

THE
PRECIOUS STONES



OF THE BIBLE.

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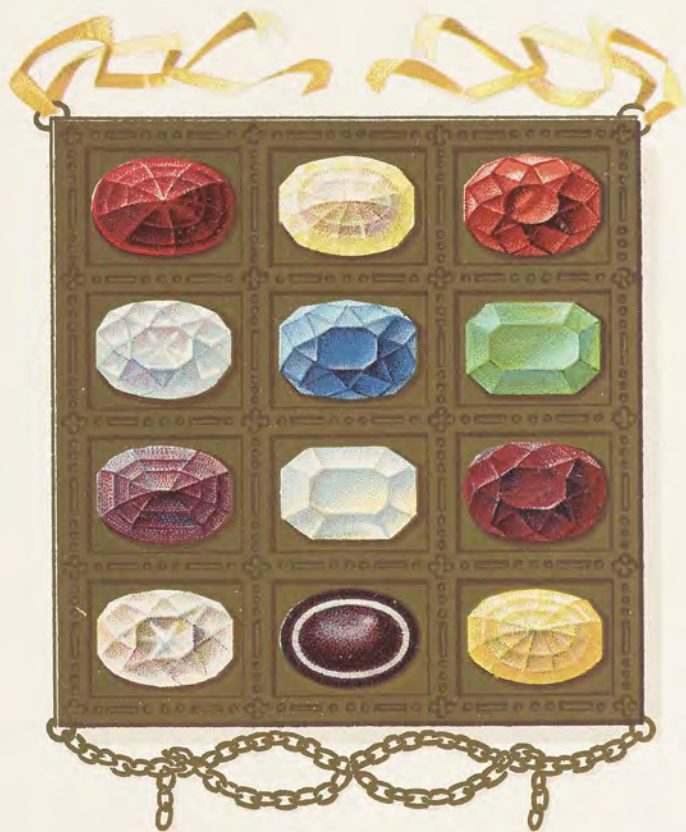
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BREASTPLATE OF THE HIGH PRIEST.

(The order of the Stones being from Right to Left.)

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THE
PRECIOUS STONES
OF THE BIBLE:

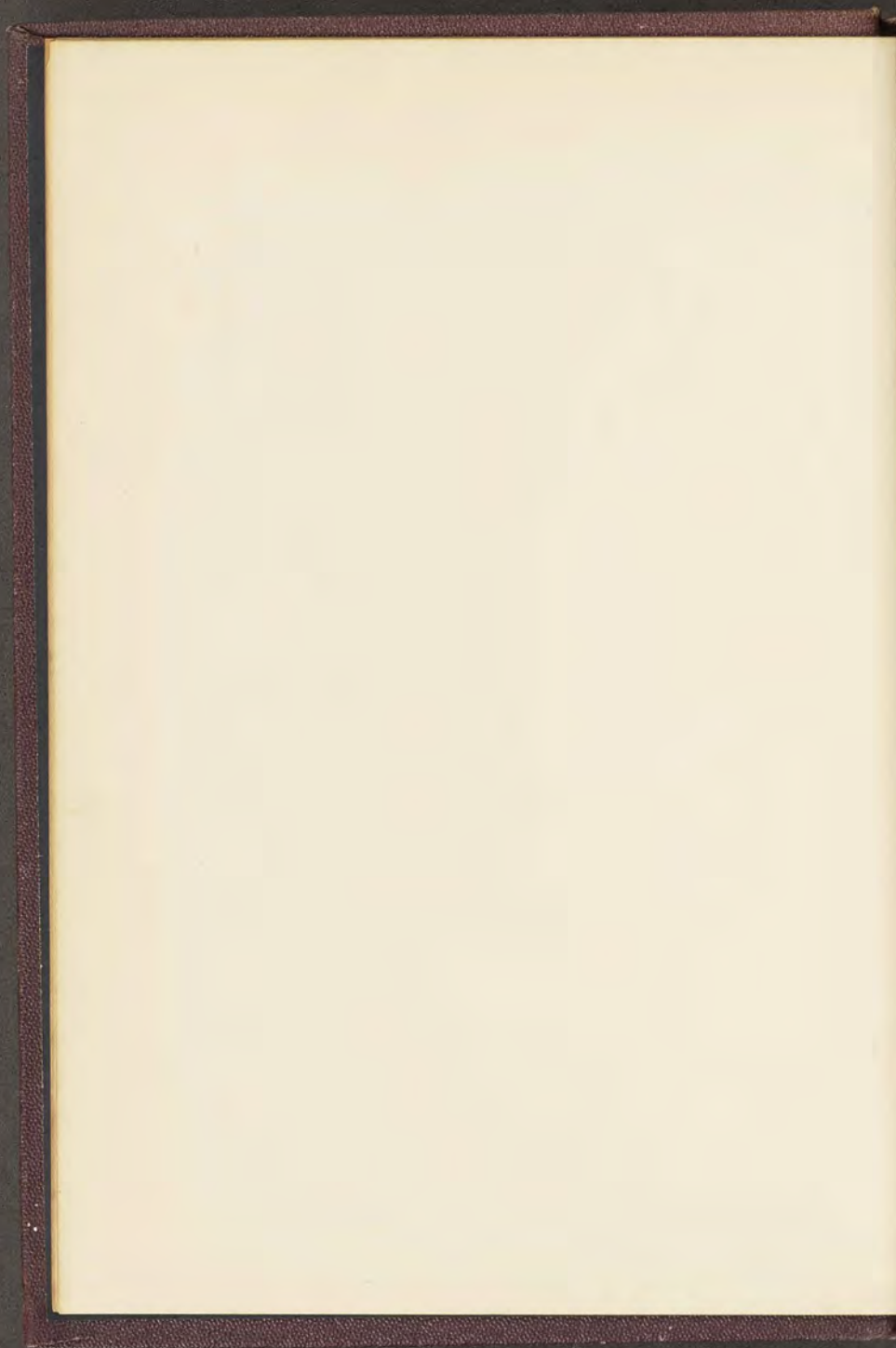
Descriptive and Symbolical.

BEING A TREATISE ON THE BREASTPLATE OF THE HIGH PRIEST,
AND THE FOUNDATIONS OF THE NEW JERUSALEM;
WITH A BRIEF HISTORY OF EACH TRIBE
AND EACH APOSTLE.

BY EDWARD CLAPTON, M.D.

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PREFACE
TO THE FIRST EDITION.

ON reading one day Chapter xxi. of the Revelation of St. John, and pondering over the exquisite description of the Heavenly Jerusalem, with its twelve foundations of precious stones, I wondered whether the latter were merely grouped together as an indiscriminate assemblage of most precious jewels, or whether they were so particularly described in regular order, and duly allotted to the twelve Apostles, with far deeper signification. On studying the subject, I was naturally led to consider in like manner the twelve precious stones which were in the breast-plate of the High Priest, and contained the names of the twelve tribes of Israel ; and then endeavoured to find out whether there were real and Scriptural

reasons why these names were thus divinely placed in their respective stones, and if so, what were the interpretations and teachings thereof.

I think I discovered, without making any forced deductions or fanciful speculations, that such reasons did exist; and, moreover, that there was perfect harmony between the twelve stones of the breastplate and the twelve foundations of the Holy City, and also a more intimate connection between the Tribes and Apostles, whose names were in the corresponding precious stones, than might have been supposed. At all events, I have made a feeble effort (by occasionally snatching a few minutes from the engagements of a busy life) to put my thoughts and investigations together in writing, only trusting that the weak handling of the subject will not detract from its interest and importance, but will lead others, more practised than I am in investigating such subjects, to carry this out in a far more efficient manner.

Men may differ in their interpretations and conclusions as to various parts of Scripture, but one

thing is certain, that the more any part of the Bible is minutely and critically examined and studiously compared with other parts, the more one is struck with the intimate and harmonious connection existing between the whole of the Scriptures from the beginning to the end, and convinced that by no possibility could such a Book have resulted from the invention and ingenuity of any number of uninspired men, be they the wisest and most subtle of mankind. Whatever subject is thoroughly worked out and impartially investigated gives internal evidence of the inspiration of the Scriptures, which cannot be mistaken. Great truths are often to be discovered by piercing the veil of types and symbols, as far as earthly figures can teach heavenly antitypes. We know that plants and flowers have been made to instruct us in great and vital realities; so in like manner do the "blossoms of the rock" and the "flowers of the caves and torrent beds" (as precious stones have been aptly termed) reflect Christ, and teach us vital lessons in connection with His unsearchable riches. All around us we see

disintegration and decay, save in these precious stones, in every one of which may be found a true sermon, if we only seek it. They are, therefore, often introduced in the Bible, not only by reason of their intrinsic value, but also figuratively, to express beauty, purity, strength, permanence, &c. The members of the Church of God are also compared to jewels (Mal. iii. 17), and to stones of a crown (Zech. ix. 16; Isa. lxii. 3), to show their preciousness in His sight. But all without exception, however varied in appearance and quality, must reflect Christ, the Sun of Righteousness; and we know that the more intensely light falls on any precious stone, the more brilliantly it is made to shine.

With regard to the Breastplate of the Ephod, with its twelve symbolic jewels, it is described as being in the form of a span, or 8 inches every way, so that each stone with its setting and borders of gold occupied a space of $2\frac{2}{3}$ inches by 2 inches. There were four rows with three stones in each row, set in gold sockets. The first row a sardius or ruby, a topaz, and a carbuncle. The second row an emerald,

a sapphire, and a diamond. The third row a ligure, an agate, and an amethyst. And the fourth row a beryl [chrysolite], an onyx, and a jasper (Ex. xxviii.). In the stones of this exquisitely beautiful and sacred mosaic were the names of the twelve tribes of Israel. It is not actually stated that their names were engraved by the hand of man, as it does in respect of the onyx stones which were worn on the High Priest's shoulders, with regard to which we read in verses 9—11, "And thou shalt take two onyx stones, *and grave on them* the names of the children of Israel. . . . With the work of an engraver in stone, like the engravings of a signet, *shalt thou engrave* the two stones with the names of the children of Israel;" but it is said, "And thou shalt set in it (the breastplate of judgment) settings of stones, even four rows of stones And the stones *shall be with the names* of the children of Israel, twelve, according to their names, like the engravings of a signet" (vv. 17—21). The names do not seem, therefore, to have been engraved *on* the stones by the hand of man, but written *in* them by Jehovah Himself, just as we

see in Rev. ii. 17 that a white stone was given to him that overcometh, and *in the stone* a new name written. We also find it stated with regard to the twelve jewelled foundations of the heavenly city, that *in them* were the names of the twelve Apostles of the Lamb (Rev. xxi. 14).

