I beg him to accept as *observations* only, and not as a matter of determination. By the glorious incommunicable name of JEHOVAH, in scripture, which is translated LORD, in great letters, is meant the Necessary, Self-existent, Independent, and Eternal Being; and considered in a covenant-way, as a promising and performing God. And in confirmation of this, it is worthy the Reader's most serious attention, that as we do not meet with this glorious name of JEHOVAH God, until creation-work, *the heavens and the earth and all the host of them were finished*; so the Lord, himself, in after ages, called upon Moses, to observe that He was not known by this name, among the Patriarchs, until the *new* creation-work, in redemption, was promised; and God had entered into covenant with Israel, that in *his seed* (meaning the Lord Jesus Christ after the flesh) *should all the families of the earth be blessed*. See Exod. vi. 2, 3. It may be proper,

also, for the information of the humble Reader, to add, that this glorious and incommunicable name of JEHOVAH, is equally applied to all the Persons of the Godhead, in various parts of scripture. In proof, I subjoin a few instances. To the Father, see Isaiah xl. 28, under the character of *Creator*. To the Son, Isaiah xliii. 1, 3, where the Son is considered under His peculiar title of *Redeemer*. And to the Spirit, in His divine offices, in redemption-work, Isaiah lxi. 1—3. For a proof, in one and the same chapter, where, to each, is distinctly and severally ascribed this glorious name; see Isaiah lxiii. 7, 9, 10. And, no less, to the Three Sacred Persons, in confirmation of the unity of the Godhead; see Deut. vi. 4, explained by the Lord Jesus himself, Mark xii. 29.—I only repeat, under this article, that when the word Lord occurs, in smaller letters, in the Bible, and means not JEHOVAH, but *Adonai*; the original carries with it the idea of a *Lord* (r *Ruler*); an *Almighty Helper* or *Supporter*. And, in this sense, it is peculiarly applied to the Person of the Lord Jesus, when at any time He is spoken of, in his mediatorial character, in the great work of redemption. A striking example we have in the 110th Psalm, ver. 1. *The LORD said unto my Lord*: that is, JEHOVAH said unto my Adonai. Hence, the Lord Jesus assumed that name, and applied it to Himself. See Matt. xxii. 44. Mark xii. 36. Luke xx. 42. For further proofs, see Abraham's address to the Lord, under this character, Adonai JEHOVAH, Gen. xv. 2. See, also, other proofs, Isaiah xl. 10. xxv. 8. Psalm xvi. 2. Isaiah xxviii. 16, &c. &c.

5 And every plant of the field before it was in the earth, and every herb of the field before it grew: for the LORD God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and *there was* not a man to till the ground*.

6 But there went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground†.

7 And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul‡.

8 ¶ And the LORD God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed§.

9 And out of the ground made the LORD God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food: the tree of life also in the

* Job xxxviii. 28. Psalm civ. 14.

† Job xxxiii. 6, 4. xxxii. 8.

‡ Job xxxviii. 26.

§ Gen. xiii. 10.

midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil*.

10 And a river went out of Eden to water the garden: and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads†.

11 The name of the first *is* Pison: that *is* it which compasseth the whole land of Havilah, where *there is* gold;

12 And the gold of that land *is* good: there *is* bdellium and the onyx stone.

13 And the name of the second river *is* Gihon: the same *is* it that compasseth the whole land of Ethiopia.

14 And the name of the third river *is* Hiddekel: that *is* it which goeth toward the east of Assyria. And the fourth river *is* Euphrates.

15 And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden, to dress it and to keep it‡.

16 ¶ And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat:

17 But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.

The tree of life, perhaps an emblem, or token of obedience, in the original covenant of works. And *the tree of knowledge of good and evil*; perhaps, a token, that man, by disobedience, had learnt the knowledge of the good he had lost, and the evil he had taken to him. But how sweet to view, in the Person of Jesus, both the tree of life, and all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. Rev. xxii. 1, 2.

18 And the LORD God said, *It is not good that the man should be alone*; I will make him an help meet for him§.

19 ¶ And out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought *them* unto Adam to see

* Rev. ii. 7. xxii. 2, with John vi. 48, 53.

† Rev. xxii. 1.

‡ Psalm xlv. 4.

§ Psalm cxxviii. 2.

§ Eccles. iv. 9.

what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that *was* the name thereof.

20 And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for Adam there was not found an help meet for him.

21 ¶ And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof;

22 And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man.

1 Tim. ii. 13. Ephes. v. 31, 32. As the apostle speaks of this as a figure, and we know that Adam was a figure of Him that was to come; doth it not suggest to us, that as the woman was formed out of the side of the man, when fallen into a deep sleep; so the church of the Lord Jesus was redeemed and issued from his pierced side, when, in the debased state of the sleep of death; he, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, was taken, and by wicked hands, crucified and slain.

23 And Adam said, This *is* now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.

24 Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.

25 And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.

REFLECTIONS.

MANY are the sweet reflections which are suggested to the Reader's mind, from the perusal of this Chapter. Here is the first institution of the holy sabbath. And here we meet also with the first institution of the holy estate of marriage. Both of divine authority. Both sanctioned by God himself; and therefore both worthy to be observed with suitable reverence. Concerning the *former*, I would say to the pious Reader, may it be your mercy, and mine, to honour the Lord's day, on account of the many precious purposes, for which the Lord himself honoured it: and to *cease from our own works, as God did from His*. And concerning the *latter*, I would add a prayer, that a due sense of

the Divine appointment, in the institution of holy wedlock, may make every one engaged in it, remember what the Apostle says: *Marriage is honourable unto all, and the bed undefiled; but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge.* But doth not the idea of union in the marriage-state, in this life, awaken a spiritual improvement, and call up to the recollection of the true believer in Jesus, the sweet thought of our spiritual union with Him, who hath betrothed his people to himself, for ever? Oh! what a precious scripture is that; *Thy Maker is thy Husband, the Lord of Hosts is his name.* Isa. liv. 5. Dearest Jesus, be Thou my Husband, Shepherd, Friend!

May the recollection, which the 7th verse of this chapter awakens, of the dust of which our nature was formed, remind you and me of our earthly extraction; so that we can truly say *to corruption, thou art my father; and to the worm, thou art my mother and my sister.* Job xvii. 14. But at the same time, may the pleasing thought, that the LORD God hath breathed into our nostrils the breath of life, make us never forget our heavenly relationship. And oh! that God the Holy Ghost would breathe upon the dry bones, both of him that writes and him that reads, and bid us live.

Reader! do not overlook the very gracious doctrine of the 20th verse. *There was not found an help meet for Adam.* No! There is not, there cannot be, in any, or in all the creatures of God's providence, an help meet. And though the LORD God brought the woman to our first father, as a suitable help meet for the *body*; yet it is the *Seed of the Woman*, alone, which can become an Help-meet for the *soul*. Dearest Jesus! be thou my Help, my Hope, and my Portion for ever.

CHAP. III.

CONTENTS.

I know not, whether we ought to consider this chapter, as the most melancholy, or the most pleasing in the whole Bible. It certainly contains the substance of what forms both. Here we read the sad origin of sin, and its unavoidable consequences, misery and death. And here, we, no less, behold the first discoveries of grace, in the promised redemption, by our Lord Jesus Christ. So that while that sentence is still felt, In Adam all die; that mercy is, no less promised, In Christ shall all be made alive. The contents of this chapter may be summed up under a few particulars. The account of the devices of Satan; the fall of our first parents; the arraignment of the sinners at the bar of Divine Justice; God's sentence, which followed; and the expulsion, in consequence thereof, of the first transgressors from Paradise.

NOW the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?

It is worthy observation that the Scriptures uniformly distinguish our implacable enemy by this name. *John* calls the devil and Satan that

old serpent, which deceiveth the whole world. Rev. xii. 9. xx. 2. So *Paul*; the *serpent*, saith he, beguiled Eve through his subtlety. 2 Cor. xi. 3. But I would recommend the Reader to remark with me, the arguments the great enemy made use of, in order to accomplish his purposes on our poor nature, in the person of our first mother. In this verse his conversation opens with seemingly questioning the truth of God's command. 'Yea!' saith he, 'hath God said?' thereby intimating, as though it were impossible for God's laws to be too rigorous. Reader! it is the same plan with him now. His stratagem is to raise doubts and questions in the mind, of the reality of divine judgments; and when once he hath tempted us to disbelieve what the Lord hath said, the next step to disobedience is not far to make.

2 And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden:

3 But of the fruit of the tree which *is* in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.

Observe, the woman had not lost sight of the commandment. She could not plead ignorance. Gen. ii. 16.

4 And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die:

5 For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.

Reader! remark the progress of the enemy. He had before been working upon our mother's mind, to disbelieve what God hath said; and now he advanceth further, in a way of insinuation, that so far would the breach of the divine command be from producing any evil, that it would bring good. Reader! pause over this account, and in your own instance make the diligent observation, whether the approaches of this implacable foe are not always veiled under similar coverings. *Unbelief* is the grand point, in all his schemes, he strives to induce in us. And for the most part, I believe, it will be found that the commission of almost every sin begins in this. Hence we have reason, upon all occasions, to cry out with the Apostles, *Lord increase our faith.* Luke xvii. 5.

6 ¶ And when the woman saw that the tree *was* good for food, and that it *was* pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make *one* wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.

Pause over this verse, and remark the fatal mean by which, as the Apostle saith, *sin hath entered into the world, and death by sin.* Rom. v. 12. In this transgression all our nature was involved, and necessarily, as in the rectitude of our first Parents, the whole race would have

been interested; so in their fall, the whole were condemned. See those scriptures, which so fully prove the fact, and explain the cause. Rom. v. 12—19. 1 Cor. xv. 22.

7 And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they *were* naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons*.

8 And they heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God amongst the trees of the garden†.

9 And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where *art* thou‡?

10 And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I *was* naked; and I hid myself.

11 And he said, Who told thee that thou *wast* naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat?

12 And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest *to be* with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat§.

13 And the LORD God said unto the woman, What *is* this *that* thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat.

Observe the immediate effect of sin. Shame, guilt and fear, filled the mind of Adam. Observe also on the part of the Lord, how immediately grace manifested itself: *Adam, where art thou?* which, though implying the solemnity of enquiry concerning what Adam had done, yet no less implied, that pre-venient mercy had pardon in store. 1 John i. 9.

14 And the LORD God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou *art* cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life|| :

* Job xxxi. 33. † Psm. cxxx. 7. Amos ix. 3. Jer. xxiii. 24.

‡ Exod. iii. 4. § James i. 13, 14.

|| Micah vii. 17. Luke x. 18. Rev. xx. 2, 3, 10.

15 ¶ And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

Rev. xii. 7. Heb. ii. 14. Isaiah liii. 10. Coloss. ii. 15. Rom. xvi. 20. How sweet and precious are all these scriptures, in confirmation of this glorious promise!

16 ¶ Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire *shall be* to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.

Job xiv. 1. 1 Cor. xiv. 34. Who should have thought, that under this sentence of the woman so much grace was hid. The Church, which our first mother might here be said to represent, is set forth in all the scriptures as having an unceasing desire after Jesus, her *Ishi*: that is, her husband. Isaiah xxvi. 8. And Jesus after his Church: Song vii. 10. So that beheld in this point of view, this sentence of the woman is productive, in after ages, of much mercy. I venture in this place to add, what appears to me to be the real sense of that expression, in Paul's writings: *The woman being deceived was in the transgression. Notwithstanding she shall be saved in childbearing.* 1 Tim. ii. 14, 15. By her childbearing of the promised seed, that individual childbearing of the man Christ Jesus.

17 And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, 'Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat *of* it all the days of thy life;

18 Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field*;

19 In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou *art*, and unto dust shalt thou return.

Job xvii. 13, 14. Psalm xxii. 15. How sweet a relief ought it to be to the poor man who earns his bread by the sweat of his brow, while thus bearing a part in the sin and punishment of Adam's transgression; to consider how he bears a part in the precious interest of all that concerns Jesus, in whose sufferings we had no portion. Yes! thou dear Redeemer, thou didst tread the wine press of thy Father's wrath alone. Thou didst bear the curse. Thou didst endure the bloody sweat.

* Job xxxi. 40.

Thou didst die the death. And oh! what a thought? Thou wast made sin for us when thou knewest no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in thee. 2 Cor. v. 21.

20 And Adam called his wife's name Eve; because she was the mother of all living.

I would desire the Reader to pause over this verse, and compare it with chapter i. 23. In that place, our first father called his wife (*Ishah*) Woman; meaning, that as the name Adam, signifies earth; so, Woman, signifies part of the same perishing materials. If, therefore, by this new name of (*Evah*, or Eve) which signifies life, as a mother, Adam meant an allusion to that reviving promise, (Verse 15) as the mother of our Lord, after the flesh, it forms a most illustrious instance of faith, in the promised redemption; for it proves that he believed God, and looked upon Eve, as the mother of Him who was to come, as the Life and Light of men. And if it was by God's appointment, was it not a sign or seal of the promise, as God did by Abraham and Sarah; see Gen. xvii. 5, 15.

21 Unto Adam also, and to his wife, did the LORD God make coats of skins, and clothed them.

Rom. xiii. 14. Were not these the skins of beasts slaughtered for sacrifice? They could not be for food, for at this time no animal food was made use of. And if it were so, how beautiful is it to trace sacrifices immediately after the fall. And let the Reader further remark, that not only was the blood of Jesus hereby set forth in type and figure, as the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world: but also the righteousness of Jesus, as a covering and a garment of salvation sweetly shadowed forth also. And Reader! do not overlook that other interesting part of the verse: the Lord God made Adam and his wife this covering. He that provides the righteousness must put it on also. Rom. xiii. 14.

22 ¶ And the LORD God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever*:

23 Therefore the LORD God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken†.

24 So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.

* Rev. xxii. 2, 14.

† Job xvi. 22.

Numbers. xxii. 23. While the view of this tremendous sword which no created power could take away, alarms the mind, and seems to forbid all approaches any more to the garden of God, what a relief is it to the soul of the true believer in Jesus, when he contemplates it as removed, and never, never more to become a fence, since Jesus took it away by the sacrifice of himself. Reader! consult that scripture of the prophet, and behold this sword after sleeping for many ages, awaking at the voice of Jehovah, and sheathing itself in the heart of Jesus: by whose death he hath overcome death, and opened a new and living way by his blood, into the everlasting Paradise of God for all his people. Zech. xiii. 7.

REFLECTIONS.

How dreadful is sin! and to what an awful state hath it reduced our nature! Oh! my brother, let us pray for grace, to flee from the first approaches of sin, and never let us, as our deluded parent, tamper with the temptations of the devil; but seek strength from above, to resist him, that he may flee from us.

I would beg to suggest one precious thought to the Reader's mind, from the difference of the sentence pronounced by the LORD God, upon the several transgressions. The Serpent is cursed, but Adam is not. The earth, indeed, is cursed, for his sake, and the whole creation doomed to groan, and travail together in pain, on his account. But, praises to the divine mercy, in the midst of all this train of evil, induced by sin, our first father is not cursed; but, though justly condemned, is yet promised mercy. And is not this the reason? He, who in after ages, should come, *to do away sin, by the sacrifice of Himself*, was to assume the nature of man. Hence, therefore, the nature is not cursed, for he saith, *Destroy it not, there is a blessing in it.*

Is there not a spiritual signification in the sentence pronounced upon our first mother, when it is said, *In sorrow shalt thou bring forth children?* What travailing pains can exceed the pains of a guilty conscience? What are the pangs to bring forth in a state of nature, compared with those which sinners feel, before their delivery into a state of grace? But what were the unequalled pains of the Lord Jesus, when He travailed for souls, in the garden and on the cross! Dearest Lord! didst thou, for me sustain the wrath of thy Father against sin? Oh! mayest thou see the travail of thy soul in my salvation, as well as in the salvation of all thy church and people, that thou mayest be satisfied.

One thought more, let me add, before we leave this precious chapter, which is suggested to the mind, in the foolish attempt of our first parents, after their transgression, to seek shelter from the Divine presence. Reader! may it be your mercy and mine also, upon all occasions of guilt, to seek a throne of grace, though both sin and conscience accuse; and not run away from mercy. May we never forget that there is One there, whom the Father heareth alway. Oh! may the blessed Spirit lead us to our God in Christ, not in the flimsy covering of any thing we call our own, by way of finding favour, like the fig-leaf righteousness of our poor parents, to conceal our shame; but clothed in the perfect robe of Jesus's righteousness typified by the coat of skins, that we may appear comely, in His complete covering, and be accepted in the Beloved, *without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing.*

CHAP. IV.

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This chapter begins that subject, which all succeeding history hath been manifesting, of the distinction between the church and the world. Abel and Cain form the great head of each, and their generations preserve the evidence of the original stock, to mark the difference between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God, and him that serveth Him not. We see, in this chapter, the truth of that awful sentence, of the enmity, which the seed of the Serpent bears, in all ages, to the Seed of the Woman. The sacred historian carries on the account, in this chapter, of the different branches of Adam's family, down to Enos, the son of Seth.

AND Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from the LORD.

If, by this expression, Eve meant to say that this was the God-man, which was promised to bruise the Serpent's head, how sad the mistake!

2 And she again bare his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground.

And if, by the name of Abel, which signifies *vanity*, our first mother meant, that his birth was of little consequence, now she had gotten Cain; how strikingly was that Scripture fulfilled! Isaiah lv. 8.

3 And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the LORD.

4 And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock, and of the fat thereof. And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering:

Prov. xv. 8. Psalm xi. 7. See, also, particularly, Heb. xi. 4, which, at once, proves that Abel knew under what character the promised Seed should come; and, therefore, by faith in that redemption, he brought his offering. Sweet and precious testimony *to the truth as it is in Jesus!*

5 But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell*.

6 And the LORD said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen†?

7 If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee *shall be* his desire, and thou shalt rule over him‡.

* Prov. xix. 3.

† Luke xv. 28.

‡ Deut. xxx. 15, 19.

8 ¶ And Cain talked with Abel his brother : and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him*.

9 And the LORD said unto Cain, Where *is* Abel thy brother ? And he said, I know not : *Am* I my brother's keeper† ?

10 And he said, What hast thou done ? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground.

Heb. xii. 24. In the original, it is, thy Brother's *bloods*; as if, not only the death of Abel was concerned, but the cause of Christ included in the deed. See Rev. vi. 10. Heb. xii. 24.

11 ¶ And now *art* thou cursed from the earth, which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand‡ :

12 When thou tillest the ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her strength ; a fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be in the earth§.

13 And Cain said unto the LORD, My punishment *is* greater than I can bear||.

14 Behold, thou hast driven me out this day from the face of the earth ; and from thy face shall I be hid ; and I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth ; and it shall come to pass, *that* every one that findeth me shall slay me**.

15 And the LORD said unto him, Therefore whosoever slayeth Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold. And the LORD set a mark upon Cain, lest any finding him should kill him.

Rev. xiv. 9, 11. How striking a difference to Ezek. ix. 4.

16 And Cain went out from the presence of the LORD, and dwelt in the land of Nod, on the east of Eden††.

17 And Cain knew his wife ; and she conceived, and bare Enoch : and he builded a city, and called

* Gal. iv. 29. 1 John iii. 13, 15.

† Numb. xxxii. 23.

‡ Job iii. 2, 3, &c.

§ Rev. ix. 5, 6.

|| Lam. iii. 39.

** Psm. cix. 10.

†† Psm. xvi. 11.

the name of the city, after the name of his son, Enoch*.

18 And unto Enoch was born Irad : and Irad begat Mehujael : and Mehujael begat Methusael : and Methusael begat Lamech.

19 ¶ And Lamech took unto him two wives : the name of the one *was* Adah, and the name of the other Zillah†.

20 And Adah bare Jabal : he was the father of such as dwell in tents, and *of such as have* cattle.

21 And his brother's name *was* Jubal : he was the father of all such as handle the harp and organ.

22 And Zillah, she also bare Tubal-cain, an instructor of every artificer in brass and iron : and the sister of Tubal-cain *was* Naamah.

Reader! observe, here, how little notice is taken of the posterity of Cain. This is all which is said of him and his race, until that they were all destroyed by the deluge. Compare Psm. xxi. 10. with Psm. cii. 28.

23 And Lamech said unto his wives, Adah and Zillah, Hear my voice ; yewives of Lamech, hearken unto my speech : for I have slain a man to my wounding, and a young man to my hurt :

24 If Cain shall be avenged sevenfold, truly Lamech seventy and sevenfold.

25 And Adam knew his wife again : and she bare a son, and called his name Seth. For God, *said she*, hath appointed me another seed instead of Abel, whom Cain slew.

26 And to Seth, to him also there was born a son ; and he called his name Enos : then began men to call upon the name of the LORD.

Enos, signifying wretchedness ; in allusion, perhaps, to the fallen state of nature, which even the children of gracious parents are born to, as well as others. Psm. li. 5. Eph. ii. 2, 3. By men calling upon the name of the Lord, is, perhaps, meant, calling themselves by his name. And if so, hence begun that distinction of character, which hath, ever since, marked the precious from the vile, in the character of the Lord's people ; they, who, in the first ages, lived in the faithful expectation of the Lord's coming, and such as now are counted *to the Lord for a generation*. Psm. xxii. 30, 31.

* Psalm xlix. 11.

† Gen. ii. 24.

REFLECTIONS.

THE honest employment of our fathers, in the patriarchal age, gives the highest sanction, both of antiquity, and right order, to the different labours of life. It was the saying of a good old saint, now with God, "Give your children a Bible, and an honest calling, and then leave them with God, for his blessing." From the offerings of the sons of Adam, of their first-fruits to God, we learn how early the practice hath been, and how becoming it is to acknowledge the Lord, as the original Giver of all we have or enjoy. And is it not right that, as we are but tenants at will, we should be always ready to pay our rents, by way of acknowledging our holding. But what a sweet thought it is, that amidst all God's gifts, of which we are only stewards, he hath given us the Lord Jesus, to have and to hold for ever!—Contemplate, my soul, with due self-abasement, the awful effects of our fallen nature, in the horrible view of the murder of Abel. Alas! what crime is there, that man is not capable of committing, unless restrained by Almighty grace. Lord, keep me in the hour, and from the power, of temptation! Reader! remark, with me, that the first who tasted death, in consequence of the fall, died in the faith of Jesus. Blessed Redeemer! as thou art, thyself, the first-fruits in resurrection, so the first-fruits of the dust of the earth are thine! But, do I not see in Abel, a type of the blessed Jesus? Was not Jesus hated, and, at length, murdered by his brethren, when, as the great Shepherd of his father's sheep, he came to seek and save that which was lost? But, Oh! how infinitely short, Abel falls, in comparison of Jesus. The blood of Abel cries for vengeance. The blood of Jesus pleads for mercy. Dearest Lord! in all things it behoves thee to have the pre-eminence. May it be my happiness, like Abel, to offer all my poor offerings, in faith, with an eye to thy blood and righteousness; then will God my Father have respect unto them, and I myself shall be accepted in the beloved.

CHAP. V.

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This is a very interesting chapter, though at the first view, it seems to contain nothing but the pedigree of the first patriarchs. But when we consider that this is the pedigree which uniformly leads on to the promised Seed, and ends not, until it is summed up in the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ, it is not what the apostle calls the fables of endless genealogies, (1 Tim. i. 4.) but contains the power of an endless life. Heb. vii. 10. This chapter is further remarkable, for containing the short lives, and short history of the patriarchs, before the flood, including no less a period than 1656 years.

THIS is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made he him*;

2 Male and female created he them; and blessed them, and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created†.

* Isaiah vi. 13. Matt. i. 1.

† Isaiah li. 1.

3 And Adam lived an hundred and thirty years, and begat *a son* in his own likeness, after his image; and called his name Seth:

I beg the reader to remark the particularity of expression, in this verse; Adam begat a son, in his own likeness. Not in the image of God, in which, he himself was made; but in *his own* likeness, that is, a fallen, sinful, faded likeness.

4 And the days of Adam after he had begotten Seth were eight hundred years: and he begat sons daughters:

5 And all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years: and he died.

6 And Seth lived an hundred and five years, and begat Enos:

7 And Seth lived after he begat Enos eight hundred and seven years, and begat sons and daughters.

8 And all the days of Seth were nine hundred and twelve years: and he died.

9 And Enos lived ninety years, and begat Cainan:

10 And Enos lived after he begat Cainan eight hundred and fifteen years, and begat sons and daughters:

11 And all the days of Enos were nine hundred and five years: and he died.

12 And Cainan lived seventy years, and begat Mahalaleel.

13 And Cainan lived after he begat Mahalaleel eight hundred and forty years, and begat sons and daughters:

14 And all the days of Cainan were nine hundred and ten years: and he died.

15 And Mahalaleel lived sixty and five years, and begat Jared:

16 And Mahalaleel lived after he begat Jared eight hundred and thirty years, and begat sons and daughters:

17 And all the days of Mahalaleel were eight hundred ninety and five years: and he died.

18 And Jared lived an hundred sixty and two years, and he begat Enoch:

19 And Jared lived after he begat Enoch eight hundred years, and begat sons and daughters:

20 And all the days of Jared were nine hundred sixty and two years: and he died.

In passing hastily over so many verses, and which contains so many ages, in the lives of the patriarchs, we have reason to be humbled in the reflection, and to feel the full force of the prophet's words, *All flesh is grass*. But it is worthy observation, at the same time, how express the Holy Ghost is, in so particularly enumerating the holy seed, while that of the ungodly is so shortly noticed, and so speedily ended. See Gen. iv. 18. So true is that scripture, Prov. x. 7.

21 And Enoch lived sixty and five years, and begat Methuselah:

22 And Enoch walked with God after he begat Methuselah three hundred years, and begat sons and daughters:

23 And all the days of Enoch were three hundred sixty and five years:

24 And Enoch walked with God: and he *was* not; for God took him.

Enoch, signifies the dedicated one.—Amos iii. 3. Observe! at the age 65, he is said to have walked with God. May not this be supposed of mean the period of his conversion?

Heb. xi. 5. Sweet testimony to his faith in the promised Seed. Psm. civ. 33.

25 And Methuselah lived an hundred eighty and seven years, and begat Lamech:

26 And Methuselah lived after he begat Lamech seven hundred eighty and two years, and begat sons and daughters:

27 And all the days of Methuselah were nine hundred sixty and nine years: and he died.

28 And Lamech lived an hundred eighty and two years, and begat a son:

29 And he called his name Noah, saying, *This same* shall comfort us concerning our work and toil

of our hands, because of the ground which the LORD hath cursed.

Noah signifies rest. A proper name for him, who was a type of the promised rest to all the people of God. Methinks, I would ask my heart, while reading the name of Noah, and his father's hopes concerning him, whether I can say, in reference to our spiritual Noah, even the Lord Jesus Christ, shall the same comfort *me*?

30 And Lamech lived after he begat Noah five hundred ninety and five years, and begat sons and daughters:

31 And all the days of Lamech were seven hundred seventy and seven years, and he died.

32 And Noah was five hundred years old: and Noah begat Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

REFLECTIONS.

WHAT a vast succession of years and ages, related in so few words! Here is no less than the whole history of 1656 years, folded up in a chapter of 32 verses! Oh! my soul, seriously consider the frailty and shortness of all human excellence. What doth the whole history of man contain, more than this short history of the patriarchs, than that one man lived so many years, and he died! and another lived so many years, and he died. Blessed Jesus! what a relief is it to my soul, amidst all the death of the world, that thou livest and abidest for ever!

Are we not (in the view of Enoch, the dedicated one, walking with God, amidst a crooked and perverse generation) led to contemplate him who was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens? He was, indeed, the only one who truly walked with God, being one with the Father, from the beginning, over all, God blessed for ever. How sweet are all the types of Jesus! But how sweeter far, he, to whom all types, prophecies, and sacrifices, ministered? Walk thou with me, O Lord, and, by thy blessed Spirit, may I be enabled to walk with thee, until, like Enoch, I come to be translated from this region of shadows and ordinances, to serve thee in thy temple for evermore.

Let us not dismiss the view, which the sacred historian here gives us, of that highly favoured servant of the Most High God, until we have taken another look at his character. By faith, (saith an Apostle) Enoch was translated, that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him; for before his translation, he had this testimony, that he pleased God. Precious testimony! Gracious God, may it be my portion. Enable me, O thou Holy and Eternal Spirit, so to walk with God, by a living faith on the person and righteousness of Jesus, as to please God, that having my conversation holy in this world, I may be truly happy in another.

CHAP. VI.

CONTENTS.

This chapter relates to us the evil effects of sin, and the sure consequences which follow; the wages of which, is, and must be, death. The abounding iniquity of mankind, and God's just determination to take vengeance thereof, by an universal destruction. The distinguishing mercy of God, in the salvation of His people, in times of general visitation, is here beautifully represented, in the case of Noah and his family. God's compassion to the brute species, in providing for their preservation. Noah, in obedience to the Divine command, prepares an ark, to the saving of his house.

AND it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them,

2 That the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they *were* fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose.

The increase of mankind is, in itself, a blessing. Gen. i. 28. But see Prov. xxix. 16.

Observe the different expressions; *sons of God*, and *daughters of men*. If you turn to Gen. iv. 26. you there discover that the *children* of Seth are said to call on the name of the Lord; including both sons and daughters; and hence, therefore, these are meant by the *sons of God*. See 2 Cor. vi. 18. Gal. iii. 28. And if you turn to Gen. iv. 16. then Gal. iv. 19. and then compare both with Gen. ii. 24. you will discover that the posterity of Cain, both by departing from God, and throwing off the reverence due to his Divine authority in the institution of marriage, by a plurality of wives, are they which are thus distinguished as *the daughters of men*. See, also, in the further confirmation, Matt. xix. 3—9. 2 Pet. ii. 14. 2 Cor. vi. 14, 15. Exod. xxxiv. 15, 16.

3 And the LORD said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also *is* flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years.

An awful scripture! Read, in confirmation of it, Ezek. xvi. 42, compare both with Hosea iv. 17, and then remark, that when the Lord ceases to correct, destruction is at hand.

4 There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare *children* to them, the same *became* mighty men which *were* of old, men of renown.

5 And God saw that the wickedness of man

was great in the earth, and *that* every imagination of the thoughts of his heart *was* only evil continually.

Reader! pause over this verse, and read it twice before you dismiss it once. When you have duly attended to it, look within, and see whether your own case corresponds to it. If you are tempted to doubt the truth of it, in your own instance, consult Jer. xvii. 9, 10. If this affords no conviction, read that sweet promise, or rather, that string of promises, Ezek. xxxvi. 25—29. And then recollect that these precious promises can be nothing to *you*, if you are ignorant of the want of them. Great Father of mercies! graciously bestow them on me, for I need them every hour!

6 And it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart.

By this expression, cannot be meant any change in the mind of God, but only a change in the circumstances of his providence towards men, according to their conduct. See 1 Sam. xv. 11—29. Mal. iii. 6. Num. xxiii. 19. James i. 17.

7 And the LORD said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them*.

8 ¶ But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD.

Prov. viii. 35. Is not Noah, in this instance, a type of the blessed Jesus? And is not the finding of Him the grace and favour here spoken of? John i. 43. Also, to *find* grace, implies God's *gift* of grace. Psm. lxxxiv. 11. Exod. xxxiii. 12, 13.

9 These *are* the generations of Noah: Noah was a just man *and* perfect in his generations, *and* Noah walked with God.

Is not a just man, in scripture language, a justified man, in the righteousness of God our Saviour? And is not this what is meant, in that expression concerning Noah, where it is said, that *he became heir of the righteousness which is by faith?* Heb. xi. 7. Rom. iii. 19—26. Perhaps that scripture, Eccles. vii. 20, cannot be explained upon any other terms. But, considered in this point of view, then all those scriptures are plain, Luke i. 6. Hab. ii. 4. 2 Cor. i. 12. Psm. xv.

10 And Noah begat three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

11 The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence.

* Rom. viii. 22.

12 And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth*.

13 And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold I will destroy them with the earth.

Observe how God makes Noah acquainted with his designs. Psm. xxv. 14. Gen. xviii. 17.

14 ¶ Make thee an ark of gopher wood; rooms shalt thou make in the ark, and shalt pitch it within and without with pitch.

15 And this *is the fashion* which thou shalt make it of: The length of the ark *shall be* three hundred cubits, the breadth of it fifty cubits, and the height of it thirty cubits.

16 A window shalt thou make to the ark, and in a cubit shalt thou finish it above; and the door of the ark shalt thou set in the side thereof; *with* lower, second, and third *stories* shalt thou make it.

17 And, behold, I, even I, do bring a flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh, wherein *is* the breath of life, from under heaven; *and* every thing that *is* in the earth shall die.

18 But with thee will I establish my covenant; and thou shalt come into the ark, thou, and thy sons, and thy wife, and thy sons' wives with thee.

Sweet promise! Is not Noah, here again, a type of the blessed Jesus? Doubtless, it was with Jesus the covenant was made, and therefore, with Noah, as his type. In this sense, in sparing Noah, the Lord spares Noah's offspring. What a mercy is it to have godly parents, godly relations, and godly friends! But what a greater mercy to belong to Him, in whom *all the families of the earth are blessed*. See Isa. lix. 21. Reader! while attending to this verse, search diligently for your own personal interest in it. Jesus is both the Ark and the Covenant to his people. Am I in Him? is the grand enquiry.

19 And of every living thing of all flesh, two of every *sort* shalt thou bring into the ark, to keep *them* alive with thee; they shall be male and female.

20 Of fowls after their kind, and of cattle after their kind, of every creeping thing of the earth after his kind, two of every *sort* shall come unto thee, to keep *them* alive.

21 And take thou unto thee of all food that is eaten, and thou shalt gather *it* to thee; and it shall be for food for thee, and for them.

22 Thus did Noah; according to all that God commanded him, so did he.

Faith in God's word, joined to a dependence on God's promises, in Christ, will ever induce holy obedience. Rom. iv. 20—24.

REFLECTIONS.

WHAT dreadful consequences of the guilt related in this chapter, soon followed ungracious and unholy connections in the marriage state, between the seed of Seth and the seed of Cain! What sad events is sin ever producing in private life, and in public bodies! How hath it drawn away the wisest of men to idolatry! See 1 Kings xi. 1. 4. How hath it corrupted the church itself, and brought misery upon it! See Ezra. ix. 1, 2. Reader! remember what the Apostle saith, *Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers; for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? or what concord hath Christ with Belial?*

What a sweet thought is that of the apostle: *The gifts and callings of God* (he saith) *are without repentance.* Rom. xi. 29. Though it is said, God repented that he had *made* man; yet it is no where said, he repented that he *redeemed* him.

May it be my mercy, to remember, while reading the account of Noah's finding favour with God, that it is by him alone, of whom Noah was a type, even the Lord Jesus Christ, that I can find favour and acceptance with God in this life, or salvation in another. In him, as the True Ark, may I be found, when God shall arise to judge the world.

CHAP. VII.

CONTENTS.

This is a very interesting Chapter, in that it enables us to look back, and read the destruction of the old world, by water; as the scriptures teach us to look forward to the sure destruction of the world that now is, by fire, in the great day of the Lord Jesus. We here behold Noah and his household entering into the ark, on the seventeenth day of the second month, in the year of the world, 1656, before Christ's manifestation in the flesh, 2348 years, and in the six hundredth year of Noah's life. The fountains of the great deep are broken up from beneath; the rains descend from above; and forty days without intermission, the deluge continues to increase, until the highest mountains are covered, and the waters prevail, to the depth of nine yards, above the surface of the

earth. All flesh is destroyed excepting Noah, and those who are with him in the ark; and the flood continues upon the earth, for the space of one hundred and fifty days.

AND the LORD said unto Noah, Come thou and all thy house into the ark; for thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation.

This invitation to Noah, if we consider the ark (as scripture authorizes us to do, See 1 Pet. iii. 20, 21.) as a type of Jesus, will be best explained by those parallel passages, Isaiah xxvi. 20; then Matt. xi. 28, and then Rev. xxii. 17. The *first* of them, is the call of God the Father: *Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, &c.* And what are those *chambers*, but the covenant of redemption, in Christ Jesus? The *second* is the invitation of Christ himself; *Come unto me, and I will give you rest, &c.* see also Isaiah xxviii. 12. Jer. vi. 16. And the *third* is the call of God the Holy Ghost; *And the Spirit and the Bride say come, &c.* proving the gracious part which that Eternal Spirit bears, in the work of redemption. Reader! is it not refreshing to the soul, to discover testimonies in every part of scripture, carrying with them such decided evidences to *the truth as it is in Jesus?* In this verse, also, God saith to Noah, *Thee have I found righteous, &c.* For the clear apprehension of this, consult Rom. iv. 3, and then compare it with Heb. xi. 7. No doubt but that the righteousness of Abraham and Noah was the same; *believing in God*, which was counted for righteousness.

2 Of every clean beast thou shalt take to thee by sevens, the male and his female: and of beasts that *are* not clean by two, the male and his female*.

3 Of fowls also of the air by sevens, the male and the female; to keep seed alive upon the face of all the earth.

4 For yet seven days, and I will cause it to rain upon the earth forty days and forty nights; and every living substance that I have made will I destroy from off the face of the earth.

5 And Noah did according unto all that the LORD commanded him.

Sweet view, this, of Noah's obedience. In this act let it be observed, that the patriarch quitted house and land, and all that he had, to rely upon the Divine assurance alone, in the security of the ark. Is not this similar to the faith of the believer in the present hour, in renouncing all self-confidences and self-attainments, to rest for salvation alone on the

* Deut. xiv. 4, 6,

righteousness of the Lord Jesus? And what greater authority than the command of Jehovah? Is not this the warrant?

6 And Noah *was* six hundred years old when the flood of waters was upon the earth.

7 And Noah went in, and his sons, and his wife, and his sons' wives with him, into the ark, because of the waters of the flood.

8 Of clean beasts, and of beasts that *are* not clean, and of fowls, and of every thing that creepeth upon the earth,

9 There went in two and two unto Noah into the ark, the male and the female, as God had commanded Noah.

10 And it came to pass after seven days, that the waters of the flood were upon the earth.

11 In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, the seventeenth day of the month, the same day were all the fountains of the great deep broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened.

12 And the rain was upon the earth forty days and forty nights.

13 In the self same day entered Noah, and Shem, and Ham, and Japheth, the sons of Noah, and Noah's wife, and the three wives of his sons with them, into the ark;

14 They, and every beast after his kind, and all the cattle after their kind, and every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth after his kind, and every fowl after his kind, every bird of every sort.

15 And they went in unto Noah into the ark, two and two of all flesh, wherein *is* the breath of life.

16 And they that went in, went in male and female of all flesh, as God had commanded him: and the LORD shut him in.

Observe the expression, *Shut him in*; then turn to 1 Pet. i. 5.

17 ¶ And the flood was forty days upon the earth; and the waters increased, and bare up the ark, and it was lift up above the earth.

18 And the waters prevailed, and were increased greatly upon the earth; and the ark went upon the face of the waters.

Doth not this verse suggest, that as the ark arose higher and higher, in proportion as the waters prevailed; so, when the waters of tribulation abound, consolation also, by Christ, aboundeth? 2 Cor. i. 5.

19 And the waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth; and all the high hills, that *were* under the whole heaven, were covered*.

20 Fifteen cubits upward did the waters prevail; and the mountains were covered.

21 And all flesh died that moved upon the earth, both of fowl, and of cattle, and of beast, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth, and every man†:

22 All in whose nostrils *was* the breath of life, of all that *was* in the dry *land*, died.

23 And every living substance was destroyed which was upon the face of the ground, both man, and cattle, and the creeping things, and the fowl of the heaven; and they were destroyed from the earth: and Noah only remained *alive*, and they that *were* with him in the ark.

24 And the waters prevailed upon the earth an hundred and fifty days.

REFLECTIONS.

WHAT a precious consideration is it to the faithful, that amidst all the judgments of God, upon the wicked, the Lord is never inattentive to the interests and safety of his people. Before the flood sweeps away the sinner, an ark shall be provided for the saint. Before that the wicked shall be driven, with everlasting destruction, from the presence of the Lord, Jesus will make up his jewels, and be glorified in them that believe. In that decisive hour, Lord, may it be my portion to be found in Thee. Reader! pause over this wonderful deliverance, in the instance of Noah and his family, and consider, whether in the ark, you do not behold a type of the Lord Jesus, preserving his church and people.

* Jer. iii. 23.

† Rom. viii. 22.

Doth not his Godhead appear in the fulness and all-sufficiency of his salvation? Is not the almightiness of his merits and death demonstrated, in bearing up the whole weight of redemption, when the wrath of God, like the torrents and tempests descending upon the ark, destroyed every thing but this place of safety? And who doth not see, that in the blood and righteousness, the doing and suffering, of Christ Jesus, the eternal safety of the believer alone is found. O! for an ardent faith, to believe *the record which God hath given of his Son*.

Let us not dismiss the contemplation of this interesting subject, until that we have taken another and another view of the ark of safety. While God, as a kind Father, foreseeing the storm approaching, doth not think it enough to call his children from the field, but takes them by the hand, to bring them home into the house; so, the same mercy, which provides the shelter of the Saviour, provides help to the sinner, to embrace it. The call of grace, is not, to Noah, *Go thou into the ark, but come*; evidently teaching, that while God the Father hath so loved the world, as to give his only begotten Son, for salvation, he gives also his Holy Spirit, to render that salvation effectual. Holy and Eternal Spirit! while thou kindly enablest me to hear the voice of entreaty, calling me to enter into the ark Christ Jesus; and while thou, as graciously, art pointing to Him, as the Way, the Truth, and the Life; Oh! add another blessing to the undeserved favour, and *make me willing, in the day of thy power; work in me, both to will and to do, of thy good pleasure*.

One word more, before we close the Chapter. As all are not Israel, which are of Israel; so, let it be remembered, that all who went into the ark, were not like faithful Noah. Men, by virtue of the *profession* of religion, may mingle with the people of God, may be found at ordinances, and, from their connection with them, may receive many temporal deliverances. Hence, we find *Ham*, among the household of Noah, in the ark; and *Judas* among the disciples of Christ. But all this is widely distinguished from the *possession* of the divine life. Tares may, and will spring up with the good seed. And we know who it is that hath said, *Let both grow together until the harvest*. But the hour is hastening, when a perfect discrimination shall take place, and then an everlasting separation will follow, *between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God, and him that serveth him not*. My soul! be it thy earnest prayer to God, never to rest in a name to live, while virtually dead before him. Grant, dearest Lord! that, while fleeing to the Lord Jesus, as the Ark, for refuge, Christ may be *formed in my heart, the hope of glory*.

CHAP. VIII.

CONTENTS.

The last Chapter concluded with the melancholy relation of the world destroyed, and the church brought within very narrow limits. This opens with an account of the renewals of mercy, in restoring the former, and enlarging the borders of the latter. The fountains of the great deep, which were broken up, are stopped; the windows of heaven, for the out-pouring of the rain, are closed; the whole earth recovers its verdure; and Noah and his family are brought forth from the ark, after inhabit-

ing it for the space of a year and ten days. Noah erects an altar, and offers sacrifice. God accepts the oblation, and promiseth never more to drown the world, but that the seasons of the year shall have their appointed weeks, while the earth remaineth.

AND God remembered Noah, and every living thing, and all the cattle that *was* with him in the ark: and God made a wind to pass over the earth, and the waters asswaged;

By God's remembrance, we must suppose is meant, only some fresh instance of grace. Luke xii. 6. Isaiah xlix. 15, 16. Pious believers may learn from hence, that every renewed manifestation of divine love, is among the remembrances of their God.

2 The fountains also of the deep and the windows of heaven were stopped, and the rain from heaven was restrained*;

3 And the waters returned from off the earth continually: and after the end of the hundred and fifty days the waters were abated.

4 And the ark rested in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, upon the mountains of Ararat.

5 And the waters decreased continually until the tenth month: in the tenth *month*, on the first *day* of the month, were the tops of the mountains seen.

The gradual decrease of the waters, afforded scope to the exercise of Noah's faith. And is not the same process of mercy made use of now, by way of calling forth the faith and patience of the believer? see Heb. x. 36.

6 And it came to pass at the end of forty days, that Noah opened the window of the ark which he had made:

7 And he sent forth a raven, which went forth to and fro, until the waters were dried up from off the earth.

Opening the window of the ark, and sending forth the messengers of enquiry, serves to teach, no less, that while faith is in the liveliest exercise, in waiting for the fulfilment of the Divine promises, it is no impeachment of faith, but, on the contrary, the truest proof of its being genuine, that we humbly send forth the enquiries of prayer and supplication, for the time of the Lord's deliverance from trouble.

* Prov. xxx. 4. Psm. cxlviii. 8. Psm. cxxxv. 7.

8 Also he sent forth a dove from him, to see if the waters were abated from off the face of the ground;

9 But the dove found no rest for the sole of her foot, and she returned unto him into the ark, for the waters *were* on the face of the whole earth: then he put forth his hand, and took her, and pulled her in unto him into the ark.

It is worthy remark, that in Psm. cxvi. 7, where the sacred writer saith, *Return unto thy Rest, O my soul*, the original is, *Return unto thy Noah*; evidently meaning, that Jesus is the alone Rest of a seeking soul.

10 And he stayed yet other seven days; and again he sent forth the dove out of the ark;

I humbly conceive that it was the Sabbath-day, at each of these distinct periods of seven days, in which Noah waited between sending forth those messengers of enquiry; and if so, what a precious thought doth it suggest, that in the ark, as on the earth, Noah religiously observed the Lord's day, as a day, particularly, to enquire of God. Psm. v. 3.

11 And the dove came in to him in the evening; and, lo, in her mouth *was* an olive leaf pluckt off: so Noah knew that the waters were abated from off the earth.

12 And he stayed yet other seven days; and sent forth the dove; which returned not again unto him any more*.

13 And it came to pass in the six hundredth and first year, in the first *month*, the first *day* of the month, the waters were dried up from off the earth: and Noah removed the covering of the ark, and looked, and, behold, the face of the ground was dry.

