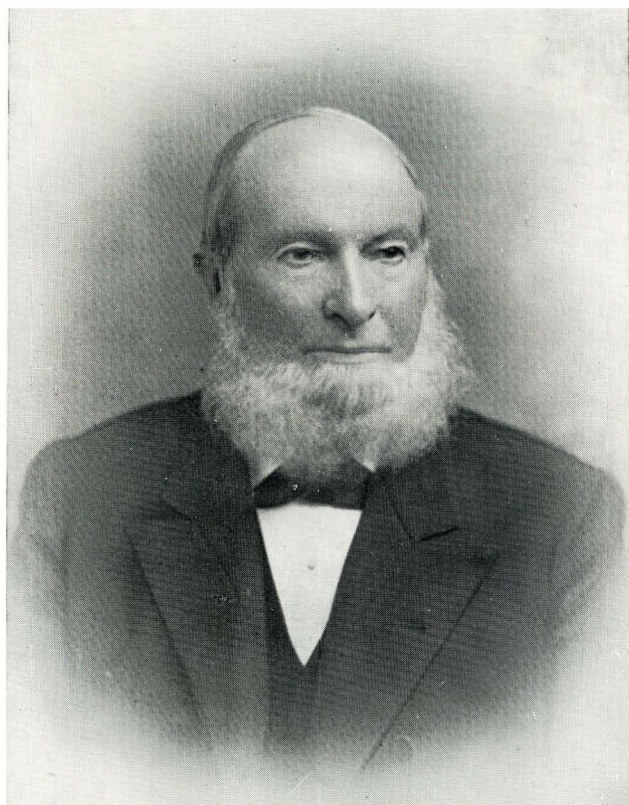


Joseph as a Type
of Christ





Faithfully Yours
J. Wilcox

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JOSEPH AS A TYPE OF CHRIST

By J. WILCOX

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EXPLANATORY NOTE.

WHEN we commenced, at our Week Evening Services, our meditations upon the History of Joseph as a Type of the Lord Jesus Christ, we had not the remotest idea of publishing them. But after we had proceeded with the subject for some months, it was suggested by several friends that, as the Lord had deigned to bless it to the souls of many of our hearers, he might, if it were published, bless it to others also; hence we decided to cast it upon the waters, in the hope that it would be found after many days. (Eccles. xi. 1.) That the blessing of heaven may rest upon it, and God be glorified thereby, is my desire and prayer.

J. WILCOX.

Joseph as a Type of Christ.

THE Holy Ghost has given us very many types of the Lord Jesus Christ in the Old Testament, and Joseph, the son of Jacob by his beloved Rachel, is among the most interesting and instructive, especially for the young.

GENESIS· XXXVII.

We find him at the early age of seventeen bringing an evil report of the sons of Bilhah and Zilpah, but what the sin was we are not told. From this it is evident that Joseph had a tender conscience, which is a very great blessing; and this made him fear to withhold the report from his father. Christ knew the sins of his brethren from all eternity, and entered into covenant engagements to answer for them all to his Father. Jacob, it is said, "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, such as princes usually wore. The Lord Jesus Christ was especially beloved of his Father, and dwelt in his bosom from the days of eternity. (Jno. i. 14—18; Prov. viii. 30, 31.)

When Joseph's brethren saw how much their father loved him they, without any justifiable cause, hated him and could not speak peaceably unto him. Just the same was it with Joseph's Antitype, the Lord Jesus Christ, who never gave his brethren any cause to speak evil of him. Joseph's dreams, which were evidently from the Lord, increased the enmity of his brethren, as they thought they signified that he would reign over them. In like manner, whatever office-character the Lord Jesus bears in covenant love to his people, the language of the carnal mind is, "We will not have this man to reign over us." Jacob now sends Joseph to see after his brethren, and he finds them at Dothan, which signifies the law. So Christ finds all his brethren under the curse of the law they had broken. Joseph was quite willing to obey his father; so Christ became obedient to his Father. (Ps. xl. 8.) Joseph was only sent to seek *his brethren*; Christ was only sent "to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." When Joseph's brethren saw him coming, they conspired to kill him. So the Jews conspired to kill Christ when he came into this world on purpose to seek their good. (Matt. xxvii. 1.) As malice and enmity was manifested to Joseph, so was it manifested towards the Lord Jesus. In the case of the latter, his life must not be spared, but offered up as a burnt offering for the sins of his people; but, at the suggestion of Reuben, Joseph's life was not taken away, but he was put into a pit with the intention that Reuben would afterwards deliver him; but

Judah, in Reuben's absence, proposes to sell him to the Ishmaelites. On Christ intimating his death to the disciples, Peter at once rebuked him, and said, "Be this far from thee, Lord;" but he must die, according to the eternal settlements of a Triune God.

As Joseph was sold by his brethren into the hands of the Ishmaelites, for twenty pieces of silver; so Christ was sold, by one who professed to be brother, into the hands of the high priest, for thirty pieces of silver, who passed him on to the Romans to be crucified. When Joseph came to his brethren, they stripped him of his coat and put him into a pit and sat down to eat bread, as unconcerned and as hard-hearted as did the Jews sit down, apparently unmoved, to watch Christ on the cross, when he was in the greatest agony of body and soul on account of the sins of his people, and the hiding of his Father's face. Thus we see how sin deprives man of even natural affection.

Reuben's grief was great when he found Joseph was not in the pit; so many of Christ's disciples sorrowed greatly over his death, as they did not fully understand his substitutionary work until after his resurrection. Joseph's nine brethren neither knew nor cared what would become of him after they raised him from the pit, which was intended by them to be his grave; so the greater part of Christ's brethren sought his death. After this, Joseph's brethren took his coat and dipped it in the blood of a kid (a clean animal, afterwards used for sacri-

fice, and a type of Christ's holy human nature, which became a sacrifice for the sins of his people). This bloody coat they presented to their father, to stop any enquiries, and to be a covering for their guilt and shame. So the righteousness of Christ, by virtue of his blood, becomes a covering for all his brethren, being a sufficient answer for all their sins and iniquities.

Joseph is now beyond the reach of his wicked brethren, and after Christ's resurrection he was beyond the reach of *his* wicked brethren to do him evil, but they were not beyond his reach to show them mercy, as in Joseph's case also. Poor old Jacob's sorrow was intense at the supposed loss of his dear son, and he refused to be comforted; and what can possibly make up for the absence of God's dear Son in the believer's soul? But our spiritual Joseph still lives, and says, "Because I live, ye shall live also."

CHAPTER XXXIX.

Chapter xxxix. informs us of Joseph being brought into Egypt. Our dear Redeemer likewise was brought into Egypt when an infant for his preservation from the bloodthirsty Herod. God the Father, in special favour, watches over both Joseph and his Antitype, the Lord Jesus Christ, as a great work lay before each. (Ps. xxxiii. 11; Prov. xix. 21; Isa. xlv. 10.) Joseph is now assigned an honourable position in Potiphar's house; and what more honourable position could our spiritual Joseph

occupy in his Father's house than he does? And do not his brethren rejoice to see him so highly exalted by his Father, although they once hated him? Joseph greatly prospered in his situation, and was raised to still greater honour, being made overseer over all that Potiphar had; in like manner was our beloved Joseph (Jesus) more honoured by his Father giving him a house of his own to rule over, which is the household of faith. (Heb. iii. 6; Gal. vi. 10.)

God blessed Laban for Jacob's sake, and the Lord also blessed the house of Potiphar for his sake, and he blesses his own people and their households for Christ's sake. What a favour, then, it is to have Christ to live in our habitations with us, and to manage our families, businesses, fields, church matters, preaching, prayer-meetings, and all other meetings held for the honour and glory of God! What an inestimable blessing this is, and Christ tells us himself that "all things are given into his hands." (Jno. iii. 35.)

As Joseph's day of prosperity had been a comfort to him in his banishment from a most affectionate and good father's home, his day of adversity is at hand; for the Lord has set the one over against the other. In verse 7, we find his master's wife casts a lustful eye upon Joseph and solicits him to a crime punishable by the death of both parties (Lev. xx. 10); but in this we see the fear of God powerfully and sweetly manifested in Joseph:—"How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin

against God?" He regarded the Lord as the first Person to be considered in such an act, even before himself or his master. If the fear of God is in exercise, it will prevent a person sinning against God, and it will also prevent him sinning against his fellow-man. The Lord Jesus was "tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin." He was tempted by men and devils. (Heb. iv. 15; Matt. iv. 1; Jno. viii. 6.) As Joseph answered his mistress from the fear of the Lord, so Christ answered Satan and others from the Word of God; and as she failed to fasten her temptation upon Joseph, so the prince of this world found nothing in Christ upon which to fasten his temptations, although, as in Joseph's case, he was tempted again and again. What a dreadful thing it is to be left in the hands of Satan!

Potiphar's wife now craftily chooses a day when no one is in the house but Joseph and herself, to further tempt him to comply with her wicked request, and on his still refusing, she caught him by his garment as he fled from her. She then called to the men of her house (ver. 14), and charged her own sin and guilt upon Joseph; for we believe she had a guilty conscience. Is not this poor guilty wretch typical of the Gentile sinner? And how she and Joseph's brethren, having secured—the one his coat and the other his garment—remind us of Ps. xxii. 18: "They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture"; although this refers to his crucifixion. This wicked woman now lays by his

garment until her lord comes home; for she had faith (of a kind) in that garment that it would acquit her before her husband of all blame, and fix it on Joseph; and so far she accomplished her purpose. Is not this much the same with a poor guilty, law-condemned sinner, deserving to be cast into hell, when he is blessed with a saving faith in the blood and righteousness of our spiritual Joseph, revealed to that faith by the Holy Ghost? Does he not *cleave* to it as being his very life? Does he not then believe that with this righteousness on he will be free from all the guilt and condemnation both of original and actual transgression? Both Jews and Gentiles share in the imputed righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Joseph's master now puts him in prison, not for his own sin, but for the sin of another; for no man being in the house, Joseph could not produce a witness to prove his innocency. The prophet Isaiah (ch. liii.) says the tender Plant (Christ) "was taken from prison and from judgment, and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living; for the transgression of my people was he stricken." He was brought before both Pilate and Herod, and they found no fault in him; yet there was not a single witness that rose up to give evidence in his favour; but he was condemned by a mob and forsaken by his disciples.

In verse 21 we read that "the Lord was with Joseph, and showed him mercy, and gave him favour in sight of the keeper of the prison." What infinite

love and favour did God the Father show to his dear Son from his birth to his ascension at his own right hand! O, what an unspeakable blessing must it be to stand in the favour of God! We see Joseph now in prison with the king's prisoners, who were bound, and Joseph was bound with them. (Ps. cv. 18; Matt. xxvii. 2.) As all the king's prisoners were given into the hands of Joseph; so have the poor sensible debtors of the King of kings been given into the hands of Christ; who was brought from prison to death. Their debts being imputed to him, he feelingly sympathizes with them. He beheld Moses when in the ark of bulrushes, and afterwards spake to him out of the burning bush. He was with the three Hebrew children in the fiery furnace, and with Daniel in the lions' den; and there are many other instances in the Word of God of how he was with his people and sympathized with them in their troubles; for "In all their afflictions he is afflicted," and wherever his poor afflicted ones are, there is he.

Verse 22 says, "And whatsoever they did there, Joseph was the doer of it." So changed were these poor prisoners under Joseph's discipline, and the love and esteem they had for him through the good and powerful influence he had over them, that they were brought, we believe, to a repentance for their sin and to a submission to his will. Hence the prison correction in Joseph's hand was made a blessing to them. When God the Father puts his dear people in prison, such as in the cases of Job, Jeremiah, David, Heman, and others, he always

sends their spiritual Joseph to be with them and to attend to them there; he subdues their haughty, rebellious spirits, and gives them godly sorrow for their sin, and constrains them to cry for mercy:— “Bring my soul out of prison, that *I may* praise thy name”; “Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now *have I* kept thy word”; “I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now *mine eye* seeth thee, wherefore *I abhor myself* and *repent* in dust and ashes.” We are well assured our blessed Joseph must be the doer of all this, and yet it is said *they did it*; yes, and that through and by his almighty love and grace; to whom be all the glory for ever and ever. Amen.

CHAPTER XL.

In the wise dispensation of God’s providence, we find that Pharaoh’s butler and baker having offended their lord, he puts them in the prison where Joseph was bound, and the captain of the guard charged Joseph with them and he served them. Here again we find a beautiful comparison between Joseph and his Antitype, and Joseph becomes a servant of servants; the dear Redeemer becomes his Father’s honoured servant. (Isa. xlii. 1; Matt. xii. 18.) He also condescends to be the servant of his church. (Lu. xxii. 27; Jno. xiii. 14, 15.) What a blessed example for every saint of God! May the Lord give grace to put it into practice when required. O what an infinite debt of love the Church of God owes to her

beloved Joseph for his unparalleled services before time, in time, and to all eternity ! Such services have made him the beloved and adored object of all nations ; and, on the other hand, the scorn of his enemies— all of which shall magnify his Name, and crown him with honour and glory.

We may further observe that those Joseph had to serve were in prison on account of their evil deeds ; yet he was willing to serve them even there. Our spiritual Joseph is ready and willing to serve his poor prisoners, even when in the prison-house of the god of this world, and in due time to deliver them, for his love and sympathy are ever the same. (Heb. ii. 17, 18.) The sadness of these two men, through their dreams, arouses the pity and compassion of Joseph's tender heart, and causes him to inquire, "Wherefore look ye so sadly to-day?" The Lord Jesus said to the two disciples on their way to Emmaus, "What manner of communications are these that ye have one to another, as ye walk, and are sad?" (Lu. xxiv. 17) ; and although he justly reproved them, he soon turned their sadness into gladness. Pharaoh's two officers said to Joseph, "We have dreamed a dream, and there is no interpreter of it." (ver. 8.) No diviner or magician was there here, such as Pharaoh afterwards sought for. Joseph replied, "Do not interpretations belong to God? Tell me them, I pray you." The chief butler told his dream to Joseph. (verses 9—11.) As the dreams came from God, so also did the interpretations come from him, and were made known to

them through Joseph; for he was the medium through which God spoke to them. Our beloved Joseph is the Person through whom all interpretations come to his redeemed people. He, and he alone, is Mediator between God and man. (1 Tim. ii. 5.) Here is also an opening, in part, of God's mind respecting Joseph's future work, although he did not perceive it at the time. God the Father began to open his mind in Eden (after the awful fall of man) respecting his well-beloved Son. In Pharaoh's dealings with his two servants we see types of God's sovereignty; both had offended, but one is pardoned and restored, and the other is hanged, according to Joseph's interpretation. We are assured all things will take place according to the word of Christ our Lord. Although Joseph entreated the butler to state his case before Pharaoh, yet "did he not remember Joseph, but forgot him." How few are grieved for the afflictions of our spiritual Joseph (Christ). He was the poor, wise man who delivered the city, yet no one remembered the same poor man. (Eccles. ix. 15, 16.) How characteristic is this of all God's people, to quickly forget favours bestowed on them!

CHAPTER XLI.

Joseph's exaltation is now near at hand. At the end of two full-years Pharaoh dreamed two dreams. That these dreams came from the Lord we doubt not, and so must the interpretation also. The Lord

allowed Pharaoh to call for all his magicians, before whom he narrated his dreams, to show their folly and make the interpretation more conspicuous through Joseph; so that he might secure all the glory to himself and the honour to Joseph, and confound the magic art of the magicians, which proved a complete failure. (Isa. xlv. 25.) Now is the Lord's time for the butler to speak, and he said to Pharaoh, "I do remember my fault this day" (ver. 9), and he goes on to rehearse his and the baker's dreams, also Joseph's interpretation of them exactly as it came to pass,—“Me he restored unto my office, and him he hanged.” Messengers are hastily sent to bring Joseph out of the dungeon (marg., *made him run*), and he shaved himself and changed his raiment, and came in unto Pharaoh. And did not our spiritual Joseph change his garments before he ascended to his Father in glory? It is written, “They parted my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture.” (Ps. xxii. 18.) May the reader and writer be blessed with a part thereof and therein. Then again, Joseph and Nicodemus brought a hundred pound weight of myrrh and aloes, and wound the body of Jesus in the linen clothes with the spices, and laid his holy body in Joseph's new tomb; but the clothes were left in the sepulchre, according to Lu. xx., and Jno. xxiv. We therefore conclude that, as his enemies had secured his garments and vesture, and his grave-clothes remained in the sepulchre, he must have arisen with other clothes, in which he ascended into

his glory which he had with the Father before his incarnation.