Following the description of the breastplate and the twelve precious stones, we read in Ex. xxviii. 30, "And thou shalt put in the breastplate of judgment the Urim and the Thummim; and they shall be upon Aaron's heart, when he goeth in before the Lord; and Aaron shall bear the judgment of the children of Israel upon his heart before the Lord continually."

Although Moses must have received precise instructions from God respecting the Urim and Thummim, and each successive High Priest must also have been divinely taught as to consulting the oracles thereof, yet no clue whatever is given in Scripture of the manner in which the enquiries were made and the answers given. The Hebrew rabbis supposed that the letters in the various stones which

formed the message were preternaturally illuminated. A similar explanation, too, was given by Josephus, who stated that the stones shone forth with remarkable splendour when they indicated God's will.

When it is said that Moses put in the breastplate the Urim and Thummim (Levit. viii. 8), it is evident by comparing all the passages relating thereto, that these words had reference to *all* the precious stones, and not to any one or two, or to any other substance introduced into the breastplate: in fact, by the act of consecration, as it were, "lights and perfections" (as Urim and Thummim signify) were introduced into the stones, as sacred and preternatural qualities, by God Himself, who alone "setteth an end to darkness, and searcheth out all perfection" (Job xxviii. 3).

When the breastplate of judgment, thus consecrated, was worn over the heart of the High Priest, and he presented himself before Jehovah in the Holy Place, and gave out his request standing before the veil opposite the cloud of glory, then the Lord answered and revealed His will, either by an

audible voice, or by some preternatural illumination of the precious stones. The possession of these stones, and the power thus given to the High Priest to consult God by means of Urim and Thummim, were evidently the highest glory of the tribe of Levi (Deut. xxxiii. 8).

According to Josephus, all the stones were conspicuous for their size and beauty, and were of inestimable value. He states, however, that in consequence of the wickedness and idolatry of the people, the stones ceased shining 200 years before he wrote his book, or about 125 B.C. There is no evidence, however, that the Urim and Thummim were ever restored after the destruction of Solomon's Temple. We read in both Ezra and Nehemiah that it was expected and hoped that they might have been restored, but there is no record that such was the case. The High Priest's breastplate which Josephus saw, and which was still to be inspected in the Temple of Concord in Rome about the third century, was doubtless not the original one, but only an imitation. It was taken from the Temple, together

with other sacred spoils, by Titus after the destruction of Jerusalem.

With respect to the foundations of that great city, the Holy Jerusalem (as described in Rev. xxi.), it is said that there were twelve foundations of precious stones, and in them the names of the twelve Apostles of the Lamb; also twelve gates of pearl, and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the Children of Israel. It seems clear that our Lord appointed *twelve* Apostles with special reference to the *twelve* heads of tribes, for we read in Matt. xix. 28, "Ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel."

I have endeavoured to give, in separate chapters, a short sketch of each tribe and each Apostle, as well as a description of the precious stone with which their names were mutually connected: at the same time showing how the respective stones in the breastplate and foundations harmonize. The plan of this little work is, I believe, an entirely novel one. Whether or not I have in any degree succeeded, the reader will judge by the following pages. At all

xvi *Preface to the First Edition.*

events, if others, by reading this, should be induced to search the Scriptures a little more, and to seek out the spiritual truths of the Bible with increased interest, my end will be more than gained.

E. C.

LONDON, *October*, 1878.

PREFACE
TO THE SECOND EDITION.

MORE than 20 years have elapsed since I wrote this book on the Precious Stones of the Bible, and although the first Edition went quickly out of print, I have not until the present time been well able to bring out further Editions, notwithstanding numerous requests and inducements to do so. Having now ample leisure I have carefully revised the book, and made many alterations and additions which I trust will render the subjects of the various Chapters still clearer.

xviii *Preface to the Second Edition.*

In all ages precious stones have exerted a strange fascination over most minds by reason of their exceeding beauty, their inestimable value, and the mysterious virtues which have been attributed to them. With regard to this subject, and especially to that of the sacred jewels of the Old Testament, their symbolism, and the lessons to be drawn from their consideration, I cannot refrain from quoting some eloquent words found in the *History of the Literature of the Israelites, according to the Old Testament and the Apocrypha*, by the daughters of Sir Anthony Rothschild:—"Nothing represents both the origin and destiny of man in a more striking and more beautiful manner than precious stones carefully worked out. Like the jewel, man is a child of the earth; but as this earthly frame encloses the breath of God and an eternal soul, it is a precious treasure in the eyes of God. He values man as bearing His image and His indelible impress. But it is the aim of man to train himself from a creature of the earth into a denizen of heaven; to transform the gloom and heaviness inherent in matter into the aërial brightness

which is the essence of the spirit; and the smiling splendour of the precious stones, which are, like him, taken from the same dark womb of the common mother, will symbolize to him that internal regeneration—that ascending from earth to heaven, from impurity to purity, from worldliness to sanctity, which is the innermost tendency of the Mosaic dispensation. But, further, the jewels are, among all ancient nations, regarded as the foci of light, as the eyes of the earth; they are the emblems of the stars, which they rival in splendour; their brilliancy recalls the brightness of heaven; and if the names of the tribes were engraven on twelve stones, the hosts of Israel were reminded to strive after the light and the purity of the heavenly hosts.”

Here, perhaps, I may be allowed to remark upon the unfortunate renderings of some of the precious stones of the Bible, and other verbal changes in connection with them, in the Revised Version of the Bible, thus causing much needless confusion. It would have been far better to leave them as they

were given with such remarkable accuracy and faithfulness in the Authorised Version. As a few instances I may mention:—

(1) In the passage Job xxviii. 18: “The price of wisdom is above rubies,” and other similar passages in Prov. iii. 15, viii. 11, and xx. 15, the Revisers have put for rubies, in the margin, or *red coral*, or *pearls*. Now this could not possibly be. We have only to consider for a moment what pearls and coral are. A pearl is a solid tumour from the carcase of an oyster, and coral the calcareous skeleton from the carcase of a sea-polyp. Both, therefore, were abominations in the eyes of all Hebrews. It is sufficient to read Levit. xi. 9—12:—“All that have not fins and scales in the seas and in the rivers, of all that move in the waters, and of any living thing which is in the waters, they shall be an abomination to you . . . Ye shall have their carcasses in abomination.” As to this, it is an interesting fact that no mention is made of pearls either in the Old Testament or the Apocrypha, except in Job xxviii. 18, where it is said by Job, “No mention shall be made of coral or

of pearls." Coral is only alluded to in one other instance, Ezekiel xxvii. 16, when speaking of the riches and commerce of Gentile Tyre.

(2) For "windows of agates," which is very intelligible, and for which there is sufficient warrant, "pinnacles of rubies" has been substituted, which is quite meaningless (Isaiah liv. 12).

(3) In the Old Testament, for Carbuncle, the Revisers have in every instance put in the margin *or Emerald*; and for Emerald, *or Carbuncle*; as if these stones could be thus interchangeable. In the Apocrypha they have made no such change.

(4) In Exod. xxviii. 18, R.V., Diamond has in margin *or Sardonyx*, as different a stone as could possibly be.

(5) In Exod. xxviii. 19, R.V., against Jacinth (Ligure A.V.), *or Amber* is needlessly put in margin. Amber is not a precious stone at all.

(6) In Rev. xv. 6, there is a remarkable change in the text. Instead of "The seven angels clothed in pure and white linen," the Revisers have put "arrayed with precious stone, pure and bright."

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It appears that some ancient authorities read *λιον*, and some *λιθον*. As to this Alford says: "The remarkable reading *λιθον* can hardly be genuine, though strongly attested."

E. C.

LONDON, *April*, 1899.

INTRODUCTION.

*As to the Order of the Names of the Twelve Tribes
and Twelve Apostles in the respective Precious
Stones which were allotted to them.*

(1.) IN describing the stones of the breastplate, having the names of the Children of Israel, and explaining the symbolical lessons which they teach, it is, of course, of the first importance to know the exact order in which these names were assigned to the several stones.

It is to be noted that *previous to the time* when God gave instructions to Moses how to make the ephod and the breastplate of judgment, we read only of the following arrangements of names:—

- | | | |
|--|---|------------------------------|
| 1. In the order of the birth of the
12 sons of Jacob. | } | (Gen. xxix.;
xxx. ; xxxv. |
| 2. In the order of the birth of the
12 heads of tribes. | } | 18 ; xli. 51,
52.) |
3. In the enumeration of the tribes before going into Egypt. (Gen. xlvi.)
4. In Jacob's prophetic blessing. (Gen. xviii. ; xlix.)

Of course the names on the stones of the breast-plate could not be according to any particular order which was *subsequent to the time* when the breast-plate was made ; such as the order in which they encamped about the tabernacle in the desert (Num. ii.) ; as they marched through the wilderness (Num. x.) ; in the order of the various numberings (Num. i. ; xxvi.) ; and in the order of Moses' blessing (Deut. xxxiii).

Now the names of the twelve Children of Israel which were engraven on the two onyx stones for the shoulders of the ephod were directed to be simply *according to their birth* (Exod. xxviii. 10), and therefore would include Levi and Joseph, but not the two sons of Joseph. The names in the twelve precious stones of the breast-

plate, however, were only to differ from this order inasmuch as they were also *according to the twelve tribes, i.e.* excluding Levi, but including Manasseh and Ephraim, instead of their father Joseph.

There are numerous passages to show that Levi was not reckoned amongst the tribes, but that Ephraim and Manasseh were. The High Priest himself who wore the breastplate, being head of the tribe of Levi, sufficiently represented that tribe. The following are some of the passages alluded to :—

1. But the Levites after the tribe of their fathers were not numbered among them (Num. i. 47).
2. But the Levites were not numbered among the children of Israel; as the Lord commanded Moses (Num. ii. 33).
3. Thus shalt thou separate the Levites from among the children of Israel: and the Levites shall be mine (Num. viii. 14).
4. Wherefore Levi hath no part nor inheritance with his brethren; the Lord is his inheritance, according as the Lord thy God promised him (Deut. x. 9).