A memorable new-year's day, (as you will find by the calculation it was) and a memorable lesson it holds forth to gracious souls, who wait patiently the Lord's promises. As Noah, after a long wintry season, now again beheld the face of the earth; so exercised believers, after long waiting, again behold the face of God with joy.

14 And in the second month, on the seven and twentieth day of the month, was the earth dried.

* Jam. v. 7, 8.

15 And God spake unto Noah, saying,

16 Go forth of the ark, thou, and thy wife, and thy sons, and thy sons' wives with thee.

Observe, Noah did not go forth, until the Lord issued the divine command; see Lam. iii. 26.

17 Bring forth with thee every living thing that *is* with thee, of all flesh, *both* of fowl, and of cattle, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth; that they may breed abundantly in the earth, and be fruitful, and multiply upon the earth.

What a sweet improvement doth this verse suggest! All that went into the ark, were preserved alive, during this eventful year. Reader! when a whole year hath run out its course in your life, and death hath made no breaches in your house, or among your relations and family; ought not the distinguishing mercy to be as remarkably distinguished in praise?

18 ¶ And Noah went forth, and his sons, and his wife, and his sons' wives with him:

19 Every beast, every creeping thing, and every fowl, *and* whatsoever creepeth upon the earth, after their kinds, went forth out of the ark.

20 ¶ And Noah builded an altar unto the LORD; and took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt offerings on the altar.

Is not the Lord Jesus both our New Testament, Altar, Priest, and Sacrifice? Heb. xiii. 15.

21 ¶ And the LORD smelled a sweet savour; and the LORD said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake; for the imagination of man's heart *is* evil from his youth; neither will I again smite any more every thing living, as I have done.

As this offering was in faith, the apostle explains what the sweet smelling savour was. Eph. v. 2. The promise in this verse is a gracious promise, and, confirmed in Christ Jesus, is, like all others, *yea and amen.* 2 Pet. iii. 13.

22 While the earth remaineth, seed-time and

harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night, shall not cease.

How hath time, through a period of near 4000 years, stamped the truth of this, all over the earth.

REFLECTIONS.

I SHALL detain the Reader but with two observations, only, on this Chapter; and if they are well founded, may a gracious God give them their due weight on the mind!

Did Noah and his family remain perfectly secure in the ark, in the time of such awful destruction of the whole world? Think, then, O my soul, what infinite and inexhaustible resources are in Christ Jesus, for all the wants of all his people. There are no straits, neither is there any narrowness, but what we ourselves make, in the everlasting covenant of grace, founded on the blood and righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ; but abounding love and abounding mercy, answering to every necessity of his people. Gracious God! cause the reader and writer of this reflection to be abundantly supplied out of this fulness, and grace for grace, until the heart's experience of both, can join issue in the apostle's song, and, under the same assurance, say, as he did, *For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things; to whom be glory for ever. Amen.*

The other observation I would beg to offer, ariseth from the different characters which the raven and the dove seem to suggest to our minds. May we not, without violence, consider the raven as an emblem of the carnal mind, which, amidst all its profession, can live upon the mere carcase without, and feels no desire to enter within the ark, for its comfort and enjoyment! and is not the dove a lovely similitude of a gracious soul, which can find no rest for the sole of its feet, until taken in and secured in Christ Jesus? Lord! grant that I may never be found among those that can rest satisfied *without* the ark; but give me that dove-like simplicity, and godly sincerity, which pants to enter *within*. And Oh! Thou, who art the *Almighty Noah* of thy church and people, as without thee, Lord, I can do nothing, do thou, like him who was thy type, put forth thine hand, and take me into the ark, that I may dwell for ever with thee, that where thou art, there I may be also.

CHAP. IX.

CONTENTS.

This Chapter opens, to us, the beginning of the account of the new world, after the destruction of the old; so that here we commence, again, as it were, the history of mankind, in general, and of the church of God in particular. In the contents of this chapter, we are highly interested; not only because it relates to us the goodness of God, in a way of providence to the world at large; but because we have in it the outlines of divine mercy, in the way of grace, confirmed afresh by covenant engagements, to Noah and his descendants, unto the latest generations.

AND God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth*.

2 And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every fowl of the air, upon all that moveth *upon* the earth, and upon all the fishes of the sea; into your hand are they delivered†.

3 Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things.

Liveth; that is, fit for food, 1 Tim. iv. 4.

4 ¶ But flesh with the life thereof, *which* is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat.

There is somewhat very striking in this precept; and which is more than once, again repeated, under the law, with the reason of its appointment; see Lev. xvii. 10, 11. No doubt, the grand object aimed at, all along, is in reference to the blood of atonement, by the Lord Jesus. And it is a matter of infinite moment, worthy the Reader's closest regard, how particular the Holy Ghost hath been, in every age of the church, from the fall of man to the death of Christ, to keep alive this leading doctrine in the minds of the people.

5 And surely your blood of your lives will I require; at the hand of every beast will I require it, and at the hand of man; at the hand of every man's brother will I require the life of man‡.

6 Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man.

It is worthy particular notice, what is said in this verse, that God will require the life of man, even of the *irrational* part of the creation, with the reason given. It may serve to shew in what light the crime of murder is held in the sight of God.

7 And you, be ye fruitful, and multiply; bring forth abundantly in the earth, and multiply therein.

8 ¶ And God spake unto Noah, and to his sons with him, saying,

* Gen. i. 28. Psm. cxxviii. 3—5. Job. v. 25.

† Ezek. xiv. 21. Lev. xxvi. 6, compared with Lev. xxvi. 22.

‡ Psm. ix. 12, compared with Exod. xxi. 26, and with Acts xvii. 26.

9 And I, behold, I establish my covenant with you, and with your seed after you;

Once for all, I beg the Reader to remark with me, the distinguishing features of the divine covenant; namely, that it is all *of* God; that it is to be fulfilled *by* God; and that it is ultimately leading *to* God, in the promotion of his glory. How precious the thought, that he who makes it, undertakes for its completion; and therefore leaves not the issue of it, to any thing doubtful or uncertain. Well might the apostle draw that sweet conclusion from it, Gal. iii. 15 to the end of the chapter.

10 And with every living creature that *is* with you, of the fowl, of the cattle, and of every beast of the earth with you; from all that go out of the ark, to every beast of the earth.

11 And I will establish my covenant with you; neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of a flood; neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth*.

12 And God said, This *is* the token of the covenant which I make between me and you and every living creature that *is* with you, for perpetual generations:

13 ¶ I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth.

14 And it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud:

15 And I will remember my covenant, which *is* between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh.

16 And the bow shall be in the cloud; and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that *is* upon the earth.

Reader! do not forget, while perusing those verses, to turn to two passages in the book of the Revelations; chap. iv. 3, and chap. x. 1. Can any thing be more decisive, in proof that all that is here said, refers to the person and covenant-righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ.

* Isa, liv. 9. Job xxxviii. 10, 11.

17 And God said unto Noah, This *is* the token of the covenant, which I have established between me and all flesh that *is* upon the earth.

18 And the sons of Noah, that went forth of the ark, were Shem, and Ham, and Japheth : and Ham *is* the father of Canaan.

19 These *are* the three sons of Noah : and of them was the whole earth overspread.

20 And Noah began *to be* an husbandman, and he planted a vineyard :

21 ¶ And he drank of the wine, and was drunken ; and he was uncovered within his tent.

Reader! it is not among the smallest of our mercies, that God the Holy Ghost hath caused the infirmities of his saints to be left on record ; by which we are taught, that the best of men are but men, and of like passions with ourselves. There is none but Jesus, to whom that sweet scripture is applicable, Heb. vii. 26. For the real character of Noah, and, indeed, of all the faithful like him, compare this 21st verse with Gen. vi. 9, then turn to 2 Chron. xxxii. 31, both which together will serve to explain what, in scripture language, is meant by a just man.

22 And Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father, and told his two brethren without.

This may serve to shew what an awful thing it is, in those who from despising the people of God, take pleasure in publishing their infirmities. God speaks of such, by the prophet, in a decided manner. Hosea iv. 8.

23 And Shem and Japheth took a garment, and laid *it* upon both their shoulders, and went backward, and covered the nakedness of their father ; and their faces *were* backward, and they saw not their father's nakedness.

24 And Noah awoke from his wine, and knew what his younger son had done unto him.

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

26 And he said, Blessed *be* the LORD God of Shem ; and Canaan shall be his servant.

These expressions are prophetic! 800 years after you may read their accomplishment. Josh. ix. 23. Judg. i. 28, &c.

27 God shall enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant.

28 And Noah lived after the flood three hundred and fifty years.

29 ¶ And all the days of Noah were nine hundred and fifty years: and he died.

Noah lived, in all, 950 years; a sojourner in two worlds, it may be said of him, and yet but a sojourner; for at length he died, and came under the universal sentence. Gen. iii. 19.

REFLECTIONS.

READER! if your feelings correspond with mine, from the perusal of this sweet chapter, you will like to dwell with peculiar rapture on what God saith in it, concerning the rainbow; and if, under the Holy Ghost's teaching, you are led to discover some of those precious things, which seem to be connected with it, you will love to consider it again and again, in the most devout contemplation. Methinks, I could for ever gaze on it, while the words of the Lord vibrate on my ear, or are present to my remembrance. What though I know that beautiful arch it forms in the heavens is produced from natural causes, and is constructed solely from the reflection of the sun-beams on the drops of rain; yet do I not know, also, that the God of nature is the God of grace too; and that such is the sovereignty of his goodness and his power, that all things are made to act subordinate to his high designs, who worketh according to the counsel of his own will. And shall I not indulge the pleasing thought, when my God causeth this glorious object to be hung out for man's notice in the heavens, though the means producing it be natural, yet the sign intended from it is gracious? Great Father of mercies! hast thou said, that thou wilt set thy bow in the cloud, that it shall be a token of thy merciful engagements to mankind; that thou wilt look upon it, and that thou wilt remember thine everlasting covenant? Oh! then, give me grace, to look upon it also; and to behold in it, by an eye of faith, that mighty Angel, even the Lord Jesus Christ, whom John, the beloved apostle, in after ages, saw clothed with a rainbow round the throne. May I so look by grace, until mine eye awakens all the affections of my heart, and my soul is confirmed and established in the full assurance of faith and dependence upon all the covenant promises of God the Father, in Christ Jesus the Lord.

CHAP. X.

CONTENTS.

This Chapter contains the history of the first branching out of the race of men, into families and households, of which, in after ages, the whole earth is overspread. Here are no less than seventy distinct roots of nations noticed, but only one nation upon earth, and that is, God's

ancient people, the Jews, who can say from which of the seventy it sprung. The sacred historian gives a short account of the posterity of Japheth, and of Ham, but enlargeth chiefly upon that of Shem, because from that stock, after the flesh, the Messiah was to arise.

NOW these are the generations of the sons of Noah; Shem, Ham, and Japheth: and unto them were sons born after the flood*.

2 ¶ The sons of Japheth; Gomer, and Magog, and Madai, and Javan, and Tubal, and Meshech, and Tiras†.

3 And the sons of Gomer; Ashkenaz, and Riphath, and Togarmah.

4 And the sons of Javan; Elishah, and Tarshish, Kittim, and Dodanim.

5 By these were the isles of the Gentiles divided in their lands; every one after his tongue, after their families, in their nations.

Jer. xxv. 22. This verse is, in my apprehension, the most interesting, to us of the Gentile church, of any in the chapter. Reader! pause over it, and remark, that as the posterity of Japheth is here said to have the isles divided unto them for an inheritance; and as the prophet Isaiah, in his 42d chapter, and 4th verse, saith, *The isles shall wait for the Redeemer's law*; is it not highly probable, that the faithful, in this our British Isle, to which we belong, are of the descendants of Japheth? Moreover, it is said in Gen. ix. 27, that Japheth shall dwell in the tents of Shem; meaning, no doubt, that the Gentile and the Jewish church, shall, in the latter day glory, be one fold under one Shepherd. But do not forget what is there said, concerning this glorious event: *God shall enlarge Japheth*; or, as the margin of the Bible hath it, and so it might have been translated, God shall *persuade* Japheth. Yes! it is the divine teachings and influence alone, which can accomplish this gracious work.

6 ¶ And the sons of Ham; Cush, and Mizraim, and Phut, and Canaan‡.

7 And the sons of Cush; Seba, and Havilah, and Sabtah, and Raamah, and Sabtechah: and the sons of Raamah; Sheba, and Dedan.

8 ¶ And Cush begat Nimrod: he began to be a mighty one in the earth§.

9 He was a mighty hunter before the LORD:

* Gen. v. 1. Matt. i. 1. † 1 Chron. i. 5. ‡ 1 Chron. iv. 40.

§ Micah v. 6.

wherefore it is said, Even as Nimrod the mighty hunter before the LORD*.

10 And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel, and Erech, and Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar.

11 Out of that land went forth Ashur, and builded Nineveh, and the city Rehoboth, and Calah,

12 And Resen between Nineveh and Calah: the same *is* a great city.

13 And Mizraim begat Ludim, and Anamim, and Lehabim, and Naphtuhim,

14 And Pathrusim, and Casluhim, (out of whom came Philistim,) and Caphtorim.

15 And Canaan begat Sidon his first-born, and Heth,

16 And the Jebusite, and the Amorite, and the Girgasite,

17 And the Hivite, and the Arkite, and the Sinite,

18 And the Arvadite, and the Zemarite, and the Hamathite: and afterward were the families of the Canaanites spread abroad.

19 And the border of the Canaanites was from Sidon, as thou comest to Gerar, unto Gaza; as thou goest, unto Sodom, and Gomorrah, and Admah, and Zeboim, even unto Lasha.

20 These *are* the sons of Ham, after their families, after their tongues, in their countries, *and* in their nations.

21 ¶ Unto Shem also, the father of all the children of Eber, the brother of Japheth the elder, even to him were *children* born.

Eber, meaning Hebrew, from whence sprung the Jews. Numb. xxiv. 24.

22 The children of Shem; Elam, and Ashur, and Arphaxad, and Lud, and Aram.

* Jer. xvi. 16. Ezek. xiii. 18.

23 And the children of Aram ; Uz, and Hul, and Gether, and Mash.

24 And Arphaxad begat Salah ; and Salah begat Eber.

25 And unto Eber were born two sons : the name of one *was* Peleg ; for in his days was the earth divided ; and his brother's name *was* Joktan.

26 And Joktan begat Almohad, and Sheleph, and Hazarmaveth, and Jerah,

27 And Hadoram, and Uzal, and Diklah,

28 And Obal, and Abimael, and Sheba,

29 And Ophir, and Havilah, and Johab : all these *were* the sons of Joktan.

30 And their dwelling was from Mesha, as thou goest, unto Sephar, a mount of the east.

31 These *are* the sons of Shem, after their families, after their tongues, in their lands, after their nations.

32 These *are* the families of the sons of Noah, after their generations, in their nations : and by these were the nations divided in the earth after the flood.

REFLECTIONS.

How graciously hath God watched over the promised seed, in the family of *Shem*, and so particularly marked down the descendants of the chosen race, from whom, after the flesh, that Holy Thing (as he is emphatically called in his own word) was to spring, Christ in the flesh, who is over all, God blessed for ever. And how graciously hath God been pleased to note the features of his people in every age, by that uniform mark, by which they are known, of a poor and afflicted people. While the posterity of *Ham* are said to be the *Nimrods* of the earth ; the offspring of *Shem*, with whom the blessing was deposited, is among the bond-slaves in Egypt. Let this teach us, how much better it is to be poor and humble, while belonging to the household of faith, than, void of faith, to be found related even to nobles.

CHAP. XI.

CONTENTS.

The sacred historian relates in this Chapter an awful proof of man's fallen nature, and thereby confirms the divine declaration concerning it, that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil con-

tinually. *For notwithstanding that the flood had swept away the whole human race, excepting that part preserved with Noah in the ark; and God's displeasure against sin had manifested itself in this dreadful judgment, yet the sin of man soon broke out afresh; and, in the daring attempt of building the tower of Babel, evidently discovered that man ventured to defy the Omnipotency of God. The relation of this foolish, as well as impious undertaking, is contained in this Chapter, together with the divine judgment which followed. Towards the close of the chapter, the Reader is first introduced to the history of Abram, of whom such honourable testimony is afterwards given throughout the whole volume of Scripture.*

AND the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech.

Happy world, may it not be said, when no confusion or misapprehension could arise from a diversity of languages! What a train of evils hath this variety alone produced in the earth in after ages! Is it not more than probable that this was the holy tongue, (Hebrew), and learned first in Paradise?

2 And it came to pass, as they journeyed from the east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar; and they dwelt there.

Or journeyed *eastward*, as chap. xiii. 11. Shinar or Senaar was afterwards called Chaldea or Babylonia.

3 ¶ And they said one to another, Go to, let us make brick, and burn them thoroughly. And they had brick for stone, and slime had they for mortar.

Observe how sinners encourage sinners by their counsel: Prov. i. 11. And ought not saints to provoke one another *to love and to good works*? Heb. x. 24.

4 And they said, Go to, let us build us a city, and a tower, whose top *may reach* unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth.

Reader! I charge you to see that your foundation be that which is mentioned, 1 Cor. iii. 11. and then those blessings will follow: Isaiah liv. 11, 12. Rev. xxi. 10—12. It is worth observing, that *Cain* was the first builder of a city: Gen. iv. 17. And those Babel-builders were the next. If the Reader would see the opposite characters, let him turn to Heb. xi. 13—16.

5 ¶ And the LORD came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men builded.

This is spoken after the manner of men: Psm cxiii. 6.

6 And the LORD said, Behold, the people is

one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do.

7 Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech.

Observe the form of expression, *let us go down*; and recollect what was remarked in the Commentary on Gen. i. 26.

8 So the LORD scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth: and they left off to build the city.

What dispersions have since taken place, both of nations and individuals!

9 Therefore is the name of it called Babel; because the LORD did there confound the language of all the earth: and from thence did the LORD scatter them abroad upon the face of all the earth.

Babel means confusion. Hence is derived *Babbler*. Here was afterward founded Babylon the great seat of idolatry and persecution. This tower was then either rebuilt, or enlarged, and converted into the temple of Belus, which, according to history, was both higher and larger than St. Paul's cathedral.

10 ¶ These *are* the generations of Shem: Shem *was* an hundred years old, and begat Arphaxad two years after the flood:

11 And Shem lived after he begat Arphaxad five hundred years, and begat sons and daughters.

12 And Arphaxad lived five and thirty years, and begat Salah:

13 And Arphaxad lived after he begat Salah four hundred and three years, and begat sons and daughters.

14 And Salah lived thirty years, and begat Eber:

15 And Salah lived after he begat Eber four hundred and three years, and begat sons and daughters.

16 And Eber lived four and thirty years, and begat Peleg:

17 And Eber lived after he begat Peleg four hundred and thirty years, and begat sons and daughters.

18 And Peleg lived thirty years, and begat Reu:

19 And Peleg lived after he begat Reu two hundred and nine years, and begat sons and daughters.

20 And Reu lived two and thirty years, and begat Serug:

21 And Reu lived after he begat Serug two hundred and seven years, and begat sons and daughters.

22 And Serug lived thirty years, and begat Nahor:

23 And Serug lived after he begat Nahor two hundred years, and begat sons and daughters.

24 And Nahor lived nine and twenty years, and begat Terah:

25 And Nahor lived after he begat Terah an hundred and nineteen years, and begat sons and daughters.

26 And Terah lived seventy years, and begat Abram, Nahor, and Haran.

These verses are all highly interesting, in that they lead to Him, after the flesh, in whom *all the families of the earth were to be blessed*. Matt. i. 1—16. I would desire the Reader to remark with me, how careful the Holy Ghost hath been, through all his sacred word, to preserve the names of the faithful. Certainly they occupy more place in the Bible than those of all the world beside.

27 ¶ Now these *are* the generations of Terah: Terah begat Abram, Nahor, and Haran; and Haran begat Lot.

28 And Haran died before his father Terah, in the land of his nativity, in Ur of the Chaldees.

29 And Abram and Nahor took them wives: the name of Abram's wife *was* Sarai; and the name

of Nahor's wife, Milcah, the daughter of Haran, the father of Milcah, and the father of Iscah.

30 But Sarai was barren; she *had* no child.

31 And Terah took Abram his son, and Lot the son of Haran his son's son, and Sarai his daughter in law, his son Abram's wife; and they went forth with them from Ur of the Chaldees, to go into the land of Canaan; and they came unto Haran, and dwelt there.

Harran is the same as *Charran*, between Ur and Canaan, Acts vii. 4. Sarai was Abram's half sister, chap. xx. 12, and supposed to be the same as Iscah, verse 29.

32 And the days of Terah were two hundred and five years; and Terah died in Haran.

Observe, how the lives of men have gradually been shortened!

REFLECTIONS.

WHAT an awful view is here again afforded of man's apostacy! So little effect had the remembrance of the deluge left upon the human mind, that instead of being humbled under the mighty hand of God, we behold the workings of the heart occupied in contriving a plan to counteract the divine sovereignty in future. Perhaps infidelity, which is the same in all ages, ventured to do, what it is for ever doing, to put down to *second* causes what was evidently the effect of a *first* ordination; and denied any divine interference in the flood of waters. Alas! my soul, what are all the rebellious murmurings and transgressions arising in my heart, but the effects of the same cause, unbelief! Lord I would pray, (as a pious father of old used to pray) "Preserve me from that evil man, myself."

I cannot close this chapter without stopping to remark, how striking an instance of the sovereignty of Almighty grace is here given, when we consider that from the confusion of languages, sent as a judgment in this instance, arose, in after ages, an occasion for the display of mercy, in the gift of tongues, to the Apostles; so that the wonders of the day of *Pentecost* sprung out of the ruins of *Babel*. What a precious testimony to the truth of that scripture: *Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee; the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain.* Psalm lxxvi. 10.

CHAP. XII.

CONTENTS.

The history of Abram, just glanced at in the close of the preceding Chapter, the Holy Ghost enters upon in this Chapter more particularly. The account of God's first call of Abram; his gracious manifestations unto him; the removal of the Patriarch in consequence thereof, from his native country, to go into Canaan; his going down into Egypt, with the events which followed. These form the subject of the present Chapter.

NOW the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee:

Reader! Is not this call of God to Abram, similar to the calls of his grace, in the present hour! Psalm. lxxv. 10. 2 Cor. vi. 17, 18.—“Into the south:” i. e. the southern part of Canaan which lay north-east of Egypt.

2 And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing:

How eminently was this fulfilled in Abram's history. *First*, according to *nature* in the flesh, in the children of Ishmael. See Gen. xvi. 10. xvii. 20. *Secondly*, according to *promise*. Here Abram was greater still in the issue of Isaac, Jacob, and the Patriarchs. Numb. xxii. 10. And *Thirdly*, and above all, in his *spiritual* seed, in which all the followers of his faith and obedience, are in scripture accounted his children: as well in the *Gentile*, as the *Jewish Church*. Gal. iii. 8, 9. Rev. vii. 9.

3 And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.

Reader! pause over this precious verse; and when you have duly meditated upon it, ask your own heart, whether it is not fully verified? Acts iv. 12. 2 Cor. i. 20.—Note, when God eminently blesses any one, it is that he may be a blessing unto others.

4 ¶ So Abram departed, as the LORD had spoken unto him; and Lot went with him: and Abram *was* seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran.

If my Reader be among the aged, and is fearing that he may have outstayed the day of grace, I do not know a more precious encouragement than what this verse holds forth, *to revive the heart of the contrite ones*. Forget it not my aged brother, that Abram the great father of the faithful, was 75 years old, when the visions of God began with him.

5 And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother's son, and all their substance that they had gathered, and the souls that they had gotten in Haran; and they went forth to go into the land of Canaan; and into the land of Canaan they came.

What an illustrious act of faith was this? How highly it is *spoken of* by the Holy Ghost? Heb. xi. 8.

6 And Abram passed through the land unto the

place of Sichem, unto the plain of Moreh. And the Canaanite *was* then in the land.

7 ¶ And the LORD appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land: and there builded he an altar unto the LORD, who appeared unto him.

Nine times (if I mistake not) it is noticed of God's appearing to Abram. The Holy Ghost by the mouth of Stephen explains how: Acts vii. 2. See Gen. xiii. 3, 4. xv. 1. xvii. 1. xviii. 1. xxi. 12. xxii. 2, and 15.

8 And he removed from thence unto a mountain on the east of Beth-el, and pitched his tent, *having* Beth-el on the west, and Hai on the east: and there he builded an altar unto the LORD, and called upon the name of the LORD.

Abram not only served God for himself, but erected an altar for his public worship.

9 And Abram journeyed, going on still toward the south.

10 And there was a famine in the land: and Abram went down into Egypt to sojourn there; for the famine *was* grievous in the land.

Was not this particularly intended for the exercise of Abram's faith? Had he consulted flesh and blood would he not have said, "Is this the land of promise? Is this the end of my pursuits? And have I for this left my Father's house, and my own land, to perish here by famine?" But what saith the Apostle? Rom. iv. 18—21. And particularly the 23d and 24th verses? Reader! what saith your own experience to this, amidst the trials of *your* faith? Have you left all for Jesus; and are you frequently discouraged on the way? See that sweet scripture: Mark x. 28, 29, 30.

11 And it came to pass, when he was come near to enter into Egypt, that he said unto Sarai his wife, Behold now, I know that thou *art* a fair woman to look upon:

12 Therefore it shall come to pass, when the Egyptians shall see thee, that they shall say, This *is* his wife: and they will kill me, but they will save thee alive*.

13 Say, I pray thee, thou *art* my sister: that

* See Observation on Gen. ix. 21.

it may be well with me for thy sake; and my soul shall live because of thee.

14 And it came to pass, that, when Abram was come into Egypt, the Egyptians beheld the woman that she *was* very fair*.

15 The princes also of Pharaoh saw her, and commended her before Pharaoh; and the woman was taken into Pharaoh's house.

16 And he entreated Abram well for her sake: and he had sheep, and oxen, and he asses, and menservants, and maidservants, and she asses, and camels.

17 And the LORD plagued Pharaoh and his house with great plagues, because of Sarai Abram's wife.

18 And Pharaoh called Abram, and said, What *is* this *that* thou hast done unto me? why didst thou not tell me that she *was* thy wife?

I think it probable, that those plagues were diseases of a particular nature. 1 Sam. v. 6—9. And it should seem that they were so considered. God's rod has a *voice*, and speaks as well as corrects. Micah vi. 9.

Reader! it is a melancholy reflection, when the people of God give occasion for the carnal to reprove them.

19 Why saidst thou, She *is* my sister? so I might have taken her to me to wife: now therefore behold thy wife, take *her*, and go thy way.

Observe how God provides for his people's safety. Psm. cv. 13, 14, 15.

20 And Pharaoh commanded *his* men concerning him: and they sent him away, and his wife, and all that he had.

REFLECTIONS.

METHINKS I would not read this call of God to Abram, and observe the Patriarch's ready faith to obey it, without begging grace from God, to attend to the many precious invitations with which I am called upon to follow Jesus in the regeneration; and, like Abram, to arise, leave house and home, and kindred, and relations; and by faith become *the follower of them who now through faith and patience inherit the promises*. And oh! that He, who endued the patriarch with such holy for-

* Gen. xx. 12.

titude, would arm my mind with the like confidence, that, amidst every discouragement, *against hope I might believe in hope*; and trust God, where I cannot trace him. Dearest Jesus! grant me as thou didst the patriarch, the frequent visits of thy love, and then whatever famine shall arise, or straits surround me, in the midst of all, a wilderness with thee will, to my soul, be far preferable to a land flowing with milk and honey without thee!

CHAP. XIII.

CONTENTS.

The history of the Patriarch Abram, is continued through the whole of this Chapter. He is still in his pilgrimage state, wandering and removing under the guidance of Heaven, from one place to another. His wealth is here particularly noticed; as also his remarkable piety. But troubles beset him. A strife between his servants and the servants of his kinsman Lot, soon causeth them to separate from each other. Lot removes eastward towards the fruitful plains of Sodom, and Abram remains still in Canaan.

AND Abram went up out of Egypt, he and his wife, and all that he had, and Lot with him, into the south.

It will be profitable to remark in this place (considering it spiritually) how the Lord, in the several ages of the church, hath led his people down into Egypt, and brought them up again. Gen. xlv. 34. Hosea xi. 1. Matt. ii. 15. Rev. xi. 8.

2 And Abram *was* very rich in cattle, in silver, and in gold*.

3 And he went on his journeys from the south even to Beth-el, unto the place where his tent had been at the beginning, between Beth-el and Hai;

Bethel; that is the house of God, made remarkable by divine manifestations, Gen. xxviii. 19. xxxv. 1.

4 Unto the place of the altar, which he had made there at the first: and there Abram called on the name of the LORD.

5 And Lot also, which went with Abram, had flocks, and herds, and tents.

6 And the land was not able to bear them, that they might dwell together: for their substance was great, so that they could not dwell together.

Such are all creature comforts! See 1 Tim. vi. 9.

* Prov. x. 22.

7 ¶ And there was a strife between the herdmen of Abram's cattle and the herdmen of Lot's cattle: and the Canaanite and the Perizzite dwelled then in the land.

And is it not a serious question, whether the disputes and contentions among the professors of godliness, do not give occasion frequently to the enemy to blaspheme?

8 And Abram said unto Lot, Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, and between my herdmen and thy herdmen; for we *be* brethren.

9 *Is* not the whole land before thee? separate thyself, I pray thee, from me: if *thou wilt take* the left hand, then I will go to the right; or if *thou depart* to the right hand, then I will go to the left.

Sweet and endearing argument! Oh! that it were more generally made use of, and its power more generally felt. *Canaanites* and *Perizzites* may quarrel; for nature untaught, unrestrained by grace, hath corruptions to beget it. But let not you and I, who profess to be disciples of the lovely and all-loving Jesus; John xiii. 35.

10 And Lot lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it *was* well watered every where, before the LORD destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, *even* as the garden of the LORD, like the land of Egypt, as thou comest unto Zoar.

See the cause of this mistaken choice, 1 John ii. 16. Ezek. xvi. 49.

11 Then Lot chose him all the plain of Jordan; and Lot journeyed east: and they separated themselves the one from the other.

12 Abram dwelled in the land of Canaan, and Lot dwelled in the cities of the plain, and pitched *his* tent toward Sodom.

13 But the men of Sodom *were* wicked, and sinners before the LORD exceedingly.

14 ¶ And the LORD said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward:

Observe God's renewed visit to Abram. How much better was the patriarch in a barren land, with God for his portion, than Lot in all the fruitfulness of Sodom, amidst *the filthy conversation of the wicked*.—Reader! pause to remark, how abundantly the presence and favour of Jesus, compensate the absence of earthly friends.

15 For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever.

16 And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth; so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, *then* shall thy seed also be numbered.

If the Reader wishes to observe, how very precious the exercise of Abram's faith was upon this occasion, I refer him to the account of it in Stephen's Sermon: Acts vii. 5.

17 Arise, walk through the land, in the length of it, and in the breadth of it; for I will give it unto thee.

Was not this a type of Emanuel's land, the glory of all lands? And is not every true believer like the patriarch, called upon to enter upon the possession of it by faith *here*, before he comes to the realizing of it hereafter? Psalm xlviii. 12. Heb. xi. 14.

18 Then Abram removed *his* tent, and came and dwelt in the plain of Mamre, which *is* in Hebron, and built there an altar unto the LORD.

Still in a pilgrimage state. Observe Abram again builds an altar. And what doth his conduct in this instance teach, but this, that it is very meet, right, and our bounden duty, in all places wheresoever a gracious God meets his people, in the visits of his love, that there they should raise a memorial of tribute to his praise?

REFLECTIONS.

AMIDST all the competitions, strifes and jealousies, which this world's goods excites among men in life, let Abram's portion be my portion. Let me but be able, in a well-grounded assurance to call Jesus mine, and I value not what sinners value of the perishing things of time and sense. Precious Redeemer! it is thy favour which gives a sweetness to every joy, and softens every sorrow. Let the cisterns of all creature-comforts be dried up, if thy wisdom see it fit: the streams of thine everlasting love will still flow. And while, like the prophet, I can truly *re-joice in the Lord, and joy in the God of my salvation*, it matters not, even if *the fig-tree doth not blossom, neither fruit be in the vine*.

Methinks this gracious call of God to Abram, which is always sweet in mercy, is uncommonly so in this instance: *lift up thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art*. And is not the same in effect said to every believer? Lift up thine eyes, and behold in every direction, northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward, how all mercies and promises are confirmed to the faithful, in the Covenant of grace which is in Christ Jesus. *All are yours* (saith the Apostle, *if ye are*

Christ's; whether the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come. Blessed God! May it be my mercy to enjoy all things in Jesus, and Jesus in all things!

CHAP. XIV.

CONTENTS.

If the history of the first battle ever fought be interesting, this Chapter, which relates it, must be so. But alas! what is the relation of all wars, but the relation of our fallen state. From whence come wars and fightings, but of our lusts which war in our members? Sodom, the land of plenty, becomes now the land of desolation. The battle of the kings, involves Lot, Abram's kinsman, in the evil. The patriarch hearing of it, hastens to his rescue, and delivers both him and his household from captivity. In this enterprise Abram meets Melchisedeck, king of Salem, and priest of the Most High God; is refreshed by him after the battle and blessed.

AND it came to pass in the days of Amraphel king of Shinar, Arioch king of Ellasar, Chedorlaomer king of Elam, and Tidal king of nations*;

2 That these made war with Bera king of Sodom, and with Birsha king of Gomorrah, Shinab king of Admah, and Shemeber king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela, which is Zoar†.

3 All these were joined together in the vale of Siddim, which is the salt sea‡.

4 Twelve years they served Chedorlaomer, and in the thirteenth year they rebelled.

The Reader is desired to recollect, that the *Sodomites* were the descendants of *Canaan*: on whom that memorable denunciation was prophetically made by *Noah*. Gen. ix. 25.

5 And in the fourteenth year came Chedorlaomer, and the kings that were with him, and smote the Rephaims in Ashteroth Karnaim, and the Zuzims in Ham, and the Emims in Shaveh Kiriathaim.

6 And the Horites in their mount Seir, unto El-paran, which is by the wilderness ||.

* Gen. x. 10. and xi. 2. † Gen. xix. 20. ‡ Joshua iii. 16.

§ Rephaims, 2 Sam. v. 18—22. Emims, Deut. ii. 10, 11. Zuzims, Deut. ii. 20, 21. || Deut. ii. 12.

7 And they returned, and came to Enmishpat, which *is* Kadesh, and smote all the country of the Amalekites, and also the Amorites, that dwelt in Hazezon-tamar*.

8 And there went out the king of Sodom, and the king of Gomorrah, and the king of Admah, and the king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela (the same *is* Zoar); and they joined battle with them in the vale of Siddim†;

9 With Chedorlaomer the king of Elam, and with Tidal king of nations, and Amraphel king of Shinar, and Arioch king of Ellasar; four kings with five.

10 And the vale of Siddim *was full of* slimepits; and the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled, and fell there; and they that remained fled to the mountain.

11 And they took all the goods of Sodom and Gomorrah, and all their victuals, and went their way.

12 ¶ And they took Lot, Abram's brother's son, who dwelt in Sodom, and his goods, and departed‡.

13 And there came one that had escaped, and told Abram the Hebrew; for he dwelt in the plain of Mamre the Amorite, brother of Eshcol, and brother of Aner; and these *were* confederate with Abram.

Abram might be called the Hebrew, either from Eber, his ancestors, as above, or else from his having *passed* the Euphrates, when he became a passenger, or pilgrim, in the land of Canaan.

14 ¶ And when Abram heard that his brother was taken captive, he armed his trained *servants*, born in his own house, three hundred and eighteen, and pursued *them* unto Dan§.

15 And he divided himself against them, he

* Deut. i. 19—46. † Gen. xix. 22. ‡ 2 Cor. vi. 17. Rev. xviii. 4.

§ Compare with Gen. xii. 2. 1 Sam. xiv. 6.

and his servants, by night, and smote them, and pursued them unto Hobah, which *is* on the left hand of Damascus.

16 And he brought back all the goods, and also brought again his brother Lot, and his goods, and the women also, and the people.

17 And the king of Sodom went out to meet him after his return from the slaughter of Chedorlaomer, and of the kings that *were* with him, at the valley of Shaveh, which *is* the king's dale.

18 ¶ And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he *was* the priest of the most high God.

19 And he blessed him, and said, Blessed *be* Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth:

20 ¶ And blessed be the most high God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand. And he gave him tithes of all.

I beg the Reader, very particularly, in entering upon the perusal of these verses, to call to mind our motto: *Moses wrote of Christ*. And with this impression, to turn to the 7th chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews, and diligently compare both Scriptures: and may the same Almighty Teacher, who guided the apostle's pen in that chapter, to explain this Old Testament Scripture, lead the Reader into a clear apprehension of the whole. Of this Melchisedek it is said, that he was *without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life*. Of whom could this be said, but of Him of whom the prophet speaks: Isaiah liii. 8. Prov. viii. 23. compared with Acts viii. 33—35? Again. Of Melchisedek, it is said, that he is a *priest for ever*. But who is a priest for ever, excepting Him described in Psm. cx. 4. Heb. vii. 17—21? So once more. Of Melchisedek it is said, that *he abideth continually like to the Son of God*, and that it is witnessed of him *that he liveth*. Heb. vii. 3—8. But that no question of doubt might arise to whom these things referred, the apostle points out by many infallible marks to Him, of whom these things were spoken. See Heb. vii. throughout.—Reader! Who think you was this Melchisedek? Can you bear testimony as Nathaniel did upon a similar occasion? John i. 49.

21 And the king of Sodom said unto Abram, Give me the persons, and take the goods to thyself.

22 And Abram said to the king of Sodom, I have lift up mine hand unto the LORD, the most high God, the possessor of heaven and earth.

23 That I will not *take* from a thread even to a shoelatchet, and that I will not take any thing that is thine, lest thou shouldest say, I have made Abram rich:

24 Save only that which the young men have eaten, and the portion of the men which went with me, Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre; let them take their portion.

REFLECTIONS.

How very awful is it to contemplate the bloodshed, ravages, and desolation made by war among the inhabitants of the earth! See Reader, what hath sin done, and what a train of evils originate from that one fatal source! The Holy Ghost here opens to our view in this chapter, the first display of war. Calculate, if it be possible, since that period, the dreadful amount of the vast volume in this history alone, by which the peace of private life and public bodies hath been destroyed. O! who shall speak the groans, the heart-aches, and the sorrows, which like a flood have broken in upon the world, and desolated every part of it. Blessed Jesus! hasten that glorious period promised to thy Church, when *nation shall not lift sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.*

But my soul! while in the mention of the adorable name of Jesus, leave, I charge thee, every other consideration as trifling and unimportant, to attend to what is related in this chapter concerning this Melchisedeck, *priest of the Most High God.* Surely I behold in him, Jesus the Son of God, who was indeed set up as the Covenant-head from everlasting, in the Eternal Councils? and *whose delights were with the sons of men, before he made the earth or the highest part of the dust of the world.* He was indeed, in the truest sense of the word, *without father, as Man, and without mother as God;* having neither beginning of days nor end of life: for he is *Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.* And is he not also *King of Righteousness?* Yes! even *the Lord our righteousness.* And, blessings to his holy name! He hath wrought out, and brought in an everlasting righteousness, which is *unto all and upon all that believe.* And he is no less *King of peace;* for he hath made our peace *in the blood of his cross.* Hail thou Great Almighty Melchisedeck! Be thou *a priest upon thy throne* for me; since thou hast an *unchangeable priesthood,* and ever *livest to make intercession for sinners, and art able to save to the uttermost, all that come to God by thee.* Son of God! help me by thy Holy Spirit, to go forth in the spiritual warfare, against all the enemies of my salvation, as Abram did to the slaughter of the kings. And do thou bring forth thy bread and thy wine, even thy precious body and blood, which

is meat indeed, and drink indeed, and refresh my soul by the way. And since I have nothing, Lord, to offer thee but what is thine, accept of thine own, which thou hast given me. By thee, blessed Lord, would I desire grace, to offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, the fruit both of my lips and of my heart, giving thanks to thy name.

CHAP. XV.

CONTENTS.

In the two former Chapters, we find many tokens of God's gracious intention towards Abram. In this Chapter God confirms the same by the solemn treaty of a covenant. Abram had the most delightful assurances given to him by a faithful God; and all folded up within a covenant of promise. A bountiful God, not only pledged himself to give the Patriarch an extensive estate, but an extensive issue to enjoy it. And as these blessings of the promised seed and the promised land, spiritually considered, were types of better things to come, even the Lord Jesus Christ as the seed of the woman, and the heavenly possession through him which Canaan represented; they serve to teach us, under the gospel state, the greater privilege of those who are blessed with faithful Abram.

AFTER these things the word of the LORD came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward.

Several precious things are contained in this verse. Observe the expression *how* the Lord communed with Abram. Is not Jesus the uncreated word? Might not this vision be some manifestation of the *Shechinah*? Observe also, the Lord called Abram by name: so Jesus speaks to his sheep. John x. 3. Observe also, the sweetness of divine communications, *Fear not*. God's people are peculiarly exposed to fears. And if they had no fears to encounter, many precious promises in the covenant would have no place for exercise. Observe also, what the Lord promiseth, not only to defend, but to bless; not simply to reward, but himself to be the reward, and that exceedingly great. Psm. xvi. 5. lxxxiv. 11.

2 And Abram said, LORD God, what wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless, and the steward of my house is this Eliezer of Damascus?

3 And Abram said, Behold, to me thou hast given no seed: and, lo, one born in my house is mine heir.

Those expressions are not the language of unbelief, but of humble enquiry. See Chap. xii. 2. and Chap. xiii. 16. It is sweet to spiritualize. Doth not every faithful son of Abram say the same, until Christ, the promised seed, is formed in the heart?

4 ¶ And, behold, the word of the LORD came

unto him, saying, This shall not be thine heir; but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir.

How instant sometimes are the divine communications! See that promise, Isa. lxxv. 24.

5 And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them; and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be.

God had before promised, that his seed should be as the dust of the earth. Gen. xiii. 16. Here it is promised to be as the stars of heaven; meaning, perhaps, not only that the seed should be numerous, but glorious.

6 ¶ And he believed in the Lord; and he counted it to him for righteousness.

Reader! behold how the apostle *Paul* extols this faith. Rom. iv. 19—21. But may we not add, that this was a believing faith, on the person and righteousness of Jesus? See John viii. 56. and Heb. xi. 4. There is one thing highly observable in this account of Abram's faith, and which I beg the Reader particularly to remark; that the Patriarch's justification, on account of it, was before his circumcision. The apostle dwells at length upon this in his Epistles: see Rom. iv. 3. Gal. iii. 6. And we shall do well to dwell upon it also.

7 ¶ And he said unto him, I *am* the LORD that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give thee this land to inherit it.

It is delightful to observe, that when God engageth to bless his people, how he makes reference to his own glorious character, by way of assurance. Heb. vi. 13, &c.

8 And he said, LORD God, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it*?

9 And he said unto him, Take me an heifer of three years old, and a she goat of three years old, and a ram of three years old, and a turtle dove, and a young pigeon.

10 And he took unto him all these, and divided them in the midst, and laid each piece one against another: but the birds divided he not.

11 And when the fowls came down upon the carcases, Abram drove them away.

* See observations on verses 2, 3.

It is not altogether fanciful to trace even in the minute circumstances of sacrifice, somewhat referring to Him unto whom all the sacrifices referred? Is not the three years of age a type of the Redeemer's three years ministry? And what do those birds of prey, which came down upon Abram's sacrifice, intimate, but the vain thoughts which hover over our minds in our holy seasons?

12 And when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and, lo, an horror of great darkness fell upon him.

The sun going down denotes the season of sacrifice, Dan. ix. 21.—Concerning the *sleep*, see Gen. ii. 21. Solomon's Song v. 1. Matt. xxv. 5. Concerning the *horror*—(perhaps a cry in the soul, like that at midnight, Matt. xxv. 6.) See Psm. lv. 5. Acts ii. 37. xvi. 29, 30. Or may we not in both observe an emblem of the different tendencies in the law and the gospel? 2 Cor. iii. 13. Heb. xii. 18 and 22. As it was said of the Lord Jesus, that Christ ought *first to suffer, and then enter into his glory*; so his people. Luke xxiv. 26—46.

13 And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land *that is* not their's, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years*;

14 And also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance†.

15 And thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age‡.

16 But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again: for the iniquity of the Amorites *is* not yet full§.

17 And it came to pass, that, when the sun went down, and it was dark, behold a smoking furnace, and a burning lamp that passed between those pieces.

Smoking furnace. See Deut. iv. 20. Isaiah xlviii. 10. Burning lamp. See Isaiah lxii. 1. Exod. iii. 2. The *former* intimating affliction: the *latter* comfort. But do not both mean, in passing between the pieces of sacrifice, that Jesus is the one all-sufficient offering by which acceptance is found? See Psalm l. 5. Judges xiii. 23.—Passing between the parts of the sacrifice was an antient form of confirming the most solemn covenants. Jer. xxxiv. 18, 19. The burning lamp, (or lamp of fire), was a symbol of the divine presence, and by this probably the sacri-

* Exod. xii. 40—42. † Psalm xxxvii. 12, 13. Exod. vi. 56. xii. 35, 36.

‡ Isaiah lvii. 1. Job v. 26. § Job xxi. 7. Matt. xxiii. 32.

fice was consumed. Lev. ix. 24. Judges vi. 21. xiii. 20. 1 Kings xviii. 38.

18 In the same day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates*:

19 The Kenites, and the Kenizzites, and the Kadmonites†,

20 And the Hittites, and the Perizzites, and the Rephaims,

21 And the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Girgashites, and the Jebusites.

REFLECTIONS.

LET the visions of God with Abram have this effect upon all the true seed of Abram, earnestly to desire and as highly to prize, all the gracious manifestations of the divine love. May we esteem all the ordinances and means of grace, which tend to open a channel of communication between God and our souls. But yet more affectionately covet communion with the God of ordinances. Blessed Jesus! I would say, both for myself and for the Reader, Oh! do thou manifest thyself unto me otherwise than thou dost unto the world! May I know that thou art my portion, my shield, and my exceeding great reward.