Pharaoh now relates his dreams to Joseph, but Joseph, like Daniel, with humility, confesses that, "It is not in *him*. God shall give Pharaoh an answer of peace" (ver. 16), which was the case after Joseph interpreted his dreams. Thus do the people of God often find peace when our Joseph interprets to them their mysterious troubles and trials. (ver. 19.) Do not Pharaoh's lean kine remind us of some professors who seem to eat all God's people have to say, and yet it could not be known they had eaten it? The advice Joseph gives Pharaoh is most excellent, which he received and carried out through Joseph. Just so does our Joseph advise his people, and it is profitable to them when he gives them grace to put it into practice. We also observe, as in nature, so in grace, famine succeeds plenty, and plenty succeeds famine; but the Lord says in the days of famine his people shall be satisfied.

Joseph advises Pharaoh "to look out a man discreet and wise, and set him over the land of Egypt." (39.) God the Father looked out a Man discreet and wise, and gave him power and authority over the whole universe, and that for the good of his brethren especially, the benefit of all mankind, and the glory of God. (Mic. v. 2; Prov. viii.; Matt. xxviii. 18.) As our typical Joseph was endued with wisdom and understanding as ruler over Egypt to make provision in time of plenty for all Pharaoh's subjects and whosoever might apply to him in real

need; the same is true of his Antitype in a higher, nobler, and far greater extent—yea, unlimited; for in the counsels of eternity between Father and Son, called “the counsel of peace” (Zech. vi. 13), every provision was made for the spouse of Christ, the Church of God. Her everlasting safety was secured in her covenant Head by Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. As Joseph’s counsel was good in the eyes of Pharaoh and all his servants, so the covenant of grace has been and still is the delightful theme of all God’s true servants. What a glorious subject to meditate upon when led thereto by the Holy Ghost! In Joseph being set over the land of Egypt we have a beautiful figure of God’s Son in our nature being set up over all things. Joseph had the Spirit of God in him, and Christ was anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows (Ps. xlv. 7); and all his people are partakers with him of the same Spirit of holiness.

Pharaoh gave Joseph the ring off his hand and arrayed him in vestures of fine linen, put a gold chain about his neck and made him ride in the second chariot, and they cried before him, “Bow the knee.” This shows how highly esteemed he was by Pharaoh, who raised him to the most exalted honour and dignity—only in the throne was Pharaoh to be greater than he. Our spiritual Joseph is raised to far greater honour, glory, and grandeur, and has “given him a name which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, and every tongue confess, to the

glory of God the Father.” (Phil. ii. 10, 11.) Pharaoh called Joseph’s name Zaphnath-paaneah—(one that discovers hidden things; in the Egyptian language, “a saviour of the world”; also, “the man to whom secrets are revealed”). How very applicable is all this to the **Man**—Christ Jesus our Lord! Joseph was thirty years of age when he entered upon his exalted duties, and Christ was about the same age when he entered upon his ministry—the former to be the saviour of the body, and the latter to be the Saviour of both body and soul. May not Joseph’s numberless stores be figurative of those boundless stores of everlasting riches treasured up in Christ Jesus for his needy, starving people? God gave Joseph two sons, who were a comfort to him in a strange land. The Lord Jesus came into a strange land from the bosom of his Father to redeem his sons and daughters, and will take them home to be in glory with him for ever. Joseph became fruitful in the land of his affliction; and in the Song of Solomon (i. 16.) we read, “Our bed is green.”

The seven years of plenty now come to an end, as Joseph had foretold, but still there was plenty in all Pharaoh’s dominions, and when the people cried to the king, he orders them to go to Joseph. So with the Lord Jesus,—in his house there is enough and to spare, and we are told to go to him. May we have grace to do in all things what he commands. Joseph opened all the storehouses and sold to the Egyptians and to others, as the famine was sore in all lands. Few people, if any, would have gone to

him,—no, not even his brethren, but for the famine that was in the land. So likewise a famine may be of great use to bring our spiritual Joseph's brethren to visit him for the bread of eternal life, as was the case with the starving prodigal. The pinchings of hunger make the living soul cry and seek for food. May we be favoured to live by faith upon the broken body and shed blood of a crucified Christ.

CHAPTER XLII.

By what means Jacob heard of corn being in Egypt we are not told; but he heard and believed it. How many hear of the corn of heaven and yet never send a single messenger of faith by prayer and supplication! But there are still a few who send daily messages, and they get daily supplies in return, and in this way are kept alive in soul. To *look one upon another* in trouble is not enough. Let us send living messengers for living things from our spiritual Joseph's stores; for

“His heart is made of tenderness,
His bowels melt with love.”

Jacob sends ten of his sons *only*. His faith at this time appeared weak, as he feared some mischief might befall Benjamin if sent with the rest. How very unwilling we are to part with our favourites or idols unless compelled; but the Lord knows how to make us part with them. Joseph's brethren came to buy corn, as did the Egyptians; but observe the distinction Joseph makes,—to the former he *gives*,

to the latter he *sells*. His brethren bow down to him with their faces to the earth. Joseph knew his brethren, but they knew not him. Twenty-two years having elapsed, Joseph must have been much altered from the time they stripped him of his coat of many colours, and now they see him invested with much of the regalia of a sovereign. Not a thought entered their minds that this man, the lord of the land, was their brother. Will our spiritual Joseph be known by his brethren when they see him arrayed in all the glory and dignity of a king? Yes, we believe he will. Paul says, "Then shall I know, even as also I am known." (1 Cor. xiii. 12.) Their ignorance of their brother did not affect their relationship to him, nor their after-recognition of him. So the twofold relationship—natural and spiritual—which exists between the Lord Jesus and his people, is sure to be made known to all our Lord's brethren.

Joseph remembers his dreams, and to prove them and to find out all about his father and Benjamin charges them with being spies; he also charges them with coming to see the nakedness of the land. The dear Lord greatly tries his people when they come to him for the bread of life; yet he keeps them longing and crying, and will not let them perish; but in due time he reveals himself to them, to the joy and rejoicing of their hearts. What a mercy would it be if there were no nakedness to be seen in the land of Zion; but, alas! it is not so. Joseph now proposes that one of them should fetch

Benjamin, as a proof of their statements being correct; but to this they apparently did not consent, and he put them in prison three days. Thus they are held in the bonds of the law at Joseph's will. Their sin is now brought to remembrance with bitter and cutting reflections. Conscience is loaded with the guilt of their brother's blood, for aught they knew, as in verse 23; the anguish of his soul, his cries and entreaties when in the pit, came back with all the freshness of a resurrection unto life. How true it is, "Be sure your sin will find you out." Doubtless they had thought their sin was dead and buried, but twenty-two years nor twenty thousand years cannot bury sin, except in the ocean or fountain of Christ's precious blood. Joseph had succeeded in drawing from them a confession of their base conduct towards him, which they could not easily forget. How foolishly does the poor deluded sinner think that after so many years have passed away his sin is forgotten, because he himself may cease to remember it; but God forgets not any act of sin committed against him. The hidden things of Esau are sought out, and the hidden things of darkness brought to light, and thus the convinced sinner is brought before a holy God and judged at his tribunal, and conscience bears witness to the verdict, "Guilty, guilty." Those who are not brought in guilty here, and acquitted, will be found guilty at the judgment day, without mercy. What a mercy to be brought in guilty under God's holy law, and then acquitted through the obedience and atonement of Christ.

As Joseph speaks to his brethren by an interpreter, so does our Joseph speak to his brethren by cross-providences and conflicting experiences, which often need an interpreter ; but when such things are made plain they would rather he had spoken in that way than to be silent to them. It is sweet and profitable to the soul to have the past dark dispensations made plain to them by the light of the Holy Spirit. Joseph could refrain no longer, and he turned aside to weep—not bitter tears of guilt, like Peter, but of love and joy in prospect of a mutual reconciliation, and from brotherly affection. How graciously is this brought about between the Lord Jesus Christ and his dear people!

In order to carry out his purpose, Joseph detains Simeon as security for his brethren's return. Why Simeon? May it not have been because of his murderous conduct towards the Shechemites? which may have been brought home to his conscience in prison, together with the trouble it gave his godly father, who said, " Ye have troubled me to make me to stink among the inhabitants of the land." (xxxiv. 30.) What bitter troubles do some children bring upon their godly parents! Notwithstanding all that had transpired, Joseph ordered their sacks to be filled with corn, and restored every man's money to his sack, and gave them provision by the way. (25.) This shows us that our Joseph wants none of our money; his provision for his brethren is all free, without money and without price. Heavenly treasures cannot be purchased with the most valu-

able things the earth can yield. Earthly things can be of no use in heaven, nor can the rich man take a drop of water to hell. Joseph also *gave*, not *sold*, their provision for the way. What more could he do for them? And will not our beloved Joseph give his poor and needy brethren ample provision for the way? Certainly he will. We also notice that Joseph's brethren brought their sacks empty to him, and he had them filled without reproaching them for not having a little in them. Do we not like to bring a little in our sacks when we come into the pulpit or to the prayer-meeting, or when we go to see a friend or visit the sick? But it is better to have the sack filled with corn than a mixture of chaff with it, and we can put nothing better than chaff in the sack ourselves.

Verses 27, 28 relate the discovery of Joseph's kindness in returning their money in their sacks' mouth, which act they took to be against them. It is not an unusual thing for God's people to misconstrue his dealings with them, as Jacob himself did about Joseph and Benjamin. (36.) In their relation to their father of Joseph's conduct towards them, they all formed an unfavourable impression of him, he having imprisoned them and still having retained one, taking them for spies and speaking roughly to them; yet, in a spiritual sense, how all such treatment works for the sinner's good and God's glory.

Although Jacob's sons bring their sacks full of corn, yet the money brings trouble as well. Our

greatest blessings are often mingled with the most trying dispensations. To Jacob, the greatest trial of all was, that he was asked to part with his beloved Benjamin, and he positively refused, saying, "My son shall not go down with you." (38.) Here we observe that, although their consciences had been smitten with the guilt of selling their brother Joseph, yet not a hint is given to the father of their bitter reflections. It is our very nature to hide sin, if possible, and it is God's determination to bring it to light. What a blessing it will be if it is brought to light here between the Lord and the sinner, and a Surety found to pay the mighty debt, and pardon be received through the blood of the Lamb !

CHAPTER XLIII.

The famine is sore in the land. So it was with the prodigal, and so it is at times with all the living family of God. A famine makes no difference to the dead, only to the living. This, as a means, causes the soul to seek for more food, as Jacob suggested his sons should go again to Joseph to buy a little more corn. Our Joseph's stores are inexhaustible, and the hungry soul may here be continually fed, and even is already blessed of his God in his hunger ; for it is the Holy Spirit's work to create spiritual desires, to which is attached a very gracious promise, " They shall be filled."

Jacob's faith must be tried again. His sons having promised Joseph that they would bring

Benjamin with them, they refuse to go without him. (5.) All promises deliberately made, however painful to fulfil, should be binding. (Ps. xv. 4.) The poor old man begins to make any excuse rather than that his darling Benjamin should go. What foolish excuses we make rather than part with our idols! The delay is becoming serious, and Judah yet pleads with his father (8—10), and at last offers to become surety for Benjamin. What a sweet type of the Lion of the tribe of Judah, who became a Surety for all his brethren! It was this blessed Surety Job so longed for in his fiery trial (xvii. 3); and to this spot we believe every living soul must be brought, even to see and feel the need of a precious Christ as a Surety for them; as Benjamin saw the value of it afterwards (Gen. xlv. 17) when circumstances clearly pointed to his detention for an unknown period. As Judah was successful with his father, so our spiritual Judah is with his Father in all his intercessory work.

At length Jacob yields,—necessity compels him, and he proposes to send a present to the man who received them so roughly, thereby to gain his favour. (11.) What a mixture it was composed of! *A little balm*, which is much needed for healing sores, for which the Balm of Gilead is so renowned, for there is nothing can cure the serpent's bite but that; *a little honey*, which is exceedingly sweet, and so is the Word of God (Ps. cxix. 103); *spices and myrrh*, which may signify the graces of the Spirit, both in Jacob and his son Joseph; *nuts*

and almonds. We find our spiritual Joseph has a garden of nuts (his Church), which he visits to see the fruits of the *valley* (not the mountains). When Jacob lost his Joseph, and Joseph was put in the pit and then sold to the Ishmaelites, these were nuts that neither of them could crack for many years; yet, when the nuts were broken open, what delicious food they became for their souls! The outside of a nut has little attraction, but this we soon lose sight of when we taste the sweetness of the kernel. Even so is it in a dark dispensation. Little is said about the present after Joseph received it. Jacob also told his sons to take double money in their hands, so as to trade honestly, "peradventure it was an oversight." (12.) "Take your brother also; and God Almighty give you mercy before the man, that he may send away your other brother and Benjamin," &c. (13, 14.) What a conflict we see here between faith and fear!

They took the present and Benjamin, and stood before Joseph, and when he saw his brother Benjamin he gives orders to prepare for his brethren to dine with him. (16.) Christ said to his brethren, "Come and dine," and although a plain repast, it was perfectly free, as was Joseph's. The Lord will have it to be all of grace. When they were brought into Joseph's house they were afraid,—not only on account of their money in their sacks, but of their cruel treatment of their brother, which continued to follow them. What a burden is a guilty conscience, and what wrong interpretations we often put upon

the Lord's dealings with us, like Joseph's brethren. (18.) Now they lay their case before the steward of Joseph's house, who seemed to be in the secret, and he informed them that he had their money. It is not an uncommon thing for our Joseph to communicate his secrets to his stewards, that they may tell them to his brethren, so as to give them peace of mind. (23.) Also, the steward bringing Simeon out to them subdued their fears. They are still further favoured by being brought into Joseph's house, that they may experience more of his kindness, and enjoy his hospitality in giving them water to wash their feet, and provender for their asses. What a sweet figure of our beloved Joseph, who invites all his brethren into his house—the household of faith, and from thence to the mansions above; for all who are favoured to see the interior of God's house (his Church) must experience the new birth and be led and taught by the Holy Spirit; and in this way, like the Queen of Sheba, they see many things, and become acquainted with many secrets that outer-court worshippers know nothing of. As they were informed they were to eat bread there (25), they were, doubtless, expecting so to do, bread signifying and including all things else needful for the body. So Christ himself is all that is needful for body and soul for ever and ever.

On Joseph's return, they bring him their present, and again bow down to him to the earth. (26.) What a favour to be drawn to the feet of the dear Redeemer, with reverence and submission to his

holy will. This is a further confirmation to Joseph of his dreams. By his inquiry for their own and their father's welfare, he shows how solicitous he is about them. How descriptive is this of Joseph's Antitype, whose eyes and heart are perpetually with his dear people.

In verse 29, on seeing his brother Benjamin, he pronounces God's blessing upon him. Also in verse 30, his bowels yearn for him, and he sought where to weep. What is this but love which could not be restrained? The poet says, speaking of the Lord Jesus :

" His heart is made of tenderness,
His bowels melt with love."