5. But unto the tribe of Levi, Moses gave not any inheritance : the Lord God of Israel was their inheritance, as he said unto them (Josh. xiii. 33).
6. But the Levites have no part among you ; for the priesthood of the Lord is their inheritance (Josh. xviii. 7).
7. For the children of Joseph were two tribes, Manasseh and Ephraim : therefore, they gave no part to the Levites in the land (Josh. xiv. 4).
8. And now thy two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, which were born unto thee in the land of Egypt before I came unto thee into Egypt, are mine : as Reuben and Simeon, they shall be mine (Gen. xlviii. 5).

Ezekiel also, in describing "the names of the tribes," and the portion of the land allotted to each gives Ephraim and Manasseh, but not Levi (Ezek. xlviii. 1—29).

It is clear, therefore, that when it is stated "according to the twelve tribes," in Exod. xxviii. 21, Levi is not to be reckoned as a tribe, but

Ephraim and Manasseh are two distinct tribes, as much as are Reuben and Simeon.

Again, with respect to this order of the names which were in the twelve stones, this 21st verse of Exod. xxviii. does not reverse the previous injunction in the 10th verse, that the names were to be "according to the birth," but is in accordance with it, and additionally explains that these names in the twelve precious stones must be those reckoned as forming the twelve tribes—the same, in fact, among whom the land of Canaan was subsequently divided. The entire verse reads thus:—"And the stones shall be with the names of the children of Israel, twelve, according to their names, like the engravings of a signet; every one with his name shall they be according to the twelve tribes." The former part of this verse is merely a repetition of the 10th and 11th verses in a condensed and modified form. A literal rendering of the original Hebrew would show that these verses are quite in accordance; and it is to be noted that the Hebrew word for "according to" before *birth* is a different one from that before *tribes*. The order, therefore, of the tribes and precious stones respectively stands thus:—

- | | | | |
|--------------|-----|-----|---------------------|
| 1. Reuben | ... | ... | Sardius or Ruby. |
| 2. Simeon | ... | ... | Topaz. |
| 3. Judah... | ... | ... | Carbuncle. |
| 4. Dan | ... | ... | Emerald. |
| 5. Naphtali | ... | ... | Sapphire. |
| 6. Gad | ... | ... | Diamond. |
| 7. Asher... | ... | ... | Ligure. |
| 8. Issachar | ... | ... | Agate. |
| 9. Zebulun | ... | ... | Amethyst. |
| 10. Benjamin | ... | ... | Beryl [Chrysolite]. |
| 11. Manasseh | ... | ... | Onyx. |
| 12. Ephraim | ... | ... | Jasper. |

In confirmation of this constituting the correct arrangement of names, as being in the order of birth as well as according to the tribes, we find the following pertinent passage in Josephus (*Antiquities of the Jews*, book iii. chap. vii. 5), "Now the names of all those sons of Jacob were engraven in these stones, *whom we esteem the heads of our tribes*, each stone having the honour of a name, *in the order according to which they were born.*" Josephus also states that these stones were extraordinary in largeness and beauty; and they were an ornament not to be purchased by men, because of their immense value.

(2) Then, as to the order of the twelve Apostles of the Lamb, whose names were in the jewelled foundations of the wall of the Heavenly City (Rev. xxi. 14). The exact order of these foundations is given in verses 19, 20. The first foundation was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, chalcedony; the fourth, emerald; the fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, topaz; the tenth, chryso-prase; the eleventh, jacinth; the twelfth amethyst. But the order of the names of the Apostles is not given. As to this, four different arrangements of the names are to be found, and in these are slight variations (Matt. x. 1—4; Mark iii. 13—19; Luke vi. 12—16; Acts i. 13). Those described by St. Mark and St. Luke were in each instance as the Apostles were *chosen*, though they do not quite correspond; but that by St. Matthew as they were *sent forth* by Jesus Himself. As the word Apostle signifies “sent forth,” there can be little doubt that the order of names given by St. Matthew is the exact one, and as though to emphasize this, it is expressly stated, “*The first*, Simon, who is called Peter.” The entire passage reads thus:—“Now the names of the twelve Apostles are these: The

first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother; Philip, and Bartholomew; Thomas, and Matthew the publican; James the son of Alphæus, and Lebbæus, whose surname was Thaddæus; Simon the Canaanite, and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed him. *These twelve Jesus sent forth.*" Subsequently, another Apostle, Matthias, was appointed to fill the place of Judas. The names of the Apostles in the respective foundations would therefore stand thus:—

- | | | | | |
|-----------------------------|-----|-----|-----|--------------|
| 1. Simon Peter... | ... | ... | ... | Jasper. |
| 2. Andrew | ... | ... | ... | Sapphire. |
| 3. James | ... | ... | ... | Chalcedony.* |
| 4. John | ... | ... | ... | Emerald. |
| 5. Philip | ... | ... | ... | Sardonyx. |
| 6. Bartholomew | ... | ... | ... | Sardius. |
| 7. Thomas | ... | ... | ... | Chrysolite. |
| 8. Matthew | ... | ... | ... | Beryl. |
| 9. James the son of Alphæus | ... | ... | ... | Topaz. |
| 10. Lebbæus, or Jude... | ... | ... | ... | Chrysoprase. |

* It is explained in Chapter III. how "Chalcedony" became erroneously substituted for "Carbuncle," on account of the similarity between the two Greek words *Chalcedon* and *Carchedon*.

11. Simon the Canaanite Jacinth.
12. Matthias Amethyst.

It will be shown in the course of the following chapters that the twelve precious stones in Ex. xxviii. really correspond with those in Rev. xxi., though a few are described by different names. It will also be seen that there is a similarity in the characteristics of the respective tribes and Apostles whose names are in the same precious stones; and, moreover, that there are good reasons for supposing that the several Apostles even belonged to the corresponding tribes, with the exception of John, the brother of James, being of the tribe of Judah, and not of Dan; and Peter, the brother of Andrew, being of the tribe of Naphtali, instead of that of Ephraim. The reasons why Dan and Ephraim are thus unrepresented by Apostles belonging to their own tribes may, in all probability, be sufficiently gathered from Rev. vii. In describing the tribes as sealed with the seal of the living God these two names are not given at all. Dan is simply left out altogether, Levi being now substituted; and Joseph is put in the place of Ephraim. The explanation of this will be subse-

quently given, as well as the reasons for the right interpretation of those stones on which any difficulties as to identification may have rested.

The following is the table of accordance of the names of the Tribes and Apostles in the corresponding precious stones:—

Reuben	Sardius or Ruby	Bartholomew.
Simeon	Topaz	James the Less.
Judah	Carbuncle	James the Great.
Dan	Emerald	John.
Naphtali	Sapphire	Andrew.
Gad ("Diamond")	{Rock Crystal, or Quartz Diamond }	("Beryl") Matthew.
Asher	Ligure or Jacinth	{ Simon the Ca- naanite.
Issachar	Agate { ("Chrysoprase,"— the most beautiful variety of agate) }	Jude.
Zebulun	Amethyst	Matthias.
Benjamin	Chrysolite	Thomas.
Manasseh	Onyx { ("Sardonyx,"— the most beautiful variety of onyx) }	Philip.
Ephraim ... ("Jasper")	Brilliant... ("Jasper")	Simon Peter.

CHAPTER I.

THE SARDIUS OR RUBY.

THE SARDIUS, or RUBY (as in margin), was the first of the twelve precious stones in the breastplate of the High Priest (Exod. xxviii. 17), and represented REUBEN, Jacob's first-born son.

Rubies are now obtained chiefly from Burmah, one of the titles of former Kings of Burmah having been "Lord of the Rubies;" but they were anciently found about Sardis, fifty miles east of Smyrna, and hence the name *Sardius*.

The Oriental ruby has a crimson red colour. According to Babinet, it ranks first for price and beauty among all coloured stones. When its colour is of good quality, it has the vivid tint of arterial blood (a tint called "pigeon's blood" in commerce), or of the very centre of the red ray in the solar spectrum.

The Hebrew word for ruby, *Odem*, means "blood-

red." It is composed of precisely the same Hebrew letters as *Adam*, the first-born of mankind. The word *Adam* signifies "taken out of red earth," than which there could not be a more exact definition of the ruby, which consists of pure alumina, and is, therefore, red earth or clay in a crystallized form. Even the colour, too, of the ruby is derived from the very substance which constitutes the red colouring matter of blood itself—viz., minute proportions of oxide of iron, so that a ruby has even been called "petrified blood." We find in Scripture the similar Hebrew words, *Dama*, or "blood" (as in *Acel-dama*, "the field of blood"); *Edom*, "red" or "bloody," the name given to Esau, the first-born son of Isaac; *Ephes-dammim*, "the border of blood" (1 Sam. xvii. 1), where David slew Goliath; and *Adummim*, "the bloody way" (Josh. xv. 7), part of the road between Jerusalem and Jericho.

Emanuel states that the ruby is the most valuable of all gems when of large size, good colour, and free from flaws; its hardness is superior to any known substance except the diamond. The most valuable tint is that particular shade called by jewellers the "pigeon's-blood."

Again, in the excellent work on the "Natural

History of Precious Stones," by C. W. King, M.A., we find it stated that the test of a perfect ruby is its exact agreement with the fresh blood of a pigeon dropped upon the same sheet of paper on which it lies.

Enough is here given to show that the Sardius or Ruby is significant of *blood*; and it was peculiarly fitting that this should be awarded to Reuben, the first-born of Jacob. Among the Hebrews, before the promulgation of the law by Moses, the eldest son was the high priest of the whole family. Jesus Christ, our great High Priest, who by His sacrifice on the cross superseded all other sacrifice, is said by St. Paul to be the first-born of every creature (Colos. i. 15); in whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins (ver. 14). And He is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the first-born from the dead; that in all things He might have the pre-eminence. For it pleased the Father that in Him should all fulness dwell; and having made peace through the blood of His cross, by Him to reconcile all things unto Himself (vv. 18—20). So also in Rev. i. 5, we read: "Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the

kings of the earth. Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father; to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever."