Reader! behold the Patriarch Abram, and learn in his history the sweetness of exercised faith. Amidst all those precious promises of a faithful God, yet how long, how seemingly tedious and trying, the dispensation was appointed to be to his seed, before the fulfillment. Oh! for faith, that against hope, you and I may believe in hope; and in all our trials, *may we run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith.* And as the Patriarch considered himself as sojourning in a strange country, and was looking beyond the tabernacles which he inhabited, for *a city which had foundations*, so may we never lose sight of that most certain truth, that *here we have no continuing city*, but may we be *seeking one to come*. And oh! thou Almighty giver of faith, increase our faith, and enable us to *walk by faith, and not by sight*, until we realize the divine presence in all the glories of eternity, and *receive the end of our faith, even the salvation of our souls.*

CHAP. XVI.

CONTENTS.

The private history of an event in the family of Abram forms the contents of this Chapter. But as no scripture is of private interpretation, it is probable, that the Holy Ghost thought proper to introduce

* Gen. xii. 7. xiii. 15.

† Exod. xxiii. 23—31.

it to the knowledge of the Church, in order to manifest that the explanation of it is to be considered spiritually. And this is one, among the innumerable other proofs, in God's word, how much the right interpretation of scripture depends upon scripture. Paul the Apostle, was commissioned to explain this history, in his Epistle to the Church of Galatia. Chap. iv. 22, to 25 Verses. The relation itself is simply this: A bond-woman called Hagar, is by Sarai given in marriage to Abram; the effects of this illicit marriage are related; the flight of Hagar into the wilderness, upon being hardly dealt with by her mistress; the mercy shewn her by an Angel there; her return to her mistress, and her being delivered of a Son.

NOW Sarai Abram's wife bare him no children: and she had an handmaid, an Egyptian, whose name was Hagar.

That's a sweet scripture to correct impatience, Isaiah xxviii. 16. *He that believeth shall not make haste.*

2 And Sarai said unto Abram, Behold now, the LORD hath restrained me from bearing: I pray thee, go in unto my maid; it may be that I may obtain children by her. And Abram hearkened to the voice of Sarai.

Observe what Sarai saith, that this restraint was of the Lord's appointment; and yet though she had grace to see this, yet she had not grace to act accordingly. Compare Gen. xxx. 2. with xxxiii. 5.

3 And Sarai Abram's wife took Hagar her maid the Egyptian, after Abram had dwelt ten years in the land of Canaan, and gave her to her husband Abram to be his wife.

For a proof that this was sinful. See Matt. xix. 3—9.

4 And he went in unto Hagar, and she conceived: and when she saw that she had conceived, her mistress was despised in her eyes*.

5 And Sarai said unto Abram, My wrong be upon thee: I have given my maid into thy bosom; and when she saw that she had conceived, I was despised in her eyes: the LORD judge between me and thee†.

6 ¶ But Abram said unto Sarai, Behold, thy maid is in thy hand; do to her as it pleaseth thee.

* Prov. xxx. 20—23.

† 1 Sam i. 6.

And when Sarai dealt hardly with her, she fled from her face*.

7 And the angel of the LORD found her by a fountain of water in the wilderness, by the fountain in the way to Shur.

I pause here to remark, that this is the first account we meet with in the Bible of the ministry of an Angel. Reader! Observe how kind his ministry. And then call to mind how very precious the services of those celestial guardians have been, upon innumerable occasions, in the Church! And if so, how very gracious must He be who hath appointed them! See Heb. i. 14. Matt. xviii. 10. Reader, do you know any thing of wilderness mercies, like Hagar? See Hosea ii. 14.—*Shur*. See 1 Sam. xv. 7. Exod. xv. 22.

8 And he said, Hagar, Sarai's maid, whence camest thou? and whither wilt thou go? And she said, I flee from the face of my mistress Sarai.

9 ¶ And the angel of the LORD said unto her, Return to thy mistress, and submit thyself under her hands.

10 And the angel of the LORD said unto her, I will multiply thy seed exceedingly, that it shall not be numbered for multitude.

Reader! I entreat you to remark with me, the peculiarity of the expression. The angel doth not promise in another's name, as would certainly have been the case had he been a *created* angel, but in his own. He saith, *I will multiply thy seed, &c.* And who then could this be but the *Angel of the Covenant*, even the Lord Jesus Christ. See Malachi iii. 1. It is very gratifying to the true believer in Jesus, to discover the Lord in places where we least expected him.

11 And the angel of the LORD said unto her, Behold, thou *art* with child, and shalt bear a son, and shalt call his name Ishmael; because the LORD hath heard thy affliction.

The name *Ishmael* signifies, God will hear. Psm. x. 17. xxxi. 22.

12 And he will be a wild man; his hand *will be* against every man, and every man's hand against him: and he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren.

The Hebrew reads, "a *wild-ass man*." Unrenewed nature is always

* Prov. xv. 1. 1 Pet. ii. 20.

thus. Job xi. 12. See this promise concerning Ishmael fulfilled. Gen. xxv. 18. The wild Arabs, which are descendants of Ishmael, preserve the same character to this day.

13 And she called the name of the LORD that spake unto her, Thou God seest me: for she said, Have I also here looked after him that seeth me?

It is but just to set up tokens of praise, where God hath set up banners of love. Reader! pray pause over this verse. Then remember, that the same eye which looked on *Hagar*, looks on you, on me, on all. An all-present God, must be an all-seeing God. And is the eye of Jesus indeed upon me? Surely then it is upon me for good. For though my *secret sins are in the light of his countenance*; yet doth he not also see my sorrow for them, my trouble under them, and my desire to be freed from the guilt and dominion of them? Precious Redeemer! how ought a sense of these things to endear thy blood and righteousness to my soul.

14 Wherefore the well was called Beerlahai-roi; behold, *it is* between Kadesh and Bered.

This name means 'The Well of Him that lives and looketh on.'

15 ¶ And Hagar bare Abram a son: and Abram called his son's name, which Hagar bare, Ishmael*.

16 And Abram *was* fourscore and six years old, when Hagar bare Ishmael to Abram.

REFLECTIONS.

WHAT awful effects have been in all ages produced by unlawful connections! See, how this illicit marriage, in defiance of the divine law, involved all the parties concerned in it in trouble! The unhallowed attempt to hasten the accomplishment of God's promise, in opposition to God's way, brought *Sarai* into distress, *Abram* into vexation, and *Hagar* into misery.

Let us again remark, how very sweet and refreshing to the soul are wilderness visits from Jesus, when for the exercise of faith and patience, his people are at any time brought there. Dearest Lord! do thou visit me when there, and then the wilderness will *rejoice and blossom as the rose*. Let me in every dispensation, and in every place, carry with me this memorial: *Thou God, my Saviour, seest me*; and the consciousness of thy presence, will comfort my heart in the most solitary desert.

* Gal. iv. 23.

CHAP. XVII.

CONTENTS.

This Chapter is rendered the more memorable, in that it contains the substance of the Covenant of Grace, which, though here represented as made between God and Abram, yet in reality, forms the outline of that everlasting Covenant made with the Lord Jesus Christ, for all the spiritual seed of Abram. In this Chapter, God's appearance to Abram is taken notice of: the effect induced by it on the mind of the patriarch: the names of Abram and Sarai are changed; the rite of circumcision appointed as an outward visible sign or seal of the Covenant, and the Patriarch's obedience to the divine command.

AND when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said unto him, *I am the Almighty God*; walk before me, and be thou perfect.

If the Reader will be at the pains to calculate the distance between the former revelations of the Lord to Abram, and the one mentioned in this verse, he will find it to amount to thirteen years! No doubt, Abram kept up the remembrance of the Lord, by ordinances and family worship. And the Lord, no doubt, manifested his remembrance of the Patriarch in many a kind providence! Let every exercised believer remember this: and in his dark seasons call to mind how the great father of the faithful was exercised. Let him remember also, that the communications of divine love, are precious things; and learn to prize them accordingly! Prov. vi. 22. John xiv. 26.

Gen. xxxv. 11. *El Shaddai*, means God All-sufficient. Sweet thought! The Christian's God is indeed All-sufficient, according to Covenant-promises, for all we want, and for all our joys. Sufficient in himself: sufficient for us: sufficient to us. And all that he is, as relating to the work of redemption, he is for his people. Reader! examine yourself by that standard, Psm. xvi. 2—5. And then see whether you can adopt that language, Psm. lxxiii. 25.

2 And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly.

3 And Abram fell on his face; and God talked with him, saying,

4 As for me, behold, my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations.

Charming view of Abram's faith and humility. So, depend upon it, more or less, are all Abram's spiritual children. See Dan. viii. 17. x. 9—15. Rev. i. 17.

Reader! do not overlook the expression. God calls it *his* Covenant. Yes! a Covenant *ordered in all things, and sure*, must be God's. And it is the happiness of his people, that He who hath made it, undertakes for its accomplishment. Jer. xxxii. 40. Isa. liv. 10. Under this verse,

it may not be amiss to remark, that Abram had more children *naturally* considered, than any other of the Patriarchs; and *spiritually*, who shall number them? Rom. iv. 16. Rev. vii. 9.

5 ¶ Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee.

The name *Abram* signifies a great Father: and *Abraham*, the Father of a multitude. It is pleasing to observe, that the Gospel Church when married to the Bridegroom hath her name changed: See Isaiah lxii. 2—4. And is not every individual believer the same? See Rev. ii. 17.

6 And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee*.

7 And I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee, in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee.

Reader! pause over that very precious word in this place, *everlasting*, and then read it afresh; and beg the Holy Ghost to write it on your heart. An everlasting Covenant founded in divine love, established in divine mercy, and secured in everlasting faithfulness. Oh! how delightful to the view of a poor perishing sinner. See Isa. liv. 10.

8 And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God†.

9 And God said unto Abraham, Thou shalt keep my covenant therefore, thou and thy seed after thee, in their generations.

10 ¶ This is my covenant, which ye shall keep between me and you, and thy seed after thee; every man-child among you shall be circumcised‡.

11 And ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt me and you§.

12 And he that is eight days old shall be circumcised among you, every man-child in your generations; he that is born in the house, or

* Gen. xxxv. 11. Ezra iv. 20.

† Heb. iv. 9. xi. 16.

‡ Acts vii. 8. Rom. iv. 11.

§ Exod. xxiv. 8. Heb. ix. 22.

bought with money of any stranger, which is not of thy seed*.

13 He that is born in thy house, and he that is bought with thy money, must needs be circumcised: and my covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant.

14 And the uncircumcised man-child, whose flesh of his foreskin is not circumcised, that soul shall be cut off from his people; he hath broken my covenant†.

15 And God said unto Abraham, As for Sarai thy wife, thou shalt not call her name Sarai, but Sarah *shall* her name be.

16 ¶ And I will bless her, and give thee a son also of her: yea, I will bless her, and she shall be *a mother* of nations; kings of people shall be of her.

Observe, it is the same letter added to *Sarai's* name, which was to *Abram's*. *Surai* signifies a Princess, and *Sarah* Princess of a multitude; intimating the number and greatness of her children: and no doubt, principally in reference to Him, whose seed are *Kings and Priests, to God and the Father*.

17 Then Abraham fell upon his face, and laughed, and said in his heart, Shall *a child* be born unto him that is an hundred years old? and shall Sarah, that is ninety years old, bear?

It is profitable to observe, how God's purposes are accomplished, concerning the fulfilment of this promise. As this child was a child of promise, Sarah shall be left past the period allowed to child-bearing, that God's grace in the gift, might more illustriously appear. Surely that song of the Church, sung in after ages, was peculiarly sweet here. Isa. liv. 1. Gal. iv. 27. And is not the verse following delightful? Yes! if you and I can personally adopt it. Gal. iv. 28.

18 And Abraham said unto God, O that Ishmael might live before thee!

Oh! that all parents had Abraham's spirit, and used this prayer!

19 And God said, Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed; and thou shalt call his name Isaac: and I will establish my covenant with him

* *Stranger!* Gal. iii. 14. Ephes. ii. 19. 1 Pet. ii. 10.

† Exod. iv. 24, 25.

for an everlasting covenant, *and* with his seed after him.

How condescending are the repetitions of promises! Heb. vi. 18. The name of *Isaac*, signifies laughter: Rom. ix. 8.

20 And as for Ishmael, I have heard thee: Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly; twelve princes shall he beget, and I will make him a great nation*.

21 But my covenant will I establish with Isaac, which Sarah shall bear unto thee at this set time in the next year †.

22 And he left off talking with him, and God went up from Abraham ‡.

23 And Abraham took Ishmael his son, and all that were born in his house, and all that were bought with his money, every male among the men of Abraham's house; and circumcised the flesh of their foreskin in the selfsame day, as God had said unto him.

Abraham *made haste and delayed not*. See Psalm cxix. 60.

24 And Abraham *was* ninety years old and nine, when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin.

25 And Ishmael his son *was* thirteen years old, when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin.

26 In the selfsame day was Abraham circumcised and Ishmael his son.

27 And all the men of his house, born in the house, and bought with money of the stranger, were circumcised with him.

REFLECTIONS.

MY Christian Brother! Are *you* included in this blessed Covenant? Have *you* the marks and characters of it? Can you say as *Paul* did, We are the true circumcision, which worship God in spirit; rejoice in

* Isaiah lxy. 24.

† Gen. xxvi. 3—5.

‡ Gen. xxxv. 13. Luke xxiv. 31.

Christ Jesus; and have no confidence in the flesh. Pause over the question! And oh! that a gracious God may grant you an answer of peace. If this be your portion, then need you nothing more to make you happy. For God saith to you as to the Patriarch: *I will give you the land wherein you are a stranger.* And where is that, but heaven? Dearest Jesus! hast thou not taken possession of it in the name of thy people? and hast thou not promised, that *thou wilt come again and receive them to thyself, that where thou art, there they shall be also.*

Poor timorous, doubting Believer! Did God say to Abraham that he would bless him, and in confirmation of it, reveal himself by this glorious name—the Almighty God; beg of him then for grace to convert this promise into a prayer: and plead, that the same God may be to thee and thine, the God all-sufficient. And oh! that every gracious soul may find grace as the Patriarch did, to intreat God for the *Ishmaels* of his household, the unawakened and careless around him. And may the Lord's answer be as gracious. *I have heard thee.*

CHAP. XVIII.

CONTENTS.

In this Chapter, we have the account of another revelation of the divine will, which God was pleased to make to Abraham. The subject of the conversation is also recorded, and the hospitable manner in which the Patriarch received the messengers. A renewal of the divine promise, concerning a son by Sarah, is now made, and the time fixed for its accomplishment. The purposes of God relating to the destruction of Sodom, are made known to Abraham; and the Patriarch's intercession for the salvation of the place, is also taken notice of in this Chapter.

AND the LORD appeared unto him in the plains of Mamre: and he sat in the tent door in the heat of the day;

In what manner the Lord appeared is not said, but the Reader is enabled to form an idea by what follows. See Judges xiii. 3, and 21.

2 And he lift up his eyes and looked, and, lo, three men stood by him: and when he saw them, he ran to meet them from the tent door, and bowed himself toward the ground,

That is a sweet precept of the Holy Ghost by the Apostle, and founded, no doubt, on this circumstance. Heb. xiii. 2.

3 And said, My Lord, if now I have found favour in thy sight, pass not away, I pray thee, from thy servant:

I beg the Reader to remark with me, the change of person in this verse to the former. There the appearance was spoken of as *three men*. Here Abraham addresses but *one*, and calls him Lord. Compare this with the 12th verse, then read the 15th; and compare that again with

the 22d verse of the 5th chapter of St. John's Gospel. Let the Reader duly consider that feature of character peculiarly belonging to the Lord Jesus Christ; and let him determine (for I don't presume) whether this be not the Christ?

4 Let a little water, I pray you, be fetched, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree:

Washing the feet in Eastern countries, was part of the courtesy shewn to travellers. Hence 1 Tim. v. 10. Luke vii. 44.

5 And I will fetch a morsel of bread, and comfort ye your hearts; after that ye shall pass on: for therefore are ye come to your servant. And they said, So do, as thou hast said*.

6 And Abraham hastened into the tent unto Sarah, and said, Make ready quickly three measures of fine meal, knead *it*, and make cakes upon the hearth.

7 And Abraham ran unto the herd, and fetcht a calf tender and good, and gave *it* unto a young man; and he hasted to dress it.

Observe Abraham's liberality and hospitality. Isa. xxxii. 8. Heb. xiii. 2.

8 And he took butter, and milk, and the calf which he had dressed, and set *it* before them; and he stood by them under the tree, and they did eat†.

9 ¶ And they said unto him, Where *is* Sarah thy wife? And he said, Behold, in the tent.

10 And he said, I will certainly return unto thee according to the time of life; and, lo, Sarah thy wife shall have a son. And Sarah heard *it*, in the tent door, which *was* behind him‡.

11 Now Abraham and Sarah *were* old, *and* well stricken in age; *and* it ceased to be with Sarah after the manner of women§.

12 Therefore Sarah laughed within herself, saying, After I am waxed old, shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also||?

* Judges vi. 18. xiii. 15.

† See Luke xxiv. 43.

‡ Rom. ix. 8, 9. Gen. xxi. 2.

§ Heb. xi. 11.

|| Luke i. 18.

13 And the LORD said unto Abraham, Wherefore did Sarah laugh, saying, Shall I of a surety bear a child, which am old?

Here the speaker is expressly called Jehovah; so in the 17th and following verses.

14 Is any thing too hard for the LORD? At the time appointed I will return unto thee, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son*.

15 Then Sarah denied, saying, I laughed not; for she was afraid. And he said, Nay; but thou didst laugh.

Isaiah lvii. 11. What mercy that she was not instantly struck dead! Reader! hath not the same mercy been your's also, in the numberless instances of your unbelief?

16 And the men rose up from thence, and looked toward Sodom; and Abraham went with them to bring them on the way.

17 ¶ And the LORD said, Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do †;

18 Seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him?

Reader! do not overlook what the Holy Ghost hath caused to be marked so often, the cause why so much grace was shewn to Abraham; even for that *promised seed*, the Lord Jesus.

The letter H added to both the names, Abram and Sarai, has been thought, not only to imply this wonderful encrease, as above mentioned, (see Ch. xvii.) but also, being a radical letter in the sacred name JAH, or Jehovah, it has been thought to intimate a nearer relation in the covenant of grace.

19 For I know him, that he will command his children, and his household, after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD to do justice and judgment; that the LORD may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him.

Precious testimony to Abraham's character, as a Parent and a Master! How true is what St. Paul saith, Titus iii. 8.

20 And the LORD said, Because the cry of So-

* 2 Kings iv. 16.

† Psm. xxv. 14.

dom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous ;

Observe! Sin is said to cry for judgment.

21 I will go down now, and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which is come unto me ; and if not, I will know.

This is spoken of after the manner of men. See Gen xi. 5.

22 And the men turned their faces from thence, and went toward Sodom : but Abraham stood yet before the LORD.

A striking verse to point out the immense distinction of character between two of the men which accompanied the third, and the Lord of whom it is said, that Abraham stood *yet* before him. See Gen. xix. 1.

The following is the first form of prayer recorded in the Bible, and observe it is all along in the style of intercession. Was not Abraham here, a type of the blessed Jesus? Luke xiii. 9.

23 ¶ And Abraham drew near, and said, Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked?

24 Peradventure there be fifty righteous within the city : wilt thou also destroy, and not spare the place for the fifty righteous that *are* therein?

25 That be far from thee to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked : and that the righteous should be as the wicked, that be far from thee : Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?

26 And the LORD said, If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then I will spare all the place for their sakes.

27 And Abraham answered and said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the LORD, which *am but* dust and ashes :

28 Peradventure there shall lack five of the fifty righteous : wilt thou destroy all the city for *lack of* five? and he said, If I find there forty and five, I will not destroy *it*.

29 And he spake unto him yet again, and said, Peradventure there shall be forty found there. And he said, I will not do *it* for forty's sake.

30 And he said *unto him*, Oh, let not the LORD

be angry, and I will speak: Peradventure there shall thirty be found there. And he said, I will not do *it*, if I find thirty there.

31 And he said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the LORD: Peradventure there shall be twenty found there. And he said, I will not destroy *it* for twenty's sake.

32 And he said, O let not the LORD be angry, and I will speak yet but this once: Peradventure ten shall be found there. And he said, I will not destroy *it* for ten's sake.

33 And the LORD went his way, as soon as he had left communing with Abraham: and Abraham returned unto his place.

I would not interrupt the Reader with either references or remarks, through the whole of this sweet prayer, and now only at the end of it, beg the Reader to determine, how it was the communion broke off, since God was so gracious and Abraham so successful: Did the patriarch conclude, that if less than *Ten* righteous persons were in Sodom, the place ought not to have been saved: or, was it that the decree having gone forth, God restrained prayer in his servant? See Jer. vii. 16. and xi. 14. But what a delightful consideration it is, that though Abraham gave over interceding, Jesus never doth. And though Abraham could not find *ten*, nor even *one* righteous man in Sodom to save that city from destruction; yet Jehovah himself hath found *One* in the Sodom of our earth, for whose sake he hath spared, and will everlastingly spare, his redeemed. Yes! the Lord hath laid help upon *One that is mighty*, whose name is *Wonderful*. Jesus hath been found tabernacling in our nature, by whose perfect obedience and death, he hath magnified the divine law, and made it honourable, and hath brought in *an everlasting righteousness, which is unto all, and upon all, that believe*. Oh! blessed be God for Jesus Christ!

REFLECTIONS.

How sweet were those days of primitive simplicity, when men were in the habit of enjoying intercourse of friendship with Angels. And if (as there seems great reason to suppose), one of those celestial visitors which called on Abraham, was indeed the Son of God, in an human form; what a charming evidence doth it give of favour and condescension on the part of God, and of happiness on the part of man.

But stop, my soul! pause over the thought, and remark with suitable joy and thankfulness, the far happier state of the Church in the present hour, among those highly favoured saints unto whom the Lord Jesus manifests himself, *otherwise than he doth to the world*. Since those days of Abraham, the Son of God hath come down, not merely in the form, but really and truly man, and *dwelt among us*. And his gracious visits have been, not as in the earlier ages when his name was *secret*, but

to every one unto whom his blessed Spirit hath made him known, and they have *seen* his glory: *the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.*

In beholding the patriarch *Abraham* drawing near and pleading with God for *Sodom*, who can forbear to call to mind that precious character of the Lord Jesus; or overlook that gracious Intercessor with God for his people, *whom the Father heareth alway.* My soul! never, I charge thee, forget thy Jesus, in this his High-Priestly office. Only for thy comfort recollect, that though Abraham's mediation was not successful, such can never be the issue of the Redeemer's pleading. *He ever liveth to make intercession.* And oh! the blessedness of that assurance: *he is able to save to the uttermost all that come to God by him.*

CHAP. XIX.

CONTENTS.

The Sacred Historian, prosecutes in this Chapter, the account of what was hinted at in the former; namely, the destruction of Sodom. Lot is delivered from the overthrow: he is constrained by the Angels to flee for his life; his wife becomes a monument of the divine displeasure for looking back: Lot retreats into Zoar: he removes to the mountain: he there falls into the horrid sins of drunkenness and incest.

AND there came two angels to Sodom at even; and Lot sat in the gate of Sodom: and Lot seeing *them*, rose up to meet them; and he bowed himself with his face toward the ground;

2 And he said, Behold now, my lords, turn in, I pray you, into your servant's house, and tarry all night, and wash your feet, and ye shall rise up early, and go on your ways. And they said, Nay; but we will abide in the street all night.

The same observations meet us here, as in the opening of the foregoing Chapter; which see.

3 And he pressed upon them greatly; and they turned in unto him, and entered into his house: and he made them a feast, and did bake unleavened bread, and they did eat.

Doth not the Reader call to mind, Him, who in the days of his flesh was constrained in like manner. Luke xxiv. 28, 29. And is not the Reader's heart prompted by the view of both scriptures, to constrain Jesus also, to enter in and tarry with him. Oh! for a spirit of heart-wrestling with God our Saviour, not to be refused!

4 But before they lay down, the men of the city, *even* the men of Sodom, compassed the

house round, both old and young, all the people from every quarter:

Observe, old and young, *all*; an universal infection of sin. See Isaiah i. 5, 6, 7.

5 And they called unto Lot, and said unto him, Where *are* the men which came into thee this night? bring them out unto us, that we may know them *.

6 And Lot went out at the door unto them, and shut the door after him.

7 And said, I pray you, brethren, do not so wickedly.

8 Behold now, I have two daughters which have not known man; let me, I pray you, bring them out unto you, and do ye to them as *is* good in your eyes: only unto these men do nothing; for therefore came they under the shadow of my roof †.

9 And they said, Stand back. And they said *again*, 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 they pressed sore upon the man, *even* Lot, and came near to break the door ‡.

10 But the men put forth their hand, and pulled Lot into the house to them, and shut to the door.

Observe how God protects his people in the moment of danger.

11 And they smote the men that *were* at the door of the house with blindness, both small and great: so that they wearied themselves to find the door.

Perhaps such blindness as that mentioned; 2 Kings vi. 18. or like *Elymas* the sorcerer. Acts xiii. 11. But awful as both these instances are, how much more the blindness of the soul. Rom. xi. 8.

12 And the men said unto Lot, Hast thou

* Rom. i. 26, 27. Isaiah iii. 9. Jude 7. † 1 Sam. xxx. 23.
Acts xvii. 26. ‡ Isaiah lxv. 5. 2 Chron. xxxvi. 16.

here any besides? son-in-law, and thy sons, and thy daughters, and whatsoever thou hast in the city, bring *them* out of this place:

Sweet thought! mercy you see is shewn to ungodly relations, in the suspension of judgments. Matt. xiii. 30. 1 Cor. vii. 14—16.

13 For we will destroy this place, because the cry of them is waxen great before the face of the LORD; and the LORD hath sent us to destroy it *.

14 And Lot went out, and spake unto his sons-in-law, which married his daughters, and said, Up, get you out of this place; for the LORD will destroy this city. But he seemed as one that mocked unto his sons-in-law †.

15 And when the morning arose, then the angels hastened Lot, saying, Arise, take thy wife, and thy two daughters, which are here; lest thou be consumed in the iniquity of the city ‡.

16 And while he lingered, the men laid hold upon his hand, and upon the hand of his wife, and upon the hand of his two daughters; the Lord being merciful unto him: and they brought him forth, and set him without the city §.

17 And it came to pass, when they had brought them forth abroad, that he said, Escape for thy life; look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain; escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed.

1 Kings xix. 3. And what is the cry of God in the soul of every truly awakened believer, but the same: Escape for thy life from sin: Look not back with any hankering after the world: Neither stay thyself upon any creature-righteousness, or creature enjoyments: but flee unto the rock Christ Jesus, lest thou art consumed?

18 And Lot said unto them, Oh, not so, my Lord:

19 Behold now, thy servant hath found grace in thy sight, and thou hast magnified thy mercy,

* Psalm xi. 5, 6. † Rev. xviii. 4. ‡ Ezek. xiv. 14. Num. xvi. 26.
§ Ephes. ii. 8.

which thou hast shewed unto me in saving my life; and I cannot escape to the mountain, lest some evil take me, and I die:

20 Behold now, this city *is* near to flee unto, and it *is* a little one: oh, let me escape thither, (*is* it not a little one?) and my soul shall live.

Zoar means a little one.

21 And he said unto him, See, I have accepted thee concerning this thing also, that I will not overthrow this city, for the which thou hast spoken*.

22 Haste thee, escape thither; for I cannot do any thing till thou be come thither. Therefore the name of the city was called Zoar †.

23 The sun was risen upon the earth when Lot entered into Zoar.

Jesus the Sun of righteousness, may be said to be arisen on the soul, when the faithful enter within his shelter. See Mal. iv. 2. Isaiah xxxii. 2.

24 ¶ Then the LORD rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the LORD out of heaven ‡:

25 And he overthrew those cities, and all the plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and that which grew upon the ground.

Numb. xxxiv. 12. Psm. lxxxiii. 15. A standing monument of God's judgment! Deut. xxix. 23. 2 Pet. ii. 6. Matt. x. 15.

26 ¶ But his wife looked back from behind him, and she became a pillar of salt §.

27 And Abraham gat up early in the morning, to the place where he stood before the LORD ||:

28 And he looked toward Sodom and Gomorrah, and toward all the land of the plain, and beheld, and, lo, the smoke of the country went up as the smoke of a furnace.

Rev. xix. 3. So we are told, the saints will behold the destruction of Spiritual Sodom at the last day.

* Ephes. i. 6.
xviii. 15.
Rom. xi. 22.

† Rev. vii. 3.—Ezek. ix. 4.

‡ Luke xvii. 32. Ezek. iii. 18—20. Heb. iv. 1.

§ Heb. ii. 1. Psm. v. 3.

¶ Job xxxi. 3.

29 And it came to pass, when God destroyed the cities of the plain, that God remembered Abraham, and sent Lot out of the midst of the overthrow, when he overthrew the cities in the which Lot dwelt.

Precious consideration to the believer. Heb. vi. 10. Isaiah lxiii. 11. Exod. xxxii. 13.

30 And Lot went up out of Zoar, and dwelt in the mountain, and his two daughters with him; for he feared to dwell in Zoar: and he dwelt in a cave, he and his two daughters.

31 ¶ And the firstborn said unto the younger, Our father *is* old, and *there is* not a man in the earth to come in unto us after the manner of all the earth:

32 Come, let us make our father drink wine, and we will lie with him, that we may preserve seed of our father.

33 And they made their father drink wine that night: and the firstborn went in, and lay with her father; and he perceived not when she lay down, nor when she arose.

34 And it came to pass on the morrow, that the firstborn said unto the younger, Behold, I lay yesternight with my father: let us make him drink wine this night also; and go thou in, *and* lie with him, that we may preserve seed of our father.

35 And they made their father drink wine that night also: and the younger arose, and lay with him; and he perceived not when she lay down, nor when she arose.

36 Thus were both the daughters of Lot with child by their father.

I detain the Reader but to turn to two scriptures, after the perusal of this melancholy subject. The *first* is, 1 Cor. x. 12. The *other* is, 1 Peter i. 5.

37 And the firstborn bare a son, and called

his name Moab: the same *is* the father of the Moabites unto this day.

38 And the younger, she also bare a son, and called his name Ben-ammi: the same *is* the father of the children of Ammon unto this day.

Awful effects of sin! Those nations were the sworn foes of the Lord's people through all generations. Here ends the history of Lot.

REFLECTIONS.

My soul! do not hastily turn thine eyes of reflection from this Chapter. Behold in it the graciousness of God's mercy in the midst of judgment, and connect with it this precious assurance, in all times of prevailing corruption like this, that *the Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of danger* as well as *temptation*. Who shall say in the present hour what nations, ripe for destruction by sin, are still preserved by the *Lots* which are dwelling among them? Who knows, or can calculate, the extent and efficacy of those prayers of the faithful, which being quickened by divine grace are heard in the divine mercy, for the suspension of the Lord's anger from breaking forth upon a guilty land! My soul! I counsel thee to seek earnestly a spirit of grace and supplication from above, that in lamenting before a throne of mercy those sins of our common nature in which I bear a part, my spirit may so earnestly wrestle with God in the Redeemer's name and righteousness, that I may find acceptance in the Beloved.

Reader! what various views of men and things, of mercy and judgment, of grace and nature, and the very different terminations between the righteous and the wicked, doth this chapter furnish. Gracious God! let it be my mercy to be called out of Sodom; to disregard the reproaches of the ungodly, and resolutely, like Lot, to bear an open testimony against them. And when in tenderness to my lingering footsteps, thou layest thy gracious hand upon me, oh! for thy quickening power in my soul also, that I may hasten to the *Zoar* of safety, even to the Lord Jesus Christ, who alone *delivereth from the wrath to come!*

CHAP. XX.

CONTENTS.

The history of the patriarch Abram is re-assumed. In his journey (for he is still in the pilgrimage state) he is going towards the South. In Gerar, where he sojourned, Abimelech, the King of the place, beholdeth the beauty of Sarah, Abraham's wife; and she is, in consequence thereof, taken into the King's house. God, by the ministry of a dream, restrains Abimelech from his evil designs. Abimelech is informed of the relationship between Abraham and Sarah; he reproves Abraham, for not informing him of it himself; and sends him away from him, with his wife, and all that he had. Upon Abraham's Prayer, God removes the affliction from Abimelech and his family.

AND Abraham journeyed from thence, toward the south country, and dwelled between Kadesh and Shur, and sojourned in Gerar*.

2 And Abraham said of Sarah his wife, She is my sister: and Abimelech king of Gerar sent, and took Sarah†.

3 But God came to Abimelech in a dream by night, and said to him, Behold, thou *art but* a dead man, for the woman which thou hast taken; for she *is* a man's wife.

By the ministry of dreams and visions of the night, in the early ages of the world, the Lord was pleased to convey many great and important discoveries, not only to the faithful, but (for the benefit of his people), to the prophane also. Gen. xli. 1, &c. Dan. ii. 1, &c.

4 But Abimelech had not come near her: and he said, LORD, wilt thou slay also a righteous nation‡?

5 Said he not unto me, She *is* my sister? and she, even she herself said, He *is* my brother: in the integrity of my heart and innocency of my hands have I done this§.

6 And God said unto him in a dream, Yea, I know that thou didst this in the integrity of thy heart; for I also withheld thee from sinning against me: therefore suffered I thee not to touch her.

7 Now therefore restore the man *his* wife; for he *is* a prophet, and he shall pray for thee, and thou shalt live: and if thou restore *her* not, know thou that thou shalt surely die, thou, and all that *are* thine.

Numb. xxii. 32. Psm. cv. 14, 15. Abraham is the first person called a prophet in the Scriptures, and that on account of his immediate intercourse with God by way of divine revelation.

8 Therefore Abimelech rose early in the morning, and called all his servants, and told all

* Chap. xvi. 7—14. See Heb. xi. 8—13.

Gen. xii. and xxvi.

lxxiii. 13. lxxxvi. 2.

† Gen. xviii. 23—25.

† Compare

§ Psm. xxiv. 4.

these things in their ears: and the men were sore afraid.

9 Then Abimelech called Abraham, and said unto him, What hast thou done unto us? And what have I offended thee, that thou hast brought on me and on my kingdom a great sin? thou hast done deeds unto me that ought not to be done*.

10 And Abimelech said unto Abraham, What sawest thou, that thou hast done this thing?

11 And Abraham said, Because I thought, Surely the fear of God *is* not in this place; and they will slay me for my wife's sake †.

12 And yet indeed *she is* my sister; *she is* the daughter of my father, but not the daughter of my mother; and she became my wife.

This was the case. See chap. xi. 29.

13 And it came to pass, when God caused me to wander from my father's house, that I said unto her, This *is* thy kindness which thou shalt shew unto me; at every place whither we shall come, say of me, He *is* my brother ‡.

14 ¶ And Abimelech took sheep, and oxen, and menservants, and womenservants, and gave *them* unto Abraham, and restored him Sarah his wife.

15 And Abimelech said, Behold my land *is* before thee: dwell where it pleaseth thee §.

16 And unto Sarah he said, Behold, I have given thy brother a thousand *pieces* of silver: behold, he *is* to thee a covering of the eyes, unto all that *are* with thee, and with all *other*: thus she was reproved.

About 115*l.* in value. See chap. xxiv. 65.

17 So Abraham prayed unto God: and God

* Gen. xxxix. 9. Jos. vii. 25.

† Gen. xii. 13.

‡ Psm. xxxvi. 1.

§ Chap. xiii. 19.

healed Abimelech, and his wife, and his maid servants; and they bare *children**.

18 For the LORD had fast closed up all the wombs of the house of Abimelech, because of Sarah Abraham's wife†.

REFLECTIONS.

READER! let not the greatness of Abraham's character tempt you to overlook Abraham's infirmity. Alas! what is man in his highest attainments! Had not the Patriarch lost sight that Jehovah himself was *his shield and his exceeding great reward*, he need not have condescended to such a pitiful resource for the safety of his wife. God forbid, that this weakness of the Patriarch should ever be made a pretence for the sins of others, when we see how it displeased the Lord!

Surely the Holy Ghost causeth the infirmities of the faithful to be recorded, in order to teach his people that most unquestionable truth; that *there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good and sinneth not*; and to constrain the heart into the love of Jesus; whose perfect righteousness is the alone cause of justification before God. Dearest Lord! how increasingly sweet and interesting, in every renewed instance of human infirmity which I feel in myself, or meet with in others, is thy finished salvation to my view. Oh! do thou establish my soul in it more and more. Give me to see, and know that I am thine in an everlasting Covenant, *which cannot be broken*: that from having committed my soul-concerns into thy hands; all my earthly interests I may safely leave at thy disposal; and that *the fear of man*, as in the case of the Patriarch, *may not bring a snare*.

CHAP. XXI.

CONTENTS.

The long-looked for blessing of a son to Abraham and Sarah, is at length bestowed; and Isaac, the child of promise, is born. This Chapter relates the auspicious event. The casting out of Ishmael, the son of Hagar, the bond-woman, is also noticed, with the circumstances attending it. Some inferior matters, which occurred in Abraham's family, and a covenant of amity, which the Patriarch entered into with Abimelech; form the remainder of the particulars, related in this Chapter.

AND the LORD visited Sarah as he had said, and the LORD did unto Sarah as he had spoken.

That is a precious Scripture of the prophet, Habak. ii. 3, 4. And the apostle's comment upon it, is not less so. Heb. x. 36, &c. These

* Numb. xii. 13. James v. 16. Job xlii. 8. † Chap. xii. 17.
xvi. 2. xxx. 2.

words are not only applicable, in the case of the Patriarch's trials of faith, but have been refreshing to thousands in their various exercises.

2 ¶ For Sarah conceived, and bare Abram a son in his old age, at the set time of which God had spoken to him.

Observe here, that it is twice mentioned by the Holy Ghost, as if to impress it more strongly on the mind, that this event, so contrary to the ordinary course of nature, was, as *the Lord had said* (verse 1.) and as *the Lord had spoken*, (verse 2.)

3 And Abraham called the name of his son that was born unto him, whom Sarah bare to him, Isaac.

This was the name, which the Lord himself had appointed. Gen. xvii. 19. *Isaac* signifies *laughter*.

4 And Abraham circumcised his son Isaac being eight days old, as God had commanded him.

It was proper, that he, who was equally interested in the *blessings* of the covenant with Abraham, should partake with him, in the *seal* of the covenant. Gen. xvii. 10, 11, 12—14.

5 And Abraham was an hundred years old, when his son Isaac was born unto him.

Observe, how particular the Holy Ghost is, to mark down again Abraham's age, in order to manifest, that the mercy of a Son was not within the ordinary course of natural expectation. Gal. iv. 23.

6 And Sarah said, God hath made me to laugh, so that all that hear will laugh with me*.

7 And she said, Who would have said unto Abraham, that Sarah should have given children suck? for I have born *him* a son in his old age.

Reader! Pause here to remark, that while the gift of a Son became such a subject of astonishment to Sarah; what greater cause have you and I to be astonished, that *God should have given his only begotten Son*, to the end, *that all which believe in him should not perish, but have everlasting life*! Nay, to advance one step farther in the wonderful mercy, who could have believed that such a gift should have been given to *you*, or to *me*? Well may we exclaim with the prophet: *Wonder, O heavens, and be astonished, O earth!*

8 And the child grew, and was weaned: and Abraham made a great feast the *same* day that Isaac was weaned.

In all seasons of enjoyment, see that they are sanctified seasons. I would desire to do as the disciples did; invite Jesus to be present. John ii. 2. 1 Tim. iv. 4, 5.

* Luke i. 46.

9 ¶ And Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, which she had born unto Abraham, mocking.

10 Wherefore she said unto Abraham, Cast out this bondwoman and her son: for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, *even* with Isaac.

The spiritual meaning of this never could have been known, had not the Holy Ghost graciously condescended to have taught the Church, by his servant the apostle. See Gal. iv. 22—31.

11 And the thing was very grievous in Abraham's sight because of his son

Probably, the pious Patriarch, made it a subject of prayer. Reader! may grace enable us, in all our trials to do the same.

12 And God said unto Abraham, Let it not be grievous in thy sight because of the lad, and because of thy bondwoman; in all that Sarah hath said unto thee, hearken unto her voice; for in Isaac shall thy seed be called.

13 And also of the son of the bondwoman will I make a nation, because he *is* thy seed.

Observe how gracious the Lord is! How sure is that promise: Deut. xxviii. 2—14.

14 And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and took bread, and a bottle of water, and gave *it* unto Hagar, putting *it* on her shoulder, and the child, and sent her away: and she departed, and wandered in the wilderness of Beer-sheba*.

15 And the water was spent in the bottle, and she cast the child under one of the shrubs.

16 And she went, and sat her down over against *him* a good way off, as it were a bowshot: for she said, Let me not see the death of the child. And she sat over against *him*, and lift up her voice, and wept.

Sweet subject, spiritually considered. Is not the whole world a wilderness state? But yet, the greatest distresses will not open our eyes to discover our relief, until the Holy Ghost performs this mercy, and directs to the Lord Jesus. And although, like the well to *Hagar*, he is always

* Luke xiv. 26.

near us in the everlasting covenant of grace, yet we shall see him not, unless He, whose office it is, *takes of the things of Jesus to shew them unto us.* John xvi. 15.

17 And God heard the voice of the lad; and the angel of God called to Hagar out of heaven, and said unto her, What aileth thee, Hagar? fear not; for God hath heard the voice of the lad where he *is* *.

18 Arise, lift up the lad, and hold him in thine hand; for I will make him a great nation †.

19 And God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water; and she went, and filled the bottle with water, and gave the lad drink ‡.

20 And God was with the lad; and he grew, and dwelt in the wilderness, and became an archer §.

21 And he dwelt in the wilderness of Paran: and his mother took him a wife out of the land of Egypt ||.

22 ¶ And it came to pass at that time, that Abimelech and Phichol the chief captain of his host spake unto Abraham, saying, God *is* with thee in all that thou doest **:.

23 Now therefore swear unto me here by God that thou wilt not deal falsely with me, nor with my son, nor with my son's son: *but* according to the kindness that I have done unto thee, thou shalt do unto me, and to the land wherein thou hast sojourned ††.

24 And Abraham said, I will swear.

25 And Abraham reproved Abimelech because of a well of water, which Abimelech's servants had violently taken away.

26 And Abimelech said, I wot not who hath done this thing: neither didst thou tell me, neither yet heard I *of it*, but to day.

* Gen. xvi. 11. † Gen. xxv. 12—13. ‡ Luke xxiv. 16—31.

§ Gen. xxxix. 2.

|| Judges xiv. 3.

** Gen. xii. 10. Zech. viii. 23.

†† Heb. vi. 16.

27 And Abraham took sheep and oxen, and gave them unto Abimelech; and both of them made a covenant.

28 And Abraham set seven ewe lambs of the flock by themselves.

29 And Abimelech said unto Abraham, What *mean* these seven ewe lambs which thou hast set by themselves?

30 And he said, For *these* seven ewe lambs shalt thou take of my hand, that they may be a witness unto me, that I have digged this well.

31 Wherefore he called that place Beersheba; because there they swore both of them*.

32 Thus they made a covenant at Beersheba: then Abimelech rose up, and Phichol the chief captain of his host, and they returned into the land of the Philistines.

33 And *Abraham* planted a grove in Beersheba, and called there on the name of the LORD, the everlasting God.

Observe, though Abraham is still in a pilgrimage state, yet in every place, where the Lord manifested himself to him, he sets up his *Ebenezer*. Isaiah xl. 28.

34 And Abraham sojourned in the Philistines' land many days†.

REFLECTIONS.

THE long exercise of Abraham and Sarah's faith respecting this child of promise, and the happy issue of it, may serve to teach us how sure God's promises are; and the certainty, that those who, with faith and patience, wait the fulfillment of the divine promises, shall not be disappointed of their hope. It is exceedingly precious upon all occasions to remark, the Lord's gracious dealings with his people. Faithful men love to dwell upon the evidences of a faithful God.

My Brother! Look, I beseech you, beyond the subject of this promised Isaac, unto Him, of whom Isaac was but a type; even unto Jesus, in whom all the promises centre, and in whom they are *all yea and amen*. And as Sarah rejoiced in her Isaac, may it be your mercy and mine, with all *the children of promise*, as Isaac was, to rejoice in infinitely higher strains of joy in our Redeemer; that *unto us a child is born; unto us a Son is given: whose government is upon his shoulders*,

* Meaning; the *well of the oath*.

† Heb. xi. 9.

and whose name is Wonderful: Counsellor: the mighty God: the everlasting Father: the Prince of Peace.

When the Reader hath duly contemplated his person, of whom Isaac became a striking type, and in whom all the promises centre; I would beg of him to make earnest enquiry concerning his own personal interest in this divine Saviour. Paul tells the believing church of *Galatia*, that as *Sarah* was a figure of the church, so *Isaac* became a figure of the children of that church. *Now we, brethren*, (says he) *as Isaac was, are the children of promise.* My brother, is this *your* privilege? Are you of the seed of the bond-woman or of the free? Are you one of the descendants of *Hagar* or of *Sarah*? In other words, (according to the apostle's beautiful illustration of it), do you seek favour with God from a *covenant of works*, which gendereth to bondage; or are your hopes of salvation founded on a *covenant of grace*, which maketh free. Upon the decision of this grand question will depend your everlasting welfare.

May it be the happy portion, both of the Writer and Reader, to be found as Isaac was among *the children of promise*! The Lord in mercy grant, that we may not be looking for justification from a covenant of works, which never did, or ever will, be able to save the soul! The law is the ministration of death. It is the dispensation of terrors from Mount Sinai. For *Hagar* is Mount Sinai, which is in bondage with her children, a spiritual bondage to sin, and a legal bondage to wrath. But the gospel is the ministration of life: freeing the soul, by the blood and righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ, from the guilt and condemnation of sin, and bringing it into that liberty, wherewith the children of grace are made free. Grant, O Lord! that this may be our mercy: that in the great day it may be found that we have not been *children of the bond-woman, but of the free.*

CHAP. XXII.