The time had not yet quite arrived for Joseph to show his relationship to them. So our spiritual Joseph wisely and graciously times all his revelations to his brethren, and what fears often prevail that he will never reveal himself to them again! Joseph makes no reference to the present they brought him; it was with his brethren that his very heart and soul were taken up. How insignificant are all things to Christ if the heart is lacking! "My son, give me thine heart." (Prov. xxiii. 26.) Although Joseph, his brethren, and the Egyptians were all separately provided for, yet were they in the presence of each other. So Christ dwells in the presence of all his brethren, and eats and drinks with them. But behold the distinction that is made after they are seated! Benjamin has five times as much as either of his other brothers, although he

was the youngest. Joseph's love to Benjamin was very great, he being his brother by both father and mother. Christ is related to his own brethren both naturally and spiritually, for "they that are joined to the Lord are one spirit," and all such have the extra messes, if not in providence yet in grace, as we see further on. (Gen. xlv. 22.) When our Joseph makes a feast for his own brethren, what merry-making there is with him, as in the case of the returning prodigal!

CHAPTER XLIV.

Joseph commands his steward to fill every man's sack with food, as much as they can carry, and to put every man's money in his sack's mouth. What a loving and bountiful Giver is our spiritual Joseph; and as Joseph was not impoverished when their sacks were filled, no more is our Joseph when he fills our earthen vessels with the rich treasure or fruits of his Spirit. (Gal. v. 22, 23.) Nor does he want us to bring a price in our hand, since all is free, and he will have it so. (Isa. lv. 1.) It is his glory to give freely to the most unworthy. (Lu. xv. 21—24.) The steward is commanded to put Joseph's silver cup with Benjamin's money in his sack. This he did, as every faithful steward does as he is bidden. They rise early in the morning on their journey homeward, probably conversing about their reception and kind entertainment in Joseph's house, the exceeding kindness of the lord of the

country in comparison to his former roughness, their having settled the difficulty with the steward in giving him the double money—all this contributed to give them light hearts and buoyant spirits, and doubtless made them happy and cheerful.

But before they had proceeded far, the steward is sent by Joseph to charge them with taking his silver cup; and again this faithful steward did as commanded. The charge is a serious one, especially after such unexpected kindness from such a man as Joseph. Now their trouble begins again, and their rejoicing is turned into sorrow as the cup is found in Benjamin's sack. How quickly does the day of adversity follow the day of prosperity: "God hath set the one over against the other." (Eccles. vii. 14.) So sure are they the charge is false that they propose the thief should die and the rest be bondsmen. Upon search being made, the cup was found in Benjamin's sack, which greatly aggravates the case, Judah having become responsible for Benjamin's return to his father. With heavy hearts they return to meet the lord of the country. How will he receive them now? What will he do with them? Many such questions would occupy their minds. However much a sinner may deny his sin, the Lord has a way of bringing it home to his conscience, as clearly as the cup was found in Benjamin's sack. If our secret sins were not set in the light of God's countenance we should not be troubled about them and cry for mercy.

Immediately they come into Joseph's presence

they fall down before him on the ground. (14.) What wisdom is here displayed! A thousand excuses could not have altered the case, as the cup was found in Benjamin's sack. So all our excuses will be of no benefit to us when God brings us in guilty under his holy law. Let us fall on the ground at his feet, confessing with Job, "Behold, I am vile," and seek for mercy through the merits of a crucified Christ, pleading his atoning blood and spotless righteousness. This is the only way sin can be cancelled and pardon received. They knew from past experience Joseph could imprison them; and so is the poor guilty sinner brought to see and feel persuaded God could justly shut him up in the prison-house of hell for ever, so that "Mercy, mercy, mercy!" becomes his incessant cry. Like Job he is also brought to feel his need of a Surety. In the person of Judah this is clearly seen when he said, "What shall we say unto my lord? what shall we speak? or how shall we clear ourselves?" This was impossible, as the theft appeared so plain, and to this is again added the consciousness of the sin against their brother Joseph. "Be sure your sin will find you out" is truly verified, and confession by Judah is also made. Judah is set forth here not only as a surety, but as an advocate on the behalf of Benjamin, whom Joseph proposes to detain as his servant; and like his Antitype he proves a most successful one. John says, "We have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous," and it is he that pleads his people's

cause, and is sure to carry their case quite through. In Judah we have a sweet illustration of this branch of our Redeemer's work, and of his Suretyship too. Whilst Benjamin is considered the guilty person in this matter, he is quite passive ; but Judah takes his place altogether and uses all the arguments at his command, rehearsing every particular in the case, and so ably and truthfully did he lay it before Joseph that he finds it impossible to withstand Judah's appeal. So every guilty soul for whom the faithful Advocate pleads shall be accepted of God the Father through his dear Son.

CHAPTER XLV.

"Then Joseph could not refrain himself." The pathetic speech of Judah and the sight of his brethren's distress so overcame him that the pent-up feelings of affection break forth like a mighty river. What a sweet emblem of the river of God's everlasting love to his chosen in Christ ; but his time of revealing this love to them is the best ; for he has a set time for that very purpose. Joseph now orders every man to go out, and no man was present while he made himself known to his brethren, and he wept alone. If Joseph's heart burst forth with love to his brethren, what must that love be that is in the ever-blessed Redeemer toward his brethren, so blessedly manifested in his taking their place and becoming their Surety, answering for all their sins, and undertaking to see them landed in eternal glory !

This relationship was a secret between Joseph and his brethren. So, "the secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will show them his covenant." What heavenly, covenant secrets has the Holy Ghost to reveal from time to time through or from this relationship to his brethren, which is twofold: "We are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones" (Eph. v. 30), and "he that is joined to the Lord is one spirit." (1 Cor. vi. 17.) Here is a union that can never be broken—one with God for ever and ever!

Now they are alone with Joseph, who can describe their feelings? What is the meaning of these sobs and tears? What is he about to do with us? They must have been spell-bound. But Joseph breaks the silence by saying, "I am Joseph, your brother. Doth my father yet live?" They were dumb and terrified at his presence. So was Job (xxi. 6; xxiii. 15), also the Psalmist (cxix. 120), and so has it been with many others. Adam confessed he was afraid at God's voice. It is a guilty conscience that causes slavish fear and terror. Joseph's presence was to them a trouble, and for the moment they would have fled from him if they could. It is impossible for the guilty to flee from the presence of God, although Adam tried to do so. Joseph speaks again (4) to dispel their fears: "Come near to me, I pray you. And they came near;" and again he endeavours to convince them that it is he they sold into Egypt. This secret could not be known to any but Joseph and his brethren. Who

can bring sin to remembrance and charge it upon the conscience but God himself? And who but the same God by his blessed Spirit can speak peace by the blood of the cross? Joseph sees their grief, and they look upon each other with bitter reflections; but he speaks comfortably unto them, and tells them it was God sent him there, which clearly proved that he had forgiven them. This doubtless set them at ease in Joseph's presence. What a blessed change it is for a guilty sinner to be delivered from the curses of a broken law and an angry Judge, and be brought into the liberty of the gospel of Christ Jesus our Lord! The same person that has bound and imprisoned us now breaks our bonds and gives us liberty and embraces us. What a wondrous change love works in the poor sinner's soul! What a sweet and blessed restoration of friendship, love, and union, that had been blighted by sin! "Then I restored that which I took not away." (Ps. lxi. 4; Isa. lviii. 12; Ruth iv. 15.)

The brethren coming near to their brother Joseph proved the reconciliation to be mutual, but the request comes from him, not them. How striking the likeness between Joseph and Christ (7); the former sent into Egypt to preserve natural life, and the latter sent by the same Father into this wicked world to give eternal life to his brethren, dead in trespasses and sins; and this according to the stipulations of the everlasting covenant between the Father and Son, "ordered in all things and sure." (Zech. vi. 13; 2 Sam. xxiii. 5.) The lives delivered

by Joseph were only delivered from temporal death; the deliverance by our spiritual Joseph is eternal; in the former case it was the body only, in the latter case both soul and body; so the Antitype exceeds the type as much as the sun exceeds the moon. God made Joseph a father to Pharaoh and lord of all his house (8), and ruler of all his dominions. So has he made his well-beloved Son to be his Ruler over heaven and earth and *all* worlds, visible and invisible (Dan. vii. 14); and that, too, in our nature without sin.

Joseph now hastens his brethren to carry the delightful news of his exalted position to their father, and to bring him down at once (9); for he is very solicitous that his father and his household should come and enjoy his wealth with him. So our heavenly Joseph will not be satisfied until all his Father's household are gathered to him to participate with him in his heavenly inheritance. (Jno. xvii. 24.) What a glorious gathering this will be; and shall *we* be in that blessed company? The promise of Joseph (10) was that Goshen, which appears to be the best part of Egypt, was to be their dwelling-place, and also that they should be near him. We are sure our spiritual Joseph will have all the household of faith in the best of his estate and near him, even nearer than the angelic host. "And there will I nourish thee." (11.) Thus Joseph undertook to supply them with every needful thing, from the little babe with milk, to the old man with strong meat; and this was to continue.

through the famine. Even so the saints are to be satisfied in the days of famine. To make this the more certain to them (12) he says, "Behold, your eyes see, and the eyes of my brother Benjamin, that it is my mouth that speaketh unto you." Before, he had spoken to them as a judge, through an interpreter and also by his steward, and maintained that distance which became his high and exalted position; but now no steward or interpreter is required to come between him and them. In all probability he spoke to them in the Hebrew language, and as they were thus brought so closely together, they would discover in him the features of their brother Joseph. Benjamin would be an excellent witness before his father, not having been a party to the wicked deeds of the others. What a beautiful emblem is this of King Jesus, and of how close he comes to his brethren in the ever-blessed gospel, yet how distant in the law! How terrible and dreadful when he speaks to them in the law by Moses! The poor sinner trembles under his awful threats, especially when bound in prison with no prospect of release; but when God comes in the gospel, even though it be through a steward, it is music in his soul. Then when he comes nearer still and speaks with his own mouth into the heart, the Lord Jesus is distinguished from all other persons, and the desire of the soul is, "Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth." What holy familiarity is experienced, and yet what self-loathing and abasement; what confession of sin and contrition of spirit! and there is *then* no more fear

of Moses than as though he had never existed. What mouth can speak or pen depict the contrast between a poor self-condemned sinner, awaiting his final sentence from an inexorable Judge in whose presence he stands, and the same Judge in the Person of a precious Christ appearing his Advocate, Surety, Friend, and Saviour, and the Holy Spirit bearing witness in the soul that his sins have been pardoned and reconciliation made through the righteousness Christ wrought out and his atoning blood! Grace is here displayed in all its glory and beauty, and love in its immeasurable heights, depths, breadths, and lengths surpassing all human comprehension. Neither men nor angels can describe such a glorious scene as this,—when the eye of faith sees Jesus as a Brother, and the circumcised ear hears the voice of her Beloved.

All this and much more must be communicated to poor old Jacob—not what they had *heard* merely, but what they had *seen* (13); and Joseph tells them to bring his father also that he may see his glory. Our spiritual Joseph does infinitely more than this; yea, far above all we can ask or think. If Joseph is so desirous to have his father to dwell in his presence, to behold his glory and share in his pleasures, shall the heavenly Bridegroom be less anxious to have his betrothed home with him for ever, that the marriage may be consummated in eternal glory, about which so much has been said and written for nearly 6,000 years! Especially has the Lord Jesus spoken of his bride, and so honourably too, in his will and

testament. If in the eternity past his delights were with his bride (Prov. viii. 31), what will his delight be when he shall present her to himself a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blame? (Eph. v. 27.)

Love now afresh flows forth from Joseph's heart (14), as he fell upon his brother Benjamin's neck and wept, and Benjamin fell upon his neck and wept; and he kissed all his brethren and wept upon them. (15.) "And kills them with a kiss." This was a sweet confirmation to them of the sincerity of his love; so that they must have returned home with great joy. And what is our Joseph's repeated love to his people but a re-assurance of his constant care and concern for them! Joseph's name becomes more famous still, now that his brethren have come, for it pleased Pharaoh well and his servants when they discovered that he was a son of a numerous and most honourable family, and even more honourable in God's sight than Pharaoh and all his princes; for his own father was a prince and had prevailed with God and man, and his great-grandfather was a friend of God, for he called him, "Abraham, my friend." Alas! God's friends appear to be very few at the present time! If Joseph became increasingly famous in the eyes of men, what will his Antitype be in the sight of God and man! His Name shall be still famous in Israel. (Ruth iv. 14.) His family comprises a number that no man can number, and his fame exceeds all the fame of repre-

sentatives, as far as his own glory in heaven exceeds all his other works.

In verse 18 we see there is a perfect concurrence in the will of Pharaoh and Joseph that Jacob and his family should be brought down into Egypt, and all things needful are sent to bring this about. As before stated, all things were specified in the covenant of grace, even the hairs of the head. The waggons (19) remind one of the *chariot* of salvation that Solomon made for the daughters of Jerusalem, and for them only. It was made of the *wood of Lebanon*, which was very fragrant and durable. It may be figurative of the pure and durable humanity of Christ. The *pillars were made of silver*, which may signify gospel ministers, also the doctrines of grace they are taught to preach; as both are as silver tried in the fire (Zech. xiii. 9; Prov. ix. 1; Jer. i. 18); and in the Lord's hands both become supports to the Church of God, as the two pillars were supports to the porch of the Temple, signifying establishment and strength. The *bottom of gold* we believe clearly points to the Deity of Christ in our nature, without sin; as God is the foundation of all that is holy and good. The *covering of purple* implies his solemn, bloody sufferings, which became a covering for all the daughters of Jerusalem, as the blood on the lintels and doorpost became the safety of every Israelite in Egypt when the messenger of death visited every house where it was not found, and will continue to do the same. The *midst being paved with love* is sweetly and blessedly figurative

of the love of Christ in his sufferings for his beloved bride. . This is the *dowry bed* on which the daughters of Jerusalem may rest and recline (marg.) Like Joseph's waggons, it contains little children, young men, and fathers. This *chariot* also beautifully sets forth our Lord Jesus Christ in his incarnation, when he came from heaven to redeem his Church by dying for her, she dying with him and rising with him, and was in union with him when he took his seat at the right hand of God. And as the waggons were large and strong and safe enough for all Jacob's family, so is this chariot, and every one in it will arrive in glory to the praise of sovereign grace in Christ. (Pardon this little digression.)

Joseph further says, "Regard not your stuff; for the good of all the land of Egypt is yours." (20.) This is descriptive (in part) of heaven. What excellent counsel not to regard our stuff. Do we not cleave to our stuff, and does it not cleave to us? And what undue regard we often have for it! What was Jacob's household stuff in comparison to all the good of Egypt, where he would see his Joseph and dwell near him, and daily live upon the bread Joseph had stored up for his father's house? although he knew it not at the time, nor did Jacob. Who can conceive a thousandth part of what is laid up in Christ for his beloved,—things new and old (Song vii. 13; Ps. xxxi. 19); and when by faith the soul can lodge in this goodness (Ps. xxv. 13, marg.), what is all the stuff of this world then? The too great a regard for our stuff is the cause of so much

of our trouble. It is only stuff after all ; not so the good things of heaven.

Joseph gave them waggons and provisions by the way (21), according to the command of Pharaoh. He had nothing to *sell* his brethren ; all came to them without money and without price. So every blessing, temporal or spiritual, comes freely from the loving heart of Jesus to his poor brethren ; and there is still with him enough and to spare, for his riches are inexhaustible. Joseph adds more gifts still to his bounty (22) in giving each man changes of raiment ; but to Benjamin five changes of raiment and three hundred pieces of silver (over £30 of our money). The changes of raiment for the ten brethren indicate that the Lord Jesus, whose tender mercies are over all his works, gives to all his creatures of the bounties of his providence, but for his Benjamin he reserves the very best and the most—the five changes prefiguring the many changes the poor soul may have to pass through, sometimes with sackcloth on his loins, on account of sin, like David (1 Chron. xxi. 17) ; also like Joshua with filthy garments (Zech. iii. 3), and the Church in her filthy rags. (Isa. lxiv. 6 ; Job xxix. 14.) Then follow other changes of a delightful nature. (Isa. lxi. 3, 10 ; Zech. iii. 5 ; Lu. xv. 22.) All these and many others of a similar nature show what a variety of changes the soul has to pass through while here below ; some to make the heart ache with sadness, and others to make the heart to expand with gladness ; as the hymn-writer says,

“ My soul through many changes goes,
His love no variation knows.”