Now when the Lord smote all the first-born in the land of Egypt, from the first-born of Pharaoh that sat on his throne, unto the first-born of the captive that was in the dungeon, and all the first-born of cattle (Exod. xii. 29), He ordained that all the first-born, both of men and tame beasts for service, should be consecrated to Himself. The children were offered in the temple and redeemed: the firstling of every clean beast was killed, and their blood sprinkled upon the altar. Within thirty days of the birth of a first-born male child the ceremony of consecration was gone through. Our Saviour, as being a first-born son, was thus presented in the temple in accordance with this law (Luke ii. 22). The rite of redemption is still observed among all the Jews. The father presents his little son before the "Cohen," or descendant of Aaron, and says, "My wife, who is an Israelite, has brought me a first-born, but the law assigns him to thee." The Cohen, after receiving the money for his redemp-

tion, places his hand on the child's head and repeats "God make thee as Ephraim and Manasseh. The Lord bless thee and preserve thee. The Lord lift up His countenance upon thee, and give thee peace. Length of days, years, and peace be gathered to thee, and God keep thee from all evil, and save thy soul."

He said, "God make thee as Ephraim and Manasseh," because the birthright was eventually taken from Reuben, the first-born of Jacob, by reason of his guilt, and given to the sons of Joseph. It was on account of this guilt that old Hebrew legends fancifully stated that the *blushing ruby* became the symbolical representation of Reuben, who brought a blush upon himself by his irreverent conduct (1 Chron. v. 1).

When God had smitten the first-born of the Egyptians, the Passover was declared to His chosen people to be to them a perpetual ordinance. As soon as the paschal-lamb was slain, they were commanded to take a bunch of hyssop,* to dip it in the blood, and sprinkle the lintel and two side-posts with it. In Heb. xi. 28 we find, "Through faith he kept

* See Appendix A.

the passover, and the sprinkling of blood, lest He that destroyed the first-born should touch them ;” and in Heb. ix. 22, “ Almost all things are by the law purged with blood ; and without shedding of blood is no remission.” Our Lord’s death occurred during the festival of the Passover, which was typical of the justice and goodness of God in passing over such as were by faith sprinkled with His most precious blood. “ Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us.”

“ Paschal Lamb, by God appointed,
 All our sins on Thee were laid ;
 By Almighty love anointed,
 Thou hast full atonement made :
 Ev’ry sin may be forgiven
 Through the virtue of Thy blood ;
 Open’d is the gate of heaven ;
 Peace is made for man with God.”

When Moses was blessing the children of Israel before his death on Mount Pisgah, which was situated in the territory of Reuben (the only territory of all the country allotted to the twelve tribes on which he was permitted to stand), he said, “ Let Reuben live and not die, and let not his men be few.” Reuben’s sins had, indeed, been great and grievous, and deserved to bring down the wrath of

God on himself and his descendants; yet notwithstanding his guiltiness, instability, and impetuosity, it was immensely in his favour that, when his brethren proposed in the most cruel manner to slay Joseph, he successfully interceded, and said unto them, "Shed no blood; let us not kill him." Moses' prayer, "Let him live and not die," fitly represented the mercy of God, the intercession of the Saviour, and the transforming power of the Holy Spirit.

The significance of various passages, such as Rev. iv. 3, will be explained in the last chapter, when Ephraim and the Jasper are taken into consideration.

Rubies rank first in value and appearance among all coloured stones, as already mentioned.

A fine and pure ruby, of the desired vivid pigeon's-blood colour of 4 carats weight, or 16 grains, is worth more than 400 guineas. The price of the most brilliant diamond of equal weight is scarcely 220 guineas. When, therefore, of good colour and large size, rubies exceed even the best diamonds in value. In ancient times, too, they were always considered to be the most precious

things on earth.* As to this, what do we find in God's word?

“The price of wisdom is above rubies” (Job xxviii. 18);

“Wisdom is better than rubies” (Prov. viii. 11);

“Is more precious than rubies” (Prov. iii. 15).

Not the wisdom of this world, or sagacity, is here meant; not even spiritual wisdom, or true piety; but the Eternal, Essential Wisdom—“Jesus Christ, the Word” (1 Cor. i. 24). It was this Wisdom that the Lord possessed from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was (Prov. viii. 23). “The Lord by Wisdom hath founded the earth” (Prov. iii. 19). It was the second Person in the blessed and glorious Trinity; the Word; He who was called Faithful and True, and yet who had a name written that no man knew but He Himself. He was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood, and His name is called the Word of God (Rev. xix. 11—13). Solomon, in Prov. viii., discourses largely and pro-

* There is a very ancient Oriental saying, “He is trying to procure rubies by pottage,” applicable to a man seeking to acquire great things by small means.

foundly on this Wisdom, whose price is so far above rubies.

With regard to the territory allotted to Reuben, it was bounded on the west by the Lower Jordan and the Dead Sea; on the east by the Arabian Desert; on the north by the land of Gad; and on the south it was separated from Moab by the river Arnon. It was rich pasture land, and contained very much cattle. The Reubenites, therefore, became wealthy proprietors of land and cattle; but for all this very little is known of them historically.

The Prophet Joel is said to have belonged to the tribe of Reuben. His commission was to "the inhabitants of the land," but only as they represented the Church of God, both Jew and Gentile. His sublime allegorical prophecy contained a distinct reference to the descent of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, and was fully quoted by St. Peter in his Sermon (Acts ii. 16—21). Joel also treated of future calamities and judgments, together with exhortations to repentance, and promises of deliverance. He described the fierce instruments of persecution and martyrdom under the similitude of locusts, such as we find in Rev. ix. Next, he spoke of wonders in the heavens and in the earth,

blood and fire, and pillars of smoke ; and, still using the metaphorical language which he delighted in, he said, " The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the Lord come." Lastly, he portrayed God's judgments against the enemies of His people, represented by Egypt and Edom, because they shed innocent blood in their land. " But Judah shall dwell for ever, and Jerusalem from generation to generation. For I will cleanse their blood that I have not cleansed : for the Lord dwelleth in Zion." Here we are to understand Judah and Jerusalem as figurative of the Church of God. In that day " a fountain shall come forth of the house of the Lord, and shall water the valley of Shittim." This Shittim, or Abel-Shittim, was in the plains of Moab (Numb. xxxiii. 49), on the east of the Jordan, and allotted to the tribe of Reuben.

The sixth foundation of the Heavenly Jerusalem is the *SARDIUS* (Rev. xxi. 20), and in it would be, therefore, the name of *BARTHOLOMEW*. It seems peculiarly appropriate that the ruby should be thus assigned to that Apostle who suffered the most terrible and bloody death of all, and who has been looked upon as the chief representative of the

Apostolic band of Christian Martyrs, whose blood was the seed of the Church.

King gives a close translation of a poem by Marbodus, who applied these several stones so as to express the virtues which ought to build up the Christian Church. The verse pertaining to the Ruby is the following :—

“The Sardius stone is shining red,
Deep with the hue of blood o’erspread;
In this the world may fitly see
The Martyr’s glorious victory.”

Surely it was no mere chance or coincidence that seventy thousand Huguenots were massacred on St. Bartholomew’s day (the 24th August, 1572)—that seventy thousand more martyrs or witnesses were thus “slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held.”

It is generally admitted (of which, indeed, there can be little doubt) that Bartholomew and Nathanael are one and the same person, Bartholomew merely signifying “Son of Tholmai.” According to Farrar, legend says that he was a man of higher position than the rest of the Apostles; and Jerome speaks of him as *Bartholomæus nobilis*. Hence he is usually represented in mediæval art

clothed in a purple mantle adorned with precious stones.

That Bartholomew or Nathanael belonged to the tribe of Reuben is rendered more than probable upon a careful study of his first introduction to Christ, and his formal call to follow Him as a disciple. It appears from the sacred narrative that Jesus came to John the Baptist, and was baptized of him in the Jordan, John publicly testifying that He was the promised Messiah. Then Jesus went into the wilderness, which was on the west of the Jordan, and was tempted of the devil. After this He returned to the fords of Jordan, crossing to the eastern side, and proceeded to choose His disciples. John was then preaching and baptizing at "Bethabara beyond Jordan;" and on seeing Jesus approach him said, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."

First, Andrew was called, and he at once sought out his brother Simon Peter and brought him to Christ. The day following, Jesus found Philip, who quickly sought out Nathanael and said unto him "We have found Him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write Jesus of Nazareth, the

son of Joseph." When Nathanael perceived that Jesus already knew him, he expressed surprise until Jesus explained that before Philip called him, He had seen him under the fig-tree. Now after crossing the Jordan from the wilderness, in order to reach Bethabara, in the lower portion of Gad, Jesus must needs pass through the north-west portion of the land of Reuben; and here Nathanael would seem to have had his fixed residence, and therefore to have been a Reubenite; for amongst the Hebrew nation the term "being under the fig-tree" was synonymous with "being at home."

After these events they went direct to Cana in Galilee, and there at the marriage-feast Jesus turned the water into wine. Was there not a deep symbolical meaning in this first miracle? The baptismal rite having been instituted by the application of water, Jesus now prefigured by the wine the *blood* that He would shed for His mystical bride, the Church. As He said of the wine at the close of the Last Supper, "Drink ye all of it, for this is my blood of the New Testament."

It would appear that Nathanael did not return to his native home, but now settled at Cana, for in John xxi. 2 we find him designated "Nathanael of

Cana in Galilee"—just as our Saviour was called "Jesus of Nazareth," although born in Bethlehem and of the tribe of Judah.

When first called, Nathanael was evidently quite ignorant of this region in Galilee, for in his prejudice he had said of the town in the close neighbourhood of Cana, "Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?"; and besides, he knew nothing of the family of Jesus.

It is true that Philip of Bethsaida must have been well acquainted with Nathanael previously, but that may be readily accounted for. In speaking about the Apostle John, who was a fisherman, Dr. Farrar states that as the fish of the Lake of Galilee were sent in large quantities to Jerusalem, it is not impossible that John lived there at certain seasons. In like manner, Philip probably went at certain times of the year to the important district about the fords of Jordan, near its entrance into the Dead Sea, in which region there was an extensive traffic, and thus had become acquainted with Nathanael, who may indeed have been his partner, or banker, or agent in business.

It may be mentioned here that near this part of the territory of Reuben (all which region belonged to the tetrarchy of Herod Antipas), and not far from the eastern shore of the Dead Sea, was situated the Castle of Machærus. In this fortress John the Baptist had been for some time imprisoned, and at last received his martyrdom. (Josephus, *Antiq.* 18, chap. 5).