CONTENTS.

This Chapter contains the account of that memorable instance of the trial of Abraham's faith, in respect to the proposed sacrifice of his son Isaac; the result of which hath handed down the Patriarch's character, with such honourable testimony in the church; and as deservedly hath procured him the name of the father of the faithful. God's command to Abraham to perform this service; the Patriarch's ready obedience; his journey to the place appointed, with Isaac his son; his resolute perseverance in the intended sacrifice; an angel from heaven staying his hand, in the moment of doing it; the substitution of a ram in the place of his son; God's gracious approbation; and the renewal of the promises of the covenant; these form the subject of this chapter.

AND it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham: and he said, Behold, *here I am.*

2 And he said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a

burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of.

Tempt, i. e. try to prove. Heb. xi. 17—19. For a right idea of temptations, consult James i. 13, 14, compared with verses 2, 3, 12. 1 Pet. i. 6, 7.

Mount Moriah, where the temple was afterwards built. 2 Chron. iii. 1.

3 And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son, and clave the wood for the burnt offering, and rose up, and went unto the place of which God had told him.

That is a sweet scripture, to explain Abraham's conduct. Gal. i. 15, 16.

4 Then on the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw the place afar off.

Probably God gave the Patriarch some token, by which he might know the spot.

5 And Abraham said unto his young men, Abide ye here with the ass; and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you.

Reader! recollect, how Jesus, in his unequalled agony in the garden, was withdrawn from the more immediate followers which he had taken with him there. Matt. xxii. 41.

6 And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering, and laid it upon Isaac his son; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife, and they went both of them together.

So Jesus carried his cross. John xix. 17.

7 And Isaac spake unto Abraham his father, and said, My father: and he said, Here *am* I, my son. And he said, Behold the fire and the wood: but where *is* the lamb for a burnt offering?

If he be a parent, or a master of a family, who is reading this Chapter, I would beg of him to observe how well instructed Isaac was, in the nature of religious services. Reader! may we not say as Isaac did, in all our ordinances, behold the fire, and the wood, the *outward* signs of worship: but where is the Spirit's work? Where is Jesus? Whose heart is warmed with the Father's love!

8 And Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering: so they went both of them together.

Reader! it is no interesting question, though perhaps not easily answered; did Abraham really know, that God had already provided a Lamb for a burnt-offering; even *the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world*? There are two passages in the scriptures, which seem to imply as much. Jesus hath given the one; and the Holy Ghost by his servant the apostle hath given the other. John viii. 56. and Heb. xi. 17. But Reader! whether Abraham in those distant ages, had such clear views of Jesus or not; what blessings, what privileges are ours, before whom the Lamb of God is not only provided, but hath fully taken away sin by his blood. John i. 29. Rev. xiii. 8.

9 And they came to the place which God had told him of; and Abraham built an altar there, and laid the wood in order, and bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar upon the wood.

10 And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son.

I pass over many interesting things, which belong to this history, considered *naturally*, in order to regard such as are *spiritual*. How delightful a representation doth the whole transaction afford of God the Father's love? Rom. viii. 32. How sweet a type is given, in the obedience and voluntary surrender of Isaac, of the free and voluntary offering of the Lord Jesus on the cross? John x. 18. Phil. ii. 8. Ephes. v. 2.

11 And the angel of the LORD called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham: and he said, Here *am* I*.

12 ¶ And he said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only *son* from me.

This knowledge is not meant, as referring to God, but as proving the faith of his people to the world. Deut. viii. 2. But were not those three days during which Isaac lay under a sentence of death, until released by an order from heaven, typical of Christ's lying under death, until raised the third day from the grave? 1 Cor. xv. 3, 4.

13 And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold behind *him* a ram caught in a thicket by his horns: and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt offering in the stead of his son.

Job xxxiii. 24. Another type of Jesus, as a substitute. 1 Pet. i. 19. 1 Cor. v. 7. *Christ our passover is sacrificed for us.*

14 And Abraham called the name of that place

* Gen. xvi. 7,

Jehovah-jireh: as it is said to this day, In the mount of the LORD it shall be seen.

That is, *the Lord will provide*. Reader! cannot *your* experience bear a thousand testimonies to this sweet scripture? Have *you* not been called upon many times, to set up your *Jehovah-jirehs*?

15 ¶ And the angel of the LORD called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time,

16 And said, By myself have I sworn, saith the LORD, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only *son*:

Heb. vi. 13—18. *Zacharias* refers to this oath and promise, and applies both to Christ. Luke i. 73.

17 That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying, I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies;

18 And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice*.

19 So Abraham returned unto his young men, and they rose up, and went together to Beer-sheba; and Abraham dwelt at Beer-sheba.

20 ¶ And it came to pass after these things, that it was told Abraham, saying, Behold, Milcah, she hath also born children unto thy brother Nahor;

The pedigree of *Rebekah* is here introduced, because she afterwards becomes a subject of much note in the church of God.

21 Huz his firstborn, and Buz his brother, and Kemuel the father of Aram.

22 And Chesed, and Hazo, and Pildash, and Jidlaph, and Bethuel.

23 And Bethuel begat Rebekah: these eight Milcah did bear to Nahor, Abraham's brother.

24 And his concubine, whose name *was* Reumah, she bare also Tebah, and Gaham, and Thahash, and Maachah.

* Gal. iii. 14—16. Isaiah lxx. 16.

Concubines were a kind of half wives; they themselves were considered as servants in the house; and their offspring were not entitled to any inheritance. Gen. xxv. 5, 6.

REFLECTIONS.

WHEN we behold the happy termination of the trial of Abraham's faith, who doth not see the certainty of that precious promise, *Blessed is the man that endureth temptation!* Oh! the vast privilege of those whom the Lord enables to be faithful, and whom he supports in the trying hour. Gracious God! be it my portion, to be kept by thy grace in every conflict, then shall I be *more than conqueror, through Him that hath loved me.*

But while I derive this instruction, under grace, from the Patriarch's bright example of faith, teach me, Lord, to behold a more glorious object of contemplation, in what this scene so strikingly represents of divine mercy. Do I not see in Abraham, as a father, so readily offering up his son, the type of that unequalled love of God our Father, in giving his only begotten Son as a sacrifice for the salvation of his people? And in the free-will offering of Isaac, to his father's direction, is not Jesus's voluntary submission to the death of the cross strongly represented? Oh! matchless love of both! May it be my happiness always to connect, in the view of redemption, the love of both, as the united cause and source of all my hopes; and under the precious application of the Father's grace, and the Son's merits to my heart, by the merciful influences of God the Holy Ghost, may I live in the full enjoyment of this assurance, until I come to enter upon the possession of the realized felicity unto all eternity.

CHAP. XXIII.

CONTENTS.

The subject of this Chapter is that common place subject which belongs to our nature universally, and forms a part in the history of all persons and families. Death (here we are told) makes an inroad into the house of Abraham, and takes away Sarah, the desire of his eyes, with a stroke. The Patriarch's concern for the purchase of a burying-ground is here related; his treaty for that purpose with the sons of Heth; his agreement with them: the place obtained: and the funeral of Sarah is observed with all due solemnity.

AND Sarah was an hundred and seven and twenty years old: *these were* the years of the life of Sarah.

2 And Sarah died in Kirjath-arba; the same is Hebron in the land of Canaan: and Abraham came to mourn for Sarah, and to weep for her.

Gen. i. 10. Acts viii. 2. How suited the observation of the Patriarch, both to this, as well as to himself, and to all other cases. Gen. xlvii. 9. How applicable that prayer! Psalm xc. 12. How delightful that thought! Psm. cii. 24-27.

3 ¶ And Abraham stood up from before his dead, and spake unto the sons of Heth, saying,

4 *I am* a stranger and a sojourner with you: give me a possession of a burying-place with you, that I may bury my dead out of my sight.

Acts vii. 5. How sweetly David made use of the same expression, and converted it into a motive for prayer. Psm. xxxix. 12, 13. Reader! while we behold Abraham parting with his beloved Sarah, and desiring to bury her remains out of his sight; think, what a blessed relief it is to consider, that the covenant relationship with Jesus, rots not in the grave. When the comeliness of his people is turned to corruption, their ashes are equally precious to him as when their bodies were animated. Delightful thought! Yes, thou dearest Redeemer, the covenant of redemption holds good as ever in the grave; by thy death thou hast slain the enmity of the grave: and by thy resurrection secured the resurrection of thy people. Death as well as life is ours, if Jesus be ours. 1 Cor. iii. 22, 23.

5 And the children of Heth answered Abraham, saying unto him,

6 Hear us, my lord: thou *art* a mighty prince among us: in the choice of our sepulchres bury thy dead; none of us shall withhold from thee his sepulchre, but that thou mayest bury thy dead.

7 And Abraham stood up, and bowed himself to the people of the land, *even* to the children of Heth.

Observe, Abraham considered himself but a wayfaring man, whilst others thought him a prince. See Luke xiv. 11. A mighty prince, a prince of God. Heb. xxi. 6.

8 And he communed with them, saying, If it be your mind that I should bury my dead out of my sight; hear me, and intreat for me to Ephron the son of Zohar,

9 That he may give me the cave of Machpelah, which he hath, which *is* in the end of his field; for as much money as it is worth he shall give it me for a possession of a burying-place amongst you.

10 And Ephron dwelt among the children of Heth: and Ephron the Hittite answered Abraham in the audience of the children of Heth,

even of all that went in at the gate of his city, saying,

11 Nay, my lord, hear me: the field give I thee, and the cave that *is* therein, I give it thee; in the presence of the sons of my people give I it thee: bury thy dead.

12 And Abraham bowed down himself before the people of the land.

13 And he spake unto Ephron in the audience of the people of the land, saying, But if thou *wilt give it*, I pray thee hear me: I will give thee money for the field; take *it* of me, and I will bury my dead there.

14 And Ephron answered Abraham, saying unto him,

15 My lord, hearken unto me: the land *is worth* four hundred shekels of silver; what is that betwixt me and thee? bury therefore thy dead.

16 And Abraham hearkened unto Ephron; and Abraham weighed to Ephron the silver, which he had named in the audience of the sons of Heth, four hundred shekels of silver, current *money* with the merchant.

*In point of value about 50*l.* of our money.*

17 And the field of Ephron, which *was* in Machpelah, which *was* before Mamre, the field, and the cave which *was* therein, and all the trees that *were* in the field, that *were* in all the borders round about, were made sure

18 Unto Abraham for a possession in the presence of the children of Heth, before all that went in at the gate of his city.

19 ¶ And after this, Abraham buried Sarah his wife in the cave of the field of Machpelah before Mamre: the same is Hebron in the land of Canaan.

This became a memorable sepulchre afterwards for the holy seed. Gen. xlix. 31, 32.

20 And the field, and the cave that is therein, were made sure unto Abraham for a possession of a burying-place, by the sons of Heth.

REFLECTIONS.

I DETAIN the Reader but with *two* reflections on this Chapter. May the Holy Ghost increase them largely, and profitably to his mind! The *one* is, that in the confirmation of God's promises to Abraham, to give him Canaan for an everlasting possession, the first spot of it which he could truly call his own, was his burying-place. This was indeed possessing it, until the glorious morning of a resurrection. The *other* is, from hence the first sound of that sweet declaration was made, which *John* in after ages heard more distinctly: *Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord. These all died in faith*, said the Apostle. They fell asleep in Jesus. Lord, grant me the same faith? May it be my portion that, wherever the *Macpelah* for my earthly house may be, Jesus may receive my soul: and may it be found in that hour that *I have a building with God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.*

CHAP. XXIV.

CONTENTS.

The subject still continues, of Abraham's history. Every circumstance relating to the Patriarch becomes important, and as such the Holy Ghost hath been pleased to transmit it to the church. In this Chapter we find the Patriarch engaged in making provision for the settlement of his son Isaac. Accordingly he sends his eldest servant to seek a wife for him among his own kindred: the departure of the servant on this embassy, and the success of it are here related. Rebekah, the daughter of Bethuel, consents to become the wife of Isaac, and the marriage is consummated.

AND Abraham was old, and well stricken in age: and the LORD had blessed Abraham in all things.

What was said to Hezekiah, Isaiah xxxviii. 1, is in effect said to every aged person.

2 And Abraham said unto his eldest servant of his house, that ruled over all that he had, Put, I pray thee, thy hand under my thigh:

3 And I will make thee swear by the LORD, the God of heaven, and the God of the earth, that thou shalt not take a wife unto my son of the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I dwell:

It is an anxious concern, with every gracious parent, that his children should not be connected with ungracious partners. 2 Cor. vi. 14—18.

4 But thou shalt go unto my country, and to my kindred, and take a wife unto my son Isaac.

Some have thought, that as Isaac was in many respects a type of the blessed Jesus, what is said here, in reference to the servant's embassy, to bring home a wife for Isaac, may shadow out the service of ministers of the gospel in their bringing home souls to Christ. Certain it is, that the church is called the *bride, the Lamb's wife*. Rev. xxi. 9. And Christ himself is called the *bridegroom*. John iii. 29. Ephes. v. 23—27. 2 Cor. xi. 2.

5 And the servant said unto him, Peradventure the woman will not be willing to follow me into this land: must I needs bring thy son again into the land from whence thou camest*?

6 And Abraham said unto him, Beware thou that thou bring not my son thither again †.

7 The LORD God of heaven, which took me from my father's house, and from the land of my kindred, and which spake unto me, and that sware unto me, saying, Unto thy seed will I give this land; he shall send his angel before thee, and thou shalt take a wife unto my son from thence.

Precious instance again of Abraham's faith. Exod. xxiii. 20.

8 And if the woman will not be willing to follow thee, then thou shalt be clear from this my oath; only bring not my son thither again.

9 And the servant put his hand under the thigh of Abraham his master, and sware to him concerning that matter ‡.

10 And the servant took ten camels of the camels of his master, and departed; for all the goods of his master *were* in his hand: and he arose, and went to Mesopotamia, unto the city of Nahor.

Nahor was the same place as *Haran*.

11 And he made his camels to kneel down

* Joshua ii. 17.

† Heb. xi. 15.

‡ Heb. vi. 16.

without the city by a well of water at the time of the evening, *even* the time that women go out to draw *water*.

Kneeling is a method of giving rest to camels.

12 And he said, O LORD God of my master Abraham, I pray thee, send me good speed this day, and shew kindness unto my master Abraham.

Observe the piety of the servant. Reader! set this down as a sure maxim: the soul which begins in prayer, will find cause to end in praise.

13 Behold, I stand *here* by the well of water; and the daughters of the men of the city come out to draw water*:

14 And let it come to pass, that the damsel to whom I shall say, Let down thy pitcher, I pray thee, that I may drink; and she shall say, Drink, and I will give thy camels drink also: *let the same be she that* thou hast appointed for thy servant Isaac; and thereby shall I know that thou hast shewed kindness unto my master.

15 And it came to pass, before he had done speaking, that, behold, Rebekah came out, who was born to Bethuel, son of Milcah, the wife of Nahor, Abraham's brother, with her pitcher upon her shoulder.

Read this verse, and then turn to Isaiah lxx. 24.

16 And the damsel *was* very fair to look upon, a virgin, neither had any man known her; and she went down to the well, and filled her pitcher, and came up.

17 And the servant ran to meet her, and said, Let me, I pray thee, drink a little water of thy pitcher.

18 And she said, Drink, my lord: and she hasted, and let down her pitcher upon her hand, and gave him drink.

* Prov. xix. 14.

19 And when she had done giving him drink, she said, I will draw *water* for thy camels also, until they have done drinking.

Was not that sweet promise of the gospel fulfilled to *Rebekah*, in the after stages of her life? Matt. x. 42.

20 And she hasted, and emptied her pitcher into the trough, and ran again unto the well to draw *water*, and drew for all his camels.

21 And the man wondering at her, held his peace, to wit whether the LORD had made his journey prosperous or not.

Reader! have you never found occasion in the review of God's dealings with *you*, to stand amazed, as this man did?

22 And it came to pass, as the camels had done drinking, that the man took a golden earring of half a shekel weight, and two bracelets for her hands of ten *shekels* weight of gold;

23 And said, Whose daughter *art* thou? tell me, I pray thee: is there room *in* thy father's house for us to lodge in?

24 And she said unto him, I *am* the daughter of Bethuel the son of Milcah, which she bare unto Nahor.

25 She said moreover unto him, We have both straw and provender enough, and room to lodge in*.

26 And the man bowed down his head, and worshipped the LORD.

27 And he said, Blessed *be* the LORD God of my master Abraham, who hath not left destitute my master of his mercy and his truth, I *being* in the way, the LORD led me to the house of my master's brethren.

If I were to make any observation on this verse, it should be this: that those are the sweetest mercies which we receive as answers to prayer. They are doubly blessed. *First*, in that they prove that God the Holy Ghost must have taught the heart to ask them. Rom. viii. 26, 27. And *secondly*, in that they bring with them an evidence that

* Prov. xii. 10.

our God is a prayer-hearing, and a prayer-answering God. Isaiah lxxv. 24. John xvi. 23.

28 And the damsel ran, and told *them of* her mother's house these things.

29 And Rebekah had a brother, and his name *was* Laban: and Laban ran out unto the man, unto the well.

30 And it came to pass, when he saw the earring and bracelets upon his sister's hands, and when he heard the words of Rebekah his sister, saying, Thus spake the man unto me; that he came unto the man; and, behold, he stood by the camels at the well*.

31 And he said, Come in, thou blessed of the LORD; wherefore standest thou without? for I have prepared the house, and room for the camels.

So should ministers constrain their hearers. Luke xiv. 23.

32 And the man came into the house: and he ungirded his camels, and gave straw and provender for the camels, and water to wash his feet, and the men's feet that *were* with him.

33 And there was set *meat* before him to eat; but he said, I will not eat, until I have told mine errand. And he said, Speak on†.

34 And he said, I *am* Abraham's servant.

35 And the LORD hath blessed my master greatly: and he is become great: and he hath given him flocks, and herds, and silver, and gold, and menservants, and maidservants, and camels, and asses.

36 And Sarah my master's wife bare a son to my master when she was old; and unto him hath he given all that he hath.

37 And my master made me sware, saying, Thou shalt not take a wife to my son of the

* Prov. xviii. 16.

† Eccles. ix. 10.

daughters of the Canaanites, in whose land I dwell.

38 But thou shalt go unto my father's house, and to my kindred, and take a wife unto my son.

39 And I said unto my master, Peradventure the woman will not follow me.

40 And he said unto me, The LORD before whom I walk, will send his angel with thee, and prosper thy way; and thou shalt take a wife for my son of my kindred, and of my father's house.

41 Then shalt thou be clear from *this* my oath, when thou comest to my kindred; and if they give not thee *one*, thou shalt be clear from my oath.

42 And I came this day unto the well, and said, O LORD God of my master Abraham, if now thou do prosper my way which I go:

43 Behold, I stand by the well of water; and it shall come to pass, that when the virgin cometh forth to draw *water*, and I say to her, Give me, I pray thee, a little water of thy pitcher to drink;

44 And she said to me, Both drink thou, and I will also draw for thy camels; *let* the same *be* the woman whom the LORD hath appointed out for my master's son.

45 And before I had done speaking in mine heart, Behold, Rebekah came forth with her pitcher on her shoulder; and she went down unto the well, and drew *water*: and I said unto her, Let me drink, I pray thee.

46 And she made haste, and let down her pitcher from her *shoulder*, and said, Drink, and I will give thy camels drink also: so I drank, and she made the camels drink also.

47 And I asked her, and said, Whose daughter *art* thou? And she said, The daughter of

Bethuel, Nahor's son, whom Milcah bare unto him: and I put the earring upon her face, and the bracelets upon her hands.

48 And I bowed down my head, and worshipped the LORD, and blessed the LORD God of my master Abraham, which had led me in the right way to take my master's brother's daughter unto his son.

49 And now if ye will deal kindly and truly with my master, tell me: and if not, tell me; that I may turn to the right hand, or to the left.

50 Then Laban and Bethuel answered, and said, The thing proceedeth from the LORD: we cannot speak unto thee bad or good.

51 Behold, Rebekah *is* before thee, take *her*, and go, and let her be thy master's son's wife, as the LORD hath spoken.

52 And it came to pass, that, when Abraham's servant heard their words, he worshipped the LORD, *bowing himself* to the earth.

53 And the servant brought forth jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment, and gave *them* to Rebekah: he gave also to her brother and to her mother precious things*.

54 And they did eat and drink, he and the men that *were* with him, and tarried all night; and they rose up in the morning, and he said, Send me away unto my master.

55 And her brother and her mother said, Let the damsel abide with us a *few* days, at the least ten; after that she shall go.

56 And he said unto them, Hinder me not, seeing the LORD hath prospered my way; send me away that I may go to my master.

57 And they said, We will call the damsel, and enquire at her mouth.

* Deut. xxxiii. 13—16.

58 And they called Rebekah, and said unto her, Wilt thou go with this man? and she said, I will go †.

59 And they sent away Rebekah their sister, and her nurse, and Abraham's servant, and his men.

60 And they blessed Rebekah, and said unto her, Thou *art* our sister, be thou *the mother* of thousands of millions, and let thy seed possess the gate of those which hate them ‡.

61 And Rebekah arose, and her damsels, and they rode upon the camels, and followed the man: and the servant took Rebekah, and went his way.

62 ¶ And Isaac came from the way of the well Lahai-roi: for he dwelt in the south country.

63 And Isaac went out to meditate in the field at the eventide: and he lifted up his eyes, and saw, and, behold, the camels *were* coming.

64 And Rebekah lifted up her eyes, and when she saw Isaac, she lighted off the camel.

65 For she *had* said unto the servant, What man *is* this that walketh in the field to meet us? And the servant *had* said, It *is* my master: therefore she took a vail, and covered herself.

1 Cor. xi. 5, 6. Some have thought, that this bringing in of Rebekah into the tent, is no unapt similitude of the bringing in of the Gentiles to the church. Isaiah liv. 1. Rom. xi. 11.

66 And the servant told Isaac all things that he had done.

67 And Isaac brought her into his mother Sarah's tent, and took Rebekah, and she became his wife; and he loved her: and Isaac was comforted after his mother's *death*.

REFLECTIONS.

READER! If God, in his providence, hath called you to the *anxious* and important trust of a parent; and hath given you, in your own expe-

† Psalm xlv. 13.

‡ Gen. xxii. 17.

rience, to know the invaluable preciousness of divine grace; surely you will need no argument to teach you, how infinitely interesting it must be, to see that the connections which your children form in the marriage state, are gracious connections. It is a melancholy consideration, that even among truly serious persons too little attention is shewn to this important article; and the after-consequences manifest, but too strikingly, the sad neglect. May the Patriarch's conduct in this particular, be followed by every truly gracious Parent of the Patriarch's spirit: and may God in his providence, direct the choice of every child of promise, like *Isaac*, to a true yoke-fellow in Christ Jesus; for there can be *no fellowship of righteousness with unrighteousness; neither communion of light with darkness. Wherefore come out from among them and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.*

CHAP. XXV.

CONTENTS.

This Chapter closes the historical relation of Abraham's life. Having carried on the interesting account of the Patriarch, from his call of God, through all the several gracious manifestations, which, in a covenant-way, the same God made towards him: We are now arrived in this Chapter, to the period of his death. The particulars relating to the disposal of his effects to his children and family; and the interment of the Patriarch, by his sons, Isaac and Ishmael; are also related in this Chapter: and the sacred Historian, having done with the memoirs of Abraham, immediately takes up the narrative of Isaac, with whom the promise is lodged, and through whom the history is to go on in succession, until He comes, to whom the whole of the promise is referred: and in whom it is finished. Here is an account of Isaac's prosperity: Of his two sons, Esau and Jacob: Of their different characters: Of the birth-right sold by Esau to Jacob: and the consequence hinted at, in which that event differently interested the parties.

THEN again Abraham took a wife, and her name was Keturah.

2 And she bare him Zimran, and Jokshan, and Medan, and Midian, and Ishbak, and Shuah.

Six sons added to Abraham's family. Gen. xii. 2.

3 And Jokshan begat Sheba, and Dedan. And the sons of Dedan were Ashurim, Letushim, and Leummim.

4 And the sons of Midian; Ephah, and Epher, and Hanoah, and Abidah, and Eldaah. All these were the children of Keturah.

5 And Abraham gave all that he had unto Isaac.

Was not this typical of Christ's fulness? John iii. 35. Col. i. 19.

6 But unto the sons of the concubines, which Abraham had, Abraham gave gifts, and sent them away from Isaac his son, while he yet lived, eastward, unto the east country.

Sweet distinction, in comparing this verse with the former. *Providential* mercies are one thing: *Gracious* gifts are another. Reader! if Jesus be your portion, in possessing him, you possess all. 1 Cor. iii. 22, 23.

7 ¶ And these *are* the days of the years of Abraham's life which he lived, an hundred three-score and fifteen years.

8 Then Abraham gave up the ghost, and died in a good old age, an old man, and full of years; and was gathered to his people.

Precious thought! He was gathered to his people! Whose people? See Gen. xlix. 10. John xi. 52. Matt. i. 21.

9 And his sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him in the cave of Machpelah, in the field of Ephron the son of Zoar the Hittite, which *is* before Mamre;

10 The field which Abraham purchased of the sons of Heth: there was Abraham buried, and Sarah his wife.

See how the grave is calculated to reconcile differences!

The mingling of the dust of relations, is an ancient custom. See Gen. xxiii. 19.

11 And it came to pass after the death of Abraham, that God blessed his son Isaac; and Isaac dwelt by the well Lahai-roi*.

12 Now these *are* the generations of Ishmael, Abraham's son, whom Hagar the Egyptian, Sarah's handmaid, bare unto Abraham:

13 And these *are* the names of the sons of Ishmael, by their names, according to their generations; the first born of Ishmael, Nebajoth; and Kedar, and Adbeel, and Mibsam,

14 And Mishma, and Dumah, and Massa,

* Gen. xvi. 14.

15 Hadar, and Tema, Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah:

16 These *are* the sons of Ishmael, and these *are* their names, by their towns, and by their castles; twelve princes according to their nations.

Ishmael's children become heads of nations. See Gen. xvii. 18.

17 And these are the years of the life of Ishmael, an hundred and thirty and seven years: and he gave up the ghost and died; and was gathered unto his people*.

18 And they dwelt from Havilah unto Shur, that *is* before Egypt, as thou goest toward Assyria: *and* he died in the presence of all his brethren.

That is the south of Moab. From the river Euphrates on the east, to Egypt on the west.

19 And these *are* the generations of Isaac, Abraham's son: Abraham begat Isaac:

20 And Isaac was forty years old when he took Rebekah to wife, the daughter of Bethuel the Syrian of Padan-aram, the sister to Laban the Syrian.

21 And Isaac intreated the LORD for his wife, because she *was* barren: and the LORD was intreated of him, and Rebekah his wife conceived.

Twenty years Rebekah continued barren, for Isaac was 40 years old when he married Rebekah, and 60 years old when Esau and Jacob were born. See Verse 26.

22 And the children struggled together within her; and she said, If *it be* so, why *am* I thus? And she went to enquire of the LORD.

23 And the LORD said unto her, Two nations *are* in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels; and *the one* people shall be stronger than *the other* people; and the elder shall serve the younger†.

* Chap. xvi. 12. † Gal. v. 17. Rom. ix. 12. Ezek. xxxvi. 37.

24 ¶ And when her days to be delivered were fulfilled, behold, *there were* twins in her womb.

Is not this of spiritual signification also in every true believer's experience? Compare Gen. iii. 15. with Gal. v. 17.

25 And the first came out red, all over like an hairy garment; and they called his name Esau.

26 And after that came his brother out, and his hand took hold on Esau's heel; and his name was called Jacob: and Isaac *was* threescore years old when she bare them.

The Holy Ghost mentions this, a thousand years after, with peculiar marks of approbation: See Hosea xii. 3. *Esau* means perfectly made; and Jacob a supplanter.

27 And the boys grew: and Esau was a cunning hunter, a man of the field; and Jacob *was* a plain man, dwelling in tents.

How like was Esau to Nimrod! *A man of the field*, in scripture language means, a man of the world, carnally minded: *But dwelling in tents*, describes a pilgrim, one who hath here no continuing city: such was the Patriarch Jacob. See Heb. xi. 8—10.

28 And Isaac loved Esau, because he did eat of *his* venison: but Rebekah loved Jacob.

No doubt Rebekah had an eye to God's promise: Compare the 23d verse with Rom. ix. 12.

29 ¶ And Jacob sod pottage: and Esau came from the field, and he *was* faint:

30 And Esau said to Jacob, Feed me, I pray thee, with that same red *pottage*; for I *am* faint: therefore was his name called Edom.

31 And Jacob said, Sell me this day thy birth-right.

See Deut. xxi. 16, 17. Spiritually considered this is truly interesting. See Heb. xii. 15, 16. And doth not every carnal man the same, who barter Jesus, and the blessings in him, for the husks of the world?

32 And Esau said, Behold, I *am* at the point to die; and what profit shall this birthright do to me?

33 And Jacob said, Swear to me this day; and he swore unto him: and he sold his birth-right unto Jacob.

34 Then Jacob gave Esau bread and pottage

of lentiles; and he did eat and drink, and rose up, and went his way: thus Esau despised *his* birthright.

REFLECTIONS.

It is hardly possible, to close our view of the life of Abraham, without blessing God for such an illustrious testimony as his history affords of the triumph of faith. Lord, I would say, give to me a double portion of the same spirit! But do we not behold in the Patriarch, some faint outlines of resemblance of Him, who according to the flesh, was in after ages, to be his seed? Was not Abraham, as the chosen of God, and the covenant head and father of millions of redeemed souls, a lively type of that Almighty Saviour, who was set up as the covenant head of his people; and the one chosen of the Father before all worlds, in whom all nations are blessed? It is said, that by faith the Patriarch, when he was called of God to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed and went out, not knowing whither he went? and do we not from hence call to mind, the obedience of the Son of God, who left the realms of bliss, and came down a stranger in this strange land, that all his people might afterwards, through Him, receive the gift of an eternal inheritance! Blessed Jesus! May every thing of a gracious nature in thy holy word, lead me to discover somewhat of thyself, that while I admire and learn to praise God for the exercise of the faith and grace which I behold among men, I may be looking up, with gratitude and thankfulness unto thee, who art both the Author and Giver of Faith, and of all our Mercies.

CHAP. XXVI.

CONTENTS.

The beginning of Isaac's spiritual warfare, like that of his father before him, affords large occasion for the exercise of faith. A famine prevails in Canaan: God directs the Patriarch what to do: Covenant promises are renewed: Isaac, through distrust and fear, denies that Rebekah is his wife, by calling her his sister: the consequence of this follows in a suitable punishment: after this Isaac prospers in worldly substance: God appears to him: his son Esau marries two Hittite women, which occasions great grief to Isaac and Rebekah. These are the principal things noticed in this chapter.

AND there was a famine in the land, beside the first famine that was in the days of Abraham. And Isaac went unto Abimelech king of the Philistines unto Gerar.

Gen. xii. 10. *Gerar*, a place to the north-east of Egypt. Reader! observe how extraordinary are the trials of faith. The very land which was the glory of all lands, is visited by famine: and in the country to which God promised a fullness of blessings, there is first a want even of bread. Such are the exercises of grace.

2 ¶ And the LORD appeared unto him, and said, Go not down into Egypt; dwell in the land which I shall tell thee of*:

3 Sojourn in this land, and I will be with thee, and will bless thee; for unto thee and unto thy seed, I will give all these countries, and I will perform the oath which I sware unto Abraham thy father†;

4 And I will make thy seed to multiply as the stars of heaven, and will give unto thy seed all these countries; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed;

Very sweet are the renewals of divine assurances. My brother! if you know what it is, as one of old did, *against hope to believe in hope*, you will know also how to *walk by faith and not by sight*. Gen. xxii. 16—18.

5 Because that Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws.

6 And Isaac dwelt in Gerar.

7 And the men of the place asked *him* of his wife; and he said, *She is* my sister: for he feared to say, *She is* my wife; lest, *said he*, the men of the place should kill me for Rebekah; because she *was* fair to look upon.

So did Abraham. Gen. xx. 5. See also xii. 13. Reader! do not hastily pass over this verse; but remark, in the perusal, the weakness of the patriarch's faith. Was it not enough that the Lord had appeared unto him, had assured him of his remembrance, of his covenant engagements, and that he would bless him: nay, that his dwelling in *Gerar* was by the express command of God. Could Isaac doubt of God's protection after this, and could he suppose that he would want means effectually to secure the chastity of his wife, so that he must descend to the pitiful conduct of dissembling? Alas! what do we see in this history of Isaac, but another evidence of what our poor faithless and unbelieving nature is, in the midst of all God's assurances of his love.

8 And it came to pass, when he had been there a long time, that Abimelech king of the Philistines looked out at a window, and saw, and, behold, Isaac *was* sporting with Rebekah his wife.

* Psalm xxxvii. 3.

† Gen. xii. 10.

9 And Abimelech called Isaac, and said, Behold, of a surety she *is* thy wife: and how saidst thou, She *is* my sister? And Isaac said unto him, Because I said, Lest I die for her.

10 And Abimelech said, What *is* this thou hast done unto us? one of the people might lightly have lien with thy wife, and thou shouldst have brought guiltiness upon us*.

11 And Abimelech charged all *his* people, saying, He that toucheth this man or his wife shall surely be put to death†.

12 Then Isaac sowed in that land, and received in the same year an hundred-fold: and the Lord blessed him‡:

13 And the man waxed great, and went forward, and grew until he became very great:

14 For he had possession of flocks, and possession of herds, and great store of servants: and the Philistines envied him§.

15 For all the wells which his father's servants had digged in the days of Abraham his father, the Philistines had stopped them, and filled them with earth||.

16 And Abimelech said unto Isaac, Go from us; for thou art much mightier than we**.

17 And Isaac departed thence, and pitched his tent in the valley of Gerar, and dwelt there.

18 And Isaac digged again the wells of water, which they had digged in the days of Abraham his father; for the Philistines had stopped them after the death of Abraham: and he called their names after the names by which his father had called them.

* Gen. xx. 9.

† Psm. cv. 14, 15.

‡ That is a sweet promise, Isaiah lxxv. 18. Psm. cxii. 1—3.

§ Psalm cxliv. 13, 14.

|| This was contrary to their covenant. Gen. xxi. 25.

** Exod. i. 9.

19 And Isaac's servants digged in the valley, and found there a well of springing water *.

20 And the herdmen of Gerar did strive with Isaac's herdmen, saying, The water *is* our's: and he called the name of the well Esek; because they strove with him †.

21 And they digged another well, and strove for that also: and he called the name of it Sitnah ‡.

22 And he removed from thence, and digged another well; and for that they strove not: and he called the name of it Rehoboth; and he said, For now the LORD hath made room for us, and we shall be fruitful in the land §.

23 And he went up from thence to Beer-sheba ||.

24 And the LORD appeared unto him the same night, and said, I *am* the God of Abraham thy father: fear not, for I *am* with thee, and will bless thee, and multiply thy seed for my servant Abraham's sake **.

25 And he builded an altar there, and called upon the name of the LORD, and pitched his tent there: and there Isaac's servants digged a well.

See how faithful men in all places, desire to erect, and leave behind them, their testimonies to God's faithfulness. Chap. xii. 7. xiii. 18, &c.

26 ¶ Then Abimelech went to him from Gerar, and Ahuzzath one of his friends, and Phichol the chief captain of his army ††.

27 And Isaac said unto them, Wherefore come ye to me, seeing ye hate me, and have sent me away from you?

28 And they said, We saw certainly that the LORD was with thee: and we said, Let there be now an oath betwixt us, *even* betwixt us and thee, and let us make a covenant with thee ‡‡;

* *Living* waters, Solomon's Song iv. 15. † *Esek* means contention.

‡ *Sitnah* means hatred. § *Rehoboth* means roomy. Psalm iv. 1.

|| *Beersheba* a city to the south of Canaan.

** Gen. xii. 2. xv. 1—8. xvii. 6, 7.

†† Prov. xvi. 7.

‡‡ Prov. xxi. 1.

29 That thou wilt do us no hurt, as we have not touched thee, and as we have done unto thee nothing but good, and have sent thee away in peace: thou *art* now the blessed of the LORD*.

30 And he made them a feast, and they did eat and drink.

31 And they rose up betimes in the morning, and sware one to another: and Isaac sent them away, and they departed from him in peace.

32 And it came to pass the same day, that Isaac's servants came and told him concerning the well which they had digged, and said unto him, We have found water.

33 And he called it Shebah: therefore the name of the city is Beer-sheba unto this day.

Sheba means an oath, *Beer* the well; hence *Beersheba*, the well of the oath.

34 ¶ And Esau was forty years old when he took to wife Judith the daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and Bashemath the daughter of Elon the Hittite†:

35 Which were a grief of mind unto Isaac and to Rebekah‡.

REFLECTIONS.

LET no true believer in Jesus ever be discouraged by the trials he meets with, since the faithful in all ages have been so exercised. The Apostle makes this an evidence of the Christian character, that *no man should be moved by these afflictions, since (saith he) ye yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto.* Oh! it is sweet to see divine wisdom, and divine faithfulness, in all appointments concerning us; and to be able to say of every one of them, as *Paul* did, *I know that this shall turn to my salvation, through the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ.* But how very gracious is God amidst all the chequered circumstances of life, in famine, and in fullness, to renew to his people the unalterable assurances of his Covenant love in Christ Jesus! Reader! may it be your happiness and mine, to live upon this when all the supplies of creature cisterns be dried up; and like *David*, rejoice in that God hath made with us *an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure*; and let this be *all our salvation, and all our desire, although he make it not to grow.*

* Gen. xxi. 23.

† Heb. xii. 16. Deut. vii. 3.

‡ Gen. xxvii. 46.

I would have the Reader, methinks, (as I desire myself) to seek grace from the Lord, to profit by what this Chapter relates of the weakness of *Isaac's* faith, respecting the safety of his wife, and of his own life. Had he only considered, poor man, the faithfulness of that God who had promised him his assured favour and protection; there was nothing in the circumstances of his situation to have given him a real cause of fear. But consulting with flesh and blood, and not laying hold of God's promises, his trust in the Lord gave way, and he fell into temptation, sin, and unbelief. Reader! let you and I mark it down among the memorandums of our hearts, that such will be the sure result in every believer's experience, when not upheld by divine strength, but left to the weakness of his own mind. Let you and I therefore pray with the apostle, that *we may be strengthened with all might according to his glorious power*, who is the alone strength of his people; for then, and not otherwise, shall we be able to act faith upon God's promises, *unto all patience and long suffering, with joyfulness*.

CHAP. XXVII.

CONTENTS.

This Chapter contains the history of Jacob's craftily obtaining the blessing of the birth-right from his father Isaac, and thereby supplanting his brother Esau: a circumstance, which unless read with a spiritual apprehension, will be to us, as it is always to the carnal, a stumbling-stone and rock of offence. In this Chapter the Holy Ghost also relates the sad conduct of the Patriarch Isaac, who, notwithstanding the open revelation God made to him before the birth of his two sons, Jacob and Esau, that the elder should serve the younger, in direct defiance of this will of God, sought to entail the covenant blessing on Esau. He gives directions to Esau how to prepare for him venison, in order to receive this blessing; Rebekah contrives by stratagem to obtain it for her son Jacob: the success of Jacob, and the disappointment of Esau, are both related in this Chapter. Esau determines to be revenged of Jacob; and Rebekah in order to prevent it, contrives to send Jacob to her brother's house by way of refuge.

AND it came to pass, that when Isaac was old, and his eyes were dim, so that he could not see, he called Esau his eldest son, and said unto him, My son: and he said unto him, Behold *here am I*.

I would earnestly beseech the Reader, before he enters upon the perusal of this chapter, to consult very carefully the following scriptures: *First*, Gen. xxv. 23. Here you see, that the appointment of Jacob to the birth-right was of the Lord. And do not forget this one thing, that He, who thought proper to have this blessing given to Jacob, by a *transfer*, might, had he pleased, have as easily given it by *birth-right*. Next consult Gen. xxv. 32—34, and compare with Heb. xii. 16, 17. The construction which the Holy Ghost hath put on Esau's conduct, clearly proves what that conduct was. He poured contempt upon the promised

blessing of redemption; and how shall the soul that rejects that mercy, be made the rich partaker of it? *Thirdly*, consult Malachi i. 2, 3. And if these scriptures need any farther comment, let the Reader turn to the 9th chapter of Romans from the 7th verse to the end; and these are enough, under the divine teaching, to explain this whole transaction.

2 And he said, Behold now, I am old, I know not the day of my death:

Dying patriarchs always called their households round them. Gen. xlix. 1. Deut. xxxiii. 1.

3 Now therefore take, I pray thee, thy weapons, thy quiver and thy bow, and go out to the field, and take me *some* venison*;

4 And make me savoury meat, such as I love, and bring *it* to me, that I may eat; that my soul may bless thee before I die.

This blessing was the same as that mentioned, Gen. xxviii. 4.

5 And Rebekah heard when Isaac spake to Esau his son. And Esau went to the field to hunt *for* venison, *and* to bring *it*.

6 ¶ And Rebekah spake unto Jacob her son, saying, Behold, I heard thy father speak unto Esau thy brother, saying,

7 Bring me venison, and make me savoury meat, that I may eat, and bless thee before the LORD before my death.

8 Now therefore, my son, obey my voice according to that which I command thee.

9 Go now to the flock, and fetch me from thence two good kids of the goats; and I will make them savoury meat for thy father, such as he loveth:

10 And thou shalt bring *it* to thy father, that he may eat, and that he may bless thee before his death.

There is not a passage in scripture which needs more the enlightening influences of the Holy Ghost to guide into all truth, than these verses. Various have been the opinions of Commentators upon the transaction here recorded. Almost all, and indeed every one which I have seen, condemn the conduct of Jacob and his mother, passing by at the same time all reproof upon Isaac. I confess it appears to me that Isaac was

* "*Hunt me venison.*" Heb.

most faulty of the whole. I venture to propose one or two thoughts upon the subject, and shall then leave the matter to the Reader himself to form his own judgment, praying that God the Holy Ghost may give him a right judgment in this, as well as all things.

The Lord had informed Rebecca, when she was with child, that she had twins in her womb, and that two manner of people should be separated from her bowels; and that the elder should serve the younger. Chap. xxv. 21—23. Thus informed of God himself, how could Isaac presume to counteract, or attempt to alter, the appointment of God? The method Rebecca took to defeat the purpose of her blind husband was, no doubt, a deception; but it seems to have very clearly originated from the sense she had of what God had said. Perhaps it might have been better to have openly expostulated with Isaac, and have pointed out to him the danger of despising the divine precept. But she feared probably the success. And the object appeared to her important. Certain it is, that her conduct, as well as Jacob's, on this occasion is not spoken of, in this relation of it, as incurring the divine displeasure. Neither do I find in any other part of scripture a passage to this amount. But, as I said before, I do not presume to decide upon it. The Lord the Spirit be the Reader's Teacher!

11 And Jacob said to Rebekah his mother, Behold, Esau my brother *is* a hairy man, and I *am* a smooth man:

12 My father peradventure will feel me, and I shall seem to him as a deceiver: and I shall bring a curse upon me, and not a blessing.

13 And his mother said unto him, Upon me *be* thy curse, my son: only obey my voice, and go fetch me *them*.

14 And he went, and fetched, and brought *them*, to his mother: and his mother made savoury meat, such as his father loved.

15 And Rebekah took goodly raiment of her eldest son Esau, which *were* with her in the house, and put them upon Jacob her younger son:

Is not this a very apt similitude of Him, who assumed our likeness, the likeness, as the apostle terms it, of *sinful flesh*; and was made *sin for us, though he knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him*. Rom. viii. 3, 4. 2 Cor. v. 21. Reader! if you seek a blessing from God your Father, so must you be clothed, in the garment of Jesus, who is indeed our elder brother, and *the first born among many brethren*.

16 And she put the skins of the kids of the goats upon his hands, and upon the smooth of his neck:

17 And she gave the savoury meat and the bread, which she had prepared, into the hand of her son Jacob.

18 And he came unto his father, and said, My father : and he said, Here *am* I ; who *art* thou, my son ?

19 And Jacob said unto his father, I *am* Esau thy first-born ; I have done according as thou badest me : arise, I pray thee, sit and eat of my venison, that thy soul may bless me.

20 And Isaac said unto his son, How *is it* that thou hast found *it* so quickly, my son ? And he said, Because the LORD thy God brought *it* to me.

21 And Isaac said unto Jacob, Come near, I pray thee, that I may feel thee, my son, whether thou *be* my very son Esau, or not.

22 And Jacob went near unto Isaac his father ; and he felt him, and said, The voice *is* Jacob's voice, but the hands *are* the hands of Esau.

23 And he discerned him not, because his hands were hairy, as his brother Esau's hands : so he blessed him.

24 And he said, *Art* thou my very son Esau ? And he said, I *am*.

25 And he said, Bring *it* near to me, and I will eat of my son's venison, that my soul may bless thee. And he brought *it* near to him, and he did eat : and he brought him wine, and he drank.

26 And his father Isaac said unto him, Come near now, and kiss me, my son.

27 And he came near, and kissed him : and he smelled the smell of his raiment, and blessed him, and said, See, the smell of my son *is* as the smell of a field which the LORD hath blessed :

Song ii. 13. iv. 12, 13. vii. 11, 12. These scriptures prove the spirituality carried on through the whole of this transaction.

28 Therefore God give thee of the dew of hea-

ven, and the fatness of the earth, and plenty of corn and wine:

See Heb. xi. 20. Reader! remember every other mercy centers in Christ. Psm. lxxii. 17. Compare Numb. xxiii. 7—10, and 19—23.

29 Let people serve thee, and nations bow down to thee; be lord over thy brethren, and let thy mother's sons bow down to thee: cursed *be* every one that curseth thee, and blessed *be* he that blesseth thee.

30 And it came to pass, as soon as Isaac had made an end of blessing Jacob, and Jacob was yet scarce gone out from the presence of Isaac his father, that Esau his brother came in from his hunting.