The money may set forth the gift of faith. Solomon says, “ Money answereth all things.” (Eccles. x. 19.) Money was given to procure all Benjamin needed for his body. Faith, which is God’s gift, is the handmaiden to the soul, by which she receives all her supplies, and to which faith every new covenant blessing is revealed. (Rom. i. 17.) It was by this faith in God that Jacob wrestled and obtained the blessing, and it is the same with all his spiritual seed. As this money, though so much, yet doubtless it was all spent, and needed to be replenished, so the poor soul soon spends his little faith and needs daily renewals ; and O what a rich Joseph is the Lord Jesus !

The *asses* (beasts of burden, ver. 23) we believe represent the servants of Christ. (Isa. xxxii. 20.) Abraham and other great men rode on asses, and the Greatest of all men rode on one as “ King of kings and Lord of lords.” (Zech. ix. 9 ; Matt. xxi. 5.) Samson, another type of Christ, slew heaps upon heaps of his enemies with the jaw-bone of an ass. (Judg. xv. 16.) It was by one of these Balaam was solemnly rebuked, and they have been commissioned many times by the King of heaven to rebuke kings and queens and other great personages, even at the risk of their lives. (Matt. x. 27, 28.)

Their *burden* was *corn, bread, and meat* ; good things indeed, and who could live in health without them ? What blessed things does our Lord lay on

the minds and hearts of his sent servants for the support of his own brethren; and he sends them where *he* pleases, not where *they* please, and at times they feel it such a weight that they are ready to sink under it, and beg to be released. The ass (typical of a servant of Christ) is also a very stupid, stubborn animal, as may be seen in one particular case, who, when ordered by his master where to go, he set out for another place, and went fast asleep, in a spirit of disobedience, risking his own life and the lives of all that were in the ship with him. This shows us the danger of walking in a path of disobedience. The mariners threw him overboard to save their own lives, and the storm then became a calm; but Jonah was three days and three nights in the deep for his folly, and he calls it "*the belly of hell.*" Sharp discipline this! But after all he has to carry the same burden he was ordered to carry at the first; yet this severe discipline did not cure him of his fretfulness and peevishness. It is only by rich, free, and sovereign grace *they* are constrained to loving obedience.

Joseph cautions his brethren "not to fall out by the way." (xlv. 24.) As we have no particulars of the journey, we are unable to say whether this advice was fully heeded. Many things may have occupied their minds on their return journey. The selling of their brother, and Reuben and Benjamin being no parties to it, their being put in prison three days, the fulfilment of Joseph's dreams; serious discussions are very likely to have taken place as to how

they should make this matter known to their father without letting out the secret that had been kept for over twenty-two years. Upon this point there may have been great differences of opinion ; but as Benjamin had now been made acquainted with the whole matter, we do not think he could have been a party to withhold it from his father.

Verses 26 and 27 inform us that they told their father that Joseph was yet alive, and the message he sent by them, and what he said to them ; not what Joseph had said about their selling him and his forgiveness—no mention is made of that. Poor old Jacob's heart fainted, and he believed them not. Like many others, he was subject to fainting fits. We expect he had many while with Laban ; also when he heard of Esau coming to meet him with four hundred men ; when Simeon and Levi slew the men of Shechem, and especially at the loss of his beloved Joseph ; but at the sight of the waggons that Joseph had sent his spirits revived. How often have the spirits of God's saints been revived on hearing from their spiritual Joseph, or seeing him by the eye of faith, or having some sweet promise applied to their hearts !

“ And Israel said, It is enough.” (28.) It is the new man of grace now that speaks,—*Israel* being his new name, which was given to him when he wrestled with the Angel of the everlasting covenant. “ Joseph, my son, is yet alive ; I will go and see him before I die.” How descriptive is this of the living soul after having experienced the hidings of God's

face, and then in the Lord's time, and by his appointed means, he hears again from his beloved spiritual Joseph ! Then faith is renewed and every other needed grace in the soul, and with all its powers it yearns at times to see a precious Christ, and to experience more and more of fellowship and communion with him, while holy and heavenly anticipations are raised of a personal interview with him, that is, of a sweet revelation of him to the soul by God the Holy Ghost (Jno. xvi. 14) ; and further still do faith, hope and love mount up, expecting some day to see our spiritual Joseph in all his glory, without a veil between, and to hear his voice and behold his face, as John did on two occasions especially, even whilst on this earth. (Rev. i. 17 ; Luke ix. 28.)

CHAPTER XLVI.

“ And Israel took his journey with all that he had.” He walked by faith, as did his fathers, and as do all God's Israel, having his beloved Joseph in view. Who so worthy of our hope and faith as Christ the Lord ? God's people are pilgrims and strangers here below, and are looking for a city which hath foundations, whose Builder and Maker is God, where their beloved Joseph will receive and embrace them, as the father did the prodigal son. “ And Jacob came to Beersheba,” where Abraham and Abimelech made a covenant (xxi. 31), and there “ Jacob offered sacrifices unto the God of his father

Isaac." At this place a covenant of peace was made between Abraham and Abimelech, and here Jacob rested for a while, and peace and friendship were renewed between the Lord and his soul.

"And God spake unto Israel in the visions of the night, and said, Jacob, Jacob. And he said, Here am I." Just as his grandfather had said. (xxii. i.) As if he should say, "Do with me, Lord, just as it shall please thee. I am in thy hands as clay in the hands of the potter." This was the voice of the new man, which may always be distinguished by a willing obedience to the Lord. Although God said "Jacob, Jacob," yet it was Israel he spake unto,—his new name; for the Lord only has fellowship with the new man of grace, which is his own work and life in the soul. This took place in the visions of the night, when, as Elihu said, "deep sleep falleth upon men, he openeth their ears and sealeth their instruction." (Job xxxiii. 15—17.)

"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." (3.) What a blessed, gracious promise, which had its fulfilment after Jacob's death. The Lord has his own time in making and in fulfilling his own promises. No doubt Jacob much needed this "Fear not," although the sight of the wagons had decided him to go down into Egypt. Many fears often fill the bosom, even when the child of God is taking a right path. The Lord sweetly assured Jacob that he was his God and the God of his fathers, and he further tells him

what blessings he will heap upon him and upon his offspring. (3, 4.) All God's Jacobs must go down into Egypt to experience in some measure what bondage sin, guilt, and a broken law are before full deliverance is realized in the gospel of Jesus Christ. As every Israelite was delivered out of Egypt and not a hoof was left behind, so not one of Abraham's spiritual seed shall perish, but every one of them shall arrive safely in the Canaan above. God told Jacob that "Joseph should put his hand upon his eyes," which was a sure proof to Jacob that his beloved son was living and should attend him in death, which he did (l. 1), and closed his eyes, which it was customary for dear friends to do. If our beloved Joseph should close our eyes in death, what a favour it will be, and what a sweet sleep will the body then enter upon until the resurrection morning, then to be raised a glorified body, and conformed to the image of Christ; to leave this cumbrous clay behind with all its attendant evils, and to be clothed with immortality, glory, and honour; and all this through a precious Christ. O what a blessed change!

Good old Jacob now goes on his journey (5), his heart being filled with joy through a visit of love from his God, his faith was revived, and his strength renewed. How safe must that journey be that God orders, and in which he accompanies the person, as he did Jacob, and as he has faithfully promised to be with all his saints! (Matt. xxviii. 20.)

Verses 6, 7. The cattle, goods, and little ones

are needful in our journey, for our comfort and support here below, and as Judah (a type of Christ) was familiar with the way, he went before as a guide. (28.) What a trustworthy Guide is the Lord Jesus! Not one so reliable and faithful as he. Joseph makes ready his chariot to meet his dearly-beloved father (29) ; but Joseph's Antitype made himself a chariot before time to carry all his brethren to eternal glory. (Song iii. 9, 10.) Pens fail adequately to describe this parental meeting. We think the nearest akin to it is the account of the father meeting the prodigal son. On both sides hot tears of pent-up affection and fervent love burst forth, and on each side there is a two-fold affection—spiritual and natural ; mutual, yet inexpressible. Is not this a beautiful, though faint, figure of those blessed seasons of renewings and reciprocal affection between the spiritual Bridegroom and his beloved bride? His comings and goings, his short visits, and his often long absences ; her fears and suspicions lest she has so offended him that he will never return ; her groans and distress of soul, whilst unbelief and doubts seem to reign, cannot be described. All this did Jacob pass through at the loss of his dear boy. And does not this try the love on both sides? But would it be a trial if no love existed? Did Jacob lose his love for Joseph, or Joseph for his father, because of twenty-two years' absence from each other? Jacob had a natural affection to Joseph, and Joseph to his father. Christ as the Son of God loved his people from all eternity, and when he was

born of the virgin his heart was full of love to them, even that love of which they were afterwards made partakers ; for they love him with his own love as he sheds it abroad in their hearts, therefore it must be of the same kind ; as John says : “ Of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace.” (Jno. i. 16.) The poor soul that has had an earnest of this love here below shall enjoy it in all its fulness for ever and ever.

Verse 30. The dear old man’s heart is so full of love and gratitude to his God at the sight of his dearly-beloved Joseph, the son of his darling Rachel, that he is now made willing to depart and be with Christ, like godly Simeon when he had the dear Babe of Bethlehem in his natural arms and in the arms of his faith also. Even so is it still the same, when the soul embraces a precious Christ in the arms of faith ; for he is made willing in the day of Christ’s powerful love to die and be with him.

Verse 31. Joseph now addresses himself to his brethren, makes all arrangements for them, and promises to inform Pharaoh of their coming and also of their occupation. In the next three verses we find how he gives them instructions how to behave before Pharaoh and what to say. How blessed it is, and what a relief is felt, when we can leave all our matters in the hands of our spiritual Joseph for him to manage them for us, who covenanted with his Father on his people’s behalf to see to every minute circumstance in connection with them, from their birth (and even before) until

they arrive in eternal glory. (2 Sam. xxiii. 5.) Joseph, with Pharaoh's approbation, selects the most fruitful and suitable of all the land of Pharaoh, and that which will be near himself, for his brethren. This beautifully corresponds with the Antitype; and what more could he do for his beloved Spouse than he has done! When one gets a sight by faith of his eternal settlements in his covenant engagements with his Father respecting his Church, and ratified by the Holy Ghost (Zech. vi. 13); also one's own interest therein, what soul-satisfying truths these are! The Lord Jesus will not be satisfied until his Bride, his beloved, his dove, be brought home to him to be near him, even in his immediate presence, in the very best part of his Father's land, even into heaven itself, where he will show her plainly of the Father. (Jno. xvi. 25.) Then the marriage will be consummated to the eternal praise of a Triune God, and to the praise of his rich, free, and sovereign grace. Although some of the Egyptians were shepherds, as were Joseph's brethren, yet these were not an abomination to Pharaoh or his people on that account; but foreign shepherds had made incursions upon the cattle and sheep of the Egyptians and plundered them; and on that account had made themselves hateful or abominable to them.

CHAPTER XLVII.

Verse 1. Joseph first goes to Pharaoh to inform him of his father's and brethren's arrival, and that they are in the land of Goshen. The Lord Jesus

goes before his brethren and pleads their cause before his Father, as the high priest of old did once a year for himself and all Israel, which shows that Christ's is a continual intercessory work on the behalf of his poor brethren. What a valuable High Priest have we, who entered with his own blood within the veil once and for ever, and with all his meritorious life, sufferings, and death which were accepted of the Father on his people's account, even as Joseph's brethren were accepted by Pharaoh on his account. Pharaoh well knew that Joseph had been the saviour of the whole nation, as well as of his own household. The cruel treatment of Joseph by his own brethren did not prevent his seeking to the utmost their good. Neither did the base and exceedingly cruel treatment of Christ by the Jews, Herod, Pilate, and others prevent him from completing that blessed work his heart was set upon to deliver his own people from Satan, sin, and everlasting burnings, and to provide for them bread from heaven, even his own body, and his precious blood to cleanse them, his second coat to cover their shame and nakedness; and he sends the Holy Ghost to sanctify them:—

“O for such love let rocks and hills
 Their lasting silence break;
 And all harmonious human tongues
 The Saviour's praises speak.”

Verse 2. Joseph presents five of his brethren to Pharaoh. It does not mention which five, but doubtless it was left to Joseph's superior judgment.

Even so is it always better for us to leave the choice of all matters in the hands of Joseph's Antitype, for he knows what is best, and his will as revealed in his Word is our very best guide in all things. May we have grace to adhere to it; for it is

"Sweet to lie passive in his hands,
And know no will but his."

Verse 3. Pharaoh inquires their occupation, and their reply is, "Thy servants are shepherds, both we and our fathers." We suppose this and gardening are the most ancient of all occupations, if not the most honourable and delightful. Verse 4. They give Pharaoh the reason of their coming into Egypt and tell him of the sore famine in Canaan, and entreat him to let them dwell in the land of Goshen, as they knew Joseph had abundant stores and they would be well cared for. It is well for Joseph's brethren to live near Joseph's stores and enjoy the very best he has to give; but "the earth hath he given to the children of men." (Ps. cxv. 16.) Verses 5, 6. Pharaoh answers them through Joseph and commands that it should be as Joseph desired, and that his father and household shall dwell in the best of the land, even in Goshen. God the Father sends all his communications through his Son, as he has made him Ruler over all things, "that every man should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father"; and all the commands of the Father are in perfect harmony with the mind of the Son, because they are one: "I and my Father are one." (Read Jno. xvii.) Pharaoh also suggests

that if any of Joseph's brethren are active men they are to be rulers over his cattle. So our spiritual Joseph takes whomsoever he thinks proper to be overseers of his own, sometimes to the confounding of the rest of the family; for "he giveth not account of any of his matters." (Job xxxiii. 13.)

Verse 7. Joseph presented his father before Pharaoh, and Jacob blessed him. We are not told what the blessing was, but conclude it was not anything more than a temporal blessing, or a friendly salutation; not such a blessing as that with which he blessed his son Joseph; but it is evident that the less is blessed of the greater; for there is no doubt that of the two Jacob was much the greater before the Lord.

Verse 8. When asked by Pharaoh his age, what a sweet spirit of humility did he manifest! "Few and evil have the days of my life been." We expect that was little understood by Pharaoh. Jacob again blesses Pharaoh (9), and retires. Joseph placed his father and his brethren, and gave them a possession in the best of the land of Egypt. (11.) Is it not so with him who has all good things to bestow, temporal, spiritual, and eternal? Has he not given his brethren inconceivable and incorruptible treasures of grace and glory in himself which cannot be lost or mortgaged, but which they will ultimately enjoy with him for ever and ever? What a favour to be content where our Joseph places us! (Phil. iv. 11.) Joseph nourishes his father's household with bread (12) according to their families

(*marg.*, as a little child is nourished). Not only does he consider each family's need, but even the little ones are not forgotten by him, which manifests the tenderness, kindness, and love of his heart. He was himself once a little one, and so was his Antitype, and how the latter's heart feels for the little ones in faith, and takes them in his arms and warms them with the love from his own bosom ! Although we see again the similarity between the two, yet how far does Christ excel his type,—so far that the type is nearly lost in the Antitype ; for the latter gives his own flesh and blood. What a heavenly, life-giving and life-renewing repast is this—so sweet and so enjoyable ! Nor will any other feast but this be attended by Father, Son, and Holy Ghost ; and every returning prodigal, every truly repenting sinner, every backslider, every wanderer, as David, Peter, Mary, Noah, Manasseh, Paul the chief of sinners, and many other such-like characters, will be there, clothed in white raiment, near the throne of God and the Lamb. The fatted calf has been already killed, but as yet all the guests have not been invited or called, but they will be, for “yet there is room.” This is grace indeed ! Jacob's son Joseph could not have provided such a blessed entertainment for his father's family as this !