Bartholomew, or Nathanael, is said to have preached the Gospel first in Arabia Petraea (which adjoined the territory of Reuben); then in Western India, where he left St. Matthew's Gospel written in Hebrew; and at last in Armenia, where he underwent the most cruel martyrdom of all, having been flayed alive and then crucified with his head downwards. This was on 24th August, A.D. 71.*

It is a curious fact that from time immemorial to the present day there have existed in the West of India, about Bombay, a people, now numbering about 7,000, called Beni-Israel. They profess to

* There is a magnificent painting of this Apostle, by Vincenzo Carducci, in the large hall of St. Bartholomew's Hospital, Smithfield. He is clothed in a red dress, and in the background is a representation of his fearful mode of death.

be of the tribe of Reuben, and consistently therewith call more of their children by that name than by any other. Wherever Bartholomew went forth to propagate the Gospel of Christ, it seems to have fallen to his lot to preach to those lost sheep of the house of Israel who belonged to this tribe of Reuben.

In July, 1875, a deputation of two Nestorian chiefs arrived in London. They were representatives of over 200,000 Nestorians, or Armenian Protestants, calling themselves Assyrian Christians, from Kurdistan, near Mount Ararat; and they brought letters of introduction from their Patriarch, and from Bishop Gobat of Jerusalem, to the Archbishop of Canterbury. Their object was to remove the terrible oppressions from which this ancient Church has been so long suffering, and they looked to this country, above all others, to assist them in their fearful difficulties. One of the deputation, Malek Marcus (since dead), was a deacon of his Church, as well as one of the chiefs of his tribe—"that of Reuben."* The Nes-

* I was informed by Deacon Abraham, of Oroomiah, the other member of the deputation, that the Christian name of the patriarch of Armenia at that time was Reuben, this name to the present day being the most common amongst certain communities of the Nestorians.

torians believe themselves to be descendants of the two and a half tribes (the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half tribe of Manasseh) who were carried into captivity, as recorded in 1 Chron. v. 26.

This people were early converted to Christianity by the teaching of the Apostles Bartholomew and Thomas, and by two of the seventy disciples. The doctrines of the Nestorian Church are very pure, and free from the errors which have crept into many Churches, in spite of terrible persecutions from the Turks and wild Kurds, and persistent efforts of the Russians to induce them to embrace the Greek religion.

Returning to the first call of Bartholomew, or Nathanael, to be an Apostle, and assuming (as there is every reason to do) that he belonged to the tribe of Reuben—the meaning of which word is “See a son,” or “Behold the son”—may we not possess the key of that remarkable conversation described in John i. 45—51? In effect it was as follows:—

PHILIP : Come and *see the son* of Joseph, Jesus of Nazareth.

JESUS : *Behold a son* of Israel, without guile.

NATHANAEL : *Behold the Son* of God, the King of Israel.

JESUS : Hereafter thou shalt *see the Son* of Man in glory.*

Nathanael appears to have been at once convinced and converted when Jesus not only told him He had seen him under the fig-tree, but also alluded to his being a true Israelite in whom was no guile. Perhaps a chord was struck which instantaneously

* This, of course, may or may not be a fanciful interpretation of the passage, but assuming that there was a hidden allusion to the tribal name "Reuben," there would have been nothing very remarkable, for many instances occur in Scripture in which there is a similar play on names and words. In speaking of one of these, when Jesus said to Simon, "Thou art Simon, the son of Jona; thou shalt be called Cephas"—that is, "Thou art Simon, the son of *the Dove*; hereafter thou shalt be as *the Rock* in which the Dove hides"—Dr. Farrar makes the following remarks:—

"It was, indeed, a play upon the word, but one which was memorably symbolic and profound. None but the shallow and ignorant will see, in such a play upon the name, anything derogatory to the Saviour's dignity. The essential meaning and augury of names had been in all ages a belief among the Jews, whose very language was regarded by themselves as being no less sacred than the oracular gems on Aaron's breast."—(*Life of Christ*, vol. i. p. 147).

vibrated in the heart of Nathanael in connection with what he had been reading in the Holy Scriptures whilst sitting under this fig-tree, the usual place for quiet meditation and prayer. Was he then reading the 32nd Psalm? "Blessed is he whose *transgression is forgiven*, whose *sin is covered*. Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is *no guile*." It was a favourite passage, and St. Paul not only quoted it, but also beautifully discoursed on it in the first nine verses of Rom. iv. Happy would Reuben himself as well as his descendants have been had no such guile been found in their spirit and conduct! Doubtless, however, he and they looked forward with the eye of faith to Him who justifieth the ungodly and freely *forgiveth the transgressions* of those who trust in His all-atoning blood, and who *covereth their sins* with the pure robe of His own righteousness.

We find the types of this vicarious sacrifice in Lev. xvi., and also in reference to the mercy seat sprinkled with blood covering the law which condemned the sinner.

"It is the blood which maketh atonement for the soul."

CHAPTER II.

THE TOPAZ.

THE second precious stone in the breastplate was the TOPAZ, and in it the name of SIMEON, the second son of Jacob. There is no real dispute as to this stone *Pitdah* (Hebrew), or *Topazion* (Septuagint), or *Topazius* (Vulgate), being our present Topaz. There are two kinds of this precious stone: the superior bright yellow, and the darker greenish-yellow of an inferior quality. The former, or true Oriental topaz, has a highly polished surface, a shining lustre, and is composed of alumina. It is strongly electric by heat and friction, and so affords a ready means of ascertaining its identity and of distinguishing it from other stones of a similar appearance. Professor Ruskin, in his Lecture on the Symbolic use of Precious Stones in Heraldry, describes the topaz as being "symbolic of the Sun, like a strong man running his race rejoicing, standing

between light and darkness, and representing all good work." Thomson similarly writes of it:—

"With light's own smile the yellow topaz burns."

Such, too, was the idea of the Ancients, who also fancifully ascribed to this stone the property of having its powers increased or decreased with the increase and decrease of the moon. Marbodus, in his allegory, thus alludes to it:—

"Made up of hues of golden light,
And with celestial lustre bright."

Strabo describes it as being transparent and shining with golden light. It was clearly, therefore, emblematic of the light of the Sun, and as such was (in a bad sense) the special jewel of the sun-worshippers of old. With regard to this latter subject, we read in Dr. Smith's Bible Dictionary:—"The worship of the Sun, as the most prominent and powerful agent in the kingdom of nature, was widely diffused throughout the countries adjacent to Palestine. The Arabians appear to have paid direct worship to it, without the intervention of any statue or symbol (Job xxxi. 26, 27), and this simple style of worship was probably familiar to the ancestors of the Jews in Chaldea and Mesopotamia. The

Hebrews must have been well acquainted with the idolatrous worship of the sun during the captivity in Egypt, both from the contiguity of On, the chief seat of the worship of the sun as implied in the name itself (On—the Hebrew Bethshemesh, or ‘house of the sun,’ Jer. xliii. 13 [subsequently called Heliopolis, or ‘city of the sun’ by the Greeks]), and also from the connexion between Joseph and Potipherah (‘he who belongs to Ra’ [or the sun]) the priest of On (Gen. xli. 45). After their removal to Canaan, the Hebrews came in contact with various forms of idolatry, which originated in the worship of the sun; such as the Baal of the Phœnicians, the Molech of the Ammonites, and the Hadad of the Syrians. The importance attached to the worship of the sun by the Jewish Kings may be inferred from the fact that the horses sacred to the sun were stalled within the precincts of the temple (2 Kings xxiii. 11).”

Of all the tribes of Israel, Simeon was undoubtedly the chief transgressor in this idolatrous sun-worship. To this tribe was allotted the most southern territory of all, and that nearest to Egypt, where above all other countries the sun was worshipped at that period. Even this inheritance was not a special

and distinct one, like that which each of the other tribes possessed, but was taken out of the portion of the children of Judah (Josh. xix. 9). Its southernmost town—that nearest to Egypt—was even named Baal or Baalath-beer (1 Chron. iv. 33; Josh. xix. 8). Simeon himself had been selected from the rest of his brethren by Joseph for detention in Egypt, as the hostage for the appearance of Benjamin, and there probably he became learned in all the idolatries as well as in the wisdom of the Egyptians.

The topaz, symbolical as it was of the sun, was pre-eminently an Egyptian stone. It was originally found, as Pliny informs us, upon an island in the Red Sea, which, being often surrounded by fog, was so difficult to find that the mariners named it *Topaza* (from Greek *topazein*, to guess). He also describes it as being found in the mines of alabaster, near the Egyptian city of Thebes. This true Oriental topaz is now very rare, and when of good quality and brilliant lustre is exceedingly valuable. Job speaks of it as the topaz of Cush or Ethiopia (Job xxviii. 19). The solar rays exert a bleaching effect on these stones. The best specimens in the British (Natural History) Museum are therefore

kept from the light of day. The peridot or precious olivine is an olive-green variety of the ancient topaz, and has sometimes been found in solar meteorites. The topaz was looked upon by the Ancients as preventive as well as curative of disease.*

We know that "the Israelites in Egypt were as the Egyptians," and Joshua, before his death, earnestly exhorts them in these words (Josh. xxiv. 14), "Now, therefore, fear the Lord, and serve Him in sincerity and in truth; and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the flood, and in Egypt, and serve ye the Lord." And in Ezek. xx. 6, et seq., we find that the Lord says of the Israelites, "In the day that I lifted up mine hand unto them, to bring them forth of the land of Egypt into a land that I had espied for them, flowing with milk and honey, which is the glory of all lands: then said I unto them, Cast ye away every man the abominations of his

* There is a Hebrew proverb that "When the sun rises the disease will abate." It originated from a tradition that Abraham wore a precious stone round his neck, which preserved him from disease, and which cured sickness when looked upon. When Abraham died, God placed this stone in the sun.

eyes, and defile not yourselves with the idols of Egypt : I am the Lord your God. But they rebelled against me, and would not hearken unto me : they did not every man cast away the abominations of their eyes, neither did they forsake the idols of Egypt : then I said, I will pour out my fury upon them, to accomplish my anger against them in the midst of the land of Egypt. But I wrought for my name's sake, that it should not be polluted before the heathen, among whom they were, in whose sight I made myself known unto them, in bringing them forth out of the land of Egypt. . . . Moreover also I gave them my Sabbaths, to be a sign between me and them. . . . But they polluted my Sabbaths, for their heart went after their idols." Their Sabbath day was with them too literally their *Sun-day*, the name by which the first day of the week, the Lord's day, is known amongst us. This naming of the days of the week after the sun, moon, and planets, is, we know, of very great antiquity. In Dr. Jennings's "Jewish Antiquities," the author believes that the Sabbath was observed nationally by all people from the Creation to the Exodus ; that the seventh day of the heathen, which was considered sacred, and often dedicated to the sun, was

the ancient Sabbath, held by custom, after the true religion was lost.