31 And he also had made savoury meat, and brought it unto his father, and said unto his father, Let my father arise, and eat of his son's venison, that thy soul may bless me.

32 And Isaac his father said unto him, Who *art* thou? and he said, I *am* thy son, thy firstborn Esau.

33 And Isaac trembled very exceedingly, and said, Who? where *is* he that hath taken venison, and brought *it* me, and I have eaten of all before thou camest, and have blessed him? yea, *and* he shall be blessed.

It is probable that by this time, Isaac had learnt that the thing was of God. He now speaks positively that the blessing is sure.

34 And when Esau heard the words of his father, he cried with a great and exceeding bitter cry, and said unto his father, Bless me, *even* me also, O my father.

35 And he said, thy brother came with subtlety, and hath taken away thy blessing.

36 And he said, Is not he rightly named Jacob? for he hath supplanted me these two times: he took away my birth-right: and, behold, now he

hath taken away my blessing. And he said, Hast thou not reserved a blessing for me*?

37 And Isaac answered and said unto Esau, Behold, I have made him thy lord, and all his brethren have I given to him for servants; and with corn and wine have I sustained him: and what shall I do now unto thee, my son †?

38 And Esau said unto his father, Hast thou but one blessing, my father? bless me, *even* me also, O my father. And Esau lifted up his voice, and wept.

No: there are not *two* Saviours. Jesus is one, and there is no other. Acts iv. 12. Melancholy consideration in those who can be satisfied in *secondary* blessings. See Heb. xii. 17.

39 And Isaac his father answered and said unto him, Behold, thy dwelling shall be the fatness of the earth, and of the dew of heaven from above;

40 And by thy sword shalt thou live, and shalt serve thy brother; and it shall come to pass when thou shalt have the dominion, that thou shalt break his yoke from off thy neck.

There is nothing here which distinguisheth Jesus. Lord! give me him for my portion, and in him I have all. Hosea ii. 18. Ephes. i. 3.

41 ¶ And Esau hated Jacob, because of the blessing wherewith his father blessed him: and Esau said in his heart, The days of mourning for my father are at hand; then will I slay my brother Jacob ‡.

42 ¶ And these words of Esau her elder son were told to Rebekah: and she sent and called Jacob her younger son, and said unto him, Behold, thy brother Esau, as touching thee, doth comfort himself, *purposing* to kill thee.

43 Now therefore, my son, obey my voice; and arise, flee thou to Laban my brother, to Haran;

44 And tarry with him a few days, until thy brother's fury turn away;

* Jacob means a *supplanter*.

† Fulfilled, 2 Sam. viii. 14.

‡ Obediah 10.

45 Until thy brother's anger turn away from thee, and he forget *that* which thou hast done to him: then I will send, and fetch thee from thence: why should I be deprived also of you both in one day?

Poor mistaken mother! These *few* days proved somewhat more than 20 years.

46 And Rebekah said to Isaac, I am weary of my life, because of the daughters of Heth: if Jacob take a wife of the daughters of Heth, such as these *which are* of the daughters of the land, what good shall my life do me?

In this expression of *Rebekah's*, was there not a believing reference to the promised seed?

REFLECTIONS.

How sweet and precious is it, to behold dying believers anxious to give their last testimony, to the faith of Jesus! Though the pious parents of the present age, have not, like the Patriarchs, a *prophetical* benediction respecting the coming Saviour to give their children; yet have they a *parental* blessing at parting to deliver. And oh! how precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints, when life is closed with such an honourable testimony.

But ought not the improper, and frequently ill-bestowed, affection of parents, in the partiality among their children, to learn from this example of Isaac, how sinful it becomes in the divine eye? Reader! let us pray for grace, that nothing short of the *covenant* blessing, may satisfy the desires of our souls. The Lord put away far from us that awful spirit of a carnal state, which, like Esau, makes light of the covenant mercies of God in Christ Jesus, and finds, like him, *no place for repentance, though it be sought even with tears.*

CHAP. XXVIII.

CONTENTS.

No sooner are the people of God brought within the bond of the covenant, than persecution ariseth. Jacob having obtained the blessing, is obliged to flee to Padan-aram, to avoid the fury of his brother. The sacred historian relates in this Chapter, the memorable events of his journey. He is favoured with divine manifestations: God confirms to him the promised blessing: assures him of his gracious favour and protection: impressed with a deep sense of thankfulness for those visions of God, the Patriarch vows to have the Lord for his God, and to dedicate himself to his service for ever.

AND Isaac called Jacob, and blessed him, and charged him, and said unto him, Thou shalt not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan.

Observe how cautious the Patriarchs were of mingling the holy seed: Ezra ix. 2, 3. 2 Cor. vi. 14. Acts ii. 40.

2 Arise, go to Padan-aram, to the house of Bethuel thy mother's father; and take thee a wife from thence of the daughters of Laban thy mother's brother*.

3 And God Almighty bless thee, and make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, that thou mayest be a multitude of people;

4 And give thee the blessing of Abraham, to thee, and to thy seed with thee; that thou mayest inherit the land wherein thou art a stranger, which God gave unto Abraham.

Observe the same blessing still carried on. It is here called *Abraham's blessing*. And what is that but the gospel blessing of the Lord Jesus; *on* whom, and *in* whom alone, all blessings center. Precious expression! *A multitude of people*. Heb. xii. 22, 23. Rev. vii. 9. Numb. xxiii. 10.

5 And Isaac sent away Jacob: and he went to Padan-aram unto Laban, son of Bethuel the Syrian, the brother of Rebekah, Jacob's and Esau's mother.

How different was the departure of Jacob to form an alliance, from the plan adopted by Abraham for Isaac. Gen. xxiv.

6 When Esau saw that Isaac had blessed Jacob, and sent him away to Padan-aram, to take him a wife from thence; and that as he blessed him he gave him a charge, saying, Thou shalt not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan;

7 And that Jacob obeyed his father and his mother, and was gone to Padan-aram;

8 And Esau seeing that the daughters of Canaan pleased not Isaac his father;

9 Then went Esau unto Ishmael, and took unto the wives which he had Mahalath the daughter of Ishmael Abraham's son, the sister of Nebajoth, to be his wife.

Observe the policy of Esau. It was to please his father, not with a view to obtain the favour of God. And moreover, whom did he

* Hosea xii. 12.

marry? The issue of the *bond-woman*, not the *free*. Still you see pursuing carnal, not spiritual objects.—Mahalath is called Bashemath. Gen. xxxvi. 3. Naboth, Chap. xxv. 13.

10 ¶ And Jacob went out from Beer-sheba, and went toward Haran*.

11 And he lighted upon a certain place, and tarried there all night, because the sun was set; and he took of the stones of that place, and put *them* for his pillows, and lay down in that place to sleep.

Perhaps never one apparently more forlorn and friendless, when he lay down. Perhaps never one more blessed, before he rose up.

12 And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it.

In the early ages, a very usual method, in which the Lord communicated himself to his people, was by visions and dreams.

13 And, behold, the LORD stood above it, and said, I *am* the LORD God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed;

Is not this a beautiful type of the Lord Jesus? Are not all revelations of God to man, made through the medium of Jesus Christ? John i. 18. Did not this ladder represent the constancy of the communication kept open between the Lord and his people? The top reaching to heaven, representing the *divine* nature of Christ; and the bottom resting on the earth, his *human* nature. And the angels of God ascending and descending, do they not confirm that scripture, Heb. i. 14? And throw a light upon that precious declaration of Jesus, John i. 51.

14 And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.

Observe how at every renewed visit of the Lord to his people, that first, and best of covenant mercies, is again confirmed: Gen. xvii. 7.

15 And, behold, I *am* with thee, and will keep thee in all *places* whither thou goest, and will bring

* Called Charran, Acts vii. 2.

thee again into ^{the}land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done *that* which I have spoken to thee of.

All promises are *in* Christ, and *with* Christ; all promises are connected. And Reader! do not forget how the Holy Ghost taught the church to apply his to all Christ's seed. Heb. xiii. 5, 6.

16 And Jacob awaked out of his sleep, and he said, Surely the LORD is in this place; and I knew *it* not.

What gracious effects divine manifestations leave on the mind! Reader! would you know whether the Lord hath revealed himself to *your* heart? Look within. See what hath God wrought! What traces hath the Holy Spirit left behind. Jacob felt surprize, holy fear, gracious assurance, devout meltings of the heart towards God, solemn dedications of the soul, and the warmest thanksgivings.

17 And he was afraid, and said, How dreadful *is* this place! this *is* none other but the house of God, and this *is* the gate of heaven*.

18 ¶ And Jacob rose up early in the morning, and took the stone that he had put *for* his pillows, and set it up *for* a pillar, and poured oil upon the top of it.

How sweet and grateful this token of God's love, and Jacob's sense of it. What must have been the Patriarch's view of it twenty years afterward, when he came back to it again: See Gen. xxii. 9—12.

19 And he called the name of that place Beth-el: but the name of that city *was called* Luz at the first.

Bethel, means the house of God. *Luz*, means an almond-tree. When souls are awakened and brought into the bond of the covenant, *gracious* names supply the place of those which are *natural*.

20 And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on,

A vow is a solemn transaction of the soul with God. I believe, that every truly awakened believer, desires to dedicate himself to God, when God makes known the riches of his grace to him. Gen. xxxi. 13.

21 So that I come again to my father's house in peace; then shall the LORD be my God†:

* Rev. i, 17. Matt. xvii, 6.

† 1 Tim. vi. 8.

22 And this stone, which I have set *for* a pillar, shall be God's house: and of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee.

God's house, means a spot made sacred to God's worship. Gen. xxxv. 7, 14.

REFLECTIONS.

READER! may you and I learn, from this interesting account of Jacob's pilgrimage, that when the providences of our God seem most to frown, the gracious tendencies of God are perhaps most smiling. And let the truly awakened soul say, whether the sweetest seasons have not been those, when, like the Patriarch, tribulations from the world have been most powerful. But I must not close this Chapter of Jacob's mercies, when the visions of God began with him, without first requesting the Reader not to overlook the precious outlines which are here drawn by the Holy Ghost of Jesus's manifestations to all his people. Is it not by him that a channel of communication is opened to our souls for access to God, when like Jacob, we have left our father's house, and are as wanderers on the earth? Is He not *the way, and the truth, and the life*, by which all mercies come down, and all praises and prayers go up, through his divine mediation? And is it not by him alone, that we humbly hope, when all the pilgrimage of this life is over, to come again to our Father's house which is in heaven: to which hope we are begotten by his glorious undertaking, and his accomplishment of our redemption? Precious, precious Jesus! be thou with me, and keep me in the way that I go; and give me food and raiment convenient for me: fill my soul with the bread of life, and cloathe me with the garment of thy salvation; then wilt thou be indeed the Lord my God; and I shall be thine, in an everlasting covenant, not to be broken.

CHAP. XXIX.

CONTENTS.

As was before remarked of the faithful, every minute circumstance is recorded by the Holy Ghost, which concerns the church: so in this Chapter, the domestic occurrences of Jacob's family, occupy more attention than the history of all the world beside, in that period. The sacred historian relates the journey of the Patriarch; his arrival at Haran; his reception by Laban; his servitude; his marriage; his children; these form the principal contents of this chapter.

THEN Jacob went on his journey, and came into the land of the people of the east.

Acts viii. 39. Grace in exercise, made Jacob go on his way, like the *Æthiopian*, rejoicing.

2 And he looked, and behold a well in the field, and, lo, there *were* three flocks of sheep lying by it; for out of that well they watered the flocks: and a great stone *was* upon the well's mouth.

A well of water was considered a great treasure in those hot eastern countries. Hence Jesus is often spoken of under that similitude. Isaiah xxxii. 2. John iv. 14. vii. 37.

3 And thither were all the flocks gathered: and they rolled the stone from the well's mouth, and watered the sheep, and put the stone again upon the well's mouth in his place.

4 And Jacob said unto them, My brethren, whence *be* ye? And they said, Of Haran *are* we*.

5 And he saith unto them, Know ye Laban the son of Nahor? And they said, We know *him*.

6 And he said unto them, *Is* he well? And they said, *He is* well: and, behold, Rachel his daughter cometh with the sheep.

7 And he said, Lo, *it is* yet high day, neither *is it* time that the cattle should be gathered together: water ye the sheep, and go *and* feed *them*.

How sweetly is the Lord Jesus represented under the similitude of a shepherd! John x. 1—18. And how delightfully is the church represented as his flock. Song i. 7. Rachael's name signifies a *sheep*.

8 And they said, We cannot, until all the flocks be gathered together, and *till* they roll the stone from the well's mouth; then we water the sheep.

9 And while he yet spake with them, Rachel came with her father's sheep: for she kept them.

How the Lord directed Jacob's way! Psm. xxxii. 8.

10 And it came to pass, when Jacob saw Rachel the daughter of Laban his mother's brother, and the sheep of Laban his mother's brother, that Jacob went near, and rolled the stone from the well's mouth, and watered the flock of Laban his mother's brother.

11 And Jacob kissed Rachel, and lifted up his voice, and wept.

12 And Jacob told Rachel that he *was* her father's brother, and that he *was* Rebekah's son: and she ran and told her father.

Brother, here means no more than a relation.

13 ¶ And it came to pass, when Laban heard the tidings of Jacob his sister's son, that he ran to meet him, and embraced him, and kissed him, and brought him to his house. And he told Laban all these things.

14 And Laban said to him, Surely thou art my bone and my flesh. And he abode with him the space of a month.

It is profitable to remark, of whom these things were spoken in after ages; our great kinsman after the flesh. Ephes. v. 30.

15 And Laban said unto Jacob, Because thou *art* my brother, shouldest thou therefore serve me for nought? tell me. what *shall* thy wages *be*?

16 And Laban had two daughters: the name of the elder *was* Leah, and the name of the younger *was* Rachel.

17 Leah *was* tender eyed; but Rachel was beautiful and well favoured.

18 ¶ And Jacob loved Rachel; and said, I will serve thee seven years for Rachel thy younger daughter.

How striking is that scripture, in which the Holy Ghost takes notice of this event: Hosea xii. 12. Reader! do not overlook in this precious lesson, what interest a covenant God takes, in even the seemingly small concerns of his people.

19 And Laban said, *It is* better that I give her to thee, than that I should give her to another man: abide with me.

20 And Jacob served seven years for Rachel; and they seemed unto him *but* a few days, for the love he had to her.

Labours of love are always apparently short and sweet. Heb. vi. 10. But what were the services of the Redeemer for his spouse, the church, and for whom *he travailed in soul*: Isaiah lüi. 11.

21 And Jacob said unto Laban, Give *me* my

wife, for my days are fulfilled, that I may go in unto her.

22 And Laban gathered together all the men of the place, and made a feast.

23 ¶ And it came to pass in the evening, that he took Leah his daughter, and brought her to him; and he went in unto her.

24 And Laban gave unto his daughter Leah Zilpah his maid *for* an handmaid.

25 And it came to pass, that in the morning, behold, it *was* Leah: and he said to Laban, What *is* this thou hast done unto me? did not I serve with thee for Rachel? wherefore then hast thou beguiled me?

26 And Laban said, It must not be so done in our country, to give the younger before the first-born.

27 Fulfil her week, and we will give thee this also for the service which thou shalt serve with me yet seven other years*.

28 And Jacob did so, and fulfilled her week: and he gave him Rachel his daughter to wife also.

29 And Laban gave to Rachel his daughter Billah his handmaid to be her maid.

30 And he went in also unto Rachel, and he loved also Rachel more than Leah, and served with him yet seven other years.

Some have thought that by the two wives of Jacob, are represented the two churches, the Jew and the Gentile.

31 And when the LORD saw that Leah *was* hated, he opened her womb: but Rachel *was* barren.

32 And Leah conceived, and bare a son, and she called his name Reuben: for she said, Surely the LORD hath looked upon my affliction; now therefore my husband will love me†.

33 And she conceived again, and bare a son;

* See Judges xiv. 12.

† Reuben means *See a son*.

and said, Because the LORD hath heard that I *was* hated, he hath therefore given me this *son* also: and she called his name Simeon*.

34 And she conceived again, and bare a son; and said, Now this time will my husband be joined unto me, because I have born him three sons: therefore was his name called Levi†.

35 And she conceived again, and bare a son: and she said, Now will I praise the Lord: therefore she called his name Judah; and left bearing.

It was common among the Patriarchs, to give names to their children, such as might be expressive of somewhat remarkable. 1 Sam. i. 20. Judah signifies *praise*.

REFLECTIONS.

READER! remark in this Chapter, how the Lord conducts the steps of his people, when he graciously brings them *into the bond of the covenant*. Though he leads them into the wilderness, he will not leave them there, but will speak comfortably to them; and as, in all their ways they desire to acknowledge him, he will direct their steps. What a simplicity marked the primitive ages! A few flocks and herds, and the produce of the field, constituted, for the most part, the riches of the Patriarchs. And even now, is not food and raiment with Jesus, all that the believer wants below! Lord! grant me the sure possession of Jesus, and keep my heart always with wise indifference to the things of time and sense; for having him, I shall in him possess all things.

I cannot pass over, in this place, what is said respecting the names of Jacob's children, without calling upon the Reader to observe with me, what a gracious practice it was, in the church of old, thus to minute down in the several providences they met with, the Lord's gracious dealings with them. When godly parents perpetuate God's mercies, in the names they give their children, every view of the child, and every renewed mention of the name, tends to refresh the recollection of those mercies. I venture to think, that the mother, or sister of *Moses* (though the name was given him by another, as the name signified *drawn out of the water*) yet never heard his name spoken of, but it brought again to mind his wonderful deliverance. And was not *Samuel's* name always refreshing to *Hannah*, when she herself gave it him, on this express account, in that it meant, what she too well knew ever to forget, that he was *asked of God*? Reader! pause over this, and let you and I enquire of our own hearts, how many *Samuels* we might name mercies by, if we were to number all that we have received, and which have been *asked of God*? Blessed Lord! revive in my forgetful heart continual remembrances of thy unnumbered mercies: and though I have neglected to mark them down by

* Simeon signifies *hearing*.

† Levi means *joined*. See Numb. xviii. 2.

name, yet may the Holy Ghost, who acts in the sweet character of Remembrancer to his people, continually bring all things (and all mercies too) of my God and Saviour to my remembrance, whatsoever he hath shewn me.

CHAP. XXX.

CONTENTS.

The further relation of the events in Jacob's history, is contained in this Chapter. Of the increase of his family, his children; of the increase of his wealth and riches: until after fourteen years in the service of Laban, his father-in-law, he proposeth to return to his father Isaac; but is detained by Laban, who agreeth to certain conditions which Jacob had offered for his further labours in Laban's service; Jacob adopts a singular method for the increase of his flock, and succeedeth.

AND when Rachel saw that she bare Jacob no children, Rachel envied her sister; and said unto Jacob, Give me children, or else I die*.

2 And Jacob's anger was kindled against Rachel: and he said, *Am* I in God's stead, who hath withheld from thee the fruit of the womb†?

3 And she said, Behold my maid Bilhah, go in unto her; and she shall bear upon my knees, that I may also have children by her.

Sad perversion of the original appointment of God! Gen. ii. 24. Matt. xix. 5. "Be built up by her." Heb.

4 And she gave him Bilhah her handmaid to wife: and Jacob went in unto her.

5 And Bilhah conceived and bare Jacob a son.

6 And Rachel said, God hath judged me, and hath also heard my voice, and hath given me a son: therefore called she his name Dan‡.

7 And Bilhah Rachel's maid conceived again, and bare Jacob a second son.

8 And Rachel said, With great wrestlings have I wrestled with my sister, and I have prevailed: and she called his name Naphtali.

Great wrestlings. Heb. *wrestlings of God*. Naphtali signifies *my wrestlings*.

* Psalm cxxvii. 3. 1 Sam. i. 6. † See Job's conduct. Job ii. 10.

‡ Dan means *judging*, or a judge.

9 When Leah saw that she had left bearing, she took Zilpah her maid, and gave her Jacob to wife.

10 And Zilpah Leah's maid bare Jacob a son.

11 And Leah said, A troop cometh: and she called his name Gad*.

12 And Zilpah Leah's maid bare Jacob a second son.

13 And Leah said, Happy am I, for the daughters will call me blessed: and she called his name Asher†.

14 And Reuben went in the days of wheat harvest, and found mandrakes in the field, and brought them unto his mother Leah. Then Rachel said to Leah, Give me, I pray thee, of thy son's mandrakes.

Mandrakes, *dudaim* in the original; probably a rare kind of fruit, supposed to possess prolific virtues.

15 And she said unto her, *Is it* a small matter that thou hast taken my husband? and wouldest thou take away my son's mandrakes also? And Rachel said, Therefore he shall lie with thee to night for thy son's mandrakes.

It is proper to observe, that this earnestness for children, arose from the hope that the *Messiah*, the promised seed, might be of the number. And it is the same idea which operates in the present day among the Jews, who rejoice in the birth of a son, but are much disappointed in the birth of a daughter.

16 And Jacob came out of the field in the evening, and Leah went out to meet him, and said, Thou must come in unto me; for surely I have hired thee with my son's mandrakes. And he lay with her that night.

17 And God hearkened unto Leah, and she conceived, and bare Jacob the fifth son.

18 And Leah said, God hath given me my

* Gad means a *troop*.
VOL. I.

† Asher signifies *happy*, blessed.
S

hire, because I have given my maiden to my husband: and she called his name Issachar*.

19 And Leah conceived again, and bare Jacob the sixth son.

20 And Leah said, God hath endued me *with* a good dowry; now will my husband dwell with me, because I have born him six sons: and she called his name Zebulun†.

21 And afterwards she bare a daughter, and called her name Dinah‡.

22 ¶ And God remembered Rachel, and God hearkened to her, and opened her womb.

Observe Rachel's fretfulness, is by divine grace changed into prayer; for it is said that the Lord *hearkened to her.* 1 Sam. i. 27.

23 And she conceived, and bare a son; and said, God hath taken away my reproach.

24 And she called his name Joseph; and said, The LORD shall add to me another son§.

25 And it came to pass, when Rachel had born Joseph, that Jacob said unto Laban, Send me away, that I may go unto mine own place, and to my country.

Sweet thought suggested in this verse, to the gracious soul! Our everlasting home calls for our regard and our best affections. Here we are at the best but strangers and sojourners. Micah ii. 10.

26 Give *me* my wives and my children, for whom I have served thee, and let me go: for thou knowest my service which I have done thee.

27 ¶ And Laban said unto him, I pray thee, if I have found favour in thine eyes, *tarry: for* I have learned by experience, that the LORD hath blessed me for thy sake¶.

28 And he said, Appoint me thy wages, and I will give *it*.

29 And he said unto him, Thou knowest how

* Issachar means *hire*.

† Zebulun is *dwelling*.

‡ Dinah means *judgment*.

§ Joseph signifies *adding*.

¶ 2 Sam. vi. 11, 12.

I have served thee, and how thy cattle was with me.

30 For *it was* little which thou hadst before I *came*, and it is *now* increased unto a multitude; and the Lord hath blessed thee since my coming: and now when shall I provide for mine own house also?

31 And he said, What shall I give thee? And Jacob said, Thou shalt not give me any thing: if thou wilt do this thing for me, I will again feed *and* keep thy flock:

32 I will pass through all thy flock to-day, removing from thence all the speckled and spotted cattle, and all the brown cattle among the sheep, and the spotted and speckled among the goats: and *of such* shall be my hire.

33 So shall my righteousness answer for me in time to come, when it shall come for my hire before thy face: every one that *is* not speckled and spotted among the goats, and brown among the sheep, that shall be counted stolen with me.

34 And Laban said, Behold, I would it might be according to thy word.

35 And he removed that day the he-goats that were ringstraked and spotted, and all the she-goats that were speckled and spotted, *and* every one that had *some* white in it, and all the brown among the sheep, and gave *them* into the hand of his sons.

36 And he set three days' journey betwixt himself and Jacob: and Jacob fed the rest of Laban's flocks.

37 ¶ And Jacob took him rods of green poplar, and of the hasel and chesnut tree; and piled white strakes in them, and made the white appear which *was* in the rods*.

38 And he set the rods which he had piled

* Compare with, Gen. xxxi. 9—12.

before the flocks, in the gutters in the watering troughs, when the flocks came to drink, that they should conceive when they came to drink.

39 And the flocks conceived before the rods, and brought forth cattle ringstraked, speckled, and spotted.

40 And Jacob did separate the lambs, and set the faces of the flocks toward the ringstraked, and all the brown in the flock of Laban; and he put his own flocks by themselves, and put them not unto Laban's cattle.

41 And it came to pass, whensoever the stronger cattle did conceive, that Jacob laid the rods before the eyes of the cattle in the gutters, that they might conceive among the rods.

42 But when the cattle were feeble, he put *them* not in: so the feebler were Laban's, and the stronger Jacob's.

43 And the man increased exceedingly, and had much cattle, and maidservants, and menservants, and camels, and asses*.

REFLECTIONS.

It would be a far happier world than experience proves it now is, if that charming observation of the psalmist were more generally adopted, when he saith, *Lo! children are an heritage of the Lord, and the fruit of the womb is his reward.* There is a blessedness pronounced upon the quiver that is full of them. And when a gracious parent beholds a rising generation of gracious children, to call the Lord blessed, when he is gathered to his fathers; the imagination can hardly form an idea of a subject more highly calculated to call forth thankfulness unto God. It is pleasing in the reflection to the upright in heart and mind, when like Jacob, in their dealings between man and man, they have the favour of the divine approbation. But what a double sweetness rests upon the possessions of the just, when every blessing is found to lead the soul *to* God, instead of drawing the heart *from* God. Lord, I would pray, that all thy mercies may be thus sanctified, and not one of them received but with thanksgiving and prayer; that coming from thy bounty, they may lead to thy praise, and all be doubly enjoyed in Jesus.

* Psalm xxxvii. 37.

CHAP. XXXI.

CONTENTS.

After a servitude of many years, in the family of Laban, Jacob resolves to return to his own home. And to this measure he is prompted, not only by the unkind treatment of Laban and his sons, but still more by a divine direction. The circumstances of Jacob's departure, with his wives and all that belonged to him: the pursuit of Laban after him; the gracious interposition of God for Jacob's protection, by the ministry of a dream on the mind of Laban; their interview; their reconciliation; their covenant of amity; and their final separation; these form the principal contents of this Chapter.

AND he heard the words of Laban's sons, saying, Jacob hath taken away all that *was* our father's; and of *that* which *was* our father's hath he gotten all this glory *.

2 And Jacob beheld the countenance of Laban, and, behold, it *was* not toward him as before †.

3 And the LORD said unto Jacob, Return unto the land of thy fathers, and to thy kindred; and I will be with thee ‡.

4 And Jacob sent and called Rachel and Leah to the field unto his flock,

5 And said unto them, I see your father's countenance, that it *is* not toward me as before; but the God of my father hath been with me.

6 And ye know that with all my power I have served your father.

7 And your father hath deceived me, and changed my wages ten times; but God suffered him not to hurt me.

8 If he said thus, The speckled shall be thy wages; then all the cattle bare speckled: and if he said thus, The ringstraked shall be thy hire; then bare all the cattle ringstraked.

9 Thus God hath taken away the cattle of your father, and given *them* to me.

Sweet thought! When we can trace all our mercies into God's gifts,

* Prov. xiii. 22.

† Gen. iv. 6.

‡ Prov. iii. 6.

and all events which concern us, into God's ordination. See Gen. xlv. 7, 8.

10 And it came to pass at the time that the cattle conceived, that I lifted up mine eyes, and saw in a dream, and, behold, the rams which leaped upon the cattle *were* ringstraked, speckled, and grisled.

11 And the angel of God spake unto me in a dream, *saying*, Jacob: and I said, Here *am* I.

Was not this the Lord Jesus? See Gen. xlviii. 15, 16.

12 And he said, Lift up now thine eyes, and see, all the rams which leap upon the cattle *are* ringstraked, speckled, and grisled: for I have seen all that Laban doeth unto thee.

13 I *am* the God of Beth-el where thou anointedst the pillar, *and* where thou vowedst a vow unto me: now arise, get thee out from this land, and return unto the land of thy kindred.

Precious, very precious, are the renewals of the first visions of God to his people. Jacob's *Bethel* was, no doubt, always dear to the Patriarch's remembrance. And *Moses* never forgot *his* Dweller in the bush. Exod. iii. 2—4, compared with Deut. xxxiii. 16. Reader! Do *you* know any thing in your own experience, of the *first* manifestations of grace, and of the *after* visits of divine love?

14 And Rachel and Leah answered and said unto him, *Is there* yet any portion or inheritance for us in our father's house?

15 Are we not counted of him strangers? for he hath sold us, and hath quite devoured also our money.

16 For all the riches which God hath taken from our father, that *is* ours, and our children's: now then, whatsoever God hath said unto thee, do.

And is not this the language of all gracious hearts, when divorced from the love of creature enjoyments: and when united by faith and love to the Lord Jesus? Psalm xlv. 10.

17 Then Jacob rose up, and set his sons and his wives upon camels;

18 And he carried away all his cattle, and all

his goods which he had gotten, the cattle of his getting, which he had gotten in Padan-aram, for to go to Isaac his father in the land of Canaan.

19 And Laban went to shear his sheep: and Rachel had stolen the images that *were* her father's.

Teraphim: probably images for worship. Judges xvii. 5. 1 Sam. xix. 13.

20 And Jacob stole away unawares to Laban the Syrian, in that he told him not that he fled.

21 So he fled with all that he had; and he rose up, and passed over the river, and set his face *to-ward* the mount Gilead.

22 ¶ And it was told Laban on the third day that Jacob was fled.

23 And he took his brethren with him, and pursued after him seven days' journey; and they overtook him in the mount Gilead.

24 And God came to Laban the Syrian in a dream by night, and said unto him, Take heed that thou speak not to Jacob either good or bad*.

25 Then Laban overtook Jacob. Now Jacob had pitched his tent in the mount: and Laban with his brethren pitched in the mount of Gilead.

26 And Laban said to Jacob, What hast thou done, that thou hast stolen away unawares to me, and carried away my daughters, as captives *taken* with the sword?

27 Wherefore didst thou flee away secretly, and steal away from me, and didst not tell me, that I might have sent thee away with mirth, and with songs, with tabret, and with harp?

† Observe: the parting of graceless acquaintances is of this kind, in songs and merriment. But gracious souls, when the Lord in his providence calls upon them to separate, take leave of one another in prayer and mutual blessing. What a sweet instance we have of such, Acts xx. 36—38. Reader! hath it never fallen to your lot to remark many in-

* Job xxxiii. 15, 16. Esther vi. 1.

stances of the former kind? If not, it hath been mine, and of painful observation too.

28 And hast not suffered me to kiss my sons and my daughters? thou hast now done foolishly in *so* doing.

29 It is in the power of my hand to do you hurt: but the God of your father spake unto me yesternight, saying, Take thou heed that thou speak not to Jacob either good or bad.

30 And now, *though* thou wouldest needs be gone, because thou sore longedst after thy father's house, yet wherefore hast thou stolen my gods?

What sorry gods must those be which are capable of being stolen, or hid away. For the contrast to this, see Psalm cxlvi. 5.

31 And Jacob answered and said to Laban, Because I was afraid: for I said, Peradventure thou wouldest take by force thy daughters from me.

32 With whomsoever thou findest thy gods, let him not live: before our brethren discern thou what *is* thine with me, and take *it* to thee. For Jacob knew not that Rachel had stolen them.

33 And Laban went into Jacob's tent, and into Leah's tent, and into the two maidservants tents; but he found *them* not. Then went he out of Leah's tent, and entered into Rachel's tent.

Observe the diligence with which *Laban* sought after his false gods. Reader! may it provoke you and me to a greater earnestness in seeking for the *only true God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent*. How charming Job's desire! Job xxxiii. 3. How delightful David's earnestness! Psalm xlii. 1, 2. How encouraging that promise! Heb. xi. 6.

34 Now Rachel had taken the images, and put them in the camels' furniture, and sat upon them. And Laban searched all the tent, but found *them* not.

35 And she said to her father, Let it not displease my lord that I cannot rise up before thee; for the custom of women *is* upon me. And he searched, but found not the images*.

* Levit. xv. 19.

36 And Jacob was wroth, and chode with Laban: and Jacob answered and said to Laban, What *is* my trespass? what *is* my sin, that thou hast so hotly pursued after me?

37 Whereas thou hast searched all my stuff, what hast thou found of all thy household stuff? set *it* here before my brethren and thy brethren, that they may judge betwixt us both.

38 This twenty years *have I been* with thee; thy ewes and thy she-goats have not cast their young, and the rams of thy flock have I not eaten.

39 That which was torn *of beasts* I brought not unto thee; I bare the loss of it; of my hand didst thou require it, *whether* stolen by day, or stolen by night.

Is there nothing in those verses to prompt *Ministers* to watchfulness in their ministry; and *servants* to faithfulness in their service? Above all, doth not the Reader discover *somewhat* here to bring to his remembrance the unequalled *ministry* and *service* of the Lord Jesus? Was he not exposed for his sheep, *in the day to the drought, and to the frost by night*? Did he not, as their Surety, *suffer* the loss of all things? And did not God the Father, at his hand, *require* all, when he undertook their redemption? Precious Jesus! how sweet and endearing doth every renewed view of thy love appear, in which thou didst testify thy regard to thy people.

40 *Thus* I was; in the day the drought consumed me, and the frost by night; and my sleep departed from mine eyes.

41 *Thus* have I been twenty years in thy house; I served thee fourteen years for thy two daughters, and six years for thy cattle: and thou hast changed my wages ten times.

42 Except the God of my father, the God of Abraham, and the fear of Isaac, had been with me, surely thou hadst sent me away now empty. God hath seen mine affliction, and the labour of my hands, and rebuked *thee* yesternight.

43 And Laban answered and said unto Jacob, *These* daughters *are* my daughters, and *these* children *are* my children, and *these* cattle *are* my

cattle, and all that thou seest *is* mine: and what can I do this day unto these my daughters, or unto their children which they have borne?

44 ¶ Now therefore come thou, let us make a covenant, I and thou; and let it be for a witness between me and thee.

And are not all seals of the covenant in ordinances, like these stones, witnesses for or against the use, or abuse, of them?

45 And Jacob took a stone, and set it up *for* a pillar.

46 And Jacob said unto his brethren, Gather stones; and they took stones, and made an heap: and they did eat there upon the heap.

47 And Laban called it Jegar-sahadutha: and Jacob called it Galeed*.

48 And Laban said, This heap *is* a witness between me and thee this day. Therefore was the name of it called Galeed;

49 And Mizpah; for he said, The LORD watch between me and thee, when we are absent one from another†.

50 If thou shalt afflict my daughters, or if thou shalt take *other* wives beside my daughters, no man *is* with us; see God *is* witness betwixt me and thee.

51 And Laban said to Jacob, Behold this heap, and behold *this* pillar, which I have cast betwixt me and thee;

52 This heap *be* witness, and *this* pillar *be* witness, that I will not pass over this heap to thee, and that thou shalt not pass over this heap and this pillar unto me, for harm.

53 The God of Abraham, and the God of Nahor, the God of their father, judge betwixt us. And Jacob sware by the fear of his father Isaac.

54 Then Jacob offered sacrifice upon the

* *The heap of witness.*

† Mizpah signifies a *watch tower*.

mount, and called his brethren to eat bread: and they did eat bread, and tarried all night in the mount ‡.

55 And early in the morning Laban rose up, and kissed his sons and his daughters, and blessed them: and Laban departed, and returned unto his place.

REFLECTIONS.

IN the perusal of this Chapter, methinks I would not have the Reader overlook the gracious interposition of God, in behalf of his servant Jacob, when *Laban* the *Syrian* pursued him in such determined anger. Rather than the poor servant should be injured by his unkind, and unnatural master, the Lord overawes his mind by the effects of a dream. Just so, depend upon it, my brother, is the watchful care of God over his people now. Oh! could you and I but be brought acquainted with the thousand and ten thousand instances of the kind, which are daily going on in life, we should see how sweetly the Church's history is again, and again repeated: *he made them also to be pitied of all those that carried them captives.* Psalm cvi. 46. Reader! watch but the tokens of divine faithfulness towards *you*, in disposing the hearts of your enemies to be at peace with you, and, depend upon it, the evidences will fully appear. *In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen.*

But do not close the chapter until that you have remarked with me, how continually the Patriarch's history is leading us to the contemplation of the life of the blessed Jesus, of whom in numberless instances, Jacob was a type. Certainly the Holy Ghost, in his divine ministry of glorifying Jesus, intended the records of this man's memoirs to direct us more immediately to Christ. How was Jesus obliged to flee into Egypt to avoid the fury of those that sought his life! How was he afterwards led into the wilderness! What services did he sustain for the Church, both Jew and Gentile, which he betrothed to himself! And what persecutions did he go through, in those labours of love, for the souls of his people! Dearest Lord! may a sense of thine unequalled regard to our poor fallen nature, how base soever requited by the world, endear thee to my heart; and may it be my portion, with thy people, to have that testimony in my experience: *We love him because he first loved us!*

CHAP. XXXII.

CONTENTS.

This Chapter relates some very extraordinary events, which occurred in the Patriarch Jacob's journey towards Canaan, after his separation from Laban. He is first met by an host of angels. He then sends messengers to his brother Esau, who dwell in Seir, to enquire after his welfare, and to inform him of his own. The messengers return with an

‡ No doubt in reference to the promised seed.

account that Esau is coming against him, and with him an army of 400 men: Jacob is greatly distressed with the intelligence, and hath recourse to God by prayer: he sends over the brook Jabbok all his family and household, and is left alone: an angel wrestles with him, until the breaking of the day: Jacob prevails, and obtains a blessing; in consequence, the Lord puts a perpetual testimony of honour upon the Patriarch, in changing his name from Jacob to Israel.

AND Jacob went on his way, and the angels of God met him.

Perhaps this meeting was like that mentioned, Gen. xxviii. 12.

2 And when Jacob saw them, he said, This is God's host: and he called the name of that place Mahanaim.

Mahanaim, signifies two bands, or camps. See Solomon's Song vi. 13. Heb. i. 14. Psalm xxxiv. 7.

3 ¶ And Jacob sent messengers before him to Esau his brother, unto the land of Seir, the country of Edom.

Seir was not in the very road to Canaan, but near it.

4 And he commanded them, saying, Thus shall ye speak unto my lord Esau; Thy servant Jacob saith thus, I have sojourned with Laban, and stayed there until now:

Observe the humbleness of Jacob's mind. He calls his brother Lord; though by the father's blessing of the birth-right given to him, he had the right of inheritance. See Gen xxvii. 29. Reader! of such humbleness of soul are all the spiritual seed of Jacob.

5 And I have oxen, and asses, flocks, and menservants, and womenservants: and I have sent to tell my lord, that I may find grace in thy sight.

Probably he makes mention of his worldly substance, by way of shewing his brother that he needed nothing from him but his love and good-will.

6 And the messengers returned to Jacob, saying, We came to thy brother Esau, and also he cometh to meet thee, and four hundred men with him.

7 Then Jacob was greatly afraid, and distressed: and he divided the people that *was* with him, and the flocks, and herds, and the camels, into two bands;

Observe, no sooner is Jacob delivered from distress, by reason of *Laban*, but he falls into a similar, or greater trouble, from the fear of *Esau*. Reader! the world is full of *Labans* and *Esaus*, in the experience of the faithful followers of the Lamb. Jer. xxx. 7.

8 And said, If Esau come to the one company, and smite it, then the other company which is left shall escape.

9 And Jacob said, O God of my father Abraham, and God of my father Isaac, the Lord which saidst unto me, Return unto thy country, and to thy kindred, and I will deal well with thee:

Observe, the refuge of the saints! Where shall a child in his distress go, but to his father? And where shall the exercised believer flee, but to his God in Christ?

10 I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies*, and of all the truth, which thou hast shewed unto thy servant; for with my staff I passed over this Jordan; and now I am become two bands.

11 Deliver me, I pray thee, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau; for I fear him, lest he will come and smite me, and the mother with the children.

12 And thou saidst, I will surely do thee good, and make thy seed as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude.

Observe the sweet order of the Patriarch's prayer. *First*, he calls upon God, as his Covenant God, engaged to him by word, and oath, and promises. Gen. xvii. 1—7. *Secondly*. He reminds God, that where he now is, in the troubles with which he is surrounded, he is in the path of duty, by the Lord's own appointment. Gen. xxxi. 3—13. Reader! do not forget that we may always rely upon the Lord's aid, when we are in the Lord's way. That promise is absolute: Prov. iii. 6. *Thirdly*, Jacob acknowledgeth his utter unworthiness of receiving the blessing, in the very moment he asketh it. Oh! it is true grace in exercise, to lie low in the dust before God; and while imploring favour, to know that we merit wrath. Gen. xviii. 27. *Fourthly*. The mercy asked, is the Covenant mercy promised, namely, deliverance from the oppressor. Here a soul finds sure ground to tread upon. Psm. xii. 5. *Lastly*. Jacob strengthens the whole, by reminding God of what God had reminded him, *Thou saidst, I will surely do thee good*. Gen. xxviii. 13—15. We never can pray better than in telling God what he hath told us. And when we offer all *by* the Spirit's influence, *through* the righteousness of the Lord Jesus, *on* the Covenant faithfulness of God our Fa-

* Heb. *I am less than all thy mercies, &c.*

ther, what is there that we can ask believing which we shall not receive? Reader! make this whole subject spiritual; and beg of God the Holy Ghost to make it personal, as it may suit your own circumstances, and it will be a sweet scripture indeed. Rom. viii. 32. Psalm cxix. 49.

13 ¶ And he lodged there that same night; and took of that which came to his hand a present for Esau his brother* ;

14 Two hundred she goats, and twenty he goats, two hundred ewes, and twenty rams.

15 Thirty milch camels with their colts, forty kine, and ten bulls, twenty she asses, and ten foles.

16 And he delivered *them* into the hand of his servants, every drove by themselves; and he said unto his servants, Pass over before me, and put a space betwixt drove and drove.

17 And he commanded the foremost, saying, When Esau my brother meeteth thee, and asketh thee, saying, Whose *art* thou? and whither goest thou? and whose *are* these before thee?

18 Then thou shalt say, *They be* thy servant Jacob's; it *is* a present sent unto my lord Esau: and, behold, also he *is* behind us.

19 And so commanded he the second, and the third, and all that followed the droves, saying, On this manner shall ye speak unto Esau, when ye find him.

20 And say ye moreover, Behold, thy servant Jacob *is* behind us. For he said, I will appease him with the present that goeth before me, and afterward I will see his face; peradventure he will accept of me.

21 So went the present over before him: and himself lodged that night in the company.

22 And he rose up that night, and took his two wives, and his two womenservants, and his eleven sons, and passed over the ford Jabbok.

Jabbok, the boundary of the coast of the *Ammonites*. Joshua xii. 2.

* Prov. xxi. 14.

23 And he took them, and sent them over the brook, and sent over that he had.

24 ¶ And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day.

Reader! do you know what it is to be left alone to enjoy communion with God in Christ? Have you sent away all earthly concerns, and all *natural* connections, how near and dear soever they may be, in order to feel the full influence of *gracious* impressions. Who this angel was, may easily be known from the Patriarch's own account of him. Sweet to observe, in the numberless instances of it, how that Almighty angel of the covenant, the Lord Jesus, seemed to long for the period when he would fully reveal himself unto his people. See Gen. xlviii. 16. Hosea xii. 4.

25 And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with him.

Reader! observe the continual conflicts of the faithful. While dreading the coming of his brother, and not as a friend, the Lord himself comes forth to meet him, and seemingly as an enemy. And while poor Jacob is stirring up himself to lay hold on God for help, the Lord lays hold on him, with seeming violence.

26 And he said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. And he said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me.

See! how the Lord is even detained by the fervent cries of his children. Solomon's Song i. 4. vii. 5. See also how vigorous are the actings of faith, when God's grace supports that faith. Song iii. 4. Isaiah xxvii. 5. And is not this a beautiful example of what Job prayed for? Job xxiii. 3—6.

27 And he said unto him, What is thy name? and he said, Jacob.

28 And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed.

No more *Jacob*, which signifies a *supplanter*; but *Israel*, which means a *Prince*. And do not all the spiritual seed of Jacob change their name when their nature is renewed? Isaiah lxii. 4. Rev. iii. 12.

29 And Jacob asked *him*, and said, Tell me, I pray thee, thy name: And he said, Wherefore is

it *that* thou dost ask after my name? and he blessed him there*.

30 And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: for I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved†.

31 And as he passed over Penuel the sun rose upon him, and he halted upon his thigh.

The disjointed thigh testified what the Lord *could* have done. Sweet is it to have divine strength perfected in human weakness. What was Paul's experience but this, when carrying about with him in his body, *the dying of the Lord Jesus*. Gal. vi. 17. Reader! observe it is always sunshine in the soul, in or soon after seasons of divine communion.

32 Therefore the children of Israel eat not of the sinew which shrank, which *is* upon the hollow of the thigh, unto this day: because he touched the hollow of Jacob's thigh in the sinew that shrank.

Perhaps this custom was piously observed by the *Israelites*, in order to keep alive the remembrance how prevailing fervent prayer is, as manifested in this instance of their Great Ancestor.

REFLECTIONS.

READER! I charge you not to close your review of this lovely chapter, which under God's teachings hath refreshed the minds of thousands, and will continue so to do until time shall be no more, without first gathering to yourself some of the many sweet things it speaks of to the people of God. You see, in the Patriarch's instance, how those unto whom angels minister, and even unto whom Jesus himself is revealed, may, and will, be exercised with many sharp and trying dispensations. Are *you* thus exercised in the spiritual warfare? Do *you* know what it is to have the ministry of angels meeting you in the way to *Canaan*? Do the seed of *Esau* come forth, to obstruct your path? And are you thereby constrained to seek aid from God? What nights of wrestlings in prayer have you counted? What days of sunshine have broken in upon your soul, to manifest divine communions? Can you call to mind the *brook*, the place, the time, when you have sent away the best and tenderest of all earthly endearments, that you might be left alone to enjoy the visits of God your Saviour.