Although all the land of Egypt and Canaan fainted because of the famine (13), there was no lack in Goshen. O how awful will be the state of all those who live and die without the Bread of Life ! Joseph gathered up all the money (14) that was

found in the land of Egypt. Just so has the Lord Jesus all the silver and gold at his disposal, and the cattle upon a thousand hills; and as Pharaoh was enriched by Joseph's wisdom and prudence, so the Father's riches of grace in all their various forms are magnified by the wisdom, prudence, suffering, and dying of his only-begotten and well-beloved Son, and thus an everlasting revenue of glory, honour and blessing redounds to Jehovah through the God-Man. Now when the money was spent, the people came to Joseph, and begged him to give them bread. (15.) Yes, we have to come like the prodigal, "when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land, and he began to be in want." We must be driven to *want* before there is any real begging for the bread and water of life which our Joseph has in such abundance. To feel spiritual hunger and thirst for Christ is a real blessing, even before the soul is filled. (Matt. v. 6.) It takes a long time to make us part with all for him, and it is only done by his constraining power.

Verse 16. They still have their cattle, which could be of little use to them in time of famine. Even so, gold, and silver, and cattle will not satisfy a starving prodigal. If a man would give all that he hath for eternal life, for a precious Christ, it would be utterly contemned. "All that a man hath will he give for his life." What is all this world, with all its bewitching allurements, when the soul is brought into real trouble about its state before a holy God! When overwhelmed with the burden of

sin, with Satan the accuser at his right hand, God's holy law condemning him, and death and hell before him, what would not such a soul part with for eternal life? Our spiritual Joseph has every supply in store for poor, bankrupt sinners who really need him. Here again does the contrast appear. Joseph had only stores for the body, but Christ has abundance for body and soul, for time and eternity, and asks for nothing in return; for he bestows his blessings without money and without price. The rich graces of the blessed Spirit drop down as rain upon the mown grass, and as showers that water the earth, and then what softening of spirit, what moulding into the mind and will of Christ, is there, while faith, hope, and love spring up like a new life within, making the soul to be as a watered garden. Repentance unto eternal life, meekness, humility, patience, and gentleness flow forth as so many streams from a living fountain; old things have passed away, and behold, all things have become new! The soul has found the Pearl of great price, and is now willing to sell all that he hath to obtain it. This blessed change is brought about through our spiritual Joseph. Well might his name be called "Wonderful," and we believe it will be by all the host of heaven.

In verse 17 it says Joseph fed them with bread that year (margin, led them); which seems to imply that they were led to do whatsoever he advised under their trying circumstances. Hence they leaned upon him for counsel, trusting in him and not in

themselves. They had been living witnesses of his wisdom, prudence, and exceeding kindness to all who came to him in want, there being no record of any case he rejected. All those who truly come to Christ are led to do so by the report they have heard of him, and they come to him for what they feel to need, and he sends none empty away—except the self-righteous scribes and Pharisees, who are rich enough and have need of nothing. The poor and needy, the lame, halt, maimed, blind, leprous, and all sorts of sick folk flock to him to share in that power and love he so openly manifested out of his loving heart. “As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.” It is only as we are taught by the Holy Spirit to see our own folly that we seek for wisdom in the Lord Jesus.

Verse 18. They come again to Joseph and openly confess their state. Like the poor woman in the gospel who had spent all, and yet her state grew worse and worse. Doubtless she thought her health would improve as she spent her money on physicians. This is just like it is with us, for we often think that both our soul matters and temporal concerns will get better by a little more of our wisdom, forethought, and contrivance; but it has all been in vain, the rent has been made worse, and we have been absolutely obliged to come to our spiritual Joseph again and again, necessity compelling us.

Verse 19. “Wherefore shall we die before thine eyes?” Did ever a poor, needy soul that hungers and thirsts after a precious Christ die for

want before his eyes? This cannot be. It was for such the Lord Jesus gave his own body and blood for their meat and drink, and his soul a sacrifice for their sins. "Buy us," they say. This Christ has already done, and his dear people are brought to see and feel how blessed it is to form a part of his purchased possession. The Egyptians now promise to be Pharaoh's servants, and he buys them with bread. Christ purchased his people with his own blood. (1 Pet. i. 19.) They also ask him for seed that they should not die, and that their land be not desolate. How this reminds us of the Seed of the woman, Jesus Christ, that was to bruise the serpent's head (Gen. iii. 15), which he did; and where this blessed seed is implanted in the soul, that soul can never die. (Col. i. 27.) It is the gift of God, which is eternal life. (Rom. vi. 23.) How barren must that land be which is uncultivated and unprepared by God the Holy Ghost for the seed of eternal life; a wilderness indeed! Such was the case with the wayside hearers, the stony-ground hearers, and those where the seed fell among thorns. Only where the soil was prepared for the seed was there fruitfulness. (Matt. xiii. 3—8.) Joseph bought all the land for Pharaoh. The Church of God is bought with such an infinite price as none other could give but Christ himself. (1 Cor. vi. 19, 20; also vii. 23.) What a vast contrast here presents itself! The type gives the bread that perisheth, and thereby increases the wealth of Pharaoh and the nation, and saves the lives of the

subjects ; but the Antitype gives his own precious atoning blood for the redemption and salvation of his beloved bride, soul and body (Acts xx. 28 ; Ps. lxxiv. 2), and this to magnify and glorify the grace of God, that his name may be sanctified in the midst of his saints in truth and righteousness. O that both writer and readers may be included in that purchased possession, to the praise and glory of his grace !

Joseph exercises his authority and discretion in removing the people to where he sees fit (21), and Christ places his people in that part of his vineyard which he sees will be most for their good and his glory. "He maketh poor, and he maketh rich ; he bringeth low, and he raiseth up." (1 Sam. ii. 7.) "Shall I not do as I will with my own ?" Like Asaph, God's people often come to wrong conclusions until led into the sanctuary of God, and then they understand. (Ps. lxxiii. 17.)

Joseph did not purchase the land of the priests or princes. (22.) That was given them by Pharaoh. Even so the incorruptible inheritance cannot be bought with gold or silver or the works of men's hands, but is reserved in heaven for those who are "kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation." (1 Pet. i. 5.) Nor is it possible to sell or part with this inheritance, or to finally lose it. This heavenly land belongs to our great High Priest, and is reserved for the consummation of his marriage with the King's daughter, who is "all glorious within, and her clothing is of wrought gold. She

shall be brought unto the King in raiment of needlework," not in her filthy rags of self-righteousness. (See Ps. xlv. ; Isa. lxi. 10 ; Rev. xix. 7, 8.) In this land are fountains of living waters, to which he will lead her ; for he himself is the Fountain of everlasting love. Here below she is only in her betrothed state (Hos. ii. 19, 20) ; but then she will be in her glorified state, where she shall receive her wedding-dress, complete with all the precious adornments of the Holy Spirit, and to her will this be granted from heaven (Rev. xix. 8 ; xxi. 2), previous to her sitting down with her beloved Husband, even as the prodigal was clothed with the best robe, ring, and shoes before he sat down to partake of the fatted calf. All these, and thousands of other as yet unknown gracious favours, together with all her beauty and glory, has been provided for her by him her soul loveth, although she once despised him. O how this will fit her to sing the new song for ever and ever ! Joseph said, " Behold, I have bought you this day and your land for Pharaoh." (23.) So John says, " These were redeemed (bought) from among men " by the precious blood of Christ. Is it not inexpressibly blessed when our beloved Joseph comes and says, " I have bought thee body and soul with my own blood, and thou art mine and shalt be mine in that day when I number up my jewels ? " (1 Pet. i. 18, 19.) Joseph purchased the natural life only. Our spiritual Joseph gives natural and eternal life to his people by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost ; and

thus they (O wondrous grace!) are made suitable companions for the King's Son, and to enjoy fellowship with him for ever and ever. "The Lord taketh pleasure in them that fear him," and if this is so towards them while here below, what pleasure will he have in them and manifest to them in eternal glory! The spouse of Christ needs often to be reminded that she is his purchased possession, for she is apt to forget this blessed truth when she is cleaving to the dust instead of to her Beloved. At such times he comes and says, "From all your idols will I cleanse you." Then she thinks he is turned against her, when in reality he is turned towards her, even with a loving heart, to correct her for her folly.

Joseph knew if he gave them no seed for their land it must remain barren, and neither he nor they would reap any benefit from it. Precisely the same is it with his Antitype; he knows if he does not first give seed there will be neither a hundred-fold, sixty, or thirty-fold. Joseph makes a law (24) that the fifth part of their produce should be given to Pharaoh, and four parts to be retained by them for their families and all other needful purposes. The Lord Jesus, out of the pity and compassion of his heart, provides all his servants with what is needful to trade with (Lu. xix. 12—27), and all his faithful ones render him his own with profit by a constant supply of grace from himself. As Joseph was so generous as to allow them four parts, and only one was to be for Pharaoh, this shows his tender

compassion for them. But look at the abundance Christ gives his dear people, and what, in comparison, do they give to him? In many cases (not all) do they not withhold from him that which is his due? (Mal. iii. 10.) Do they not forsake his house and give him only one service in seven days? forgetting that it is he who gives them health and strength, whether little or much, and how sad it is when they devote it all to the world during the six days. This is not giving him the fifth. Where can love be that can so serve Christ, and make a thousand excuses to stay away from his house when *all* worldly things *must* have their proper attention? It was out of the increase Pharaoh was to have his; and is it not in this way the Lord Jesus has his revenue? John says, "We love him because he first loved us." May the dear Lord bestow upon *all* his people more grace to serve him with a willing heart.

Verse 25 shows us how highly they esteemed Joseph's arrangements, and confessed he had saved their lives, and entreated they might find grace in his sight, expressing their willingness to be Pharaoh's servants. Joseph's kindness brought them into a willing submission to him. It is by his overcoming grace that Christ sways his sceptre in the heart: "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power," as Peter said, "to forsake all and to follow him, through evil and through good report." O for grace to do this cheerfully and faithfully! As the Egyptians were so satisfied with the bargain

and wished to continue in Joseph's favour, may we who profess to fear God, and have a hope of interest in his everlasting covenant, so desire and strive, through grace, to be continually in the enjoyment of God's manifested favour.

We now return to Israel and their dwelling-place in Goshen, near Joseph (27), where we find they grew and multiplied exceedingly, according to God's promise to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. This prosperity would cause poor old Jacob's heart to rejoice in his God, to see his seed multiply according to the faithful promises made to him and his fathers. Though the Lord may keep his people long waiting for the fulfilment of his promise, yet it is sure to come to pass; and what thanksgiving and praise attend it! When the Church of God is enjoying spiritual prosperity in the good things of heaven (the best of lands), in the presence of the Lord Jesus, what rejoicing and gladness it produces! Jacob lived in Egypt seventeen years, the same time Joseph had lived at home with his father, and his father's age was 147 years. Now the time drew nigh that he must leave Egypt for the heavenly Canaan (28), and he calls for his beloved son Joseph, treating him as the elder of the family, and says, "If now I have found grace in thy sight." By this he did not mean to imply that he had not; for he had the greatest confidence in Joseph, and that he would willingly do as he desired him. As the matter of the burial was of such great importance to his dear aged parent, Joseph willingly takes a

solemn oath that his father's dust shall not lie in the midst of an idolatrous nation, but where his ancestors were buried and where his posterity were in future to dwell, there he should be buried, which would remind them of their future residence in Canaan and also of God's promise respecting it. How exact is the dear old man in giving instructions to Joseph: "Thou shalt carry me out of Egypt and bury me with my fathers" (30); and Joseph promises to do so. Joseph's Antitype, by his almighty power in raising himself out of the grave, as Head of his own body, the Church, has promised that she shall be with him. The Lord Jesus was made a High Priest with an oath (as no other was), that he should be a Priest after the order of Melchisedec, to see to the life, death, and resurrection of all Abraham's spiritual seed. (Ps. cx. 4.) If "an oath for confirmation is an end of all strife" between man and man, how much more so between God and man! (Heb. vi. 13—20.) So, as God's promise and oath were faithfully fulfilled to Abraham; so with every member of Christ's mystical body; and we are told to look to Abraham as an example, and to Christ; the one earthly and the other heavenly. (Isa. li. 2; xlv. 22.)

CHAPTER XLVIII.

Joseph is informed of his father's sickness. (1.) The Lord Jesus was informed of the sickness of Lazarus, yet he delayed his coming four days. No

doubt Joseph went to his father immediately, which became him as a loving, dutiful son. The Lord Jesus was obedient in all things to his Father, for he always did his Father's will, and even now when after much entreaty he delays his coming, yet it is in harmony with his Father's will; for he is sure to come to all his friends, and never too late. Had he come before Lazarus was dead, it had been too soon, as the glory of God would not have been manifested in his resurrection: "My times are in thy hand." Joseph took with him his two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim, to receive his beloved father's dying blessing. Even so every believer in Christ is accepted of the Father in his beloved Son. (Eph. i. 6.) Every good gift comes through him, and all that are joined to the Lord in one spirit are those, and those only, the Father receives.

Jacob is told (2) "Behold, thy son Joseph cometh to thee," and he put forth all his strength and sat upon the bed in order to converse with him. God's people know when the Father comes to them, but not always without an interpreter. Samuel did not. Job and his friends were greatly puzzled about his affliction and losses until Elihu came: "God speaketh once, yea, twice, yet man perceiveth it not." (Job xxxiii. 14.) When the Lord spoke through Nathan to David he did not perceive it until Nathan said, "Thou art the man." Jacob begins to speak to Joseph and his two sons of that special occasion when God appeared to him at Bethel (the house of God) in the land of Canaan, when he saw

the ladder and the angels of God ascending and descending thereon, which ladder represents the mediatorial work of the Lord Jesus, who stood above, and the angels, the heavenly messengers, carry heavenly messages to sinful man and return again, such as in the case of Lot, Abraham, Daniel, Joshua, and others. This ladder reached from heaven to earth. Thus through Christ God and man are united. What a blessed opening up of the covenant of grace was this to poor Jacob, and how precious must this revelation have been to his soul under the painful circumstances through which he had left his father, mother, and home to go into a strange land! We can well believe that the stone which was his pillow was not only anointed with oil but made wet with tears of sorrow and joy. He rehearses the promise that God had given him and fulfilled to him before Joseph and his sons. (Gen. xxviii. 15.) What condescension and kindness in the Lord to give his poor timid worm Jacobs a few high heaps in the way to look back upon, and to speak of to others for their spiritual encouragement and their own consolation! Joseph may not have heard of this before, and it would help to confirm him and his two sons in the faithfulness of his father's God.

In verse 5 we see clearly the spirit of prophecy, which was fulfilled in Ephraim and Manasseh to the very letter. What a proof is this that there is a God in heaven that knows and brings all things to pass according to the counsel of his own sovereign

will. By this spirit of prophecy Jacob claims the two sons of Joseph as his own to form two tribes in Israel, and they, through having the birthright which Reuben had forfeited through his sin with Bilhah (Gen. xxxv. 22; 1 Chron. v. 1), became a great and flourishing people—a multitude of nations. The seed of Christ increased to a multitude that no man can number, of all nations, kindreds, people, and tongues, beside the 144 thousand sealed of the tribes of Israel.

Jacob inquires who Joseph's sons are (8); though, doubtless, he had known them. What a recognition of the Lord's goodness is there in Joseph's answer! The Lord Jesus recognizes that the sons and daughters given to him are his Father's gift. Jacob said, "Bring them, I pray thee, unto me, and I will bless them;" which he did. All those who are brought to God the Father through our Lord Jesus Christ will be blessed by him far surpassing any blessing Jacob could confer on Ephraim and Manasseh; for all blessings, temporal or spiritual, must come through the Incarnate Word, who was the blessed Person revealed to Jacob's faith and with whom he wrestled for a blessing. Now Joseph brings (10) his sons near to his father, and he kisses and embraces them. O, what kissing and embracing is there by the Lord Jesus at times, when differences have taken place and his people have sinned against him in various ways, and wandered and backslidden from him, when they are brought to consider their conduct and to cry for mercy and feel godly sorrow

for their sin, all of which he abundantly bestows upon them, sometimes after chastening them and sometimes without the chastening! When, after true repentance, restoration and reconciliation takes place, as in the case of the prodigal, what embracing and kissing there is between the Father and his sons and daughters! O, what warmth of love flows from a precious Christ to a poor guilty sinner, and the same flows back to him in sweet praises! How pathetically does Jacob refer to the loss of his dear boy, and of how he now had not only seen his face, but God had also shown him his seed; and thus, as Paul said, God had done abundantly above all that he could ask or think. Jacob lost one son, and that only for a time; but in this very way he gained two others. How often is it so with God's people, that they gain by their losses and profit by their crosses; for although they may be kept for years mourning over them, yet they will eventually praise the Lord, as he sanctifies their trials to them; and thus the Lord gets his own with increase. Jacob's idol must be taken from him, and so must ours. The Lord will have all the heart or none. John says, "My little children, keep yourselves from idols."