In Num. i. 22, 23, we find that the fighting men of the tribe of Simeon were in number 59,300; whereas subsequently in the plain of Moab, where the second census was taken at Shittim, there were only 22,200 (Num. xxvi. 14). How is this terrible decrease to be accounted for, the like of which happened not to any of the other tribes? It was chiefly due to the recent mortality following the idolatry of Baal-peor, this being the vilest and most licentious form of sun-worship into which the Israelites were enticed by the Midianites. Among the Canaanitish nations Baal was their divinity representing the sun, as Ashtaroth was the moon. In Num. xxv. 3—5, we read that "Israel joined himself unto Baal-peor; and the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel. And the Lord said unto Moses, Take all the heads of the people and hang them up before the Lord, *against the sun*, that the fierce anger of the Lord may be turned away from Israel. And Moses said unto the judges of Israel, Slay ye every one his men that were joined unto Baal-peor." Amongst the slain was particularly mentioned Zimri, a prince of a chief house among the Simeonites. After his

death the plague was stayed from the children of Israel. No wonder that after this no blessing was bestowed on Simeon by Moses when he blessed the children of Israel before his death, and not even the slightest mention made of Simeon's name. No wonder that the tribes of Reuben and Gad left the Simeonites, who had hitherto been associated with them under the same standard on the south side of the camp, and instead of them took half the tribe of Manasseh. Even after all this there must have been something very wrong about the tribe of Simeon, for we find that they did not multiply (1 Chron. iv. 24—27). To them particularly were applicable the sad words of the Psalmist:—"They sinned still, and believed not for His wondrous works. . . They tempted and provoked the most high God, and kept not His testimonies; but turned back and dealt unfaithfully, like their fathers. They provoked Him to anger with their high places, and moved Him to jealousy with their graven images" (Ps. lxxviii.). They forsook the Lord God of their fathers, and served Baal and Ashtaroth. And the anger of the Lord was hot against them. Yet when they at length did in their trouble turn unto the Lord God of Israel, and sought Him, He was found of them. It was ever thus.

Fallen man is drawn down into the depths of sin and misery, not through mere ignorance, for he may have all the learning of the Egyptians; not even through absence of all religious feeling, though his natural tendency is to a sensuous and idolatrous worship; but by the enticings of Satan and by the promptings of his own depraved heart and natural proneness to evil rather than to good: until at length, drawn by the Spirit of the living God, he looks up in sorrow and repentance, and finds, instead of an unforgiving avenger, a loving and merciful Father, who is ever ready to point out the way of reconciliation. "Come now and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." They are pointed to Him, who was wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities; by whose stripes we are healed, and on whom the Lord hath laid the iniquity of us all.

Many of the Simeonites must have become "hearers or obeyers" (as the word Simeon signifies) and have feared the name of the Lord of Hosts; and, instead of worshipping the sun and moon, must have looked forward to the time when the Sun of Righteousness should arise with healing in His

wings. Even in the time of good King Asa, it is said that strangers out of Simeon joined him in abundance when they saw that the Lord his God was with him : “ And they entered into a covenant to seek the Lord God of their fathers with all their heart and with all their soul ” (2 Chron. xv.). It is to be hoped, too, that it was by the request of the God-fearing portion of the tribe of Simeon that King Josiah broke down their altars and groves of Baalim, and cut down their *sun-images* (2 Chron. xxxiv. 4 marg.).

From this time, as far as Scripture history is concerned, the tribe of Simeon is hidden from view—not lost, however, for we find in Rev. vii. that they were among the number of the sealed in Heaven, and that for them, therefore, was open one of the Gates of Pearl.

Jacob had prophesied of them that they should be scattered in Israel, and they were so scattered. They were dispossessed of the territory which had been, as it were, merely borrowed from that of Judah; and they were dispersed amongst the Gentiles as well as amongst the other tribes of Israel. The hymn of “ The Future, ” which is sung by the Jews to this day, might have been appropri-

ated with peculiar force by these Simeonites in the dark days of their dispersion :—

“All is not lost ! in yonder skies
 I see the gleams of hope arise
 Star of the East, thy glimmering ray
 Is brightening to the perfect day.
 Again shall Judah's flag, unfurled,
 Wave forth its signal to the world!
 Again shall cattle crowd the plain,
 The fields be rich with golden grain ;
 Her towers with busy voices ring,
 Her swains rejoice, her maidens sing !
 See ! in yon East the glowing gleam ;
 Faith is not false, nor hope a dream.
 MESSIAH comes ! rejoice our eyes,
 And lo ! in yonder Eastern skies
 The *Sun of Righteousness* shall rise,
 And on its healing pinions bear
 Love, peace, and joy, for all the world to spare.”*

There was always a tradition amongst the Jews, mentioned by almost every commentator, that the tribe of Simeon used to furnish schoolmasters and scribes for the rest of the nation. Jacob had said

* This hymn of “The Future” was sung before Sir Moses Montefiore, at the opening of some schools for Jewish children at Stepney. There were two other hymns sung on the same occasion, entitled “The Past” and “The Present,” each of which began with “All is lost !” It is well known that the Jews are looking forward to the early coming of Him who came 1,900 years ago, with the same fervency of expectation as Christians are to the second Advent.

that both Simeon and Levi were to be scattered in Israel. The Levites were thus dispersed for the services of the sanctuary; and that the Simeonites were eventually scattered as schoolmasters, according to the Jews' tradition, is more than probable.*

The prophets Nahum, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah belonged to the tribe of Simeon. The writings of all three stand high in respect of scholarly diction and sublime imagery, and they are the only prophets whose style is truly poetical. All Scripture is inspired, indeed, but the style of each writer is peculiar to himself; and in these three prophets one cannot but perceive pre-eminent scholars and teachers. Nothing can exceed the sublime allegorical scenes depicted by Nahum, the subject of whose prophecy is "The burden of Nineveh," the destruction of which he predicts with singular minuteness of detail. The Assyrian rulers are compared to locusts, which camp out in the cold day, "but when the sun ariseth they flee away, and their place is not known where they are." So do

* Simeon is synonymous with Shimei, as we find in Zech. xii. 13, margin; and Shimshai the scribe, of whom we read in Ezra iv. 17, had his name not only similar in composition, but also signifying "my sun" or "sunny."

spiritual enemies from the bottomless pit (as locusts are compared to in Rev. ix.) flee away before the Sun of Righteousness.

Habakkuk speaks of the mighty God as "of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity." Light and darkness are not more opposite to one another than the holy nature of God is to sin. As St. Paul says, "What communion hath light with darkness? and what concord hath Christ with Belial?" The third chapter is an ode splendid in images and most elevated in style. In it Habakkuk says, "God came from Teman (*marg. the South*), and the Holy One from Mount Paran. His glory covered the heavens, and the earth was full of His praise. And His brightness was as the light; He had bright beams out of His side. . . . The sun and moon stood still in their habitation; at the light of thine arrows they went, and at the shining of thy glittering spear."

Zephaniah denounces God's wrath against the remnant of Baal, and the idolatrous priests who worship the host of heaven. The day of His wrath would be a day of darkness and gloominess, and men would walk like blind men. Zephaniah was specially severe upon those inhabitants of the sea

coast—the nation of the Cherethites—who dwelt near the coast in the territory belonging to Simeon. They were all to be destroyed, so that no inhabitant would remain. Zephaniah also, in a Messianic tone, comforts the God-fearing amongst the children of Israel with promises of future blessings.

We no sooner enter on New Testament history than we find that just and devout man Simeon in the temple, holding the infant Jesus in his arms, and, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, speaking of Him as “A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of Thy people Israel.” This aged saint was most probably of the tribe of Simeon, for, as the son of Hillel, and the father of Gamaliel, he belonged to one of the most learned and famous families of schoolmasters.

It was in the *TOPAZ*, the ninth foundation of that Holy City, the new Jerusalem, that the name of *JAMES* was written—James the son of Alphæus, and our Lord’s brother, or rather cousin-german or kinsman (as the same Greek word signifies).* It seems peculiarly appropriate and significant that

* It was the custom of the Jews to call all near relations by the names of brothers and sisters.

the topaz should have been awarded to this Apostle. He, more than any, was the Apostle of light and works, of which, as already explained, the topaz was symbolic. But his stone, most bright and precious, reflected not the rays of the natural sun—it reflected the light of Him who shone above the brightness of an Eastern sun at midday (Acts xxvi. 13), and who is the light of the heavenly Jerusalem, which had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it (Rev. xxi. 23).

The text which was dearest to the heart of James, which was the ruling guide of his life and preaching (as we know by his Epistle), was that which he heard himself from the lips of his Master in the sermon on the Mount. "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." Again, it was he who, in his Epistle, spoke of every good and perfect gift as being from above, and coming down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness neither shadow of turning (such as there is in respect of the sun, the fountain of natural light). But inasmuch as the sun is a great and terrible instrument of destruction, as well as the source of light and heat (Isa. xix. 18, marg.), so (writes James)

the unsaved and wordly man, rich though he be in this world's goods, passeth away as the flower of the grass. For the sun is no sooner risen with a burning heat, but it withereth the grass, and the flower thereof falleth, and the grace of the fashion of it perisheth (James i. 11). Christ's Gospel is, indeed, a savour of death unto death in them that perish, as well as the savour of life unto life in them that are saved (2 Cor. ii. 15, 16). How earnestly and prayerfully, then, ought we to seek day by day for more light—light from God the Father, who is the Father of lights; light from God the Son, who is the light of the world; light from God the Holy Spirit, to enlighten our understanding and to guide us into all truth.

That James the son of Alphæus, or James the Less as he is sometimes called, was pre-eminently the Apostle of good works need hardly be stated. His Epistle sufficiently indicates that he was the great moral teacher of the New Testament. Scripture history also shows that he was appointed to preside over the infant Church at Jerusalem, which place he seems never to have quitted. He was held in the highest esteem by all, and even St. Paul formally acknowledged his authority.

The mode of his death is related by Josephus. He was thrown down from the temple by the Scribes and Pharisees, then stoned, and lastly beaten to death with a fuller's club. This occurred at the Passover, A.D. 62, shortly before Vespasian commenced the siege of the city. He was succeeded as Bishop of Jerusalem by Simeon, also a relative of our Lord.