Let these and the like questions arise in your minds, from the perusal of this chapter. And may the same gracious Covenant God and Saviour, (for he is *the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever*.) grant both to you and to me, that in our going home to our Father's house, like the Patriarch, Jesus's host may meet us, and give us comfort: nay, may Jesus himself be there, in every step of the way; that Jordan's waves,

* Judges xiii. 17, 18.

† *Peniel* means the face of God.

and the valley of the shadow of death, that lie between, may not affright: for when he is near, his rod and staff shall comfort. So will *goodness and mercy follow us all the days of our life, till we come to dwell in the house of our God for ever.*

CHAP. XXXIII.

CONTENTS.

The Patriarch's history is still continued through this Chapter. Here is the account of Jacob's meeting his brother Esau, and the effect of the interview: the affection displayed between the brothers; their amicable separation: Esau returns to Mount Seir, and Jacob pursues his journey to Canaan.

AND Jacob lifted up his eyes, and looked, and, behold, Esau came, and with him four hundred men. And he divided the children unto Leah, and unto Rachel, and unto the two handmaids*.

2 And he put the handmaids and their children foremost, and Leah and her children after, and Rachel and Joseph hindermost.

3 And he passed over before them, and bowed himself to the ground seven times, until he came near to his brother.

The passing over of Jacob, before his family, should remind us of Christ's unequalled love, in the moment of danger, amidst his disciples in the garden. John xviii. 8.

4 And Esau ran to meet him, and embraced him, and fell on his neck, and kissed him: and they wept.

See what grace can accomplish! Read that Scripture, Prov. xvi. 7.

5 And he lifted up his eyes, and saw the women and the children; and he said, Who *are* those with thee? And he said, The children which God hath graciously given thy servant.

Jacob had now about twelve children; and the eldest could not be much above fourteen years of age. A delightful little troop! But observe to whose mercy he refers all: Psm. cxvii. 3.

6 Then the handmaidens came near, they and their children, and they bowed themselves.

* Psalm cxii. 7.

7 And Leah also with her children came near, and bowed themselves: and after came Joseph near and Rachel, and they bowed themselves.

Observe, *Joseph* is particularly noticed among the children.

8 And he said, What *meanest* thou by all this drove which I met? and he said, *These are* to find grace in the sight of my lord.

9 And Esau said, I have enough, my brother; keep that thou hast unto thyself.

It is one thing to have *enough* of this world's goods, and it is another to have the Lord himself for our portion. Gen. xxvii. 39.

10 And Jacob said, Nay, I pray thee, if now I have found grace in thy sight, then receive my present at my hand: for therefore I have seen thy face, as though I had seen the face of God, and thou wast pleased with me.

11 Take, I pray thee, my blessing that is brought to thee; because God hath dealt graciously with me, and because I have enough. And he urged him, and he took *it*.

There is a difference in the expression of *enough*, in this verse, from the same expression in the 9th verse. Jacob's *enough* means, I have *all*. And so he had, according to Paul's explanation of covenant blessings. See 1 Cor. iii. 22, 23. Phil. iv. 18, 19.

12 And he said, Let us take our journey, and let us go, and I will go before thee.

13 And he said unto him, My lord knoweth that the children *are* tender, and the flocks and herds with young *are* with me: and if men should overdrive them one day, all the flock will die*.

14 Let my lord, I pray thee, pass over before his servant: and I will lead on softly, according as the cattle that goeth before me and the children be able to endure, until I come unto my lord unto Seir.

15 And Esau said, Let me now leave with thee *some* of the folk that *are* with me: And he said,

* Isaiah xl. 11.

What needeth it? let me find grace in the sight of my lord.

He who hath angels to convoy him, needs no other defence.

16 So Esau returned that day on his way unto Seir.

Seir is still the returning place of every one of the seed of *Esau*.

17 And Jacob journeyed to Succoth, and built him an house, and made booths for his cattle: therefore the name of the place is called Succoth.

Succoth, so called from the booths erected there. Heb. xi. 9. Observe: this is not the Succoth mentioned in Exod. xiii. 20, but Judges viii. 5.

18 ¶ And Jacob came to Shalem a city of Shechem, which is in the land of Canaan, when he came from Padan-aram; and pitched his tent before the city.

See the account of this place, called *Sychem*, John iv. 5. Acts vii. 16, where Hamor is also called Emmor.

19 And he bought a parcel of a field, where he had spread his tent, at the hand of the children of Hamor, Shechem's father, for an hundred pieces of money.

Observe: though Jacob by God's blessing was the proprietor in right of inheritance, yet not an inch of the land of Canaan had he in possession. Acts vii. 5.

20 And he erected there an altar, and called it El-elohe-Israel.

El-elohe-Israel, is God, the God of Israel; meaning God in a covenant way.

REFLECTIONS.

How sweetly doth grace induce all the finer affections of the heart, and constrain all our angry passions into love! Lord, let thy grace enable us to *put on, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercy, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering, forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, even as Christ hath forgiven us, so also may we.* And in the reading of this chapter, I would beg of God to bestow, both upon him that reads, and on him that writes, the grace of having a wise choice between the fulness of this earth's blessing, and the appointment of whatever the Lord sees fit in a covenant way. Dearest Jesus! while the *Esaus* of the present hour, are sending out into the highways to enquire of every one they meet, who will shew them any good; let but *the light of thy countenance be lifted on my soul, and it will put gladness in my heart, more than in the time that corn and wine increase.*

CHAP. XXXIV.

CONTENTS.

Hitherto the Patriarch Jacob had been exercised with many sharp and trying afflictions, as they arose out of the circumstances of his own life. In this chapter, the history of the Patriarch records the beginning of the afflictions with which he was exercised, as they arose out of the circumstances of his children. Dinah his daughter, and as it should seem his only daughter, prompted by vain curiosity, going forth to see the daughters of the land, is ravished by Shechem prince of the Hivites. Jacob's soul is grieved at hearing of it. His sons determine to be revenged. Hamor the father of Shechem, in order to gratify his son's wishes, proposeth a treaty of marriage between his son and Jacob's daughter; the sons of Jacob appear to give consent, on condition of the Hivites being circumcised: but when this was done, Simeon and Levi come upon their city by surprize, destroy all the males, and take away their cattle.

AND Dinah the daughter of Leah, which she bare unto Jacob, went out to see the daughters of the land.

Titus ii. 5. *Dinah* was most probably at this time, about 16 years of age.

2 And when Shechem the son of Hamor the Hivite, prince of the country, saw her, he took her, and lay with her, and defiled her*.

3 And his soul clave unto Dinah the daughter of Jacob, and he loved the damsel, and spake kindly unto the damsel.

This was lust, not love.

And Shechem spake unto his father Hamor, saying, Get me this damsel to wife.

5 And Jacob heard that he had defiled Dinah his daughter: now his sons were with his cattle in the field: and Jacob held his peace until they were come†.

6 And Hamor the father of Shechem went out unto Jacob to commune with him.

7 And the sons of Jacob came out of the field when they heard it: and the men were grieved, and they were very wroth, because he had wrought

* Prov. vii. 11. xiii. 20.

† Psalm xxxix. 1, 2.

folly in Israel in lying with Jacob's daughter; which thing ought not to be done*.

8 And Hamor communed with them, saying, The soul of my son Shechem longeth for your daughter: I pray you give her him to wife.

9 And make ye marriages with us, *and* give your daughters unto us, and take our daughters unto you.

This was contrary to divine appointment. Deut. vii. 3, 4.

10 And ye shall dwell with us: and the land shall be before you; dwell and trade ye therein, and get ye possessions therein.

11 And Shechem said unto her father and unto her brethren, Let me find grace in your eyes, and what ye shall say unto me I will give.

12 Ask me never so much dowry and gift, and I will give according as ye shall say unto me: but give me the damsel to wife.

13 And the sons of Jacob answered Shechem and Hamor his father deceitfully, and said, Because he had defiled Dinah their sister†:

14 And they said unto them, We cannot do this thing, to give our sister to one that is uncircumcised; for that *were* a reproach unto us‡:

15 But in this will we consent unto you: If ye will be as we *be*, that every male of you be circumcised;

16 Then will we give our daughters unto you, and we will take your daughters to us, and we will dwell with you, and we will become one people.

17 But if ye will not hearken unto us to be circumcised; then we will take our daughter, and we will be gone§.

18 And their words pleased Hamor, and Shechem Hamor's son.

* Joshua vii. 15.

† Psalm xii. 2.

‡ Gen. xvii. 11.

§ 1 Pet. ii. 16. 1 Thess. ii. 5.

19 And the young man deferred not to do the thing, because he had delight in Jacob's daughter: and he *was* more honourable than all the house of his father*.

20 ¶ And Hamor and Shechem his son came unto the gate of their city, and communed with the men of their city, saying,

21 These men *are* peaceable with us; therefore let them dwell in the land, and trade therein; for the land, behold, *it is* large enough for them; let us take their daughters to us for wives, and let us give them our daughters.

22 Only herein will the men consent unto us for to dwell with us, to be one people, if every male among us be circumcised, as they *are* circumcised.

23 *Shall* not their cattle and their substance and every beast of their's *be* our's? only let us consent unto them, and they will dwell with us.

Sad is the consequence of supposing gain to be godliness! 1 Tim. vi. 5.

24 And unto Hamor and unto Shechem his son hearkened all that went out of the gate of his city; and every male was circumcised, all that went out of the gate of his city.

25 ¶ And it came to pass on the third day, when they were sore, that two of the sons of Jacob, Simeon and Levi, Dinah's brethren, took each man his sword, and came unto the city boldly, and slew all the males.

See here the recompense of an evil eye! Gen. xlix. 5—7.

26 And they slew Hamor and Shechem his son with the edge of the sword, and took Dinah out of Shechem's house, and went out.

27 ¶ The sons of Jacob came upon the slain,

* Gen. xli. 40.

and spoiled the city, because they had defiled their sister.

28 They took their sheep, and their oxen, and their asses, and that which *was* in the city, and that which *was* in the field.

29 And all their wealth, and all their little ones, and their wives took they captive, and spoiled even all that *was* in the house.

30 And Jacob said to Simeon and Levi, Ye have troubled me to make me to stink among the inhabitants of the land, among the Canaanites and the Perizzites: and I *being* few in number, they shall gather themselves together against me, and slay me; and I shall be destroyed, I and my house*.

31 And they said, Should he deal with our sister as with an harlot?

REFLECTIONS.

How dreadful the effect of unbridled passions! What sad events have been induced by their indulgence in all ages. And what is the whole history of mankind since the fall, but the same distressing page of suffering and sorrow, by reason of iniquity and sin. Blessed Jesus! how endearing here again is the recollection of thy merciful character, in that thou camest *to take away sin by the sacrifice* of thyself.

I think that this chapter affords a very interesting lesson to young women. Female modesty is so truly graceful and becoming, that too much care can never be taken of it. Like the fine bloom of the purple plumb it cannot be touched without injury. Had the daughter of Jacob been less exposed, her chastity would not have been violated. Hence among the precepts of the apostle to young women, which he gives in charge to his beloved *Titus*, to teach the church, he particularly dwells on this, that they be *chaste and keepers at home*: as if wandering abroad tended, most likely, to the loss of their chastity.

And while this lesson is read to *daughters*, and especially to the daughters of gracious parents, from this chapter; let not an exercised soul among *parents* that are gracious, forget to derive this instruction also from it, that a godly father may have ungodly children. Grace is not by descent. It runs not in the blood. *Jacob* was dear to his God; but *Jacob's* children were very often a source of sorrow to him. Many afflicting providences were in his family. *David* also, though *the man after God's own heart*, yet concerning his children he might well cry out, as he did in one of his Psalms, *Lord, remember David and all his*

* Exod. v. 21. See Prov. xxix. 25.

afflictions! Reader! if God in his providence should have called *you* to the interesting character of a parent, and in his wisdom should see fit to exercise you with such distresses, where will you find resources to bear you up under the heavy pressure? There is but one that can give relief, and that one the holy men of old possessed. And that is a comfortable and well-grounded assurance of an interest in the covenant righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ. This acts like an anchor to the soul in a dark and stormy night. *David* fled to this, in his troubles, and found that he rid by it safely through the tempest. *Although my house* (says he) *be not so with God, yet hath he made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure. For this is all my salvation, and all my desire, although he make it not to grow.*

CHAP. XXXV.

CONTENTS.

In the opening of this Chapter, Jacob's history seems to brighten in the renewal of divine visits to him. But, in the progress of the Chapter, we have the sad news of death in his family. Such is the mixed state of the happiest pilgrimage. The Patriarch by the Lord's direction, removes from Shechem to Bethel. Arriving there, he builds an altar unto the Lord: Deborah, his mother's nurse, dies in Bethel, and is buried there: God again visits Jacob, and renews the assurance of his favour: Jacob sets up a pillar in token of it: he prosecutes his journey: by the way new calamities befall him, for his beloved Rachel dies in child-bed of Benjamin: he perpetuates her memory by erecting a pillar: still pursuing his rout towards Isaac his father's house a fresh instance of grief occurs; for Reuben his eldest son, commits incest with his father's concubine. Jacob's sons are mentioned: he arrives at his father Isaac's, at Mamre. Isaac dies in a good old age, and is buried by the joint affection of Jacob and Esau.

AND God said unto Jacob, Arise, go up to Beth-el, and dwell there: and make there an altar unto God, that appeared unto thee when thou fleddest from the face of Esau thy brother.

Gen. xxviii. 22. I think it more than probable, that Jacob had forgotten his vow: Gen. xxviii. 20—22. And perhaps too often lost sight of the divine faithfulness. Alas! who among Jacob's true spiritual seed, but find cause to lament the same infirmity.

2 ¶ Then Jacob said unto his household, and to all that were with him, Put away the strange gods that are among you, and be clean, and change your garments:

And I think it more than probable also, that the Lord in tender mercy, had visited the Patriarch with afflictions to call his vows to remembrance. Rev. iii. 19. It should seem by this address of Jacob to his household that he considered his visitations in this light: Isaiah i. 16—18. How sweetly the apostle converts such puttings away, into a gospel sense! 1 Pet. iii. 21, 22. But, Reader! is it not strange that *Jacob*, the highly

favoured, highly blessed Jacob, should suffer strange gods in his family? Alas! what is man in his greatest attainments! Precious Redeemer, how increasingly dear becomes the recollection of thy salvation at every renewed instance we feel in ourselves, or are called upon to behold in others, of human corruption!

3 And let us arise, and go up to Bethel; and I will make there an altar unto God, who answered me in the day of my distress, and was with me in the way which I went.

Psalm lxvi. 13, 14. How charming is the like in *Ephraim!* Hosea xiv. 8. How amiable in the *Prodigal!* Luke xv. 18.

4 And they gave unto Jacob all the strange gods which *were* in their hand, and *all their* earrings which *were* in their ears; and Jacob hid them under the oak which *was* by Shechem.

When grace works, how it works! Luke xix. 8, 9.

5 And they journeyed: and the terror of God was upon the cities that *were* round about them, and they did not pursue after the sons of Jacob.

What can be more gratifying, than to see how the Lord provides for his people, even in the very hearts of their enemies. What a cluster of scriptures might be gathered in proof of it; see Malachi iii. 11. Isaiah liv. 14—17. Deut. vii. 10. Exod. xxxiv. 24.

6 ¶ So Jacob came to Luz, which *is* in the land of Canaan, that *is*, Beth-el, he and all the people that *were* with him*.

7 And he built there an altar, and called the place El-beth-el: because there God appeared unto him, when he fled from the face of his brother.

El-beth-el, that is the God of Bethel. Reader! precious are the *Bethels*; the house of God, and the ordinances of God's house. But how infinitely more precious the God of his house. See! that when you attend the house of God, your heart is waiting for the gracious visits of God in his house. Let you and I imitate the Greeks we read of, (John x. 21), and earnestly cry out; *we would see Jesus.*

8 But Deborah Rebekah's nurse died, and she was buried beneath Beth-el under an oak: and the name of it was called Ailon-bachuth.

Gen. xxiv. 59. Faithful, long-tried servants are humble friends, and should be treated with affection and tenderness. Jacob's example here

* *Luz*, see chap. xxviii. 19.

is worthy imitation. Coloss. iv. 1. *Allon-bachuth*, that is, *the Oak of Weeping*. This shews that a grateful tribute was paid to *Deborah's* memory.

9 And God appeared unto Jacob again, when he came out of Padan-aram, and blessed him.

How sweet, how very sweet, are the renewals of divine mercy. Reader! shall I say, I hope *you* know them. And if so, you will know how to prize them.

10 And God said unto him, Thy name is Jacob: thy name shall not be called any more Jacob, but Israel shall be thy name: and he called his name Israel*.

11 And God said unto him, I *am* God Almighty: be fruitful and multiply; a nation and a company of nations shall be of thee, and kings shall come out of thy loins;

12 And the land which I gave Abraham and Isaac, to thee I will give it, and to thy seed after thee will I give the land.

Glorious name! *El Shaddai*, God All-mighty, God All-sufficient. As much as to say, I am able to fulfil all my promises. See what they are, Gen. xvii. 1—9. Confirmed to Jacob personally; Gen. xxviii. 13—15.

13 And God went up from him in the place where he talked with him.

Divine communions cannot be uninterrupted while we live in vessels of clay. But, Reader, those souls who know what it is to enjoy them, know also, what it is to pine after their renewals. Do *you* know both? Luke xxiv. 31, 32.

14 And Jacob set up a pillar in the place where he talked with him, *even* a pillar of stone: and he poured a drink offering thereon, and he poured oil thereon.

15 And Jacob called the name of the place where God spake with him, Beth-el.

Every renewed token of Jesus' love, ought to beget in our hearts renewed thankfulness. If a gracious God at any time fulfils a promise, every gracious child would desire to act faith upon his faithfulness.

16 And they journeyed from Beth-el; and there was but a little way to come to Ephrath:

* Gen. xxxii. 28.

and Rachel travailed, and she had hard labour*.

17 And it came to pass, when she was in hard labour, that the midwife said unto her, Fear not; thou shalt have this son also.

See the effects of a fallen state! Gen. iii. 16.

18 And it came to pass, as her soul was in departing, (for she died) that she called his name Ben-oni: but his father called him Benjamin.

See how little we consult our own happiness, when we presume to dictate to God. Compare Gen. xxx. 1, with this verse. *Benoni*, is the son of my sorrow. *Benjamin* means the son of my right hand. Jacob no doubt by the change of the name, meant to place this child near his heart, as a particular token to the memory of his beloved *Rachel*.

19 And Rachel died, and was buried in the way to Ephrath, which is Beth-lehem.

20 And Jacob set a pillar upon her grave: that is the pillar of Rachel's grave unto this day.

This monument was long after preserved. See 1 Sam. x. 2. Reader! do not pass over the review of *Rachel's* death, without again remarking the trials of the faithful. Gen. xlvii. 9.

21 And Israel journeyed, and spread his tent beyond the tower of Edar.

Still you see journeying. Heb. xi. 8—10.

22 And it came to pass, when Israel dwelt in that land, that Reuben went and lay with Bilhah his father's concubine: and Israel heard it. Now the sons of Jacob were twelve:

More grief for Jacob. 1 Cor. v. 1. Gen. xlix. 4.

23 The sons of Leah; Reuben, Jacob's first-born, and Simeon, and Levi, and Judah, and Issachar, and Zebulun:

The Holy Ghost is pleased to give a record of Jacob's sons. 'This is the first enumeration in the Bible of them. Perhaps inserted here, that as the church is formed out of them, the record might be noticed. Rev. vii. 4—8. xxi. 12.

24 The sons of Rachel; Joseph, and Benjamin:

25 And the sons of Bilhah, Rachel's handmaid; Dan, and Naphtali:

* 1 Thess. v. 3.

26 And the sons of Zilpah, Leah's handmaid; Gad, and Asher: these *are* the sons of Jacob, which were born to him in Padan-aram.

27 And Jacob came unto Isaac his father unto Mamre, unto the city of Arbah, which *is* Hebron, where Abraham and Isaac sojourned.

It is probable that Jacob visited his father often, though it be only mentioned in this place.

28 ¶ And the days of Isaac were an hundred and fourscore years.

From the age of Isaac at his death, it appears that he did not die at that time, for he must, by his age, have lived after Joseph's being sold into Egypt. But perhaps it is inserted here, by way of finishing that Patriarch's history.

29 And Isaac gave up the ghost, and died, and was gathered unto his people, *being* old and full of days: and his sons Esau and Jacob buried him.

It is good to see that Esau and Jacob's love continued. Death indeed in a family, may well induce affection in the survivors. It is awful to see relations, sometimes for a little property, fighting over the graves of their friends, while they themselves are falling after them. Gen. xxvii. 41.

REFLECTIONS.

READER! while we pass over this Chapter to admire and adore the divine goodness manifested in so many sweet and repeated visits of his love to the Patriarch Jacob; let us examine our own hearts for the like tokens of such *Bethel* enjoyments. Will you look within, and ask your own heart; (for I desire continually to put the same questions to mine); when did the visions of God begin with my soul? When did Jesus, (according to his most sure promise to his people), manifest himself to me otherwise than he doth to the world? When did I experience the renewings of the Holy Ghost? Reader! do not dismiss these questions unanswered?

In the sorrows of the Patriarch's household, let us seriously contemplate the lot of a fallen state. *Sin hath indeed entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passeth upon all men because all have sinned.* But my soul, look with an eye of faith beyond the grave. What though thy friends, children, servants, die; nay, thou thyself art hastening after them? yet Jesus, *thy* Jesus liveth. And am I not his in an everlasting covenant, and is he not mine? And shall I mourn then with such bright prospects in view? Dearest Lord! when all friends leave me, and when *my heart and strength fail, be thou the strength of my heart and my portion for ever.*

One look more at *Isaac* before we close the Chapter, and drop the

Patriarch's history. I delight in every person and in every thing, which receives in scripture the particular notice of God the Holy Ghost, to trace somewhat which may lead my heart to Jesus. And is there nothing striking to this amount in Isaac's life? Was not the Redeemer long promised, long looked for, with a devout earnestness by all the church, and at length born into the world in a method contrary to the established course of natural causes; similar, but infinitely beyond the example of Isaac's birth? And were there not *Ishmaels* to mock the Lord Jesus in the long and trying persecutions he sustained, like the son of *Hagar the Egyptian*, despising *Isaac*? In the cheerful acquiescence which Isaac made to his father's will for sacrifice; carrying the wood; being bound upon the altar; and not offering a repining word when Abraham took the knife to slay his son; can I not, as a type, trace somewhat of thine unequalled love; oh! thou Lamb of God, who voluntarily didst undertake, by the sacrifice of thyself, the redemption of thy people; when fainting beneath thy cross, thou wast led as a *lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so openedst not thou thy mouth!* Oh! may my soul live in the constant, daily, hourly meditation of thy love! May every thing tend to lead my heart unto thee! And may thy love at length awaken mine, and induce all those precious effects of loving thee *who hast so loved me, as to have given thyself for me.*

CHAP. XXXVI.

CONTENTS.

This Chapter is a digression from the main subject of Jacob's history, but becomes so far interesting from its connection with it, as it records the fulfilment of the divine promises concerning the posterity of Esau. When Rebekah was pregnant with Jacob and Esau, the Lord informed her that two nations were in her womb; and that two manner of people should be separated from her bowels. In confirmation of this, the distinct race of Esau for several generations is recorded in this Chapter: their decided hatred to the seed of Jacob is thereby more clearly left for discernment, as it occurred in the after ages of the Church.

NOW these are the generations of Esau, who is Edom*.

2 ¶ Esau took his wives of the daughters of Canaan; Adah the daughter of Elon the Hittite, and Aholibamah the daughter of Anah the daughter of Zibeon the Hivite†;

3 And Bashemath Ishmael's daughter, sister of Nebajoth.

4 And Adah bare to Esau Eliphaz; and Bashemath bare Reuel‡;

* Gen. xxii. 17.

† Gen. xxvi. 34.

‡ 1 Chron. i. 35, &c.

5 And Aholibamah bare Jeush, and Jaalam, and Korah: these *are* the sons of Esau, which were born unto him in the land of Canaan.

Observe, though *Esau* had three wives, yet but five sons from all. More wives than one, which is contrary to the divine ordination, is not always favourable to the increase of mankind.

6 ¶ And Esau took his wives, and his sons, and his daughters, and all the persons of his house, and his cattle, and all his beasts, and all his substance, which he had got in the land of Canaan; and went into the country from the face of his brother Jacob.

7 For their riches were more than that they might dwell together; and the land wherein they were strangers could not bear them because of their cattle.

8 Thus dwelt Esau in mount Seir: *Esau is* Edom.

Gen. xiii. 6, 11. Deut. ii. 5. Joshua xxiv. 4. Concerning *Esau's* wealth, I would say with one of old: Psalm xvii. 14, 15.

9 ¶ And these *are* the generations of Esau the father of the Edomites in mount Seir:

10 These *are* the names of Esau's sons: Eliphaz the son of Adah the wife of Esau, Reuel the son of Bashemath the wife of Esau.

11 And the sons of Eliphaz were Teman, Omar, Zepho, and Gatam, and Kenaz.

12 And Timna was concubine to Eliphaz, Esau's son; and she bare to Eliphaz Amalek: these *were* the sons of Adah, Esau's wife.

13 And these *are* the sons of Reuel; Nahath, and Zerah, Shammah, and Mizzah: these were the sons of Bashemath, Esau's wife.

14 And these were the sons of Aholibamah, the daughter of Anah the daughter of Zibeon, Esau's wife: and she bare to Esau Jeush, and Jaalam, and Korah.

How short the account! how trifling the record of this man's race! Here is no further mention of them than by name: and their very pos-

terity enumerated only to three or four generations. Reader! look at that scripture, Psalm xxxvii. 35, 36.

15 These *were* dukes of the sons of Esau: the sons of Eliphaz the firstborn *son* of Esau; duke Teman, duke Omar, duke Zepho, duke Kenaz,

Respecting the title here; see Gen. xxvii. 40. Reader! observe, that while Jacob's children were husbandmen, Esau's race were nobles. And yet what said God? See Malachi i. 2. But how sure that promise, Isaiah lvi. 5?

16 Duke Korah, duke Gam, and duke Amalek: these *are* the dukes *that came* of Eliphaz in the land of Edom; these *were* the sons of Adah.

17 And these *are* the sons of Reuel, Esau's son; duke Nahath, duke Zerah, duke Shammah, duke Mizzah; these *are* the dukes *that came* of Reuel in the land of Edom; these *are* the sons of Basemath, Esau's wife.

18 And these *are* the sons of Aholibamah, Esau's wife; duke Jeush, duke Jaalam, duke Korah: these *were* the dukes *that came* of Aholibamah the daughter of Anah, Esau's wife.

19 These *are* the sons of Esau, who *is* Edom, and these *are* their dukes.

20 These *are* the sons of Seir the Horite, who inhabited the land; Lotan, and Shobal, and Zibeon, and Anah,

21 And Dishon, and Ezer, and Dishan: these *are* the dukes of the Horites, the children of Seir in the land of Edom.

22 And the children of Lotan were Hori, and Heman; and Lotan's sister *was* Timna.

23 And the children of Shobal *were* these; Alvan, and Manahath, and Ebal, Shepho, and Onam.

24 And these *are* the children of Zibeon; both Ajah, and Anah: this *was that* Anah that found the mules in the wilderness, as he fed the asses of Zibeon his father.

25 And the children of Anah *were* these; Dishon, and Aholibamah the daughter of Anah.

26 And these *are* the children of Dishon: Hemdan, and Eshban, and Ithran, and Cheran.

27 The children of Ezer *are* these; Bilhan, and Zaavan, and Achan.

28 The children of Dishan *are* these; Uz, and Aran.

29 These *are* the dukes *that came* of the Horites; duke Lotan, duke Shobal, duke Zibeon, duke Anah.

30 Duke Dishon, duke Ezer, duke Dishan: these *are* the dukes *that came* of Hori, among their dukes in the land of Seir.

On these verses I only remark, that the *Hittites* which also sprung from Esau, are here incorporated in the history. Gen. xxvi. 34.

31 And these are the kings that reigned in the land of Edom, before there reigned any king over the children of Israel.

32 And Bela the son of Beor reigned in Edom: and the name of his city was Dinabah.

33 And Bela died, and Jobab the son of Zerah of Bozrah reigned in his stead.

34 And Jobab died, and Husham of the land of Temani reigned in his stead.

35 And Husham died, and Hadad the son of Bedad, who smote Midian in the field of Moab, reigned in his stead: and the name of his city *was* Avith.

36 And Hadad died, and Samlah of Masrekah reigned in his stead.

37 And Samlah died, and Saul of Rehoboth *by* the river reigned in his stead.

38 And Saul died, and Baal-hanan the son of Achbor reigned in his stead.

39 And Baal-hanan the son of Achbor died, and Hadar reigned in his stead: and the name of

his city *was* Pau; and his wife's name *was* Mehetabel, the daughter of Matred, the daughter of Mezahab.

40 And these are the names of the dukes *that came* of Esau, according to their families, after their places, by their names; duke Timnah, duke Alvah, duke Jetheth,

41 Duke Aholibamah, duke Elah, duke Pinon,

42 Duke Kenaz, duke Teman, duke Mibzar,

43 Duke Magdiel, duke Iram: these *be* the dukes of Edom, according to their habitations in the land of their possession: he *is* Esau the father of the Edomites.

1 Chron. i. 43, &c.—From *dukes* the seed of Esau advance to *kings*. But all the while are rejected from the covenant of promise. Psalm lxxii. 17.

REFLECTIONS.

THERE is much spiritual improvement to be drawn from the perusal of this Chapter by every gracious soul, when God the Holy Ghost awakens the heart to the observation. *Jacob's* seed, no doubt, while they were bond-slaves in *Egypt* felt their misery the more, while calling to mind the splendour of Esau's race in *Edom*. But how mistaken are our views of things, and what false calculations do we make in our estimation of happiness. Esau's children were great indeed among men. But the seed of Jacob were beloved in the sight of God. Jesus hath made them *kings and priests to God and the Father, and they shall reign with him for ever*. Dear Lord! give me that sweet promise and I ask no more. *To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me on my throne*. Rev. iii. 21.

CHAP. XXXVII.

CONTENTS.

The interesting history of the Patriarch Joseph, the son of Israel, begins at this Chapter. And as he is in many instances a most striking type of the Lord Jesus, it merits our attention the more. Here therefore I beg the Reader to call to mind the motto with which I opened our comment on this book of Genesis: Moses wrote of Christ. This Chapter hath for its contents the commencement of Joseph's history at the 17th year of his age: the partiality of his father for him: the envy of his brethren: their conspiracy against him: their selling him for a slave: and the distress of Jacob in consequence of the loss of Joseph.

AND Jacob dwelt in the land wherein his father was a stranger, in the land of Canaan.

2 ¶ These *are* the generations of Jacob. Joseph, *being* seventeen years old, was feeding the flock with his brethren; and the lad *was* with the sons of Bilhah, and with the sons of Zilpah, his father's wives: and Joseph brought unto his father their evil report.

From the review of *Esau's* splendid race of *dukes* and *kings*, we are here introduced among the humble children of Jacob, who are *shepherds* and *husbandmen*.

3 Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his children, because he *was* the son of his old age: and he made him a coat of *many* colours.

4 And when his brethren saw that their father loved him more than all his brethren, they hated him, and could not speak peaceably unto him.

Judges v. 30. 2 Sam. xiii. 18. It were to be wished that parents would remember the apostle's precept, of *doing nothing by partiality*. 1 Tim. v. 21. Observe on the subject of hatred: John vii. 7. 1 John ii. 11.

5 ¶ And Joseph dreamed a dream, and he told *it* his brethren; and they hated him yet the more.

Dreams in the patriarchal age were frequently prophetical. 1 John iii. 15.

6 And he said unto them, Hear, I pray you, this dream which I have dreamed:

7 For, behold, we *were* binding sheaves in the field, and, lo, my sheaf arose, and also stood upright; and, behold, your sheaves stood round about, and made obeisance to my sheaf.

This was literally fulfilled; see Gen. xlii. 6. xliii. 26. xliv. 14.

8 And his brethren said to him, Shalt thou indeed reign over us? or shalt thou indeed have dominion over us? and they hated him yet the more for his dreams, and for his words*.

9 And he dreamed yet another dream, and

* See Luke xiv. 14.

told it his brethren, and said, Behold, I have dreamed a dream more; and, behold, the sun and the moon and the eleven stars made obeisance to me.

10 And he told *it* to his father, and to his brethren: and his father rebuked him, and said unto him, What *is* this dream that thou hast dreamed? Shall I and thy mother and thy brethren indeed come to bow down ourselves to thee to the earth?

Gen. xlii. 29. Jacob's idea of this dream was, that the *Sun* represented himself; as a *father* is the source of life and warmth and nourishment to his family; that the *Moon* meant his wife, for as the moon derives its influence from the sun, so the wife from her husband; and the exact number of eleven stars expressly particularized the eleven sons of Israel.

11 And his brethren envied him; but his father observed the saying*.

12 And his brethren went to feed their father's flock in Shechem.

Shechem lay near 60 miles from *Hebron*.

13 And Israel said unto Joseph, Do not thy brethren feed *the flock* in Shechem? come, and I will send thee unto them. And he said to him, Here *am* I.

14 And he said to him, Go, I pray thee, see whether it be well with thy brethren, and well with the flocks; and bring me word again. So he sent him out of the vale of Hebron, and he came to Shechem.

15 And a certain man found him, and, behold, *he was* wandering in the field: and the man asked him, saying, What seekest thou?

16 And he said, I seek my brethren: tell me, I pray thee, where they feed *their flocks*.

Joseph's question leads the mind to that, Song i. 7.

17 And the man said, They are departed hence; for I heard them say, Let us go to Do-

* Luke ii. 19, 51. Acts vii. 9.

than. And Joseph went after his brethren, and found them in Dothan.

Dothan, a little distance from Shechem, 2 Kings vi. 13.

18 ¶ And when they saw him afar off, even before he came near unto them, they conspired against him to slay him *.

19 And they said one to another, Behold, this dreamer cometh.

20 Come now therefore, and let us slay him, and cast him into some pit, and we will say, Some evil beast hath devoured him: and we shall see what will become of his dreams †.

21 And Reuben heard *it*, and he delivered him out of their hands; and said, Let us not kill him.

22 And Reuben said unto them, Shed no blood, *but* cast him into this pit that *is* in the wilderness, and lay no hand upon him; that he might rid him out of their hands, to deliver him to his father again.

See chap. xlii. 22.—Observe how the Lord interposes by his instruments in the hour of need!

23 And it came to pass, when Joseph was come unto his brethren, that they stript Joseph out of his coat, *his* coat of *many* colours that *was* on him:

Reader! look at *him*, of whom Joseph was in this instance the type! Matt. xxvii. 28.

24 And they took him, and cast him into a pit: and the pit *was* empty, *there was* no water in it ‡.

25 And they sat down to eat bread: and they lifted up their eyes and looked, and, behold, a company of Ishmeelites came from Gilead with their camels bearing spicery and balm and myrrh, going to carry *it* down to Egypt §.

26 And Judah said unto his brethren, What pro-

* Luke xx. 14.

† Psalm lxiv. 5.

‡ Zech. ix. 11.

§ Amos vi. 6. Jer. viii. 22.

fit *is it* if we slay our brother, and conceal his blood?

Did not David ask a similar question, as typical of Jesus? Psalm xxx. 9.

27 Come, and let us sell him to the Ishmeelites, and let not our hand be upon him; for he *is* our brother *and* our flesh. And his brethren were content.

So was the Lord Jesus sold by one of his disciples. Heb. ii. 14.

28 Then there passed by Midianites merchant-men; and they drew and lifted up Joseph out of the pit, and sold Joseph to the Ishmeelites for twenty *pieces* of silver: and they brought Joseph into Egypt.

Judges vi. 3.—How striking a resemblance to Jesus! Matt. xxvi. 15. *Twenty pieces of silver* amounted to about *forty-six shillings* of our money.

29 And Reuben returned unto the pit; and, behold, Joseph *was* not in the pit; and he rent his clothes.

30 And he returned unto his brethren, and said, The child *is* not; and I, whither shall I go?

31 And they took Joseph's coat, and killed a kid of the goats, and dipped the coat in the blood;

32 And they sent the coat of *many* colours, and they brought *it* to their father; and said, This have we found: know now whether it *be* thy son's coat or no*.

33 And he knew it, and said, *It is* my son's coat; an evil beast hath devoured him; Joseph is without doubt rent in pieces†.

34 And Jacob rent his clothes, and put sack-cloth upon his loins, and mourned for his son many days.

35 And all his sons and all his daughters rose

* Prov. xxviii. 13.

† Chap. xlv. 28.

up to comfort him; but he refused to be comforted: and he said, For I will go down into the grave unto my son mourning. Thus his father wept for him *.

36 ¶ And the Midianites sold him into Egypt unto Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh's, *and* captain of the guard.

Gen. xxxix. 1. Heb. *Eunuch*, or Chamberlain of Pharaoh's household, as well as Captain of the guard.

REFLECTIONS.

READER! there are many practical reflections for the suppression of anger in its first appearance; and many useful improvements for the discountenancing partiality to children, which may be gathered from this Chapter, and which under grace you will do well to regard. But I turn aside from every other consideration, as of less moment, in order to follow up the evident intention of the Holy Ghost in this Chapter, to behold *him*, whom the Patriarch Joseph plainly shadowed out in several striking circumstances of his character.

And did not God the Father send his beloved Son from the realms of bliss into this our world, to see if it were well with us, and how we fared? But though he came full of love and mercy, yet when he came *unto his own, his own received him not*. Did they not conspire against him? nay, why do I say did *they* not, have we not *all* by sin and by rebellion conspired against him, sold him into the hands of the Gentiles, and *by wicked hands have crucified and slain him*? Was he not stripped of his raiment, cast into the pit, and *his grave made with the wicked in his death, because he had done no violence, neither was there any deceit found in his mouth*? Oh! thou Almighty Joseph of thy brethren! give me grace to see that though thou hast been *despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief*; and I have, (like those unnatural brethren), *hid as it were my face from thee*; yet by the sovereignty of thy grace help me to see, that thou wert sent by God the Father, to look after and provide for my everlasting welfare. Thou art sent indeed before thy people, and *to save their lives by a great deliverance*. Hail, thou dear Redeemer! henceforth may the language of my heart be, *blessed be he that cometh in the name of the Lord*.

CHAP. XXXVIII.

CONTENTS.

This Chapter is a digression from the subject of Joseph's history, but it becomes a very interesting one, because it records the race of Judah, another of Jacob's sons. And as our Lord sprang out of Judah, according to the flesh, (Heb. vii. 14.) it is indeed highly important to trace the

* Chap. xlii. 38. xliv. 29—31.

descent of Judah, until we find it terminate in Christ. The contents of this Chapter are, Judah's marriage and issue: the death of his two eldest sons for rebellion against God; Judah's incestuous commerce with his daughter-in-law, and the effects of it.

AND it came to pass at that time, that Judah went down from his brethren, and turned in to a certain Adullamite, whose name *was* Hirah.

2 And Judah saw there a daughter of a certain Canaanite, whose name *was* Shuah; and he took her, and went in unto her.

3 And she conceived, and bare a son; and he called his name Er.

See 1 Chron. ii. 3. Numb. xxvi. 19, 20. Reader! observe here the general feature of lust since the fall. See Gen. vi. 2. 4.

4 And she conceived again, and bare a son; and she called his name Onan.

5 And she yet again conceived, and bare a son; and called his name Shelah: and he was at Chezib, when she bare him.

Chezib means a lie, deceit. It was a little village. Jos. xv. 44. Micah i. 14, 15.

6 ¶ And Judah took a wife for Er his first-born, whose name *was* Tamar.

7 And Er, Judah's firstborn, was wicked in the sight of the LORD; and the LORD slew him.

8 ¶ And Judah said unto Onan, Go in unto thy brother's wife, and marry her, and raise up seed to thy brother.

This was a law, in after ages, in Israel. See Deut. xxv. 5. 10. But is there not a more ancient, and higher authority for it? Was it not meant to prefigure, in a spiritual sense, that precious doctrine, that our kinsman Redeemer, when we were dead to the first marriage of a covenant of works, should be married to us in his covenant of grace? See Ruth iv. 10—12. Rom. vii. 4.

9 And Onan knew that the seed should not be his; and it came to pass, when he went in unto his brother's wife, that he spilled *it* on the ground, lest that he should give seed to his brother.

Reader! pause over this history. Who shall take upon him to say, to what extent this unnatural sin hath been prevalent in all ages! Though hidden from human observation, with what malignity must the vast mass of such works of darkness come up before God? Oh! how precious,

increasingly precious, is Jesus, in every renewed consideration to the mind conscious of sin, *whose blood alone cleanseth from all sin.*

10 And the thing which he did displeased the LORD: wherefore he slew him also.

11 Then said Judah to Tamar his daughter in law, Remain a widow at thy father's house, till Shelah my son be grown: for he said, Lest peradventure he die also, as his brethren *did*. And Tamar went and dwelt in her father's house*.

12 ¶ And in process of time the daughter of Shuah, Judah's wife, died; and Judah was comforted, and went up unto his sheepshearers to Timnath, he and his friend Hirah the Adullamite.

Timnath, a place remarkable for intrigue. See Judges xiv. 1, 2.

13 And it was told Tamar, saying, Behold, thy father in law goeth up to Timnath to shear his sheep.

Judges xiv. 1. It is worthy remark, that though there are, I believe, but *four* women named in the list of the ancestors of Christ, after the flesh, in *Matthew's* relation of the pedigree, this is one of them, Matt. i. 3.

14 And she put her widow's garments off from her, and covered her with a vail, and wrapped herself, and sat in an open place, which *is* by the way to Timnath; for she saw that Shelah was grown, and she was not given unto him to wife.

15 When Judah saw her, he thought her *to be* an harlot; because she had covered her face.

16 And he turned unto her by the way, and said, Go to, I pray thee, let me come in unto thee; (for he knew not that she *was* his daughter in law.) And she said, What wilt thou give me, that thou mayest come in unto me?

Peter describes this lust, in strong expressions, 2 Pet. ii. 14.

17 And he said, I will send *thee* a kid from the flock. And she said, Wilt thou give *me* a pledge, till thou send *it*?

* Lev. xxii. 13.

18 And he said, What pledge shall I give thee? And she said, Thy signet, and thy bracelets, and thy staff that *is* in thine hand. And he gave *it* her, and came in unto her, and she conceived by him.

19 And she arose, and went away, and laid by her vail from her, and put on the garments of her widowhood.

20 And Judah sent the kid by the hand of his friend the Adullamite, to receive *his* pledge from the woman's hand: but he found her not.

21 Then he asked the men of that place, saying, Where is the harlot that *was* openly by the way side? and they said, There was no harlot in this *place*.

I wish the same answer could be made of many a place now.

22 And he returned to Judah, and said, I cannot find her; and also the men of the place said, *that* there was no harlot in this *place*.

23 And Judah said, Let her take *it* to her, lest we be shamed: behold, I sent this kid, and thou hast not found her.

24 And it came to pass about three months after, that it was told Judah, saying, Tamar thy daughter in law hath played the harlot; and also, behold, she *is* with child by whoredom. And Judah said, Bring her forth, and let her be burnt.

Lev. xxi. 9. As *Tamar* was by right betrothed to *Judah's* third son, no doubt it was adultery in her.

25 When she *was* brought forth, she sent to her father in law, saying, By the man, whose these *are*, *am* I with child: and she said, Discern, I pray thee, whose *are* these, the signet, the bracelets, and staff.

How strikingly true is that scripture to this conduct! Rom. ii. 1.

26 And Judah acknowledged *them*, and said, She hath been more righteous than I; because

that I gave her not to Shelah my son. And he knew her again no more.

27 And it came to pass in the time of her travail, that, behold, twins *were* in her womb.

Is not this a type of the *Jewish* and *Gentile* churches?

28 And it came to pass when she travailed, that *the one* put out *his* hand: and the midwife took and bound upon his hand a scarlet thread, saying, This came out first.

Is not this typical also, like that of Esau and Jacob, of the struggle of the churches?

29 And it came to pass, as he drew back his hand, that, behold, his brother came out: and she said, How hast thou broken forth? *this* breach *be* upon thee: therefore his name was called Pharez.

Pharez means a breach. Matt. i. 3.

30 And afterward came out his brother, that had the scarlet thread upon his hand: and his name was called Zarah.

Zarah means a Riser, or Returner. And so we trust will be the return of our elder brother the Jew, to the redemption of the Lord, when that blessed scripture comes to be fulfilled; Rom. xi. 25, 26.

REFLECTIONS.

WHAT hath sin wrought in all ages! What a dreadful bias to evil is naturally in the mind of every man! What awful examples doth the Lord sometimes proclaim, in punishments, of his utter displeasure of sin! But, my soul! while thou art seeking grace from God, to avoid every appearance of sin, let that state of humbleness, that astonishing and unequalled state of humbleness, to which Jesus submitted, when he came to do away sin by the sacrifice of himself, endear the Redeemer yet more and more to thy heart, and form him there *the only hope of glory*. Was it not enough, dearest Lord, when thou condescendest to take flesh and blood for the purposes of salvation, that thou didst not abhor the virgin's womb, but didst even appoint thine ancestors, after the flesh, to be such as were more particularly marked with unworthiness? Gracious Redeemer! may it serve to teach my heart those sweet lessons, that thou wert pleased to be made in all things like as we are, yet without sin: and although thou wert made in the *likeness* of sinful flesh, yet thou didst partake of none of the corruptions of flesh; and that in thy tender alliance with our nature, thou dost not refuse that alliance even with the vilest of our nature; but *where sin aboundeth, grace doth much more abound; that as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness, unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord*. Rom. v. 20, 21.

CHAP. XXXIX.

CONTENTS.