As Joseph brought his sons to his father he bowed himself to the earth. (12.) What honour does he show his father, even as a loving son should do. Christ honoured his Father when here below. Although Joseph had been the means of saving his father's life, and his brethren's, yet his exalted position did not make him forget the honour that was

due to his beloved parent. How sad it is when we see children who are exalted to honourable positions in society despise their poor parents; yet sometimes it is so, to their shame, entirely forgetting the Lord's command and the promise annexed to it, "Honour thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee." It is said of Christ himself that "he was subject to his parents." Obedience to God's commands is followed with his blessing, and disobedience with his curse, which must follow the debtor or the Surety.

Joseph had evidently settled in his own mind which son was to have the chief blessing by taking Manasseh in his left hand to his father's right, and Ephraim in his right hand. Joseph was moved by custom and natural affection, as the elder usually succeeds to the birthright and blessing; but how often does the Lord in his sovereignty reverse this, as in Jacob's own case. Nothing can possibly frustrate God's eternal settlements. How much we need the Holy Spirit to lead us to the Lord Jesus to receive of him what he has so freely to give, and to be made willing to refer all matters to him, and to receive as paupers his favours! "And Israel stretched out his right hand and laid it upon Ephraim's head, who was the younger." (14.) The right hand was an emblem of power and dignity, and not only so, but an emblem of faith. (Heb. xi. 21.) Jacob's hands were guided by the Holy Spirit; Joseph's hands were guided by custom

and natural affection, whereas his father's were guided by God's purpose. What a striking difference! How safe and secure are we when led by the Holy Spirit; for he only can lead us into the ways of God, and when grace is in sweet exercise in the soul, how willing are we to be led by God, even though it be contrary to our fleshly feelings! And are not the cross-handed blessings which our blessed Lord gives the very best? Do not the greatest, richest, and most durable of favours come in this way? Was it not so with Abraham, to whom we are told to look? "He went out, not knowing whither he went." (Heb. xi. 8 and 18.) And when he offered up his beloved son Isaac, doubtless that was the greatest trial of his faith, and yet in that very way did the Lord give him the most blessed view he ever had of a crucified Christ, who spoke of Abraham thus: "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: he saw it and was glad." (Jno. viii. 56.) Even so shall all Abraham's spiritual seed see that day. Jacob's greatest favours coming through his greatest trials pass on to his son Joseph in the same way. And why may not Joseph's Antitype distribute his gifts and graces in his own way, as he sees best, both temporal and spiritual? The richest of all the blessings of God to his Church came through the greatest of all sufferings, trials, and temptations which were endured by the blessed God-Man.

Verses 15, 16. Observe the beautiful order there is here. Jacob blesses his son Joseph, as the Apostle

Paul mentions, and confesses that the God of his fathers, Abraham and Isaac, had fed him all his life long. What a humble and sweet acknowledgment of his faithful covenant-keeping God is this; and he adds, "The Angel (Christ Jesus) which redeemed me from *all* evil (not part, as the Arminian tells us) bless the lads." This is a very encouraging declaration for the Church of God, and there is no ambiguity in it. This was the Angel he wished to bless the lads. He speaks from a personal experience, that as he himself had been so blessed, and also his fathers, by this Angel, he would that Joseph and his sons might be blessed by the same divine Person; and also that his name and his fathers' names might be named upon them. Jacob was not ashamed of his God, or the God of his fathers. He further desired that "they should grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth" (marg., as fishes do increase). This was fulfilled in their posterity increasing more than any other of the tribes. And what of the increase of Christ's kingdom, of whom it is said, "A nation shall be born in one day?"

When Joseph saw his father's hands crossed (17) it displeased him, and was evil in his eyes; he resented it, and even presumed to move them. What was this short of arrogance on the part of Joseph! He soon forgot the honour due to his venerable father manifested in verse 12. Is not this an exact description of all God's people? Do we not set to work to make straight that which to

us appears so crooked ; and who can do it ? (Eccles. vii. 13.) Is there not much labour spent in vain in this way ? We believe we are verily guilty here, and have often made matters still more complicated ; and yet “fools will be meddling,” and puny man will dare to put forth his hand to interfere with the work of his Maker. But even Joseph cannot deter Jacob from accomplishing his design. It has been the design of men and devils in all ages to frustrate the immutable purposes of God ; but, as in Joseph’s case, it has always failed, and always will, thus showing the folly of those who attempt it. In this particular matter we see how the Antitype surpasses the type. The Lord Jesus said, “Father, thy will, not mine, be done.” What heavenly language and gracious submission, and what immense glory was included in that meek submission to his Father’s will ! What an infinite value is set by Christ on the will of God in comparison to the will of man ! May we have grace to do likewise.

Joseph said, “Not so, my father.” “Are you not aware that Manasseh is the elder ? ‘Put thy right hand on his head.’” How improper to dictate to his father in what way his blessings should be dispensed, and to insinuate that his father had made a mistake and he must set him right. Have we not often said, “Not so, Lord. Do this or that ; and do it in this way, and not in that. Spare me this, and give me that ?” It was very grievous even to faithful Abraham not to keep Hagar and Ishmael

in the tent with Sarah and Isaac ; but God's orders must be obeyed. Although Abraham had prayed that Ishmael might live before him and be his heir, this also the Lord refused. David said, "Spare the young man Absalom." The Lord said, "No ; I have devoted him to destruction, and should I spare his life he will still be more trouble to thee." So as a withered branch he must be removed out of the kingdom. "Who shall teach the Almighty wisdom ?" Now observe the gentle, kind, and loving reply of Joseph's father. (19.) "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 (marg., fulness) of nations." (Numb. i. 33—35 ; Deut. xxxiii. 17.) How safe to walk by faith, as Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob did, and as the Lord says, the just shall, rather than by sight, which proves so dangerous. May it be our favoured lot to walk by faith and not by sight. We see how Jacob's faith was honoured of God, not Joseph's carnal reason, which never can honour God. All new covenant blessings are revealed to faith, not to reason. Some people tell us this "fulness" of Ephraim is fulfilled in the English nation and her Colonies and dependencies, but we must leave this, as it is not revealed to us ; but this we verily believe, that at the present time the most of Abraham's spiritual seed are in this little island.

Jacob blesses them *that day* (20), the day Joseph and his sons were with him, and also said that in

his sons should Israel bless, as was afterwards the case. According to some writers, Ephraim and Manasseh became so wealthy and prosperous that their names were used as a figure in blessing others. "God make thee as Ephraim and Manasseh." Thus in Jacob's blessing the younger was put first, as is often the case by the Lord himself. Jacob informs Joseph that he is near death (21); but that God will be with him and bring him again into the land of Canaan; and this he declared by faith, being inspired by the Lord so to do. Who can conceive the inestimable favour it is to have God with us, even the God-Man, Christ Jesus, who was the blessed Person who brought them out of Egypt into the land of Canaan, by the hand of Moses and Aaron, and was with them in the wilderness (Acts vii. 38); as was so clearly indicated by the cloud; and he is now with the Church in all her wanderings and changes in her present wilderness journey to the heavenly Canaan. "My soul, art thou expecting to dwell there, with Joseph's Antitype?"

Jacob promises Joseph a portion above his brethren (22), "which I took out of the hand of the Amorite with my sword and with my bow." As there is a want of clearness about this matter, whether spoken of in the past or intended for the future we cannot say, as no account of Jacob's fighting with his sword and bow appears in his history. The conduct of Simeon and Levi in slaying the Shechemites he utterly abhorred, and we do not think that is what is referred to; but it may mean

what Joshua gave them (Josh. xvii.) ; for he gave them a second lot as they were so great a people. But when we compare even this additional lot with that lot which fell to Christ as the Head of his Church and his Father's elect Servant, the type is almost lost in him. Christ is the Firstborn of every creature, the First-begotten from the dead, and in all things he has the pre-eminence—in his Person, in his work, in his nature or essence, in his offices, in his power, honour, and glory above angels and men ; for he was anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows, and without measure, and has all things in heaven and in earth committed into his hands. He is exalted as King of kings and Lord of lords, and will sit on the throne of his father David, and rule until all his enemies are made his footstool. (Ps. cx. 1.) O how highly is he exalted above all the creation of God ! (Eph. i. 20—23 ; Ps. ii. 6.) This is a glorious subject for a living soul to meditate upon, if so led by the Holy Ghost, even to contemplate the greatness of his work of redemption and salvation from his cradle to his cross ; then from his resurrection to his exaltation at the right hand of the Father, where he is now crowned with honour and glory, and is carrying on his intercessory work.

CHAPTER XLIX.

In this chapter we purpose to take up two only of the tribes of Israel,—Joseph and Judah, these being so typical of Christ. Judah was Jacob's fourth son

by Leah, and at his birth she praised the Lord, no doubt under the influence of the Spirit of the Lord. The Church of God in all ages, from righteous Abel to the end of time, and for ever and ever, will praise him who was born of the house of David, of the tribe of Judah, and "his hand shall be in the neck of his enemies" (8), which was so clearly demonstrated in David and his son Solomon, who were types of the Lord Jesus. It was from this tribe David's mighty men came, who performed such wonderful feats as recorded in 1 Chron. xi.; and may not these be typical of the Church of God, who are spiritual warriors in life and conquerors in death, through David their king, as recorded in Heb. xi.? It was these three mighty men that brake through the ranks of the Philistines for water from Bethlehem's well, and O how many times has a Triune Jehovah broken through the ranks of the enemies of the Church of God and brought living waters to sin-sick, thirsty souls; and as David did, so have they, "poured it out before the Lord in thanksgiving and praise to his holy Name, and this will continue for ever.

"Judah is a lion's whelp" (9), an emblem of the growth of that tribe, both in numbers, strength, and dominion. And did not our Antitypical Judah grow and wax strong in spirit, and the grace of God was upon him; and surely he went up from the prey! (Ps. lxxviii. 18.) "He stooped down, he crouched as a lion, and as an old lion; who shall rouse him up?" This question Balaam asked.

(Numb. xxiv. 9.) As a lion suddenly springs upon his prey, so does Christ when he suddenly rises and takes the prey from the mighty, as he did Saul of Tarsus and others. The lawful captive can only be delivered by his almighty power; and who shall stand before him when his wrath is kindled but a little? It was the Lion of the tribe of Judah that opened the book John was so anxious about, and loosed the seven seals thereof, for the Church of God and the destruction of his enemies. "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh (Christ) come." (10.) As this was fulfilled in Judah literally, so it will be fulfilled in Christ spiritually; the government having continued in that tribe until the advent of Christ, David's Seed, to whom it was promised by God. (2 Sam. xxiii. 5.) How completely is this promise made to David accomplished in Christ! (1 Kings ii. 4; Jer. xxxiii. 15—18.) He is Heir of all things, and his Church he purchased with his precious blood, and the prophecy of Zechariah ix. 9 was fulfilled when he rode into Jerusalem on a colt, the foal of an ass, that had never been broken before, as man had not sat thereon. This proves beyond all contradiction that he is David's Son according to the flesh (Ps. cxxxii. 11); and declared to be the Son of God with power. (Rom. i. 3, 4.) How conclusive is this that he was God in our nature, and was thus proclaimed to be King of kings and Lord of lords. (Matt. xxi. 1—11.) Compare Dan. ii. 44 with Lu. i. 32, 33. Christ has

therefore taken possession of this kingdom, which is not of this world, but an everlasting one. (Dan. vii. 27 ; Heb. xii. 28.) "Unto him shall the gathering of the people be." As David's kingdom was gathered to him from time to time, and not all at once, so the kingdom of Christ has been and is now being gathered to him. In the counsels of eternity, in the covenant of grace, in the purpose of Jehovah all his subjects were gathered to him ; and by his mighty grace at his appointed time they are gathered to him out of the kingdom of Satan, and by the same almighty power shall they at length be raised from the dead and gathered to him in glory. If we are not gathered to him here by sovereign grace, we cannot be gathered among the general assembly and Church of the Firstborn written (marg., enrolled) in heaven. (Heb. xii. 23.)

"Binding his foal to the vine, and his ass's colt to the choice vine." Can there be a more choice vine than Christ? (Jno. xv. 1.) If these asses represent fallen man, which we believe they do (Isa. i. 3 ; Job xi. 12), notwithstanding they are such stupid, stubborn, stiff-necked creatures, yet the King himself rode upon one, chosen by himself, into Jerusalem whilst it was in its unbroken state (at least by man) ; yet even these rebellious creatures are bound to the living Vine by the bond of everlasting love, and continually receive life from this choice Vine. Is not this grace indeed ! "He washed his garments in wine, and his clothes in the blood of grapes." May not this be emblematical of

the abundance of gospel blessings that flow like an ever-increasing river through the intense and bloody sufferings of the Lord Jesus Christ on the cross, as well as in Pilate's judgment-hall, and in the garden? and all this for his beloved spouse. This is indeed love unequalled!

"His eyes shall be red with wine, and his teeth white with milk." (12.) The redness of his eyes, not indicating drunkenness but intimating the joy and delight that was set before him (Heb. xii. 2) in accomplishing the complete deliverance of his spouse from every enemy of his and hers, through being washed in his own blood from all her defilement by sin, and clothed in white raiment, which her Husband had granted her (Rev. xix. 8); and his eyes are ever over her for good. (1 Kings viii. 29.) The whiteness of his teeth with milk is emblematical of the sweet, blessed, and nourishing promises that are in his mouth, and also their purity and suitability to the little babes, as well as to the elder brethren; and which they enjoy together with him in a mystical sense. (Cant. iv. 16; v. 1.) Did not Christ himself, as the God-Man, mystically eat and drink the word or laws of his Father in his daily life and conversation? (Jno. iv. 32—34; Jno. xvii. 8.) Besides, according to Isa. vii. 14, 15, butter and honey were to be his food, which we fully believe proves his natural birth, and that he possessed a human body and soul, and passed through all the stages of infancy, childhood, and manhood, as other children, sin excepted. Then is not this Man near

of kin to us? (Ruth ii. 20.) Is he not, like Judah, a suitable Advocate for all the poor Benjamins when Joseph searches for his silver cup and it is found in Benjamin's sack, and he offers himself to take his brother Benjamin's place and be shut up in prison rather than he should? for at all costs Benjamin must be freed to return to his father. And was it not so with our blessed Surety? What a twofold love is manifested by Joseph—love to his father and love to his brother Benjamin, and faithfulness to both. What a sweet type of our heavenly Advocate!

We now return to Joseph and his brethren. (22.) He is "a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough by a well, whose branches run over the wall." This would mean that the fruitfulness of Joseph would be afterwards manifested in Ephraim, as mentioned before. His being by a well (a living well) implies no lack of water, which is so needful for fruitfulness. Is not this so with his Antitype in a superlative degree? seeing he is himself a fountain of living waters, and all his trees are planted within the walls of salvation, and supported by these walls, as well as watered by the streams that continually flow from this fountain. (Isa. xxvii. 3.) "The archers sorely grieved him, and shot at him, and hated him." (23.) This his own brethren did, and so did Potiphar's wife. Their words were like gall to his tender spirit (Ps. lxiv. 3, 4), he not being guilty of what was laid to his charge; nor do we know that he did anything to merit their bitter invectives.