That James belonged to the tribe of Simeon is shown to be in the highest degree probable by the fact that his great learning, his authority in teaching, and his being appointed chief pastor of the infant Church in the Holy City, indicated that he was a man learned in the law, a trainer of scholars, and a faithful interpreter of the sacred books—in a word, a Scribe or Scripturalist in the highest and best sense—not one of those degenerate Scribes who endeavoured to annul the word of God for the sake of subtle traditions. James might well have been of the tribe of Simeon, and yet a kinsman of Joseph or Mary, who were of the tribe of Judah, for even originally the Simeonites had no separate inheritance, but only a portion of the land of Judah (Josh. xix. 9). Between these two tribes a brotherly alliance was formed (Judges i. 3), and doubtless intermarriages were allowed between them, as we know they were

between Levi and Judah, for Elizabeth of the tribe of Levi and wife of the priest Zacharias was a cousin of Mary of the tribe of Judah (Luke i. 5 and 36). Probably Alphæus, the father of James, was a Simeonite who had married a sister of either Mary or Joseph, and so James was styled a cousin of our Lord. It is interesting to note, in reference to the intermarriages of the three tribes of Levi, Simeon and Judah, which appear in so many instances to have been specially permitted, that the prophet Zechariah foretold that when there would be a victorious restoring of the tribe of Judah who shall look upon Him whom they have pierced and shall mourn for Him; and when at the same time the Lord would look down graciously upon them and defend them—then should these three tribes, Judah, Levi, and Simeon mourn apart, and their wives apart (Zech. xii. 12—13).

With regard to the character of the Apostle James, it was such as to earn for him the appellation of "Just." His piety and devotion were extraordinary, and his belief in the efficacy of prayer unbounded.

The Jews even attributed the destruction of Jerusalem and the ruin of their nation to his death. It is said that he was buried upon Mount Olivet in a

tomb which he had built for himself, and wherein he had buried Zacharias and old Simeon. How, appropriate! for Zacharias as well as James—as well as Simeon—had been a preacher of light. He it was who, filled by the Holy Ghost, composed the exquisite prophetic hymn which we find in the first chapter of St. Luke's Gospel, and in which he spoke of our salvation through the tender mercy of our God, whereby the day-spring from on high hath visited us, to give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace. It was fitting that this saintly triumvirate should thus occupy the same tomb. As for their epitaph, it might well have been for each of them :—

“The sun shall be no more thy light by day ;
Neither for brightness shall the moon give light
unto thee :
But the Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light,
And thy God thy glory.”—(Isaiah lx. 19).

CHAPTER III.

THE CARBUNCLE.

THE third precious stone in the breastplate was the CARBUNCLE, and it was with the name of JUDAH.

The carbuncle is a well-known gem of a deep purplish-red colour mingled with scarlet, and is symbolic of majesty or royal dignity. The word carbuncle signifies "burning coal," the stone having a very fiery appearance as though burning with a bright flame. Parkhurst describes it as a precious stone shining like lightning or a coal of fire. The Hebrew word, *Bareketh*, means literally "the flashing," and is derived from *barak*, "lightning." There can be little doubt that it was correctly rendered carbuncle, as in the Authorised Version.

In Isaiah liv. 12, the Hebrew word is *Ekdach*, but that also signifies to burn, and to send forth lightning, or flash.*

It has been said by some old authors to drop from the clouds amidst the flashes of lightning! perhaps because the Hebrew *Bareketh* has been translated into the Greek word *Keraunos*, or thunder-stone. Or the idea may have sprung originally from some such passages as that in Psalm xviii. 13:—"The Lord also thundered in the heavens, and the Highest gave His voice; hailstones and *coals of fire*."

Emanuel states that according to Eastern legends a carbuncle was suspended in the ark of Noah to diffuse light, the property of shining in the dark having always been attributed to it. In ancient times the superstition was almost universal that the property of the carbuncle was to curb wrath and to preserve from lightning. It is positively electric by

* In *heraldry*, a carbuncle is defined as "a charge or bearing consisting of eight radii, four of which make a common cross, and the other four a saltier (or St. Andrew's cross)." This is what we find in the Union flag of Great Britain, with its eight scarlet radii. It takes the name carbuncle, like the jewel of that name, from the "*flashing*," as it were, of its rays.

friction, and has a sensible effect on the magnetic needle. Almost all ancient writers on precious stones allude to the singular connection between the carbuncle and lightning, and there are some strange traditions connected therewith. Pausanias, for instance, states that a certain prophet had a large carbuncle which sparkled with such surprising lustre as to illuminate his dark winter house like strong flashes of continued lightning, to the great terror of the weak, who would not approach the place for fear of sudden death!

The African and Indian carbuncles are the most esteemed. When cut into facets they take the name of garnets, one kind—a fiery stone of pre-eminent beauty, to which the name carbuncle is now chiefly restricted—being called pyrope (from $\pi\upsilon\rho$, fire; and ψ , eye). Does not this give the clue to the elucidation of certain passages in Scripture, which otherwise are hard to be understood? for instance, St. John, in describing Christ (who was of the kingly tribe of Judah) in all His glorious majesty, makes use of the peculiar imagery so often found in Scripture to explain qualities and identities, and writes of Him, in Rev. i. 14, that “His eyes were as a flame of fire;” and in Rev. ii. 18, “These

things saith the Son of God, who hath his eyes like unto a flame of fire." Also in Rev. xix. 12, "His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns. . . . And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS."

Again, in the Old Testament, we read of Daniel, in his glorious vision of Messiah the Prince, saying that "His eyes were as lamps of fire" (Daniel x. 6).

There are other varieties of carbuncle besides that which commonly takes this name: *e.g.*, the Lychnis or lamp-stone, so called from the nocturnal luminousness which has been attributed to it. It is of a vivid poppy-red colour. Also the Spinel, from a Greek word signifying a spark. Lastly, that exquisitely beautiful stone, the so-called Balas ruby, which takes its name from the Phrygian word, Βαλίηρ or king (though some have derived it from *palatium* or palace).

In front of the State crown of England, and set in the centre of a diamond Maltese cross, is the magnificent uncut "ruby" which has been long so famous, and full of historic interest. It was given to Edward the Black Prince by Pedro, King of Castile, upon the victory of Najera, A.D. 1367, and was

afterwards worn in the helmet of Henry V. at the battle of Agincourt. It is the opinion of eminent mineralogists that this huge oval stone is in reality a *Balas ruby*—in fact, a priceless carbuncle.

It would be needless to multiply proofs that Jewish rulers were clothed in the royal colour, scarlet (or, as sometimes translated in our Bible, purple, with scarlet in marg.). In Daniel v. 29, we read that Belshazzar commanded, and they clothed Daniel with scarlet, and made him the third ruler in the kingdom. On Jesus Himself, before crucifying Him, they put a scarlet robe, in derision of His claim to be a king.

Again, when Jesus said, "Consider the lilies of the field . . . Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these,"—Dr Smith has shown that the species of lily here alluded to is the *Scarlet Marlagon*, which grows in profusion in the Levant, and is a conspicuous object on the shores of the Lake of Gennesaret. That the colour was really red or scarlet is implied in Song of Solomon v. 13.

Judah, as is well known, was the Royal tribe, from whom Jesus Christ Himself sprang, and the name Judah signifies "Praise," or the "Praise of the Lord." Therefore it was that Jacob, in blessing his

sons, said, "Judah, thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise;" and also (in allusion to his kingly attributes), "Thy hand shall be in the neck of thine enemies; thy father's children shall bow down before thee. . . . He couched as a lion; who shall rouse him up? The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be."

In connection with the name Judah (or praise) being in the carbuncle on the breastplate, we cannot but notice the remarkably ratifying passages in Isaiah, "I will make thy gates of *carbuncles*" (liv. 12); and "Thou shalt call thy gates *Praise*" (lx. 18). These gates of the Church of Christ stand open to all, as we find in the 11th verse of this latter chapter—"Therefore thy gates shall be open continually; they shall not be shut day nor night; that men may bring into thee the forces of the Gentiles, and that their kings may be brought."*

* The word *gate* in Scripture is frequently used to denote power and dominion; as, *e.g.*, the promise that God made to Abraham in Gen. xxii. 17, that his seed should possess the gate of his enemies; and in Matt. xvi. 18, The gates of hell shall not prevail against the Church.

Similarly we read in Rev. xxi. 25, 26, "And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day : for there shall be no night there. And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it." In the heavenly Jerusalem, however, the fiery hue of the gates has passed off, and is exchanged for white ; they are no longer gates of carbuncle, but of pearl.

Who are they who are to go their way into these gates with thanksgiving, and into these courts with praise ? Only those who are clothed with the robe of Christ's righteousness :—"Open to me the gates of righteousness ; I will go into them, and I will praise the Lord ; This gate of the Lord, into which the righteous shall enter. I will praise Thee : for Thou hast heard me, and art become my salvation" (Psalm cxviii. 19—21).

To quote, in explanation of this subject, all the numerous texts having reference to Judah as the Ruler, and above all to Messiah as the King ; as also to the praises due to God in respect of His omnipotence, omniscience, and eternal goodness and mercy, would be utterly impossible, so numerous are they, and permeating as it were the whole of the sacred Scriptures. In our own feeble way, we feel an elevated pleasure in joining in the

magnificent words and strains of our immortal Old Hundredth Psalm, without which few of the works of mortal hands are considered complete. We cannot but feel that except the Lord build the house, their labour is but lost that build it. "Who is like Thee, O Lord, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?" "God is King of all the earth, let every one that hath understanding sing praises."

As to the children of Judah, it is most sad to find that after the time they were taken into captivity they almost ceased to utter praises to their God. How could they sing the Lord's song in the land of a stranger and by the rivers of Babylon? they plaintively asked; but even after their return to Judea, there was on their part very little praise, according to the highest sense of the word. True, the captivity had been, in some notable instances, a means of glorifying the Almighty amongst the heathen, and of exciting their attention to His Divine Majesty and resistless power; for instance, God preserved Daniel from the den of lions in a miraculous manner, and also rescued Daniel's three friends (all of whom were of the tribe of Judah) from the burning fiery furnace; and certainly no

hymn of praise could transcend that magnificent canticle which was sung by these miraculously rescued young Jews, and which is commonly used in our Prayer Book during Lent, in place of the *Te Deum*, commencing "O all ye works of the Lord, bless ye the Lord: praise Him and magnify Him for ever."