In this Chapter the Sacred Writer re-assumes the history of Joseph. The account is related of Joseph's being carried down into Egypt; and of the reception he met with there. He is sold to Potiphar, a captain under Pharaoh king of Egypt: Joseph is so blessed of the Lord, that his master commits unto him the care of all his substance: Joseph, on account of the comeliness of his person, becomes an object of desire to his mistress. She attempts to seduce him; but by the grace of God being preserved from the temptation, her lust is changed into hatred. She accuses Joseph to her lord, who, unheard, throws him into prison. The Lord manifests his favour to his servant, so that he inclines the heart of the keeper of the prison to be kind to Joseph. These are the contents of this Chapter, to which as there is much in type and figure of the Lord Jesus, we shall do well to be very attentive in the perusal.

AND Joseph was brought down to Egypt; and Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, captain of the guard, an Egyptian, bought him of the hands of the Ishmeelites, which had brought him down thither.

Chap. xxxvii. 28. 36. Psm. cv. 17. Observe how the Lord arrangeth all his providences. Joseph being sold to Potiphar, rather than to any other, became the foundation of his being known to Potiphar's master.

2 And the LORD was with Joseph, and he was a prosperous man; and he was in the house of his master the Egyptian.

1 Sam. xvi. 18. xviii. 28. Acts vii. 9. Read that scripture, Psm. xxvii. 10.

3 And his master saw that the LORD *was* with him, and that the LORD made all that he did to prosper in his hand.

Deut. xxxiii. 16. Separated from his brethren.

4 And Joseph found grace in his sight, and he served him: and he made him overseer over his house, and all *that* he had he put into his hand*.

5 And it came to pass from the time *that* he had made him overseer in his house, and over all that he had, that the LORD blessed the Egyptian's house for Joseph's sake; and the blessing of the

* Prov. xvi. 7.

LORD was upon all that he had in the house, and in the field *.

6 And he left all that he had in Joseph's hand; and he knew not ought he had, save the bread which he did eat. And Joseph was *a goodly person*, and well favoured †.

7 ¶ And it came to pass after these things, that his master's wife cast her eyes upon Joseph; and she said, Lie with me ‡.

8 But he refused, and said unto his master's wife, Behold, my master wotteth not what *is* with me in the house, and he hath committed all that he hath to my hand §;

There is none greater in this house than I; neither hath he kept back any thing from me but thee, because thou art his wife: how then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?

Sweet argument this! It was a sin against himself. It was a sin even against his mistress! It was a sin against a kind master. But he passeth all these by as of lesser consideration, to argue the abominable nature of the sin against God: being particularly an *Israelite*, and in covenant with God.

10 And it came to pass, as she spake to Joseph day by day, that he hearkened not unto her, to lie by her, *or* to be with her ||.

11 And it came to pass about this time, that *Joseph* went into the house to do his business; and *there was* none of the men of the house there within **.

12 And she caught him by his garment, saying, Lie with me: and he left his garment in her hand, and fled, and got him out ††.

13 ¶ And it came to pass, when she saw that he had left his garment in her hand, and was fled forth,

14 That she called unto the men of her house,

* Chap xxx. 27.

† Prov. xxxi. 30.

‡ 2 Pet. ii. 14.

§ Prov. i. 10.

|| Prov. vii. 25.

** Job xxiv. 15.

†† Observe that scripture, 1 Cor. x. 13.

and spake unto them, saying, See, he hath brought in an Hebrew unto us to mock us; he came in unto me to lie with me, and I cried with a loud voice*:

15 And it came to pass, when he heard that I lifted up my voice and cried, that he left his garment with me, and fled, and got him out.

16 And she laid up his garment by her, until his lord came home.

17 And she spake unto him according to these words, saying, The Hebrew servant, which thou hast brought unto us, came in unto me to mock me:

Observe, the pointed contempt on the religion of Joseph; first, the *Hebrew*, in order to heighten the offence she charged him with after. And is it not so now? Are not the blemishes, or the supposed blemishes of the Lord's people, always magnified by the carnal world?

18 And it came to pass, as I lifted up my voice and cried, that he left his garment with me, and fled out.

19 And it came to pass, when his master heard the words of his wife, which she spake unto him, saying, After this manner did thy servant to me; that his wrath was kindled †.

20 ¶ And Joseph's master took him, and put him into the prison, a place where the king's prisoners *were* bound: and he was there in the prison.

How sweet that scripture in point, 1 Pet. ii. 17. And again, 1 Pet. ii. 19—24. See also Psalm cv. 17, 18.

21 But the LORD was with Joseph, and shewed him mercy, and gave him favour in the sight of the keeper of the prison.

Dan. vi. 22.—It is a delightful thought, that no bars can shut out the presence of God from his people.

22 And the keeper of the prison committed to Joseph's hand all the prisoners that *were* in the

* 2 Sam. xiii. 15.

† Prov. vi. 34, 35.

prison; and whatsoever they did there, he was the doer of it.

That scripture hath been more than once verified, Psalm cvi. 46.

23 The keeper of the prison looked not to any thing *that was* under his hand; because the LORD was with him, and *that* which he did, the LORD made *it* to prosper.

REFLECTIONS.

WHO doth not feel pity in the review of Joseph's unjust and cruel treatment! Behold the Patriarch a little before the object of his father's love. And now look at him as a bond slave and a prisoner in a strange land! To what a reverse of circumstances are even good men exposed, in this waste and howling wilderness. But, Reader! never forget that Jesus is with his people always, and *in all their affliction he is afflicted*. Suitable, seasonable grace shall be given them as they stand in need. And *as their day is, so shall their strength be*.

But is there nothing in this Chapter which prompts the heart to discover some faint sketches of him of whom Joseph was a type? Oh yes! certainly a greater than Joseph is here. How was the Son of God when upon earth sold and tempted, and led into prison and unto death! If we look at Joseph suffering by unjust imputation, can we forget for a moment him to whom our sins are imputed; though he did *no sin, and in whose mouth there was found no guile*. Did he not bear our sins in his own body on the tree when he died, the *just for the unjust to bring us to God*. Lord, grant that as in so much mercy, thou didst condescend to be *sin for us who knew no sin, we may be made the righteousness of God in thee*.

CHAP. XL.

CONTENTS.

The sacred historian prosecutes the interesting history of Joseph through this Chapter. The events of the prison, which by their tendency had a relation to Joseph and his future prospects in life, are here related. The chief butler and the chief baker, servants in Pharaoh's household, are for some offence brought into the same prison with Joseph. They each of them dream, and their dreams Joseph interprets: their correspondence with what Joseph predicted proves his ability: Joseph acquaints them with the unjust cause of his being imprisoned: and as he foresaw the speedy restoration of the chief butler to his office before Pharaoh, he entreated him to use his interest with the king to bring him out of the prison. But though he had such claims upon his gratitude, he forgot him.

AND it came to pass after these things, *that* the butler of the king of Egypt and his baker had offended their lord the king of Egypt.

Butler is a cup-bearer, Neh. i. 11.

2 And Pharaoh was wroth against two *of* his officers, against the chief of the butlers, and against the chief of the bakers.

3 And he put them in ward in the house of the captain of the guard, into the prison, the place where Joseph *was* bound*.

4 ¶ And the captain of the guard charged Joseph with them, and he served them: and they continued a season in ward.

Reader! do not overlook in this verse, that this captain of the guard must have been *Potiphar*, Gen. xxxix. 1. Whether by this time Joseph's master had begun to believe Joseph was innocent doth not appear, but yet it should seem so, in that he committed to his care those state prisoners.

5 ¶ And they dreamed a dream both of them, each man his dream in one night, each man according to the interpretation of his dream, the butler and the baker of the king of Egypt, which *were* bound in the prison.

Observe how God works in his providences, and by what various means: Job xxxiii. 15, 16.

6 And Joseph came in unto them in the morning, and looked upon them, and, behold, they *were* sad.

7 And he asked Pharaoh's officers that *were* with him in the ward of his lord's house, saying, Wherefore look ye *so* sadly to day?

If we spiritualize this question and apply it to soul-distresses, that verse of David will be the enquiry, Psalm xlii. 11.

8 And they said unto him, We have dreamed a dream, and *there is* no interpreter of it. And Joseph said unto them, *Do* not interpretations *belong* to God? tell me *them*, I pray you.

How piously Joseph refers all wisdom unto God! Isaiah xli. 22, 23. Dan. ii. 28—30.

9 And the chief butler told his dream to Joseph, and said to him, In my dream, behold, a vine *was* before me;

* Chap. xxxix. 21, 23.

10 And in the vine *were* three branches: and it *was* as though it budded, *and* her blossoms shot forth; and the clusters thereof brought forth ripe grapes:

11 And Pharaoh's cup *was* in my hand: and I took the grapes, and pressed them into Pharaoh's cup, and I gave the cup into Pharaoh's hand.

It was the method probably before the art of making wine was well understood, to press the juice of the grape in this manner.

12 And Joseph said unto him, This *is* the interpretation of it: The three branches *are* three days:

13 Yet within three days shall Pharaoh lift up thine head, and restore thee unto thy place: and thou shalt deliver Pharaoh's cup into his hand, after the former manner when thou wast his butler*.

14 But think on me when it shall be well with thee, and shew kindness, I pray thee, unto me, and make mention of me unto Pharaoh, and bring me out of this house:

Doth not this lead the pious heart to the remembrance of him, who ought to be endeared indeed to our remembrance?

15 For indeed I was stolen away out of the land of the Hebrews: and here also have I done nothing that they should put me into the dungeon.

Observe in all this Joseph drops not a word of complaint against any, not a syllable either of his brethren's cruelty or his mistress's injustice. Would the Reader know the cause why he did not, I refer him to Joseph's sentiment: Gen. xlv. 7, 8.

16 When the chief baker saw that the interpretation was good, he said unto Joseph, I also *was* in my dream, and, behold, *I had* three white baskets on my head†:

17 And in the uppermost basket *there was* of all manner of bakemeats for Pharaoh; and the

* 2 Kings xxv. 27. Psm. iv. 3. Jer. lii. 31.

† Prov. xvi. 33.

birds did eat them out of the basket upon my head.

18 And Joseph answered and said, *This is the interpretation thereof: The three baskets are three days:*

19 Yet within three days shall Pharaoh lift up thy head from off thee, and shall hang thee on a tree; and the birds shall eat thy flesh from off thee.

20 And it came to pass the third day, *which was* Pharaoh's birthday, that he made a feast unto all his servants: and he lifted up the head of the chief butler and of the chief baker among his servants*.

21 And he restored the chief butler unto his butlership again; and he gave the cup into Pharaoh's hand:

22 But he hanged the chief baker: as Joseph had interpreted to them.

23 Yet did not the chief butler remember Joseph, but forgot him †.

REFLECTIONS.

READER! mark this down in the memorandums of your life, that whether in a prison or a palace, the faithful have God for their portion. And what a sweet thought is it, that, as no walls can confine the souls of God's people; so neither can bolts or bars shut the Lord out. If you are the Lord's prisoner, this is preferable to being the world's freeman. And when we recollect how precious the enjoyments some have found in those seasons, very evident it is that the Comforter is with them, and that to bless them. But even here in Joseph's history, let me not lose sight of the Lord Jesus, who *was taken from prison and from judgment, and who shall declare his generation?* Blessed Lord! let me never forget the afflictions of my spiritual and almighty Joseph, nor the cause of them; but in all events of life as well prosperous as distressing, cease not to remember thee!

CHAP. XL.

CONTENTS.

In this Chapter we behold the workings of God's providence concerning Joseph and his household, more plainly opened to our view, and

* Mark vi. 21.

† Eccles. ix. 15.

the great events leading to his own welfare, and the preservation of his Father's family, beginning to unfold themselves, as the leading cause, for which the Lord permitted his being sold as a slave, and carried down into Egypt. The ability which Joseph had displayed, in the interpretation of dreams, in the instance of the chief butler and chief baker, raised his reputation in the court of Pharaoh, king of Egypt; and a case soon after occurring, which the Lord in his providence had so ordered that Pharaoh himself should be exercised with a dream, which none of the wise men of his court could interpret: Joseph is sent for; he explains to Pharaoh the dream; the event is found to correspond; and in consequence, Joseph is advanced to the highest dignity in the kingdom, next to Pharaoh: Joseph's marriage, and children, are also noticed in this Chapter, together with the equity and wisdom of his administration under Pharaoh, which endears him to the Egyptians.

AND it came to pass at the end of two full years, that Pharaoh dreamed: and, behold, he stood by the river.

Observe the Holy Ghost is particular in remarking the long delay of Joseph's deliverance from the prison. It was *two full years* after the chief butler's restoration. David observes upon it, Psm. cv. 19. And how sweetly doth the apostle reason upon the same subject: Heb. x. 36—40.

2 And, behold, there came up out of the river seven well favoured kine and fatfleshed; and they fed in a meadow.

3 And, behold, seven other kine came up after them out of the river, ill favoured and leanfleshed; and stood by the *other* kine upon the brink of the river.

4 And the ill favoured and leanfleshed kine did eat up the seven well favoured and fat kine. So Pharaoh awoke.

5 And he slept and dreamed the second time: and, behold, seven ears of corn came up upon one stalk, rank and good.

6 And, behold, seven thin ears and blasted with the east wind sprung up after them.

7 And the seven thin ears devoured the seven rank and full ears. And Pharaoh awoke, and, behold, *it was* a dream.

8 And it came to pass in the morning that his spirit was troubled; and he sent and called for all

the magicians of Egypt, and all the wise men thereof: and Pharaoh told them his dream; but *there was* none that could interpret them unto Pharaoh.

Magicians, so called from being considered wise men. But as *the world by wisdom knew not God*, nor ever will, so worldly wisdom will be always found to lead the heart *from* God rather than *to* God. Hence those magicians pretended to explain hidden things, interpret secrets and the like, by which they imposed upon the credulity of mankind. See Exod. ix. 11. viii. 18, 19. Dan. ii. 1.

9 Then spake the chief butler unto Pharaoh, saying, I do remember my faults this day:

Sad excuse, but sweet are the fruits of patience to the faithful, Psm. xxxvii. 7. Lament. iii. 26.

10 Pharaoh was wroth with his servants, and put me in ward in the captain of the guard's house, *both* me and the chief baker:

11 And we dreamed a dream in one night, I and he; we dreamed each man according to the interpretation of his dream.

12 And *there was* there with us a young man, an Hebrew, servant to the captain of the guard; and we told him, and he interpreted to us our dreams; to each man according to his dream he did interpret.

13 And it came to pass, as he interpreted to us, so it was; me he restored unto mine office, and him he hanged.

14 Then Pharaoh sent and called Joseph, and they brought him hastily out of the dungeon: and he shaved *himself*, and changed his raiment, and came in unto Pharaoh.

1 Sam. xxi. 8. Psm. cv. 20. How strange the effect on the mind of Joseph! Such the church experienced, Psm. cxxvi. Such every gracious soul experienceth. Zech. iii. 4.

15 And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, I have dreamed a dream, and *there is* none that can interpret it: and I have heard say of thee, *that* thou canst understand a dream to interpret it.

Or, "when thou hearest a dream thou canst interpret it." *Eng. Margin.*

16 And Joseph answered Pharaoh, saying, *It is not in me: God shall give Pharaoh an answer of peace.*

Reader! do not overlook Joseph's humble frame of mind in this answer. Neither forget that precious scripture, 1 Pet v. 5.

17 And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, In my dream, behold, I stood upon the bank of the river:

The river *Nile* waters the country, which supplies the want of rain. See Zech. xiv. 18.

18 And, behold, there came up out of the river seven kine, fatfleshed and well favoured; and they fed in a meadow:

19 And, behold, seven other kine came up after them, poor and very illfavoured and leanfleshed, such as I never saw in all the land of Egypt for badness.

20 And the lean and the illfavoured kine did eat up the first seven fat kine:

21 And when they had eaten them up it could not be known that they had eaten them; but they were still illfavoured, as at the beginning. So I awoke.

22 And I saw in my dream, and, behold, seven ears came up in one stalk, full and good:

23 And, behold, seven ears, withered, thin, and blasted with the east wind, sprung up after them:

24 And the thin ears devoured the seven good ears: and I told *this* unto the magicians; but *there was* none that could declare *it* to me.

25 ¶ And Joseph said unto Pharaoh, The dream of Pharaoh *is* one: God hath shewed Pharaoh what he *is* about to do.

The repetition of a thing serves to confirm it. How sweetly do we find it to be so, respecting eternal things. Heb. vi. 17, 18.

26 The seven good kine *are* seven years; and the seven good ears *are* seven years: the dream *is* one.

27 And the seven thin and illfavoured kine that came up after them *are* seven years; and the seven empty ears blasted with the east wind shall be seven years of famine*.

28 This *is* the thing which I have spoken unto Pharaoh: What God *is* about to do he sheweth unto Pharaoh.

29 Behold, there come seven years of great plenty throughout all the land of Egypt:

30 And there shall arise after them seven years of famine; and all the plenty shall be forgotten in the land of Egypt; and the famine shall consume the land;

31 And the plenty shall not be known in the land by reason of that famine following; for it *shall be* very grievous.

32 And for that the dream was doubled unto Pharaoh twice; *it is* because the thing *is* established by God, and God will shortly bring it to pass.

33 ¶ Now therefore let Pharaoh look out a man discreet and wise, and set him over the land of Egypt†.

34 Let Pharaoh do *this*, and let him appoint officers over the land, and take up the fifth part of the land of Egypt in the seven plenteous years.

35 And let them gather all the food of those good years that come, and lay up corn under the hand of Pharaoh, and let them keep food in the cities.

36 And that food shall be for store to the land against the seven years of famine, which shall be in the land of Egypt; that the land perish not through the famine.

37 And the thing was good in the eyes of Pharaoh, and in the eyes of all his servants.

38 ¶ And Pharaoh said unto his servants, Can

* See Eccles vii. 14.

† Prov. xxii. 3.

we find *such a one* as this *is*, a man in whom the Spirit of God *is*?

Reader! do not overlook our great spiritual Joseph through all this. While Pharaoh exclaims, with astonishment, in the view of the Spirit of God in Joseph, how ought we to admire and adore Him, who *received not the Spirit of God by measure*, but in whom dwelt *all the fulness of the Godhead bodily*? John iii. 34. Coloss. ii. 9.

39 And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, Forasmuch as God hath shewed thee all this, *there is* none so discreet and wise as thou *art*:

40 Thou shalt be over my house, and according unto thy word shall all my people be ruled: only in the throne will I be greater than thou.

How sweet are those words applied to, and spoken of, Jesus? John xv. 5.

41 And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, See, I have set thee over all the land of Egypt.

42 And Pharaoh took off his ring from his hand, and put it upon Joseph's hand, and arrayed him in vestures of fine linen, and put a gold chain about his neck.

When the Church is adorned in the robes of the Redeemer's righteousness, then, like Joseph, how differently clad from the former wretchedness! Psm. xlv. 9, 10, 11.

43 And he made him to ride in the second chariot which he had; and they cried before him, Bow the knee: and he made him *ruler* over all the land of Egypt*.

44 And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, I *am* Pharaoh, and without thee shall no man lift up his hand or foot in all the land of Egypt.

45 And Pharaoh called Joseph's name Zaphnath-paaneah; and he gave him to wife Asenath the daughter of Poti-pherah, priest of On. And Joseph went out over *all* the land of Egypt.

Zaphnath-paaneah, a revealer of secrets. And is not Jesus a revealer of secrets? Is he not at the right hand of God, to teach us his Father's will, dispensing spiritual life and food to a famished world?

46 And Joseph *was* thirty years old when he

* Philip. ii. 9, 10.

stood before Pharaoh king of Egypt. And Joseph went out from the presence of Pharaoh, and went throughout all the land of Egypt.

Jesus was about the same age when he entered upon his public ministry. See Luke iii. 23.

47 And in the seven plenteous years the earth brought forth by handfuls.

48 And he gathered up all the food of the seven years, which were in the land of Egypt, and laid up the food in the cities: the food of the field, which *was* round about every city, laid he up in the same.

49 And Joseph gathered corn as the sand of the sea, very much, until he left numbering; for *it was* without number.

50 ¶ And unto Joseph were born two sons before the years of famine came, which Asenath the daughter of Poti-pherah priest of On bare unto him.

51 And Joseph called the name of the first-born Manasseh: For God, *said he*, hath made me forget all my toil, and all my father's house*.

52 And the name of the second called he Ephraim: for God hath caused me to be fruitful in the land of my affliction†.

53 And the seven years of plenteousness, that was in the land of Egypt, were ended.

54 And the seven years of dearth began to come, according as Joseph had said: and the dearth was in all lands; but in all the land of Egypt there was bread‡.

55 And when all the land of Egypt was famished, the people cried to Pharaoh for bread: and Pharaoh said unto all the Egyptians, Go unto Joseph; what he saith to you, do.

Sweet thought suggested here, in the view of the perishing Egyptians

* *Manasseh* means forgetting.

† *Ephraim* means fruitful.

‡ Isaiah xxi. 12.

going unto Joseph; to teach perishing sinners how to go unto Jesus. Heb. xii. 2.

56 And the famine was over all the face of the earth: And Joseph opened all the storehouses, and sold unto the Egyptians; and the famine waxed sore in the land of Egypt.

57 And all countries came into Egypt to Joseph for to buy corn; because that the famine was so sore in all lands*.

REFLECTIONS.

READER! two or three things in a way of *Providence* ought to affect your heart in reading this Chapter. See how safe their interests are, however long they may seem to be forgotten, whose concerns are in the divine hands! And how much therefrom, it ought to be the study of the faithful to attend to the workings of the Lord in all events of their life; convinced of this, that they who humbly watch and trust a merciful God, for the fulfilment of all his covenant promises, will never want a faithful God to watch over and take care of them.

But with those *providential* views only, let not the Reader close his meditation of this Chapter. A view of *grace* also is at hand. And if from Joseph's exaltation to the right hand of Pharaoh, our eyes are directed by the Spirit of God to the Lord Jesus at the right hand of power, into whose Almighty hands the sovereignty of grace is committed; here we shall see indeed, a true *Zaphnath-paaneah*: a wonderful counsellor! before whom all nations shall bow, *whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and whose dominion endureth throughout all ages*. Oh! thou great provider for all thy people's need, incline our hearts by thy grace to come to thee for food. And forasmuch as there is none but thou who hast the words of eternal life, *none so discreet and wise as thou art*: be thou our wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. Thou shalt be our lord and governor, and *according unto thy word so let our souls be ruled*. Ever would we desire to bow the knee before thee; and may not only ours, but every tongue confess, that *thou art Jesus Christ the Lord, to the glory of God the Father*.

CHAP. XLII.

CONTENTS.

A gracious God in his over-ruling providence, having caused a famine of bread to prevail in Canaan, compels thereby the sons of Jacob to go down into Egypt to seek sustenance for themselves and their household. And this brings about the leading design which the Lord had in view, (as the Holy Ghost informs the Church, Psm. cv. 16, 17.) in sending Joseph before his family into Egypt. The contents of this Chapter, are: the departure of the sons of Jacob from Canaan: their

* Prov. xi. 26.

arrival at Egypt: their appearance before Joseph: their unconsciousness of him: his knowledge of them: their humbling themselves before him: his treatment of them: he supplies them with corn, but detains Simeon; their return to Canaan: and the distress of their father in finding that they had left Simeon behind.

NOW when Jacob saw that there was corn in Egypt, Jacob said unto his sons, Why do ye look one upon another?

Reader! recollect that at our last view of Jacob, we left him in a state of the greatest affliction, on the supposed loss of Joseph. Gen. xxxvii. 35. Here we find him in the midst of his family, likely to perish for want of bread! Remember what Jesus saith, John xvi. 33. Then read that sweet scripture, Isaiah xxxiii. 16.

2 And he said, Behold, I have heard that there is corn in Egypt: get you down thither, and buy for us from thence; that we may live, and not die.

It is worthy remark, that *Canaan*, the land of promise, became a land of famine to *Abraham*—Gen. xii. 10. to *Isaac*, Gen. xxvi. 1,—and here to *Jacob*. My brother, none but the heavenly Canaan is exempt from such trials to the faithful. Read that scripture; Amos viii. 11, 12. and bless God if such be not among your exercises.

3 And Joseph's ten brethren went down to buy corn in Egypt.

4 But Benjamin, Joseph's brother, Jacob sent not with his brethren; for he said, Lest peradventure mischief befall him*.

5 And the sons of Israel came to buy corn among those that came: for the famine was in the land of Canaan.

6 ¶ And Joseph *was* the governor over the land, and he *it was* that sold to all the people of the land: and Joseph's brethren came, and bowed down themselves before him, *with* their faces to the earth.

Now the dream is explained. Gen. xxxvii. 9, 10. Consult that scripture: Isaiah lx. 14.—then Rev. iii. 9.

7 And Joseph saw his brethren, and he knew them, but made himself strange unto them, and spake roughly unto them; and he said unto them,

* Still a pilgrimage state. Heb. xi. 9—15.

Whence come ye? And they said, From the land of Canaan to buy food.

Reader! I charge you not to overlook the precious things contained in this verse. How little doth the sinner think, in his first approaches to Jesus, while the Holy Ghost is leading him, and his necessities, like Jacob's sons, compel him to the mercy seat, that He is a *brother*, as well as a governor, to whom he is come. How unconscious is he, when Jesus seems to make himself strange and speak roughly to him, that grace is at the bottom. My Christian Reader! never forget this one precious truth, however outward things vary, the heart of our Jesus is the same. While we fear his power let us not lose sight of his love. Heb. iv. 14—16.

8 And Joseph knew his brethren, but they knew not him.

9 And Joseph remembered the dreams which he dreamed of them, and said unto them, Ye *are* spies; to see the nakedness of the land ye are come.

No doubt this remembrance was a gracious remembrance. Joshua xxiii. 14.

10 And they said unto him, Nay, my lord, but to buy food are thy servants come.

11 We *are* all one man's sons; we *are* true *men*, thy servants are no spies.

12 And he said unto them, Nay, but to see the nakedness of the land ye are come.

13 And they said, Thy servants *are* twelve brethren, the sons of one man in the land of Canaan; and, behold, the youngest *is* this day with our father, and one *is* not.

14 And Joseph said unto them, That *is it* that I spake unto you, saying, Ye *are* spies:

15 Hereby ye shall be proved: By the life of Pharaoh ye shall not go forth hence, except your youngest brother come hither.

16 Send one of you, and let him fetch your brother, and ye shall be kept in prison, that your words may be proved, whether *there be any* truth in you: or else by the life of Pharaoh surely ye *are* spies.

17 And he put them all together into ward three days.

18 And Joseph said unto them the third day, This do, and live; *for* I fear God:

19 If ye *be* true men, let one of your brethren be bound in the house of your prison: go ye, carry corn for the famine of your houses:

20 But bring your youngest brother unto me; so shall your words be verified, and ye shall not die. And they did so.

21 ¶ And they said one to another, *We are* verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul, when he besought us, and we would not hear? therefore is this distress come upon us.

Observe, in this verse, the effects of conscience: see that scripture: Rom. ii. 15. Observe the conscious sense of merited punishment also: *therefore* (say they) is this distress come upon us. Sinners can and do frequently connect the punishments they feel, with the sense of what they acknowledge they deserve. Do not these pointings of unenlightened nature, loudly confirm that invaluable scheme of mercy and grace which the gospel proclaims? And is not the precious, precious Jesus, here again endeared to our view in the riches of his atoning blood, which alone *cleanseth from all sin*?

22 And Reuben answered them, saying, Spake I not unto you, saying, Do not sin against the child; and ye would not hear? therefore, behold, also his blood is required.

23 And they knew not that Joseph understood *them*; for he spake unto them by an interpreter.

How sweet and refreshing the thought, that during all these soul transactions of mixed hope and fear, Jesus is looking on: he sees and knows all, however unconscious we are of it.

24 And he turned himself about from them, and wept; and returned to them again, and communed with them, and took from them Simeon, and bound him before their eyes.

That is a blessed scripture, Isaiah lxiii. 9. And who shall take upon him to say to what extent those yearnings of Jesus over his people in their sorrows are carried, before the time comes for his openly manifesting himself to them as their Saviour.

25 Then Joseph commanded to fill their sacks with corn, and to restore every man's money into his sack, and to give them provision for the way: and thus did he unto them.

Is not this a striking resemblance to our spiritual Joseph, in commanding his servants the ministers, to supply the wants of his people in gospel mercies, *without money and without price?* Isaiah lv. 1.

26 And they laded their asses with the corn, and departed thence.

27 And as one of them opened his sack to give his ass provender in the inn, he espied his money: for, behold, it *was* in his sack's mouth.

28 And he said unto his brethren, My money is restored; and, lo, *it is* even in my sack: and their heart failed *them*, and they were afraid, saying one to another, What *is* this *that* God hath done unto us?

The hearts of the faithful know what kind of failing is here meant, when a gracious Redeemer makes his love towards them overflow. Solomon's Song, v. 6. vi. 12.

29 And they came unto Jacob their father unto the land of Canaan, and told him all that befel unto them; saying,

30 The man, *who is* the lord of the land, spake roughly to us, and took us for spies of the country.

31 And we said unto him, We *are* true men; we are no spies.

32 We *be* twelve brethren, sons of our father; one *is* not, and the youngest *is* this day with our father in the land of Canaan.

33 And the man, the lord of the country, said unto us, Hereby shall I know that ye *are* true men; leave one of your brethren *here* with me, and take *food for* the famine of your households, and be gone:

34 And bring your youngest brother unto me: then shall I know that ye *are* no spies, but *that* ye

are true men: so will I deliver you your brother, and ye shall traffick in the land.

35 And it came to pass as they emptied their sacks, that, behold, every man's bundle of money *was* in his sack: and when *both* they and their father saw the bundles of money, they were afraid.

Observe how low the actings of faith were in the Patriarch's experience at this time. He had lost sight of that promise, Gen. xxviii. 15. Under bereaving providences how sweet and sure is that scripture. 1 Cor. i. 9.

36 And Jacob their father said unto them, Me have ye bereaved *of my children*: Joseph *is* not, and Simeon *is* not, and ye will take Benjamin *away*: all these things are against me.

37 And Reuben spake unto his father, saying, Slay my two sons, if I bring him not to thee: deliver him into my hand, and I will bring him to thee again.

38 And he said, My son shall not go down with you; for his brother is dead, and he is left alone: if mischief befall him by the way in the which ye go, then shall ye bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to the grave.

REFLECTIONS.

LEARN, my soul, that gracious lesson to live above ordinances while favoured in the use of them; that when the means fail, the Lord of the means, who never faileth, may be thy portion for ever. And if at any time *thy* Jesus should seem to make himself strange to thee, and by his dispensations to speak roughly unto thee, never doubt but that faithful are the wounds of thy friend: he is still a brother *born for adversity*.

Hail thou spiritual Joseph! thou almighty governor, and no less our brother, in whose hands are *all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge*. To thee we come for food. Before thy sacred presence would we bow the knee. We are indeed verily guilty before thee; for, like the unnatural brethren, we have sold thee by our sins, and hid our faces from the anguish of thy soul by our iniquities. But God hath sent thee before us to preserve us a posterity in the earth, and to save our lives by a great deliverance. Nourish us, dearest Lord, how unworthy soever thy favour; and feed us with that living bread which came down from heaven; so will we praise thy mercy, and adore thy name.

CHAP. XLIII.

CONTENTS.

The patriarchal history is continued throughout this Chapter. The pressing claims of hunger compel Jacob, however reluctantly, to send his children again into Egypt for more food; and Benjamin must go with them: their arrival is particularly noticed, and the reception which Joseph gave them: he is apparently much kinder to them than before; they are brought into his house, which though the idea at first alarmed them, yet as Simeon is brought out to them, and they are told that Joseph means to entertain them at his table, their fears subside, and they begin to be merry.

AND the famine *was* sore in the land.

Very sore are bodily wants unsatisfied. But what are these to soul distresses? See Psalm lxxxviii. 1—18.

2 And it came to pass, when they had eaten up the corn which they had brought out of Egypt, their father said unto them, Go again, buy us a little food.

How sweet is that scripture, John vi. 27?

3 And Judah spake unto him, saying, The man did solemnly protest unto us, saying, Ye shall not see my face, except your brother *be* with you.

If the Reader be taught of God the Holy Ghost to read this spiritually, he will perceive that the same is said respecting Jesus. We cannot see the face of God except that Jesus be with us. John xiv. 6.

4 If thou wilt send our brother with us, we will go down and buy thee food:

5 But if thou wilt not send *him*, we will not go down: for the man said unto us, Ye shall not see my face, except your brother *be* with you*.

6 And Israel said, Wherefore dealt ye *so* ill with me, *as* to tell the man whether ye had yet a brother?

7 And they said, The man asked us straitly of our state, and of our kindred, saying, *Is* your father yet alive? have ye *another* brother? and we told him according to the tenor of these words: could we certainly know that he would say, Bring your brother down?

* 2 Sam. iii. 13.

8 And Judah said unto Israel his father, Send the lad with me, and we will arise and go; that we may live, and not die, both we, and thou, *and* also our little ones.

9 I will be surety for him; of my hand shalt thou require him: if I bring him not unto thee, and set him before thee, then let me bear the blame for ever:

I detain the Reader to remark the character here assumed by *Judah* as a *surety*, in which he was an eminent type of Jesus. It was Jesus, who from everlasting undertook to answer for his people. And in this great office he hath fulfilled all righteousness, and expiated all offences; and is now pledged, (as Judah said here), to bring all his people and set them before his father. Sweetly is it said of him that *he restored that which he took not away.* Psalm lxix. 4.

10 For except we had lingered, surely now we had returned this second time.

11 And their father Israel said unto them, If *it must be* so now, do this; take of the best fruits in the land in your vessels, and carry down the man a present, a little balm, and a little honey, spices, and myrrh, nuts, and almonds:

Observe, though *Canaan* wanted corn, yet it abounded with honey. Reader! there are many parts of the earth which are blessed with the gifts of *common* providence: but what are these without the *special* gifts of grace. Bread is the staff of life. And what bread is to the body such is Jesus to the soul. Lord, evermore give *me* this bread! John vi. 33—35.

12 And take double money in your hand; and the money that was brought again in the mouth of your sacks, carry *it* again in your hand; peradventure it *was* an oversight*:

13 Take also your brother, and arise, go again unto the man:

14 And God Almighty give you mercy before the man, that he may send away your other brother, and Benjamin. If I be bereaved of *my children*, I am bereaved.

Jacob's first and last, and grand resource was this. He had found the sweet effects of it before: Gen. xxxii. 9—12. with Gen. xxxiii. 4.

* Prov. xxi. 14.

15 And the men took that present, and they took double money in their hand, and Benjamin; and rose up, and went down to Egypt, and stood before Joseph.

Let the Reader, if he be a parent, think what Jacob felt at the departure of his children.

16 And when Joseph saw Benjamin with them, he said to the ruler of his house, Bring *these* men home, and slay, and make ready; for *these* men shall dine with me at noon.

What a change! in their last visit, Joseph spake roughly to them: now they are to dine with him. Eccles. vii. 14.

17 And the man did as Joseph bade: and the man brought the men into Joseph's house.

18 And the men were afraid, because they were brought into Joseph's house; and they said, Because of the money that was returned in our sacks at the first time are we brought in; that he may seek occasion against us, and fall upon us, and take us for bondmen, and our asses.

Is there not a spiritual illustration here! Are not awakened souls alarmed when first brought into Jesus's house and presence? Read that scripture: Rev. i. 17.

19 And they came near to the steward of Joseph's house, and they communed with him at the door of the house,

Do not timid souls flee unto the ministers and stewards of God's mysteries in their distresses, and open their cases to them? James v. 16.

20 And said, O sir, we came indeed down at the first time to buy food:

21 And it came to pass, when we came to the inn, that we opened our sacks, and, behold, *every* man's money *was* in the mouth of his sack, our money in full weight: and we have brought it again in our hand.

22 And other money have we brought down in our hands to buy food: we cannot tell who put our money in our sacks.

23 And he said, Peace *be* to you, fear not:

your God, and the God of your father, hath given you treasure in your sacks: I had your money. And he brought Simeon out unto them.

Observe what an Egyptian may learn by living in an Hebrew's family!

24 And the man brought the men into Joseph's house, and gave *them* water, and they washed their feet; and he gave their asses provender.

25 ¶ And they made ready the present against Joseph came at noon: for they heard that they should eat bread there.

Is not this expected interview between Joseph and his brethren, similar to that which we are looking forward to between God and ourselves? But as the presence of Benjamin with them ensured their gracious reception, so if Jesus be with us we have no cause to fear ours.

26 And when Joseph came home, they brought him the present which *was* in their hand into the house, and bowed themselves to him to the earth.

27 And he asked them of *their* welfare, and said, *Is* your father well, the old man of whom ye spake? *Is* he yet alive?

28 And they answered, Thy servant our father *is* in good health, he *is* yet alive. And they bowed down their heads, and made obeisance.

Here, including their father as Joseph's servant, and all the eleven brethren being present fulfilled the dream: see Gen. xxxvii. 9, 10.

29 And he lifted up his eyes, and saw his brother Benjamin, his mother's son, and said, *Is* this your younger brother, of whom ye spake unto me? And he said, God be gracious unto thee, my son.

30 And Joseph made haste; for his bowels did yern upon his brother: and he sought *where* to weep; and he entered into *his* chamber, and wept there*.

* Jerem. xxxi. 20. Hosea xi. 8.

31 ¶ And he washed his face, and went out, and refrained himself, and said, Set on bread.

32 And they set on for him by himself, and for them by themselves, and for the Egyptians which did eat with him, by themselves: because the Egyptians might not eat bread with the Hebrews; for that is an abomination unto the Egyptians.

The abomination of the Egyptians most probably was, that the Hebrews scrupled not to eat of those things which the Egyptians worshipped. 2 Kings xxiii. 13.

33 And they sat before him, the firstborn according to his birthright, and the youngest according to his youth: and the men marvelled one at another.

34 And he took *and sent* messes unto them from before him: but Benjamin's mess was five times so much as any of their's. And they drank, and were merry with him*.

REFLECTIONS.

READER! let you and I turn from the table of Joseph amidst his brethren, while they are thus merry and happy with him, to consider the spiritual interest which we have in these things.

The world which we dwell in, like that of Canaan to the Patriarch's family, is a world of famine in bread for the soul. And if you know what spiritual hunger means, you will know also that this heavenly corn for ourselves and our household, can no where else be had but of the lord of the country, even from the Lord Jesus; of whom Joseph was the type. Shall we not arise and go to him? We will not, like Jacob's sons, take a present in our hand, for he is too rich to be benefitted by our favours: and his blessings are too great to come within the price of purchase. But like Jacob, let us pray that God Almighty may give us mercy before the *man*, even the God-man Christ Jesus.

Dearest Lord, behold us now before thee! Oh! say to thy stewards the ministers of thy table as Joseph did to his: *bring these men home and make ready, for these men shall dine with me at noon.* And oh! the wonderful condescension, Jesus indeed *receiveth sinners and eateth with them.* We see thy face. We behold thy glory. We hear thy voice. We rejoice and are merry like the brethren of Joseph, while our brother Jesus saith, *Eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved.* And dearest Redeemer! we would pray do thou make our meeting gracious in drawing nigh to us by thy Holy Spirit, in opening to

* John ii. 10.

our minds the Holy Scriptures, and in making thyself known to us in breaking of bread and in prayer. Then shall we fully understand and have our souls refreshed indeed in the experience, that *thy flesh is meat indeed, and thy blood drink indeed.*

CHAP. XLIV.

CONTENTS.

The interesting narrative of the Patriarchal history is still prosecuted through this Chapter. The brethren of Joseph having purchased corn and laden their cattle, take their leave of Joseph to return to their father. But Joseph, wishing to detain them, having ordered his steward secretly to put their money in the mouth of their sacks, and his silver cup in the bag of Benjamin; soon after their departure from the city sends his steward after them to charge them with this breach of honesty. Their sacks are examined, and the cup being found, they all return to Egypt in the greatest sorrow and distress imaginable. In this state when brought before Joseph, Judah becomes the mouth of the rest; and unconscious before whom he spake, he feelingly represents the history of his family in the several incidents of it: describes the supposed death of Joseph: the distress of his father which was now again renewed in parting with Benjamin; offers himself as a bond-slave for ever, rather than that Benjamin should be detained; and concludes with praying Joseph for mercy, that the grey hairs of his father may not be brought down with sorrow to the grave.

AND he commanded the steward of his house, saying, Fill the men's sacks *with* food, as much as they can carry, and put every man's money in his sack's mouth.

Is there not a spiritual lesson here? Are not the ministers and stewards of God's mysteries to fill the hungry and to supply the thirsty: and that *without money and without price?* See 1 Cor. iv. 1.

2 And put my cup, the silver cup, in the sack's mouth of the youngest, and his corn money. And he did according to the word that Joseph had spoken.

Is not this cup an emblem of the cup of salvation? Doth not Jesus *put* it himself in the hands and hearts of his people? Psalm cxvi. 13.

3 As soon as the morning was light, the men were sent away, they and their asses.

No doubt they were all going home, very happy at their kind reception: But how short lived are our joys! Read that scripture, Rev. iii. 19. then Heb. xii. 5.

4 *And* when they were gone out of the city, and not yet far off, Joseph said unto his steward, Up,

follow after the men; and when thou dost overtake them, say unto them, Wherefore have ye rewarded evil for good?

And doth not this plan of Joseph to detain his brethren, lead the Reader to remark, how graciously Jesus useth means to detain our hearts, in order to bring them home to himself?

5 *Is* not this *it* in which my lord drinketh, and whereby indeed he divineth? ye have done evil in so doing.

The *Egyptians* were much given to the use of divination. Perhaps the steward had such ideas of his master.

6 And he overtook them, and he spake unto them these same words.

7 And they said unto him, Wherefore saith my lord these words. God forbid that thy servants should do according to this thing:

A mind conscious of innocence useth this language: Heb. xiii. 18.

8 Behold, the money which we found in our sacks' mouths, we brought again unto thee out of the land of Canaan: how then should we steal out of thy lord's house silver or gold?

9 With whomsoever of thy servants it be found, both let him die, and we also will be my lord's bondmen.

However innocent, this was a rash proposal.

10 And he said, Now also *let it be* according unto your words: he with whom it is found shall be my servant; and ye shall be blameless.

11 Then they speedily took down every man his sack to the ground, and opened every man his sack.

12 And he searched, *and* began at the eldest, and left at the youngest: and the cup was found in Benjamin's sack.

13 Then they rent their clothes, and laded every man his ass, and returned to the city.

Renting the garment is an eastern token of great distress. Gen. xxxvii. 29.

14 And Judah and his brethren came to Jo-

seph's house; for he *was* yet there: and they fell before him on the ground*.

15 And Joseph said unto them, What deed is this that ye have done? Wot ye not that such a man as I can certainly divine?

He whose name was *Zaphnath-paaneah* could not but know. Joseph did indeed know well their guilt concerning himself, and therefore the question was pointed: *what deed is this* for which God hath visited you?

16 And Judah said, What shall we say unto my lord? what shall we speak? or how shall we clear ourselves? God hath found out the iniquity of thy servants: behold, we *are* my lord's servants, both we, and *he* also with whom the cup is found.

It is plain, Judah considered it in this sense by his answer. Numb. xxxii. 23. He might have said, we had a brother whom we sold for a slave. And though in the instance whereof we are accused we are innocent; yet God is now punishing us for that unnatural cruelty.

17 And he said, God forbid that I should do so: *but* the man in whose hand the cup is found, he shall be my servant; and as for you, get you up in peace unto your father†.

18 Then Judah came near unto him, and said, O my lord, let thy servant, I pray thee, speak a word in my lord's ears, and let not thine anger burn against thy servant: for thou *art* even as Pharaoh.

Reader! attend to every minute circumstance in this intercession of Judah's, for in it there is a representation of a greater than Judah. Observe, before he opened his mouth he came near. Our Almighty Judah, in his glorious character as our intercessor, is said to be in the midst of the throne; Rev. v. 6. Observe also how suitable a type Judah was of Jesus, for our Lord sprang out of Judah. Heb. vii. 14. Observe also, how evident the marks of inspiration are in this whole address. Surely he that made man's mouth gave the matter also. Exod. iv. 10, 11. And Reader, do not overlook, that, as Joseph became the type of Jesus as our governor and judge: so Judah is a type of Jesus as our surety and intercessor. It is your happiness and mine, that he who is hereafter to come to be our *judge* is also coming as our *Saviour*. Philip. iii. 20.

* Gen. xxxvii. 7—10.

† Psalm lxxv. 2.

19 My lord asked his servants, saying, Have ye a father, or a brother?

Here Judah represents him who made intercession for the transgressors. Isaiah liii. 12.

20 And we said unto my lord, We have a father, an old man, and a child of his old age, a little one; and his brother is dead, and he alone is left of his mother, and his father loveth him.

21 And thou saidst unto thy servants, Bring him down unto me, that I may set mine eyes upon him.

22 And we said unto my lord, The lad cannot leave his father: for *if* he should leave his father, *his father* would die.

23 And thou saidst unto thy servants, Except your youngest brother come down with you, ye shall see my face no more.

24 And it came to pass, when we came up unto thy servant my father, we told him the words of my lord.

25 And our father said, Go again, *and* buy us a little food.

26 And we said, We cannot go down: if our youngest brother be with us, then will we go down: for we may not see the man's face, except our youngest brother *be* with us.

27 And thy servant my father said unto us, Ye know that my wife bare me two *sons*:

28 And the one went out from me, and I said, Surely he is torn in pieces; and I saw him not since:

29 And if ye take this also from me, and mischief befall him, ye shall bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to the grave.

30 Now therefore when I come to thy servant my father, and the lad *be* not with us; seeing that his life is bound up in the lad's life:

31 It shall come to pass, when he seeth that

the lad is not *with us*, that he will die: and thy servants shall bring down the gray hairs of thy servant our father with sorrow to the grave.

32 For thy servant became surety for the lad unto my father, saying, If I bring him not unto thee, then I shall bear the blame to my father for ever.

33 Now therefore, I pray thee, let thy servant abide instead of the lad a bondman to my lord; and let the lad go up with his brethren.

Here Judah was typical of him who became our surety. *Isaiah* liii. 4, 5.

34 For how shall I go up to my father, and the lad *be* not with me; lest peradventure I see the evil that shall come on my father*.

REFLECTIONS.