Neither did the dear Lord merit the envy and malice in the bitter words they shot at him to a much greater degree ; and they not only pierced his soul with malicious words, but they pierced his head, his side, his hands, and his feet also.

“ But his bow abode in strength ” (24), like Job’s (xxix. 20), which was made not of steel, wood, or any other material, but of *all-prayer* guided upward by the Holy Spirit, and was effectual in its purpose, by which he overcame all his enemies, and God exalted him above all his brethren. The strength of Joseph’s bow abode in the Lord ; hence it was always ready when needed, and never failed in him. (Ps. xlv. 6, 7.) “ The arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob.” How descriptive is this of the humanity of Christ ! He was continually supported by his Godhead, so that he never failed in any matter. Every arrow he shot at his enemies or at his brethren was effectual. Sometimes they cut his enemies *to* the heart (Acts v. 33—54) ; but by them his brethren were pricked *in* the heart. (Acts ii. 37.) The former gnashed upon him with their teeth, and sought how they might destroy him ; but the latter said, “ Men and brethren, what shall we do ? ” May we be found among the latter, who were quickened by the Holy Spirit and brought to yield a willing obedience to the Lord by sovereign grace, whilst his enemies were inflamed to madness and murder. In teaching the use of the bow we understand it was the custom for a strong, skilful man to

get behind the pupil, who took the bow and the pupil's hands into his own hands, and at the same time, by the teacher's strength rather than the pupil's, was the arrow shot. Thus were Joseph's prayers directed upward to his God, whether about his friends or his foes. We find the Lord Jesus engaged in the same thing and in the same way: "I pray not for the world, but for those thou hast given me out of the world; for they are thine." (Jno. xvii. 9; Ps. lxi. 22—28.) Who can estimate the favour of having an interest in his never-failing petitions? But to be without an interest in his ever-prevailing prayers is to be under the curse of God.

"From thence is the Shepherd, the stone of Israel." As a shepherd to feed his father's family was Joseph sent, and he was a stone of support to them. What a beautiful emblem of Christ, who was sent by his Father to become a Foundation Stone for all his brethren to build upon and to be supported by; also as the good Shepherd to lay down his life for them, and feed them with his own flesh and blood, which Joseph could not do. Christ is also "a precious corner-stone, a sure foundation; and he that believeth shall not make haste." (Isa. xxviii. 16.) Here again we see the Antitype far excels the type. To build our faith on any other than such a blessed Stone as this will end in eternal ruin; but he that casts anchor upon this Rock will be safe against all storms, winds, and floods. May the Holy Ghost teach us how to build thereon, so

that we may build only with gold, silver, and precious stones, because the fire will try every man's work.

"Even by the God of thy father, who shall help thee; and by the Almighty, who shall bless thee with blessings of heaven above." (25.) How assured was Jacob that his dearly-beloved son Joseph would be blessed with heavenly and earthly blessings! It was to Jacob "the substance of things hoped for; the evidence of things not seen." Doubts and fears, if he had any, had here to give place to faith. What a wonderful grace is a God-given faith! And shall all needful heavenly and earthly blessings be less certain to the Church of God through our glorious Surety? As we see the fulfilment of Jacob's prophecy in the blessings with which Ephraim and Manasseh were blessed in Canaan, so shall every prophecy and promise have their complete fulfilment in the heavenly Canaan. The blessings of heaven come first, and these are new-covenant blessings too numerous to mention (see Eph. i. and Rom. viii.), such as election, redemption (by price and power), predestination, effectual calling, righteousness, sanctification, justification, and glorification, together with a number of other good things beyond conception—the complete deliverance from the law and all its curses, and pardon and peace through the atonement, which leads to sweet fellowship and communion with Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, "who loved me and gave himself for me," says Paul (Gal. ii. 20; Eph. v. 2); and John

says, "Unto him who hath loved us, and washed us in his own blood." O what incomparable blessings when experienced in the soul! Then there are the "blessings from beneath," which are figurative of those from above—fountains and springs of water, gold and silver, pearls and precious stones, honey, milk, wine, corn, flax, oil, wool, the herd and the flock; and may not all this and much more be found in our heavenly Joseph? for God the Father dwells in him in all his glorious fulness. His prolific womb has given birth to many a little feeble, fearing, halting, trembling child, and his breasts of gospel consolation have yielded abundance of milk, wine, and honey, and all other nourishments required in their various changes in this time state. Have you, my readers, ever experienced the spiritual birth?

"The blessings of thy fathers have prevailed above the blessings of thy progenitors, unto the utmost bounds of the everlasting hills." (26.) Whilst Jacob's heart is so filled with these blessings of his God, he must dwell on them and proclaim them to Joseph; and did not both Jacob and Joseph dwell upon them in sure and certain anticipation of their fulfilment, both to themselves and their offspring? Even so is it at times with Christ and his poor brethren, when they have sweet earnestness of future blessings which their Joseph has for them in store. Why does Jacob dwell so upon these blessings? Because he sees how God had in him exceeded, in comparison, the blessings he bestowed on his fathers Abraham and Isaac in giving him twelve sons,

whereas they had only two sons each who were particularly noticed by the Lord, one of each of them being rejected by him; and as Jacob's offspring had so far exceeded the offspring of his fathers, so their blessings would be in proportion. O how desirous is the Church of God of a spiritual, godly increase! If, as some say, "bound" signifies *desire*, then Joseph had the bounds of his desire in embracing a precious Christ in the arms of his faith, like Simeon. Our Lord Jesus has a multiplicity of all kinds of blessings for his own sons and daughters—"an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for those who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time." (1 Pet. i. 4, 5.) These blessings come "upon the head of Joseph (and his posterity), who was separated from his brethren," as Christ was separated from his brethren. The anointing that came upon Christ as the great High Priest flows from him to the least member of his mystical body, even as it flowed from the head of Aaron to the skirts of his garments. (Ps. cxxxiii.) We may mention a few instances in which his separation was so manifest. Joseph was Jacob's firstborn by Rachel, to whom was given the birthright. Christ was Mary's firstborn, and succeeded to the inheritance of his father David; and it is suggested that Jacob, in making a coat of many colours for his son Joseph, intended him to be his heir, and it is not at all improbable, because he naturally expected his firstborn

would spring from his much-beloved Rachel, for whom he served seven years, which seemed but a few days for the love he had to her. If his brethren perceived this to be the intent of their father, would not that cause them to shoot their bitter arrows into his tender bosom? And only on the account of Christ procuring a robe of righteousness for his brethren, and declaring that no other righteousness but his would be acceptable to God the Father, or shelter the sinner from the curse of the law, what bitter arrows were, and still are, shot at him by all the self-righteous, such as profess their ability to work out a salvation for themselves, and despise that glorious robe. Behold how the wondrous purposes of wisdom and grace were manifested in both Anti-type and type! In the latter, the body chiefly was provided for; but in the former, body and soul are provided for for ever. Joseph was sent of his father; so was Christ sent of his Father. Joseph was blessed with wisdom for all his brethren; Christ is the wisdom of God. Joseph dwelt near his brethren; Christ is Immanuel, God with us. Joseph was a prophet; Christ is the great Prophet. Joseph was a servant; so is Christ. Joseph was a saviour; so is Christ, and a great one. Joseph was an interpreter; so is Christ, and a blessed one, too. Joseph was a ruler over all the land of Egypt; all power and authority over all worlds is given into the hand of his Antitype. Joseph made peace between his brethren; so the Lord Jesus makes peace between his brethren, and for them, with the

Father himself and the Holy Ghost, for he is the Prince of peace.

Moses says, "Blessed of the Lord be his land" (Joseph's), and was not this the secret of its richness and fruitfulness? as it appears it was some of the most productive in Canaan that fell to the lot of Ephraim and Manasseh. Is not this the case with Joseph's Antitype, whose *land* is the Church of God? Moses further says, in blessing the tribe of Joseph, "Blessed of the Lord be his land, for the precious things of heaven." (Deut. xxxiii. 13—17.) God the Father is the Husbandman that cultivates the land (spiritually considered), and makes it fruitful to the praise and glory of his grace; otherwise it would remain as barren as the mountains of Gilboa. "For the dew and the deep that coucheth beneath (before alluded to), and for the precious fruits brought forth by the sun." We see the most precious fruits brought forth by the Sun of Righteousness in the new-born soul. The sun has a wonderful influence over the fruits of the earth, in ripening them and giving them beauty, richness, symmetry, and perfection. "The Lord God is a sun and shield; he will give grace and glory; and no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly." (Ps. lxxxiv. 11.) "He will beautify the meek with salvation." What warmth, life, and vigour proceed from this Sun and draw the living soul unto himself; and without such drawings no soul can come to Christ or worship him aright, for no spiritual fruit can be brought forth but by the Holy Ghost.

“And for the precious things brought forth by the moon.” If the moon here signifies, as we believe it does, the Church of God, it is quite evident that, as the moon is dependent upon the sun for light, so is the Church dependent upon Christ for everything she needs; and as the moon exercises a great influence on the things of the earth, so the Church of Christ (of which Joseph formed a part) exercises a great power over the world of the ungodly; for wherever God has been pleased to settle his Church (as in this little island chiefly), the precious Truth of God, and the doctrines of grace, and his holy ordinances will be put forth by her through the gracious operations of his Holy Spirit, including the faithful preaching of his own gospel in the spirit and power of Christ; the lifting up of a precious Christ in his redemption and salvation, in his sacrifice and his priceless atonement; and his righteousness through which the ungodly are justified. What things can be more precious to guilty souls than these! Then again, as the moon (or *moons*, marg.) has her monthly changes, so the Church of God has her ebbings and flowings, her eclipses and expanses, her periods of light and darkness, decline and increase, sinkings and risings; and where there are not these changes, there the fear of God is not.

In verse 17 it says, “His glory is like the firstling of his bullock.” According to Gurney, Bashan was given to the half tribe of Manasseh, and it was peculiarly famous for rich pasture, excellent flocks

and herds. So the glory of Joseph is prefigured by this beautiful, powerful, and useful creature, the bullock; and in all this and much more did he and his posterity excel his brethren. Joshua may be here included also, as he was of the tribe of Ephraim and a type of Christ, and was victorious over his numerous foes and the foes of Israel, slaying thirty-one kings and bringing Israel into the land of Canaan. As Joshua led Israel into the promised land by fighting and destroying the enemies of God's people; so will the Lord Jesus fight against all his and his bride's enemies and bring her home in all the glory, majesty, power and beauty of a King's daughter, who is all glorious within, and her clothing of wrought gold. "His horns are like the horns of unicorns; with them he shall push the people together to the ends of the earth," which was verified in the two sons of Joseph; also a beautiful emblem of Christ spiritually pushing all his enemies, both men and devils, and making them flee before him. Christ is the horn of salvation raised up in the house of David for his Church, and it is through this Horn of oil the gracious anointing of the Holy Spirit comes, to supply them with his most excellent graces, to enable them to live a life of faith upon Joseph's (Christ's) all-sufficiency as a complete Saviour. But like the spouse, we are at a loss for language to set him forth; for "he is the chiefest among ten thousand, and altogether lovely."

We now return to chapter xlix. 29, where Jacob charges his sons, especially Joseph, concerning his

burial; which was to be in Canaan, not in Egypt with idolaters; but with his fathers, Abraham and Isaac, and to which place his posterity were to return; and so shall all the seed of Christ return to the heavenly Canaan; but no idolaters or mixed multitude with them; and after Jacob had finished his commands to his sons it is said, "he gathered up his feet into the bed" upon which he had been sitting, and he lies down in peace with God and man; like the Apostle Paul, when he said, "I have fought a good fight; I have finished my course; I have kept the faith" (2 Tim. iv. 7); and so Jacob died in the faith once delivered to the saints. This bed was a comfortable bed to godly Jacob, both to body and soul; and "he yielded up the ghost," which, as some say, signifies an easy, comfortable death without pain or sickness. What a hallowed bed must that be where there is no thorn in the pillow, but pardon and peace in the soul, and underneath the arms of everlasting love and mercy. May such a favoured lot be ours!

CHAPTER L.

"And Joseph fell upon his father's face, and wept upon him, and kissed him." (1.) Here we see the fervent love of Joseph manifested in its two-fold character towards his beloved, aged parent—spiritual and natural. What vivid recollections of the past would naturally flow into his mind of the 17 years he was in his father's house, part of which was

with his own mother, the coat his father made him, his dreams which he related to his father and brethren, and how they persecuted him; his father sending him to see how his brethren fared, their inhuman conduct in putting him into the pit and their malice in selling him to the Ishmaelites; yet this was God's way to honour. So says Solomon, "Before honour is humility." It was the same with his Antitype; but as Christ's humiliation far exceeded Joseph's, so his exaltation far exceeded Joseph's; for he is exalted at God's right hand in eternal glory. Joseph commands his servants, the physicians (2), to embalm Jacob,—an Egyptian custom, which was necessary before taking the body into the land of Canaan. This took 40 days, and they mourned also 70 days. Joseph was also honoured to close his father's eyes in death (3), as the Lord had promised his father he should do. (ch. xlv. 4.) Joseph sends a message to Pharaoh (4) respecting the burial of his father in Canaan, and mentions the oath made between him and his father; and received Pharaoh's consent to carry out his promise to his parent. And has not our beloved Joseph given his oath and promise out of his loving heart and according to his eternal purpose, that he will take his people body and soul into the heavenly Canaan to be for ever with him? And as the word and oath of Joseph was carried out; so will that of his Antitype most assuredly be. Yes, and all of free grace! The reason Joseph did not go himself to Pharaoh may have been that it was not customary

to appear in court in mourning. (Est. iv. 2.) God not only highly esteemed Jacob in his life, but he greatly honoured him in his death. The servants of Pharaoh and the house of Joseph and all his brethren—a very great company, followed him to the grave, nor do we read of another such a funeral being mentioned in the Word of God. But compare the burial of the King of kings with that of Jacob's. How despicable in the eyes of men, and yet how much more glorious it was in the sight of God and his saints! Jacob's death was the death of an ordinary person; the death of Christ was an extraordinary death, a vicarious death. Christ voluntarily laid his life down, which Jacob could not do. Jacob died only for himself; Christ died for the whole Church of God, and all his members died in him and with him. Jacob died as a saint; Christ died with the sins of all his people imputed unto him. (2 Cor. v. 21.)

Joseph having now carried out his father's wishes (14), he returns to Egypt; and so will our spiritual Joseph, after his intercessory work is complete, return to this world and gather together his elect from the four quarters of the earth preparatory to his taking them home to eternal glory. From verse 15 we see the effects of a guilty conscience. Sin again revives, and Joseph's brethren begin to think and feel and say the most unkind things of their loving, faithful, and affectionate brother, without the least foundation. What a contrast between their consultation now, and when they

consulted to kill him, but afterward sold him. Then they hated him, but now they fear him, and with these cutting sensations of guilt and sin upon the conscience they send a messenger to Joseph; but we fear they added falsehood to their sin, and that they had no authority for using their father's name, as we cannot believe Jacob ever sent such a message to his beloved Joseph; for he would be perfectly satisfied of his faithfulness and kindness to his brethren and their little ones, according to his promise to them. Slavish fear hath torment, which brings the soul into bondage, and then hard thoughts follow; and instead of Joseph (Jesus Christ) being viewed as a most tender, loving, kind, and sympathetic friend, and faithful to every promise he has made to his beloved brethren, he is looked upon as a hard master, without the slightest foundation. What an emblem is this of a child of God under a spirit of bondage and fear, after having had the clearest evidence of the love and faithfulness of the Lord Jesus! "Lord, what is man?"