THIS Chapter opens to our view very profitable reflections. How soon was the joy of the children of Israel turned into mourning. And yet in the midst of both, their covenant God was carrying on one and the same plan of mercy towards them. Learn, my soul, in all the chequered circumstances of life to remember this, and both in prosperity and adversity to live upon an unchangeable God.

But chiefly let this Chapter, with all the events of it, lead me to Jesus. Whatever tends to detain me, or to bring me back to him, may I esteem a mercy! Dearest Lord! put thou the cup of salvation in my lot, and may it be my portion to be thy servant for ever. I would cry unto thee as one of old; *Give ear, O shepherd of Israel, thou that leadest Joseph like a flock; thou that dwellest between the cherubims shine forth. Before Ephraim, and Benjamin, and Manasseh, stir up thy strength, and come, and save us. Turn us again, O God, and cause thy face to shine, and we shall be saved.*

CHAP. XLV.

CONTENTS.

Nature was wound up to the highest pitch in the bosom of Joseph, by the address of Judah in the foregoing Chapter, and could no longer contain. In the opening of this Chapter it gave vent, in Joseph declaring who he was, and by following the information with expressions of the utmost tenderness to his brethren. The effect of this discovery is related. And after the first emotions of surprise and joy, mingled with shame and reproach in the breasts of Joseph's brethren, are subsided, they converse together. Pharaoh king of Egypt is informed of the

* *Exod.* xviii. 8.

event, and he and his people rejoice at it. Joseph dismisseth his brethren to his father with the intelligence; invites him to come unto him and sends waggons for his convoy. The heart of Jacob misgives him at the first account; but when he had received fuller evidences of the truth of Joseph's being alive; Israel resolves to go and see his son before his death.

THEN Joseph could not refrain himself before all them that stood by him; and he cried, Cause every man to go out from me. And there stood no man with him, while Joseph made himself known unto his brethren.

What must have been the feelings of the brethren at this unexpected discovery? But Reader! spiritualize the subject and then say, what are the feelings of every poor sinner when Jesus makes himself known to him as his brother and Redeemer? John xiv. 21, 22. Heb. ii. 11, 12.

2 And he wept aloud: and the Egyptians and the house of Pharaoh heard*.

3 And Joseph said unto his brethren, *I am Joseph*; doth my father yet live? And his brethren could not answer him; for they were troubled at his presence†.

4 And Joseph said unto his brethren, Come near to me, I pray you. And they came near. And he said, *I am Joseph* your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt.

Reader! whenever Jesus makes himself known to a sinner he always saith, Come near. That's a delightful scripture to the soul who hath felt it: Ephes. ii. 13.

5 Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life‡.

6 For these two years *hath* the famine *been* in the land: and yet *there are* five years, in the which *there shall* neither *be* earing nor harvest.

7 And God sent me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance.

8 So now *it was* not you *that* sent me hither,

* Luke xix. 41.

† Acts vii. 13.

‡ Gen. i. 20. Psalm cv. 16, 17.

but God: and he hath made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house, and a ruler throughout all the land of Egypt.

Observe how piety and charity are blended. Reader! while we behold the Lord's hand in all the appointments of life, we shall never be disposed to feel much anger at the instruments of his work. Read, on a much higher concern, that scripture: Acts ii. 23.

9 ¶ Haste ye, and go up to my father, and say unto him, Thus saith thy son Joseph, God hath made me lord of all Egypt: come down unto me, tarry not:

No doubt the heart of Jacob was full of misgivings while they tarried. Prov. xiii. 12.

10 And thou shalt dwell in the land of Goshen, and thou shalt be near unto me, thou, and thy children, and thy children's children, and thy flocks, and thy herds, and all that thou hast:

11 And there will I nourish thee; for yet *there* are five years of famine; lest thou, and thy household, and all that thou hast, come to poverty.

12 And, behold, your eyes see, and the eyes of my brother Benjamin, that *it is* my mouth that speaketh unto you:

That's a sweet promise of a spiritual sight: Isaiah lii. 8.

13 And ye shall tell my father of all my glory in Egypt, and of all that ye have seen; and ye shall haste and bring down my father hither.

14 And he fell upon his brother Benjamin's neck, and wept; and Benjamin wept upon his neck.

Look at Jesus's affection. Isaiah lxiii. 9.

15 Moreover he kissed all his brethren, and wept upon them: and after that his brethren talked with him*.

16 And the fame thereof was heard in Pharaoh's house, saying, Joseph's brethren are come: and it pleased Pharaoh well, and his servants†.

17 And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, Say unto

* Song i. 2.

† Psalm xxii. 22.

thy brethren, This do ye; lade your beasts, and go, get you unto the land of Canaan;

18 And take your father and your households, and come unto me: and I will give you the good of the land of Egypt, and ye shall eat the fat of the land.

Egypt was a fruitful soil. It could boast of what Moses speaks of: Deut. xxxiii. 13, 14. But, my soul, may that blessing be my portion: Deut. xxxiii. 16.

19 Now thou art commanded, this do ye; take you waggons out of the land of Egypt for your little ones, and for your wives, and bring your father, and come.

20 Also regard not your stuff; for the good of all the land of Egypt *is* your's.

May not those *waggons* be figures of ordinances, which are designed to convey souls to our spiritual Joseph? When souls are bringing to Christ, the *stuff* of the earth will be considered as nothing. Philip. iii. 7, 8.

21 And the children of Israel did so: and Joseph gave them waggons, according to the commandment of Pharaoh, and gave them provision for the way.

22 To all of them he gave each man changes of raiment; but to Benjamin he gave three hundred *pieces* of silver, and five changes of raiment.

The most valuable commodities in those hot countries must be changes of raiment. Is there not a spiritual illustration also here? It is said that to each man Joseph gave this change of raiment. And is it not to every individual believer that the Lord Jesus gives his garment of salvation? See Zech. iii. 4. Rev. iii. 5. vii. 9.

23 And to his father he sent after this *manner*; ten asses laden with the good things of Egypt, and ten she asses laden with corn and bread and meat for his father by the way.

24 So he sent his brethren away, and they departed: and he said unto them, See that ye fall not out by the way*.

25 ¶ And they went up out of Egypt, and

* Mark xvi. 15.

came into the land of Canaan unto Jacob their father,

26 And told him, saying, Joseph *is* yet alive, and he *is* governor over all the land of Egypt. And Jacob's heart fainted, for he believed them not*.

27 And they told him all the words of Joseph, which he had said unto them: and when he saw the waggons which Joseph had sent to carry him, the spirit of Jacob their father revived:

28 And Israel said, *It is* enough; Joseph my son *is* yet alive: I will go and see him before I die.

Observe Jacob's name is changed to Israel. A believing soul is a true Israelite. Luke i. 45.

REFLECTIONS.

How grateful, after afflictions, are the renewals of joy! How refreshing the manifestations of Jesus after long, and dark seasons of his absence to the soul? Reader! let the perusal of this Chapter be sure to lead thy heart to the examination, whether Jesus hath made himself known to thee otherwise than he doth to the world. For without this the chief and best improvement from it will be lost. Oh! it is sweet to look at him whom by sin and disobedience we have sold for a slave! It is precious, indeed, to behold him who was wounded for our sins and bruised for our iniquities; now risen and exalted at the right hand of power; and though changed in state, yet still retaining the same nature, and still not ashamed to call his people Brethren.

Dearest Jesus! send the waggons of thine ordinances to bring us to thyself. Into the Egypt of even death and the grave would we follow thee, to behold thy glory. And as the good of all the land is before us, and in the heaven into which thou art entered, thou art only gone before as our fore-runner to take possession in our name; thither may thy good Spirit bring us, as to our eternal home: where we hope to see thee *face to face, and to know even as we are known.*

CHAP. XLVI.

CONTENTS.

This Chapter contains the particulars of Israel's journey to Egypt. And never surely was there a journey undertaken with more clear and leading views of the divine Providence. Constrained by famine, invited by his son, and encouraged and directed by his God, the hoary

* Psalm xxvii. 13.

Patriarch sets forward to embrace a long lost child. He takes all his family with him, arrives at the place of meeting, and beholds his son: an account of their interview.

AND Israel took his journey with all that he had, and came to Beer-sheba, and offered sacrifices unto the God of his father Isaac.

Beersheba, a memorable spot: see Gen. xxi. 33; xxvi. 33. This offering of sacrifices, was no doubt an offering with an eye to the great sacrifice Christ: see Heb. xi. 4. That is a sweet scripture, God is not ashamed to be called their God. Heb. xi. 16.

2 And God spake unto Israel in the visions of the night, and said, Jacob, Jacob. And he said, Here *am* I.

It is probable that Jacob desired in prayer that the Lord would direct him about his intended journey: see Prov. iii. 6.

3 And he said, I *am* God, the God of thy father: fear not to go down into Egypt; for I will there make of thee a great nation:

Precious tokens! not only God, God Almighty, but the God of Jacob's fathers: that is God in a covenant way. See Gen. xxii. 17, 18. Isaiah xli. 10.

4 I will go down with thee into Egypt; and I will also surely bring thee up *again*: and Joseph shall put his hand upon thine eyes.

May we not spiritualize this as a New Testament promise? Doth not Jesus indeed say, fear not to go down into the grave, I will be with thee: see Matt. xxii. 31, 32. Rom. xiv. 7, 8, 9. Isaiah xliii. 2. Psalm xxiii. 4.

5 ¶ And Jacob rose up from Beer-sheba: and the sons of Israel carried Jacob their father, and their little ones, and their wives, in the waggons which Pharaoh had sent to carry him.

If we spiritualize this verse we may consider the means of grace as so many conveyances to carry our hearts to Jesus.

6 And they took their cattle, and their goods, which they had gotten in the land of Canaan, and came into Egypt, Jacob, and all his seed with him*:

7 His sons, and his sons' sons with him, his

* Joshua xxiv. 4.

daughters, and his sons' daughters, and all his seed brought he with him into Egypt.

If we calculate the number we shall find it to be what the Holy Ghost hath said, threescore and six persons: Acts vii. 15.

8 ¶ And these *are* the names of the children of Israel, which came into Egypt, Jacob and his sons: Reuben, Jacob's firstborn*.

9 And the sons of Reuben; Hanoch, and Phallu, and Hezron, and Carmi.

10 And the sons of Simeon; Jemuel, and Jamin, and Ohad, and Jachin, and Zohar, and Shaul the son of a Canaanitish woman.

11 And the sons of Levi; Gershon, Kohath, and Merari.

12 And the sons of Judah; Er, and Onan, and Shelah, and Pharez, and Zarah: but Er and Onan died in the land of Canaan. And the sons of Pharez were Hezron and Hamul.

13 And the sons of Issachar; Tola, and Phuvah, and Job, and Shimron.

14 And the sons of Zebulun; Sered, and Elon, and Jahleel.

15 These *be* the sons of Leah, which she bare unto Jacob in Padan-aram, with his daughter Dinah: all the souls of his sons and his daughters *were* thirty and three.

16 And the sons of Gad; Ziphion, and Haggi, Shuni, and Ezbon, Eri, and Arodi, and Areli.

17 And the sons of Asher; Jimnah, and Ishuah, and Isui, and Beriah, and Serah their sister: and the sons of Beriah; Heber, and Malchiel.

18 These *are* the sons of Zilpah, whom Laban gave to Leah his daughter, and these she bare unto Jacob, *even* sixteen souls.

19 The sons of Rachel Jacob's wife; Joseph, and Benjamin.

* See Numbers xxvi. 5.

20 And unto Joseph in the land of Egypt were born Manasseh and Ephraim, which Asenath the daughter of Potipherah priest of On bare unto him.

21 And the sons of Benjamin *were* Belah, and Becher, and Ashbel, Gera, and Naaman, Ehi, and Rosh, Muppim, and Huppim, and Ard.

22 These *are* the sons of Rachel, which were born to Jacob: all the souls *were* fourteen.

23 And the sons of Dan; Hushim.

24 And the sons of Naphtali; Jahzeel, and Guni, and Jezer, and Shillem.

25 These *are* the sons of Bilhah, which Laban gave unto Rachel his daughter, and she bare these unto Jacob: all the souls *were* seven.

26 All the souls that came with Jacob into Egypt, which came out of his loins, besides Jacob's sons' wives, all the souls *were* threescore and six;

27 And the sons of Joseph, which were born him in Egypt, *were* two souls: all the souls of the house of Jacob, which came into Egypt, *were* threescore and ten.

I detain not the Reader through these verses, but only to observe upon the whole, that it was now more than 200 years since God promised to make of Abraham a great nation: and yet that branch of Abraham's seed with whom the promise was deposited, was not increased but to 70 souls: that is, including the threescore and six persons which went down with Jacob into Egypt: Jacob himself, Joseph, and Joseph's two sons, none of which were included in the threescore and six enumerated.

28 ¶ And he sent Judah before him unto Joseph, to direct his face unto Goshen; and they came into the land of Goshen.

29 And Joseph made ready his chariot, and went up to meet Israel his father, to Goshen, and presented himself unto him; and he fell on his neck, and wept on his neck a good while.

See Gen. xlv. 14. Here it is said that Joseph wept on the neck of his father *a good while*.

30 And Israel said unto Joseph, Now let me

die, since I have seen thy face, because thou *art* yet alive.

And what saith the believer when he hath seen the face of Jesus: see Luke ii. 29, 30.

31 And Joseph said unto his brethren, and unto his father's house, I will go up, and shew Pharaoh, and say unto him, My brethren, and my father's house, which *were* in the land of Canaan, are come unto me;

32 And the men *are* shepherds, for their trade hath been to feed cattle; and they have brought their flocks, and their herds, and all that they have*.

33 And it shall come to pass, when Pharaoh shall call you, and shall say, What *is* your occupation?

34 That ye shall say, Thy servants' trade hath been about cattle from our youth even until now, both we, *and* also our fathers: that ye may dwell in the land of Goshen; for every shepherd *is* an abomination to the Egyptians.

Spiritually considered, this teaches the separation of God's people from the carnal world. 2 Cor. vi. 17, 18. The abomination of the Hebrews. See Exod. viii. 26.

REFLECTIONS.

WHILE, as a subject of particular providence, we read this Chapter to remark, how the Lord graciously arrangeth and ordereth the circumstances of his people so as to fulfil that promise, that *all things work together for good to them that love God*; let us more closely observe the spiritual instructions contained in it. Reader! this Chapter concerns us. Doth not our Almighty Joseph call us down as Israel was of old, into the Egypt of darkness, even the shadow of death: and doth he not say as to him, fear not to go down, I will go with thee: and will assuredly bring thee up again. Yes! he is and will be, *the resurrection and the life*. And therefore may you and I be enabled to say as David did, *when I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil for thou art with me*. Blessed God! give to him that writes and to him that reads an happy meeting of our Spiritual Joseph, that like Jacob we may be content to die when that sight is accomplished, and cry out with the same full assurance as holy *Simeon*, in the taking the Lord's Christ into our arms; *Lord let thy servant now depart in peace, according unto thy word, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation*.

* Rom. xii. 16.

CHAP. XLVII.

CONTENTS.

The Patriarchal history is continued, mixed with an account of Joseph's wise administration concerning the affairs of Egypt. Joseph having informed Pharaoh king of Egypt of his father's arrival, and having introduced first some of his brethren, and then his father, to Pharaoh; the king ordered the best of the land for their accommodation. The famine still continuing, the Egyptians again apply to Joseph for bread, whose prudent conduct in the distribution of the same, endears him yet more and more to Pharaoh and all his people. After seventeen years residence in Egypt the Patriarch Jacob finding symptoms of his end approaching, sends for Joseph, and gives him charge concerning his burial.

THEN Joseph came and told Pharaoh, and said, My father, and my brethren, and their flocks, and their herds, and all that they have, are come out of the land of Canaan; and, behold, they are in the land of Goshen.

2 And he took some of his brethren, *even* five men, and presented them unto Pharaoh.

Reader! so must Jesus present us before God and our Father, or we cannot come before him, John xiv. 6.

3 And Pharaoh said unto his brethren, What *is* your occupation? and they said unto Pharaoh, Thy servants *are* shepherds, both we, *and* also our fathers.

4 They said moreover unto Pharaoh, For to sojourn in the land are we come; for thy servants have no pasture for their flocks; for the famine *is* sore in the land of Canaan: now therefore, we pray thee, let thy servants dwell in the land of Goshen.

Observe, sojourners, not citizens. Believers at the best are no other. Psalm xxxix. 12.

5 And Pharaoh spake unto Joseph, saying, Thy father and thy brethren are come unto thee:

6 The land of Egypt *is* before thee; in the best of the land make thy father and brethren to dwell; in the land of Goshen let them dwell: and

if thou knowest *any* men of activity among them, then make them rulers over my cattle *.

7 ¶ And Joseph brought in Jacob his father, and set him before Pharaoh: and Jacob blessed Pharaoh.

8 And Pharaoh said unto Jacob, How old *art* thou?

9 And Jacob said unto Pharaoh, The days of the years of my pilgrimage *are* an hundred and thirty years: few and evil have the days of the years of my life been, and have not attained unto the days of the years of the life of my fathers in the days of *their* pilgrimage.

Observe Jacob counts his years as days, so Job xiv. 1. Psalm xxxix. 4, 5. xc. 10.

10 And Jacob blessed Pharaoh, and went out from before Pharaoh †.

11 ¶ And Joseph placed his father and his brethren, and gave them possession in the land of Egypt, in the best of the land, in the land of Ramases, as Pharaoh had commanded ‡.

12 And Joseph nourished his father, and his brethren, and all his father's household, with bread, according to *their* families §.

13 And *there was* no bread in all the land; for the famine *was* very sore, so that the land of Egypt and *all* the land of Canaan fainted by reason of the famine.

14 And Joseph gathered up all the money that was found in the land of Egypt, and in the land of Canaan, for the corn which they bought: and Joseph brought the money into Pharaoh's house.

15 And when money failed in the land of Egypt, and in the land of Canaan, all the Egyptians came unto Joseph, and said, Give us bread:

* Exod. xviii. 21.

† Heb. vii. 7.

‡ Exod. i. 11.

§ 1 Tim. v. 8.

for why should we die in thy presence? for the money faileth.

16 And Joseph said, Give your cattle; and I will give you for your cattle, if money fail.

17 And they brought their cattle unto Joseph, and Joseph gave them bread *in exchange* for horses, and for the flocks, and for the cattle of the herds, and for the asses; and he fed them with bread for all their cattle for that year.

18 When that year was ended, they came unto him the second year, and said unto him, We will not hide *it* from my lord, how that our money is spent; my lord also hath our herds of cattle; there is not ought left in the sight of my lord, but our bodies, and our lands;

19 Wherefore shall we die before thine eyes, both we and our land? Buy us and our land for bread, and we and our land will be servants unto Pharaoh: and give *us* seed, that we may live, and not die, that the land be not desolate.

20 And Joseph bought all the land of Egypt for Pharaoh; for the Egyptians sold every man his field, because the famine prevailed over them: so the land became Pharaoh's.

21 And as for the people, he removed them to cities from *one* end of the borders of Egypt even to the *other* end thereof.

These verses are a digression from the history of the Patriarchs, and serve only to manifest the wisdom and prudence in Joseph's government. There is one sweet lesson however to be derived from it, spiritually considered; namely, to what a famine is our nature reduced, until our Almighty Joseph grants us a supply of living bread. But Reader! do not overlook how God supplied the Patriarch and his household, while the Egyptians were perishing in their own land. Read that scripture: Isaiah lxx. 13.

22 Only the land of the priests bought he not: for the priests had a portion *assigned them* of Pharaoh, and did eat their portion which Pharaoh gave them: wherefore they sold not their lands.

In all places respect hath been thus paid to religion, Ezra vii. 24.

23 Then Joseph said unto the people, Behold, I have bought you this day and your land for Pharaoh: lo, *here is* seed for you, and ye shall sow the land.

24 And it shall come to pass in the increase, that ye shall give the fifth *part* unto Pharaoh, and four parts shall be your own, for seed of the field, and for your food, and for them of your households, and for food for your little ones.

25 And they said, Thou hast saved our lives: let us find grace in the sight of my lord, and we will be Pharaoh's servants.

26 And Joseph made it a law over the land of Egypt unto this day, *that* Pharaoh should have the fifth *part*; except the land of the priests only, *which* became not Pharaoh's.

27 And Israel dwelt in the land of Egypt, in the country of Goshen; and they had possessions therein, and grew, and multiplied exceedingly*.

28 And Jacob lived in the land of Egypt seventeen years: so the whole age of Jacob was an hundred forty and seven years.

It is somewhat remarkable that Jacob lost Joseph at the age of seventeen: and now the Lord grants the same number of years for them to be together. The intermediate space of Joseph's life, the Lord had other employment for him.

29 And the time drew nigh that Israel must die: and he called his son Joseph, and said unto him, If now I have found grace in thy sight, put, I pray thee, thy hand under my thigh, and deal kindly and truly with me; bury me not, I pray thee, in Egypt†.

30 But I will lie with my fathers, and thou shalt carry me out of Egypt, and bury me in their burying place. And he said, I will do as thou hast said.

* Deut. xxvi. 5.

† Heb. ix. 27.

All the Patriarchs had this desire, And the apostle assigns the reason: Gen. i. 25. Compared with Heb. xi. 22.

31 And he said, Swear unto me. And he sware unto him. And Israel bowed himself upon the bed's head.

May we not spiritualize this promise confirmed by an oath? Doth not Jesus in effect promise the same, to all his people. John xi. 25, 26. Hosea xiii. 14. Heb. vi. 17, 18.

REFLECTIONS.

WHAT sweet lessons do the lives of the Patriarchs Jacob and Joseph afford, of endearing ties of parental and filial affection? Would we learn the influence of grace refining nature's feelings, let us read over those sacred records.

Reader! do not forget to spiritualize the Egyptian monarch's question to the hoary Patriarch, and ask the same of your own heart. How old are you in grace? What years, what days can you number since you were *new* born? Few and evil no doubt are the best of our days in the best of our pilgrimage. But do not forget that the spiritual arithmetic is not counted by natural calculations: *for the child of grace shall die an hundred years old; but the sinner still remaining in an unconverted, unrenewed state, being an hundred years old shall be accursed.*

From the tender affection of Joseph to his dying father, in the promise he made him, let me turn my eyes and contemplate Joseph's Lord and Saviour in the promise he hath left to all his people. He saith to all the true spiritual seed of Israel now, as to the Patriarch himself; *Fear not to go down to the grave, I will be with thee.* And this thought is a sweet thought: the covenant holds good in death as in life. The grave cannot dissolve it. *When we live, we live unto the Lord: and when we die, we die unto the Lord: so that living or dying we are the Lord's.* O thou that hast the keys of hell and death; sweetest Saviour! be thou my God, my guide and my companion, both in life and in death: then *to live will be Christ, and to die will be gain.*

CHAP. XLVIII.

CONTENTS.

The time of Jacob's death drawing near, Joseph hastens to visit him: and the dying Patriarch takes occasion in this interesting interview, to recount to Joseph God's gracious dealings with him from his youth. Joseph's two sons being brought before Jacob he blesseth them. And in the sure confidence that God would confirm his promise of bringing his seed again to Canaan, Jacob gives a particular spot of land there to his son Joseph. These are the contents of this Chapter.

AND it came to pass after these things, that one told Joseph, Behold, thy father is sick:

and he took with him his two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim*.

2 And *one* told Jacob, and said, Behold, thy son Joseph cometh unto thee: and Israel strengthened himself, and sat upon the bed.

Nothing can be more interesting than the closing scene of the life of the faithful. Joshua xxiii. 14. No doubt Manasseh and Ephraim felt an impression which all their lives did not obliterate. It is good to introduce the young and the gay into such solemn scenes as death. Eccles. vii. 2.

3 ¶ And Jacob said unto Joseph, God Almighty appeared unto me at Luz in the land of Canaan, and blessed me†,

4 And said unto me, Behold, I will make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, and I will make of thee a multitude of people; and will give this land to thy seed after thee *for* an everlasting possession.

It should seem very plain that the Patriarch considered the blessing in a double point of view, as implying, that the natural seed of Jacob should inherit the *earthly Canaan*; and his spiritual the *heavenly*. See Gen. xii. 2. xxxv. 11, 12. then see Gen. xvii. 19, 20.

5 And now thy two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, which were born unto thee in the land of Egypt before I came unto thee into Egypt, *are* mine; as Reuben and Simeon, they shall be mine.

This adoption of Joseph's sons had a reference to the promised blessing. The apostle explains this when he saith, it was by faith. See Heb. xi. 21.

6 And thy issue, which thou begetteth after them, shall be thine, *and* shall be called after the name of their brethren in their inheritance.

This particularly explains the foregoing verse, in marking the *natural* from the *spiritual* stock: see Romans ix. 6, 7, 8.

7 And as for me, when I came from Padan, Rachel died by me in the land of Canaan, in the way, when yet *there was* but a little way to come unto Ephrath: and I buried her there in the way of Ephrath; the same *is* Bethlehem‡.

* Psalm cxvi. 15.

† Gen. xxviii. 12—19. xxxv. 6, 7.

‡ Gen. xxxv. 19. 1 Sam. x. 2.

8 And Israel beheld Joseph's sons, and said, Who *are* these?

9 And Joseph said unto his father, They *are* my sons, whom God hath given me in this *place*. And he said, Bring them, I pray thee, unto me, and I will bless them*.

10 Now the eyes of Israel were dim for age, so *that* he could not see. And he brought them near unto him; and he kissed them, and embraced them.

Though the natural eyes of the Patriarch were grown dim; yet how quick sighted was the eye of faith?

11 And Israel said unto Joseph, I had not thought to see thy face: and, lo, God hath shewed me also thy seed.

Observe how Jacob refers all mercies into God's gift. Reader! are you a partaker of divine grace? Are you a parent also? And have you a well-grounded hope that any of your offspring are partakers of divine grace? And is there nothing in this expression of the Patriarch's, suited to *your* case? Can you not say, I had not thought that *I* should have been brought into the bonds of the covenant being so utterly unworthy: and yet God hath shewed me my seed also in the mercy? Rom. xi. 33.

12 And Joseph brought them out from between his knees, and he bowed himself with his face to the earth.

I admire the filial reverence of Joseph to his dying father! Oh! what an example worthy of imitation. Levit. xix. 32.

13 And Joseph took them both, Ephraim in his right hand toward Israel's left hand, and Manasseh in his left hand toward Israel's right hand, and brought *them* near unto him.

14 And Israel stretched out his right hand, and laid *it* upon Ephraim's head, who *was* the younger, and his left hand upon Manasseh's head, guiding his hands wittingly; for Manasseh *was* the first-born.

As Jacob in the blessing was acting under the spirit of prophecy, he was guided more by what should take place in those tribes of Israel in the after ages of the Church, than by birth-right. See Numb. i. 32—35.

* Prov. xvii. 6.

And some have thought that the sons of Joseph, *Manasseh and Ephraim*, were types of the Jewish and Gentile Church. Hence the last is more numerous than the first. Gal. iv. 27.

15 And he blessed Joseph, and said, God, before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac did walk, the God which fed me all my life long unto this day,

Sweet tribute to God the Father, and to God the Son, the Angel of the Covenant. Mal. iii. 1. Exod. xxv. 20, 21. 1 Cor. x. 4.

16 The angel which redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads; and let my name be named on them, and the name of my fathers Abraham and Isaac; and let them grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth.

17 And when Joseph saw that his father laid his right hand upon the head of Ephraim, it displeased him: and he held up his father's hand, to remove it from Ephraim's head unto Manasseh's head.

18 And Joseph said unto his father, Not so, my father: for this *is* the firstborn; put thy right hand upon his head.

It is remarkable, how, even in gracious minds there is generally found a partiality to *nature's* choice. See Gen. xvii. 18. But what saith the Lord? 1 Sam. xvi. 7.

19 And his father refused, and said, I know *it*, my son, I know it: he also shall become a people, and he also shall be great: but truly his younger brother shall be greater than he, and his seed shall become a multitude of nations.

20 And he blessed them that day, saying, In thee shall Israel bless, saying, God make thee as Ephraim and as Manasseh: and he set Ephraim before Manasseh*.

21 ¶ And Israel said unto Joseph, Behold, I die: but God shall be with you, and bring you again unto the land of your fathers.

Observe, how strong and ardent the faith of the ancient fathers was respecting the promise. John viii. 56.

* Ruth iv. 11, 12.

22 Moreover I have given to thee one portion above thy brethren, which I took out of the hand of the Amorite with my sword and with my bow*.

REFLECTIONS.

READER! I would pass by many very sweet and interesting reflections which arise out of this Chapter, to fix my mind upon one most eminently striking, and as important as it is striking: namely, how triumphant must be that glorious principle of faith which animated the Patriarch's mind at such a distant period before the coming of Jesus; and which enabled him to sing such a song of praise to the God which *had fed him all his life long, and to the angel which redeemed him from all evil*. Oh, my soul! if these all died in faith in a coming Saviour; shall not I, now I have seen him come; having *finished transgression, made an end of sin, made reconciliation for iniquity, brought in an everlasting righteousness, and sealed up the vision*: shall not I find grace to be the follower of them, who now through faith and patience inherit the promises? Blessed Lord! give me this precious gift of faith. Enable me to see God's Christ in this great salvation; and by an ardent lively faith to know my right of appropriation in it. Then shall I be assured, even as Jacob was in a dying hour, that *this God is my God for ever and ever, and he will be my guide even unto death*.

CHAP. XLIX.

CONTENTS.

At length we arrive to that point which forms the period of all things here below; and we are brought to the conclusion of the Patriarch Jacob's history. This Chapter relates the memorable circumstances of his dying moments. He convenes his children all around him, and under the spirit of prophecy declares to them, as the heads of the twelve tribes of Israel, what would distinguish their families in the last days. Having finished his prophecy and blessed them, and given commandment concerning his burial, the dying Patriarch gathers up his feet into the bed, and yields up the ghost.

AND Jacob called unto his sons, and said, Gather yourselves together, that I may tell you that which shall befall you in the last days.

The Reader will not overlook, I hope, Him whom the Patriarch here typified, nor need my reminding him of that precious conference the dying Jesus held in the midst of his family. John xiii. 1. xiv. 1. xvii. 1.

2 Gather yourselves together, and hear, ye sons of Jacob; and hearken unto Israel your father†.

* John iv. 5.

† Prov. iv. 1.

3 ¶ Reuben, thou *art* my firstborn, my might, and the beginning of my strength, the excellency of dignity, and the excellency of power:

4 Unstable as water, thou shalt not excel; because thou wentest up to thy father's bed: then defiledst thou *it*: he went up to my couch.

It is remarkable that from this tribe of Israel, there never arose a governor, a prophet, or prince. And it is as remarkable that the *Reubenites* chose their settlement on the other side of Jordan. Joshua i. 12, 13, 14, 15. Deut. xxxiii. 6. Judges v. 15, 16. James i. 8.

5 Simeon and Levi *are* brethren; instruments of cruelty *are in* their habitations.

6 O my soul, come not thou into their secret; unto their assembly, mine honour, be not thou united: for in their anger they slew a man, and in their self-will they digged down a wall.

7 Cursed be their anger, for *it was* fierce; and their wrath, for it was cruel: I will divide them in Jacob, and scatter them in Israel.

Gen. xxxiv. 30. The *Simeonites* and *Levites* were scattered among the other tribes. Joshua xix. 1. xxi. 3. 1 Chron. vi. 24, &c.

8 Judah, thou *art he* whom thy brethren shall praise! thy hand *shall be* in the neck of thine enemies, thy father's children shall bow down before thee.

1 Chron. v. 2. This was proved, Psm. xviii. 40.

9 Judah *is* a lion's whelp: from the prey, my son, thou art gone up: he stooped down, he couched as a lion, and as an old lion; who shall rouse him up*?

10 The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him *shall* the gathering of the people *be*.

This is the third promise of grace in the Bible. The *first* is, Gen. iii. 15. The *second* is, Gen. xxii. 18. And this the *third*. The *first* gives assurance of the *promised seed*, the LORD JESUS. The *second* tells of the *blessings* folded up in him. And this, *when* the mercies shall be. The sceptre did not depart until Jesus came. For in the fa-

* Rev. v. 5.

mily of David it was continued, even when Judæa became a province under the Roman government. In proof read that scripture: John xix. 7. And in proof that then Jesus, the *Shiloh*, was come, read that scripture: John xix. 15. And for the *gathering of the people*, read Haggai ii. 7. John xii. 32. xi. 32.

11 Binding his fole unto the vine, and his ass's colt unto the choice vine; he washed his garments in wine, and his clothes in the blood of grapes*:

12 His eyes *shall be* red with wine, and his teeth white with milk†.

13 Zebulun shall dwell at the haven of the sea; and he *shall be* for an haven of ships; and his border *shall be* unto Zidon.

This prophecy was completed, when the tribe of *Zebulun* had by lot assigned it the border of the sea. Joshua xix. 10, 11.

14 Issachar *is* a strong ass couching down between two burdens:

15 And he saw that rest *was* good, and the land that it *was* pleasant; and bowed his shoulder to bear, and became a servant unto tribute‡.

16 Dan shall judge his people, as one of the tribes of Israel.

17 Dan shall be a serpent by the way, an adder in the path, that biteth the horse heels, so that his rider shall fall backward§.

18 I have waited for thy salvation, O LORD.

This verse forms a sweet break in the thread of Jacob's blessing. So said Simeon, Luke ii. 25—29, 30. Reader! God grant that so may you and I. Heb. xi. 13, 14.

19 Gad, a troop shall overcome him: but he shall overcome at the last.

Gad is a type of grace, often overcome by troops of enemies, but at length victorious. Rom. viii. 37. Concerning *Gad*, see 1 Chron. v. 18, &c.

20 Out of Asher his bread *shall be* fat, and he shall yield royal dainties.

Deut. xxxiii. 24. How precious is that promise made to *Asher*: Deut. xxxiii. 25. And how very sweet have the Lord's people found it in all ages!

* Isaiah lxiii. 2. † John xv. 1. 1 Kings iv. 25. Rev. xix. 18.

‡ Deut. xxxiii. 18.

§ Joshua xix. 40.

21 Naphtali *is* a hind let loose: he giveth goodly words.

Deut. xxxiii. 23. And what greater mercy can be desired than this!

22 Joseph *is* a fruitful bough, *even* a fruitful bough by a well; *whose* branches run over the wall:

While we keep in view the Patriarch Joseph in those prophecies, let us not forget that *a greater than Joseph is here*. How fruitful is the church of the Lord! his branches have spread over the earth. Psalm lxxx. 1—8, &c.

23 The archers have sorely grieved him, and shot *at him*, and hated him:

How was Jesus shot at, and his Church assaulted in all ages? Isaiah l. 6.

24 But his bow abode in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty *God* of Jacob; (from thence *is* the shepherd, the stone of Israel*:))

25 *Even* by the God of thy father, who shall help thee; and by the Almighty, who shall bless thee with blessings of heaven above, blessings of the deep that lieth under, blessings of the breasts, and of the womb:

26 The blessings of thy father have prevailed above the blessings of thy progenitors unto the utmost bound of the everlasting hills: they shall be on the head of Joseph, and on the crown of the head of him that was separate from his brethren†.

27 Benjamin shall ravin *as* a wolf: in the morning he shall devour the prey, and at night he shall divide the spoil.

Nothing can afford a higher proof that the Patriarch Jacob, in all that he here said, was guided by the spirit of prophecy, and not by natural affection: because his predictions concerning his beloved Benjamin were not very flattering to himself. If you consult the history of the *Benjamites* you will find the truth of Jacob's prophecies fulfilled. See Judges xx. 14. It is perhaps worth observing, that Paul the Apostle was of this tribe: in the morning of whose life he was furious as a wolf

* Isaiah l. 7. 1 Pet. ii. 6, 7.

† Gen. xxviii. 13. Deut. xxxiii. 13—17.

against the cause of Jesus; but in the evening he sat down to the fruits of his labours *for* the cross. See Rom. xi. 1. Acts ix. 1. Philip. iii. 5.

28 All these *are* the twelve tribes of Israel: and this *is it* that their father spake unto them, and blessed them; every one according to his blessing he blessed them.

One thought meets us here. It is this, though Israel's tribes were thus diversified under many and various exercises, yet it is a precious thought to consider Israel as a people brought into Covenant mercies. Isaiah liv. 7, 8, 9, 10.

29 And he charged them, and said unto them, I am to be gathered unto my people: bury me with my fathers in the cave that *is* in the field of Ephron the Hittite,

Would you know what it is to be gathered unto Jacob's people, See Heb. xii. 18—22, 23, 24.

30 In the cave that *is* in the field of Machpelah, which is before Mamre, in the land of Canaan, which Abraham bought with the field of Ephron the Hittite for a possession of a burying place*.

31 There they buried Abraham and Sarah his wife; there they buried Isaac and Rebekah his wife; and there I buried Leah.

32 The purchase of the field and of the cave that *is* therein *was* from the children of Heth†.

33 ¶ And when Jacob had made an end of commanding his sons, he gathered up his feet into the bed, and yielded up the ghost, and was gathered unto his people‡.

REFLECTIONS.

MARK *the perfect man and behold the upright*, (saith the Psalmist), *for the end of that man is peace*. Reader! think what an important thing it is to die well. What is to be performed but once should be well performed. For if we err here there is no repentance in the grave. Lord, grant, if it be thy holy will, that like the Patriarch I may be waiting while *living* for thy salvation: that when *dying* like him I may rejoice in the possession of it.

* Gen. xlvii. 30.

† Gen. xxv. 19.

‡ Acts vii. 60.

Let us take a parting look at the Patriarch Jacob while closing his history, and once more in him behold a lively type of the blessed Jesus. Before his birth, like the Patriarch, was he not chosen to be the father of many nations? Did he not in a yet more striking manner struggle in the womb with the elder Adam; and by fulfilling the covenant which he had broken, recover the birth-right for his people? In the great work of redemption, how was he driven from his father's house, exposed to all the horrors of the wilderness, and made the subject of temptations? For the love he bore his Church, what a series of servitude did he not endure? Never, surely, could it be said of Israel, as of Israel's God, with equal strength of reason, *that which was torn of beasts was required of my hand; in the day I was consumed by drought, and of the frost by night.* Blessed Jesus! *in all things it behoveth thee that thou shouldst have the pre-eminence.* May it be my portion to have thy person and gracious offices always in view, until *in the dispensation of the fulness of times thou shalt gather together in one all things in thyself, both which are in heaven and which are on earth:* and the whole multitude of thy people shall be gathered round thy throne in everlasting glory.

CHAP. L.

CONTENTS.

This Chapter which concludes the book of Genesis, concludes with it the account of the last tokens of respect shewn to the Patriarch Jacob's remains. He is embalmed by the physicians of Egypt; and after the days of mourning were expired, Joseph obtains permission from Pharaoh to carry up his father's remains for interment into Canaan. The funeral ceremony is here related: their return to Egypt: Joseph and his brethren's affectionate regard for each other is again mentioned: the years which Joseph lived after his father: Joseph's death and age.

AND Joseph fell upon his father's face, and wept upon him, and kissed him.

Sweet view of Joseph's tenderness. Reader, see John xi. 35, 36.

2 And Joseph commanded his servants the physicians to embalm his father: and the physicians embalmed Israel.

It is an humbling view of our poor nature which death makes. The tenderest friend must then say as *Abraham* did, Gen. *xxiii.* 4.

3 And forty days were fulfilled for him; for so are fulfilled the days of those which are embalmed: and the Egyptians mourned for him threescore and ten days*.

4 And when the days of his mourning were

* John xix. 39, 40.

past, Joseph spake unto the house of Pharaoh, saying, If now I have found grace in your eyes, speak, I pray you, in the ears of Pharaoh, saying*,

5 My father made me swear, saying, Lo, I die: in my grave which I have digged for me in the land of Canaan, there shalt thou bury me. Now therefore let me go up, I pray thee, and bury my father, and I will come again.

It is proper to pay tokens of respect to our deceased friends, but do not forget what Jesus hath said: Matt. viii. 22.

6 And Pharaoh said, Go up, and bury thy father, according as he made thee swear.

7 ¶ And Joseph went up to bury his father: and with him went up all the servants of Pharaoh, the elders of his house, and all the elders of the land of Egypt,

8 And all the house of Joseph, and his brethren, and his father's house: only their little ones, and their flocks, and their herds they left in the land of Goshen.

9 And there went up with him both chariots and horsemen: and it was a very great company.

How falsely sometimes we calculate! Jacob talked of going down to the grave to his children. But a gracious God here permits Jacob's funeral to be followed by all his children. See Gen. xlii. 38.

10 And they came to the threshing floor of Atad, which *is* beyond Jordan, and there they mourned with a great and very sore lamentation: and he made a mourning for his father seven days.

Atad was westward of Jordan, Deut. i. 1. Job ii. 13.

11 And when the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites, saw the mourning in the floor of Atad, they said, This *is* a grievous mourning to the Egyptians: wherefore the name of it was called Abel-mizraim, which *is* beyond Jordan.

Abel-mizraim, that is, the mourning of the Egyptians.

* Esther iv. 2.

12 And his sons did unto him according as he commanded them:

13 For his sons carried him into the land of Canaan, and buried him in the cave of the field of Machpelah, which Abraham bought with the field for a possession of a burying place of Ephron the Hittite, before Mamre*.

14 And Joseph returned into Egypt, he, and his brethren, and all that went up with him to bury his father, after he had buried his father.

15 And when Joseph's brethren saw that their father was dead, they said, Joseph will peradventure hate us, and will certainly requite us all the evil which we did unto him.

16 And they sent a messenger unto Joseph, saying, Thy father did command before he died, saying,

17 So shall ye say unto Joseph, Forgive, I pray thee now, the trespass of thy brethren, and their sin; for they did unto thee evil: and now, we pray thee, forgive the trespass of the servants of the God of thy father. And Joseph wept when they spake unto him.

How sweet to this purpose are those gospel precepts, and how much the influence of them, arising from the same Almighty Spirit's gift, was on the mind of Joseph! Coloss. iii. 12, 13. Matt. vi. 12—15. Ephes. iv. 31, 32.

18 And his brethren also went and fell down before his face; and they said, Behold, we *be* thy servants.

19 And Joseph said unto them, Fear not: for *am* I in the place of God?

20 But as for you, ye thought evil against me; *but* God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as *it is* this day, to save much people alive.

21 Now therefore fear ye not: I will nourish

* Gen. xxiii. 16.

you, and your little ones. And he comforted them, and spake kindly unto them.

Gen. xlv. 5.—Nothing can be more satisfactory in proof of a work of grace in the heart, than when believers pass by second causes to keep in view the Lord's hand in all appointments.

22 And Joseph dwelt in Egypt, he, and his father's house: and Joseph lived an hundred and ten years.

23 And Joseph saw Ephraim's children of the third *generation*: the children also of Machir the son of Manasseh were brought up upon Joseph's knees.

How graciously, sometimes, the Lord lengthens out the years of the faithful! see Job xlii. 16.

24 ¶ And Joseph said unto his brethren, I die: and God will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land unto the land which he sware to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.

It was thus the fathers in the faith comforted their descendants with an assurance of God's promises. One saint relates to another God's covenant promises, and their dependance upon them. Thus Abraham to Isaac: and Isaac to Jacob: and Jacob to Joseph: and Joseph to his descendants. Reader! if believers *now* had faith in equal exercise, such would be our comforts in dying hours. Exod. iv. 31. Psm. xxvii. 13, 14.

25 And Joseph took an oath of the children of Israel, saying, God will surely visit you, and ye shall carry up my bones from hence.

26 ¶ So Joseph died, *being* an hundred and ten years old: and they embalmed him, and he was put in a coffin in Egypt*.

REFLECTIONS.

READER! it would be wrong to close our review of the life of the Patriarch Joseph, without once more looking at so illustrious a character, both as he is in himself, and as he is a type of the ever blessed Jesus. As he is in himself, how truly lovely doth he appear in every relation and character of life. As a son, as a brother, as the wise governor in Egypt, raised up by the Lord for the preservation of his own house and family, and the whole kingdom of Egypt. And as a father, as a man, when a servant, and when a Lord! But how lovely is it to see the

* Heb. xi. 22.

Holy Ghost graciously shadowing out the features of Jesus, in the prominent parts of Joseph's life. From the first departure he made from his father's house, through the whole of his eventful life, from the prison to the throne, we see the outlines of the great Redeemer's history sketched out. And from Joseph we are immediately directed to Jesus, and as we bow the knee before him, we cannot help crying out; Hail! thou glorious Almighty Governor of thy kingdom! Thou art indeed the true *Zapnath-paaneah*. Thou art He whom thy brethren shall praise, and all thy church adore. To thee every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess that thou art Christ, to the glory of God the Father.

Before we shut this book of Genesis let us take one thought more. The close of it may lead our minds to the improving thought of the close of our own. It serves to enforce upon the mind that solemn conclusion of the sacred writer; *so teach us to number our days that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom*. Reader! what a vast change hath been wrought in the circumstances of mankind, from the opening of the history of creation through the several periods of it. *There* we began the wonderful relation of God's goodness to our race, in the formation of man after his own image. And *here* we behold him become the prey and food of worms! And whence all this but because *sin hath entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death hath passed upon all men, because all have sinned*. And what shall bring relief to the mind under this discouraging prospect, but the contemplation of his love and faithfulness, who is the unchangeable covenant God, *the same yesterday and to-day and for ever*. Reader! may it be your happiness and mine, to live upon this great and unchangeable God, as he is revealed to his people in a three-fold character of persons. And under this assurance that blessing will be our portion: *the children of thy servants shall continue, and their seed shall be established before thee*.

EXODUS.

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS.

IN opening this *second* book of Moses, I would desire the Reader to call to mind the observation which was made at the opening of the *first*; namely, that as *Moses wrote of Christ*, we might be careful not to lose sight of him through every chapter, but to be searching for him in this field of scripture as for *hidden treasure*. And indeed as it appears from the many references which are made by the other sacred writers of both the Testaments to this book of God, that there are more types and shadows of the Lord Jesus in *Exodus*, than perhaps in any other of the writings of the Old Testament: a more awakened attention, therefore, should be called forth, accompanied with earnest prayer to God the Spirit, that we may