In sending a messenger (16), it appeared they were both ashamed of their conduct and ashamed to face their brother through their base and inhuman treatment of him. How certain it is that sin will carry with it its own reward, however long it may remain hidden. "Be sure your sin will find you out," is here verified. In verses 17 and 18 we have a full confession of sin, and Joseph's feelings in hearing it, which made him weep, and

his tender heart is again touched in two ways. First, by their manifesting a lack of confidence in him after so many proofs of his unselfish kindness towards them; and secondly, his generous promise (xlv. 10, 11), which he had hitherto faithfully carried out and now again renews it. (21.) What more could he say, or what more could he do for them? What a true figure is this of Christ's brethren and his dealings with them! How under a sense of sin and a spirit of bondage they act a base part towards him, indulging hard, unkind thoughts and feelings towards him, without the least cause for so doing, and that in the face of the clearest evidence to the contrary. Satan, unbelief, and fear make them afraid to go to him; but Paul says, "We have not an high priest who cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." Not all the infirmities of Joseph's brethren could separate Joseph from them, or cause his faithfulness to fail; nor can all the infirmities and failings of Christ's brethren cause him to part from them; but his faithfulness, love, and relationship remain the same. What a merciful and unchangeable High Priest we have to do with! Joseph's brethren going to him and seeing and feeling the love and tenderness of his heart, they fall down before him with a willing submission to be his servants, to fall entirely into his hands and to be at his mercy, for him to do with them just as he thought well. What a beautiful simile is this of

Christ and his people, who are dear to him, and whom the Father brings to fall before him to confess their sins against him with shame and confusion of face; for "he brings down their heart with labour; they fall down and there is none to help. Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and he saves them out of their distress." (Ps. cvii. 12, 13.) Although this is a most trying spot to flesh and blood, and for proud man to be brought into, yet it is a profitable and a blessed spot to a living soul; for here true confession is made and godly sorrow is felt, while forgiveness of sin is given by Him who is exalted as a Prince and a Saviour to do so; and as this flows as a peaceful river, with its all-healing virtues from this blessed Person, the same returns to him in worship, thanksgiving, and praise; and this is a part of the revenue of his estate. What wonderful displays of God's power, grace, and glory do we see through the many failings of his own dear people!

Joseph said unto them, "Fear not (19); for am I in the place of God;"—to take vengeance upon you? How suitable to them was this "Fear not," because Joseph was the very person they did fear, and from him the words came to them with power and authority and subdued their fears, and a sweet reconciliation followed. There is no vengeance in Joseph's heart towards his brethren; neither is there any vengeance in the heart of the Saviour towards his brethren:

" His heart is made of tenderness,
His bowels melt with love."

“But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it for good to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive.” (20.) Joseph reminds them of their evil intent and God’s good intent. What a contrast is here brought before us—the design of man and the design of God! Even the malicious intentions of his brethren were links in the chain of wisdom to bring about God’s purposes in the fulfilment of Joseph’s dreams. Surely “the wrath of man shall praise thee; the remainder of wrath thou shalt restrain.” (Ps. lxxvi. 10.) What folly for puny man to attempt to overthrow the eternal settlements of the most high God! How vividly does this bring before one’s mind the contrivances of the chief priest, scribes, and Pharisees to secure Jesus to crucify him, so that all his predictions and declarations respecting his Father and himself might be falsified; but instead of this they were the very means according to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God (Acts ii. 23) to make it manifest that he was the Son of the Father in truth and love, and that every word he spoke was of the Father. (Jno. xvii. 8.) What boundless good was hidden in Joseph’s tribulated path, from his being sold until he is brought before Pharaoh, a period of thirteen years, when he becomes the saviour of Egypt, of Pharaoh and his people, but more especially of his own brethren. What wonderful mysteries were veiled in Mary’s firstborn, called the Son of God; for “it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell.” (Col. i. 19

and ii. 9.) This fulness in Christ infinitely exceeds all the blessings that came through Joseph; for Joseph himself was a subject of Christ's and all he had belonged to him. But the grand design of God in Joseph was to save much people alive. And was not that the design in the ancient settlements of the covenant of grace—to save a number that no man could number, of all nations, kindreds, and tongues, to the praise and glory of God; and what poor law-condemned, guilty soul can say he is not included? See hymn 411 (Gadsby's),

“Come, saints, and sing in sweet accord,” &c.

Do we not behold the wisdom of God in mysterious providences, trying dispensations, losses in business, and unexpected trials, that drive the soul almost to desperation and at times to the verge of insanity, if not quite? and yet these are only the covering that hides the depths, heights, breadths, and lengths of God's superabounding goodness, grace, and glory, which only the eye of faith can see, and that only as the Lord enlightens it; but when these coverings are removed and unbelief gets a mortal wound, who can describe the blessed change? Behold the change in the two disciples on their way to Emmaus, when the Lord Jesus revealed himself to them in the breaking of bread, and then their returning to Jerusalem and finding the eleven gathered together and them that were with them! Jesus Christ was the theme of the two from Jerusalem to Emmaus; and so on their return to Jerusalem a risen Christ was their theme; but there is still another blessed surprise in store for

them (we think quite unexpected), for whilst they each related what they had seen and felt, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them and said, "Peace be unto you." Has not the same thing been repeated thousands of times since then, when God's saints have been gathered together by him, and he is the Substance, the Alpha and Omega of the gathering? Has he not said "Peace be unto" many a poor troubled soul? and then have they, like the disciples, had their faith, hope, and love strengthened, and they have parted in joy and peace to further dwell upon the mysteries of a Christ risen in the heart, as well as from the grave. Who can take a real heavenly pleasure in these blessed things, and yet live without assembling with the saints of God whenever a convenient season offers itself? The two disciples did not mind the sixty furlongs each way; and why? Because their hearts burned with holy love to their dear Redeemer. Such love is sure to find its Object, which is God, and God in Christ, even if the day is far spent or night comes on.

"Now, therefore, fear ye not; I will nourish you, and your little ones. And he comforted them, and spake kindly unto them." (21.) This is the same Joseph that had once spoken to them so roughly. (xlii. 30.) The same spiritual Joseph, or Christ, that speaks in the law speaks in the gospel. He bids the north wind to awake as well as the south; he brings sin to remembrance, as well as pardon and peace by the blood of his cross. Joseph is now

desirous of assuring them of his good-will towards them by repeating his "*Fear not*;" and is not a *fear not* needed by God's tried people from time to time? We believe it is. They are Joseph's brethren still; the relationship cannot be altered, nor can his love to them be changed. Amid all their sins and infirmities Joseph continues the same and speaks kindly to them (marg. to their heart). Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob needed the same *Fear nots* and kindness, and Ruth also; and it is the same in the present day. Can Joseph see his brethren in trouble, especially about his *bearing* towards them, and not feel it and sympathize with them? Can the dear Redeemer see his own brethren, joined to him by eternal union, in overwhelming trouble about their sins against him, and not sympathize with them and be deeply affected thereby? No!—

"In every pang that rends the heart
The Man of sorrows bears a part."

No creature sympathy can be equal to his; it reaches the inmost soul and breaks and softens the hard, frozen heart:—

"Dissolves the heart in thankfulness,
And melts the eyes in tears."

What blessed things Christ has laid up in store for his people in himself, which he has made over to them as being joint heirs with him,—all needed grace here and glory hereafter; and he promises to nourish and cherish them (Eph. v. 29), give them cordials when sick of sin, themselves, and a wicked

and a professing world; and when in deep distress to ease and comfort them, as he did Hezekiah, and as a father doth his children. We believe it has been the case with God's saints in all ages, to again and again need these *fear nots*, and when his worm Jacobs are full of fear, and surrounded with formidable enemies,—Esau, to wit, coming with 400 men, what can such weak, feeble things do? Are they not just the very people that need these very words spoken with power and love from their beloved Joseph? Then their slavish fear is changed into a loving, filial fear. Those who are strangers to fears about their covenant interest in the Lord Jesus and his faithfulness to them in sore temptations, distress of soul, and his providential dealings with them, cannot know and enjoy that comfort and consolation provided in the ever-blessed gospel by God's dear Son, and applied with power to the heart by the Holy Spirit. It is the poor that are filled with good things, while the rich are sent empty away. We believe no one on earth could have spoken such friendly words to Ruth as Boaz did, when we consider all the circumstances of the case—the very great contrast between the position of each,—Ruth's poverty and Boaz's wealth. Boaz was a Jew; Ruth was a Moabitish widow. So there was a contrast between Joseph and his brethren in many ways. And is it not so between the Lord Jesus and his brethren? yet in each case there is the relationship. Boaz was a near kinsman of Ruth, and so was Joseph of his brethren; and Christ also of his

brethren; and this relationship can never be destroyed or altered. What a precious, blessed Brother is the Lord Jesus Christ,—“a Brother born for adversity;” and it is in adversity that his worth is made known; as in the case of Joseph’s brethren. It was famine that compelled them to go to Joseph; and does not this compel Christ’s brethren to go to him, by the leading of the Holy Spirit? What a blessed bond of relationship exists between the Lord Jesus and his brethren; for they are bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh; and they that are joined to him are one spirit. (1 Cor. vi. 17.) Who can estimate the value of such a union? All other unions will be dissolved, but this cannot; for the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

“And Joseph dwelt in Egypt, he and his father’s house.” So our Joseph dwells with his own people, whether in Egypt, in bondage under Pharaoh, or under Joseph’s rule, or in the land of Canaan,—whether on earth or in heaven: “Here will I dwell; for I have desired it” (Ps. cxxxii. 13, 14), says our spiritual Joseph. Joseph lived only 110 years, but his Antitype is the Ancient of days, and will live with his Father and his household of faith for ever and ever. As Christ himself is the inheritance of his people and they are his inheritance; therefore they shall live to enjoy each other’s company in the realms of bliss; and as they have mutual interests here (as Husband and wife), they will have mutual interests in glory where nothing can possibly mar the holy enjoyment thereof. Here is rest without wear-

ness, peace without war, love without enmity, happiness without misery, joy without sorrow, and the consummation of all will be to see Him face to face, without a veil between and be like him:

“ There we shall see his face,
And never, never sin ;
There from the rivers of his grace
Drink endless pleasures in.”

Joseph saw only the third generation of Ephraim's children (23) ; but his Antitype saw the generations of all his children from all eternity, and delighted in them (Prov. viii. 31) ; and they will be his delight in glory, as they are the travail of his soul. (Isa. liii. 11 ; Ps. xvi. 3 ; Cant. vii. 3.) Joseph's grandchildren were brought up (or *borne* up, marg.) on his knees, and nursed by him ; and will not our Joseph nurse his tender lambs with the sincere milk of the Word that they may grow thereby, and carry them in the bosom of his everlasting love ? (Is. lxiii. 9.)

“ Joseph said unto his brethren, I die.” (24.) His heart and flesh began to fail, as is the case with good men as well as with all others. Yet God was still the portion of his soul, and Joseph was fully persuaded that his God would visit his father's family and bring them into the land of Canaan. The blessed Redeemer in laying down his life, did so in the certainty that all his Father's family would be visited with mercy and grace, and that their dead souls would be quickened into life, godly sorrow be given them for their sins, and pardon through his

atoning blood and righteousness, and that they would at the end of their days lay down their bodies to sleep until the resurrection morn (1 Thess. iv. 14), taking their souls to be with him in the heavenly Canaan. Would that the Lord would visit his Church with an abundant outpouring of his Holy Spirit, which we believe would make her more separate from the world and its spirit; as Job says: "Thy visitation hath preserved my spirit," and nothing else can. The prophecy of Joseph was fulfilled in God sending Moses and Aaron to bring Israel out of Egyptian bondage—out of the iron furnace; but they could not bring them into the land of Canaan, that being reserved for Joshua (the saviour), another sweet type of Christ in the gospel, who by his blessed Spirit brings the soul from under the law into the sweet liberty of the gospel. Moses by his law can never bring a soul to Christ; for Christ says, "No man can come unto me except the Father who hath sent me draw him." How wonderfully is the covenant that God made with Abraham fulfilled in Christ: "In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because thou hast obeyed my voice." (Gen. xxii. 18.) What infinite value does God set upon the obedience of faith, and he has given us faithful Abraham as an example.

Joseph was very anxious his bones should not lie in Egypt with idolaters (25 and 26), but lie in Canaan with his fathers, the true worshippers of the living God. It was therefore necessary he should be embalmed, as his father was, and by this means

his bones were preserved ; and on the departure of Israel for Canaan they were taken hither, and we suppose must have been carried about in the wilderness during their forty years' wanderings, and probably buried by his own family after obtaining peaceful possession of that part of Ephraim's inheritance which Jacob gave to his son Joseph. The account of the burial of his bones is given us in Josh. xxiv. 32. Gurney gives a very interesting account of embalming the body.—It was filled with odoriferous and drying spices and drugs, and anointed with oil of cedar and with myrrh and cinnamon for the space of thirty days, and then put in salt forty days. (Gen. l. 3.) Afterwards it was wrapped in linen, it is said to the extent of 1,080 yards, dipped in oil of myrrh, and rubbed with a certain gum, and delivered to the relations, who put it into the coffin, and either kept it in their own house or in a tomb. By this embalming it could be kept for thousands of years, as the mummies or embalmed bodies of the ancients to this day attest. The cost of preparing the body and embalming it would vary according to rank, from a trifle to £300. The holy and sacred humanity of our Lord Jesus Christ was not so treated. Joseph of Arimathea, a rich man and a secret disciple of Christ, openly came forward and *craved* (to beg earnestly) the body of Jesus, and Pilate gave him leave, after inquiring if he was already dead ; otherwise it was no doubt the intention of his enemies to bury him with the two thieves, so as to heap all the indignity upon him it

was possible, implying his association was with thieves and robbers in life, in death, and in burial. In a certain sense this was true, yet not in the sense they intended it to be conveyed to those who witnessed his crucifixion; but although he associated with some of the greatest of sinners, yet he never connived at their sins; and had he not associated with great sinners, he would never have associated himself with us in a way of salvation. Here again we see the designs of the enemies of the Lord Jesus frustrated, and the purposes of God carried out in their perfection, and Joseph gives him a most honourable burial in his own new tomb. The prophet Isaiah says, "He made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth." After Joseph and Nicodemus had wound his holy body in the new linen cloth, with the costly spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury, was not this a sweet-smelling sacrifice to God, of which Noah's was a beautiful type? Then on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene was early at the sepulchre to see her Lord, with her heart so full of love that she would have taken that dead body away if she could, not then knowing he was risen. But the body of the dear Redeemer could not be detained in this dark Egypt; but as the Head of his body the Church he must be the Firstborn from the dead. The body of the Lord Jesus needed none of man's preservation, for that holy body could not see corruption. (Ps. xvi. 10.) The blessed Spirit by whom

he was begotten in the womb of the virgin (Matt. i. 20), and was anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows (Ps. xlv. 7), and again at his baptism (Luke iii. 32), and was anointed afresh to the work of the ministry of the gospel, this same blessed Spirit remained with that sacred humanity, which was more precious to God and man than ten thousand worlds, and by this blessed Spirit he was raised from the dead according to the Scriptures. (Rom. viii. 11 ; Acts ii. 24 ; Jno. x. 18.) From this we see that a Triune God was engaged in the resurrection of his ever-blessed Person. What vast importance was placed upon the resurrection of Christ's body by himself and his apostles, especially by Paul. (1 Cor. xv.) How the honour and glory of God and the accomplishment of the Church's salvation was involved in this one act, as the apostle so effectually proves ; for "if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised ; and if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain ; ye are yet in your sins." What a glorious subject for meditation ! Joseph's body still remains in Canaan until the resurrection of the just ; but Christ our Lord sitteth at the right hand of the Father (Ps. cx.), and ever liveth to make intercession for transgressors. (Isa. liii. 12 ; Heb. vii. 25.) What a sweet theme ! What a foundation truth for a living soul is the doctrine of the resurrection, especially that of the just ; and on the other hand, what a solemn doctrine for the unjust ! (Jno. v. 28, 29.) Shall we, then, rise in the image of the first Adam, who is of the earth, earthy ;

or of the second Adam, who is a quickening spirit? With this we finish our brief narrative, with our prayer that the Lord may make it useful to some of his feeble folk (Prov. xxx. 26), who make their houses in the rocks.