On the return of the Jews to their own land the foundations of the new Temple were laid with great rejoicing, but their praises and joy were strangely mixed with mourning, as Ezra relates; and even in respect of the dedication of the walls and the celebrations of the feasts and other religious appointments, the public thanksgivings were of a most pathetic kind. The glory of Judah, as the Royal tribe, had indeed departed. What a contrast to the days of David and Solomon, five centuries earlier, with regard to the magnificence of the kingdom and all earthly glories! Riches, wealth, and honour, as well as wisdom and knowledge, had all departed; and not only so, but the Jews dealt treacherously and profaned the holiness of the Lord, and a worse fate awaited them. They rejected their Messiah and crucified the Lord of Glory. He came to His own, and His

own received Him not. All the faults of treacherous Judah (as Jeremiah generally designated this tribe) seem to have been concentrated in the traitor Judas Iscariot, or Ish Kerieth (a man of Kerieth or Scarioth, in Judah); but though of the tribe of Judah, no song of praise came from his lips. Even on that intensely solemn occasion (one of the most solemn in the history of the world), the Last Supper, it is recorded that Judas retired before the hymn was sung at the close of the supper, that hymn of praise being the 113th and five following Psalms.

When the Jews, with mock loyalty to the Roman Emperor, said to Pilate, "We have no King but Cæsar," they were glad, no doubt, to have become rid of their alien Idumean king, Herod the Great; and it is no wonder that they ignored Herod Antipas, the tetrarch of Galilee and Peræa, who was in Jerusalem at that time; but in discarding and rejecting their true King, the Prince of Life and Lord of Glory, they became the headlong subjects of Satan, the ruler of the darkness of this world; in putting themselves out of the protection of the Lion of the tribe of Judah, they exposed themselves with inconceivable infatuation to the fierce ravages of their adversary the devil, who as a roaring lion seeketh whom he may devour.

After the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, A.D. 70, when millions of Jews lost their lives by sword or famine, and Judea was reduced to a desolate wilderness, the Jews became scattered among all nations—a living evidence of prophecy. Yet have they never ceased to look earnestly forward to the re-occupation of their land; and scarcely any public occasion has passed by without the utterance of their prayerful watchword, "Next year in Jerusalem." They will yet see Him whom they pierced, and both recognize and acknowledge their Messiah, who, for Zion's sake, will not rest till He hath made Jerusalem a praise in the earth; and her re-gathered children shall at length pass through her "gates of carbuncle" into the courts of His holiness.

The prophets Isaiah, Daniel, Amos and Micah were of the tribe of Judah. Isaiah is supposed to have been descended from a branch of the royal family. He has been designated the "Evangelical Prophet," so circumstantially did he describe the promised Messiah and His Kingdom. Daniel, too, according to Josephus, was of the family of Zedekiah, the last King of Judah. Sir Isaac Newton said that to reject the prophecies of Daniel is to

reject the Christian religion, for this religion is founded upon his prophecy concerning the Messiah.

Amos was a simple herdsman, and yet no prophet has more magnificently described the Deity. He foretold the low state into which the Kingdom of David would fall, and its glorious restoration under the Messiah. Micah was probably either a herdsman like Amos, or a vine-dresser. He clearly predicted the birth of Our Saviour at Bethlehem in Judah, and the establishment of His Kingdom over all nations.

The third foundation in the wall of that holy city, the New Jerusalem, is said in our translation to be a *Chalcedony*; but this must on no account be confounded with the stone of that name with which we are familiar. In the learned work on *Precious Stones* by C. W. King, M.A., we find that the insertion of this name instead of *CARBUNCLE* is easily accounted for. King states that this Chalcedony is understood by Marbodius as the Carchedonius, or African Carbuncle—a very common confusion of two names, arising from the similarity between the Greek names *Χαλκηδών* and *Καρχηδών*: the former, Chalcedon, being a town of Bithynia in Asia Minor,

opposite Byzantium; and the latter, Carchedon, being the Greek name for Carthage, the once celebrated city of Africa, and rival of Rome. In Chaldean (Jerusalem paraphrase) the name for carbuncle is *Kadkedana*.

Of all varieties of carbuncle the Carthaginian was the most celebrated. Theophrastus also is quoted as saying that the carbuncles found in Carthage were bright red, and when held against the sun resembled glowing coal, which perfectly corresponds with the stones we now call by the same name. There can be little doubt, therefore, that the above is the true explanation of the original error or transliteration. A second clue has indeed been afforded by Emanuel, who says: "The most esteemed are the Indian and Garamantine carbuncles; the latter term has given rise to the modern name of garnet: the same gem was also called the *Chalcedonian*." Another author observes that when held against fire or the light of the sun, the Chalcedonian surpasses in lustre all other carbuncles. Few can have supposed that the stone named in the Revelation is our chalcedony, and it has been variously described by commentators as carbuncle, ruby, and turquoise. It is obvious, indeed, that the

very common chalcedony, which has a dull greyish appearance and is of little value, could hardly have been included in this list of most precious stones; and it is equally unlikely that the beautiful and brilliant carbuncle would have been omitted.

The name of JAMES the son of Zebedee, or James the Great, was in this stone, the CARBUNCLE, and with an appropriateness that is obvious. He, above all the Apostles, looked at Jesus in the light of a King, and longed to see Him in His glorious majesty. He was even ambitious enough to desire to sit on Christ's right hand in His kingdom. He was chosen to be one of the three Apostolic witnesses of the more intimate transactions of our Lord's life. Thus he (together with Peter and John) was taken to the miraculous raising of Jairus' daughter; was admitted to Christ's glorious Transfiguration on the Mount; was taken along with Him into the garden to be a spectator of His bitter agonies; and not the least honour which our Lord conferred on these three Apostles was that of giving them new names and titles,—Simon he named Peter, and James and John, Boanerges or the "Sons of Thunder." That James had here on earth a resolute disposition and fiery temper is

instanced by the circumstance that he and John urged Jesus that they might command fire to come down from heaven (even as Elias did) and consume the inhospitable inhabitants of a Samaritan village (Luke ix. 54). Then there was the remarkable request, as already mentioned, that he and John might sit, the one on the right hand and the other on the left of our Lord when He took possession of His kingdom (even as the heads of Judah and Ephraim had the first place amongst the rulers of the twelve tribes).

James, either from age or character, took a higher position than his brother. He was always eager for pre-eminence, and possessed a burning and impetuous spirit. He is supposed to have been surnamed "Great" from some peculiar honours and favours which our Lord conferred upon him.

That he and his brother John were of the tribe of Judah would seem to be evident from the fact of their mother, Salome, being sister of Mary, the mother of Jesus. Such, at least, is the general opinion, and Dr. Smith states that the weight of modern criticism is decidedly in favour of this view. That Salome was the wife of Zebedee is obvious on comparing Matt. xxvii. 55, 56, with Mark xv. 40,

41. There is no record of the birthplace of James and John, though when they became engaged in business as fishermen, they doubtless settled at Bethsaida or its neighbourhood. They must have been of some note, as they had their own hired servants (Mark i. 20), and John was personally acquainted with Caiaphas, the high priest of the Jews (John xviii. 16). Their Jewish origin may also be inferred from the fact that John, in his Gospel, minutely describes Christ's ministry in Judea and scarcely at all the Galilean ministry. He must have been well acquainted with Judea, and Dean Farrar suggests that he resided much at Jerusalem, to which he was bound by peculiar relations. His residing with Mary, the mother of Jesus, when she was left desolate, as a son, is perhaps another proof that he and James equally with her belonged to the tribe of Judah.

After our Saviour's ascension, James is said by Sophronius and others to have confined himself to preaching to the dispersed Jews in Judea and Samaria. At last, Herod Agrippa, in persecuting the Christians, specially selected James, who with his fiery temper was so boldly reproving the Jews and contending for the faith of the Christian religion,

and ordered him to be beheaded with the sword, A.D. 44 (Acts xii. 2).

It is a noteworthy fact that St. James is the only Apostle whose death is recorded in the New Testament. He did drink, indeed, of the cup that Jesus drank of, and was baptized with the baptism that He was baptized with; and in the regeneration when the Son of Man shall sit on the throne of His glory, he also will be one of the twelve sitting upon thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel, and giving praise and honour and glory unto Him that sitteth upon the throne and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.

The order in which these first three stones (the ruby, the topaz, and the carbuncle) are given, has a significance which cannot be overlooked. Their teaching is first, of blood; secondly, of light; thirdly, of praise and glory. This order is the teaching of the Bible in many passages. Take, for instance, the first three verses of the 67th Psalm: "God be merciful unto us, and bless us; and cause His face to shine upon us. That thy way may be known upon earth, thy saving health among all nations. Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee." So that God's mercy comes

first; then the shining of His face upon us; and, as a necessary consequence, praising God. We must first go to the Mercy Seat or Propitiatory, as the same Greek word (*Ilasterion*) signifies. But this mercy seat must be sprinkled with blood, in order to make atonement for sinners, as we read in Lev. xvi. No mercy, in fact, can be obtained except at the blood-stained mercy seat, which was an eminent type of Christ himself; not until then can we see the Sun of Righteousness, with healing in His wings, according to the succeeding prayer for light and saving health; and lastly, praise to God must necessarily follow. All this is well illustrated in Luke xviii. ver. 35 to 43: "A certain blind man sat by the wayside begging, and hearing that Jesus of Nazareth was passing by, he cried saying, Jesus, thou Son of David, have *mercy* on me. The more the people rebuked him that he should hold his peace, so much the more he cried, Thou Son of David, have *mercy* on me. And Jesus stood, and commanded him to be brought unto Him; and when he was come near, He asked him, What wilt thou that I should do unto thee? And he said, *Lord, that I may receive my sight.* And Jesus said unto him, Receive thy sight; thy

faith hath saved thee. And immediately he received his sight, and followed Him, *glorifying God*: and all the people, when they saw it, gave *praise* unto God." As Christ's triumphal entry into Jerusalem immediately followed this miracle, who can doubt that this poor man, who by prayer and faith had thus obtained mercy and received sight, was one of the foremost of the multitude to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice saying, "Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord: peace in heaven, and glory in the highest!"

CHAPTER IV.

THE EMERALD.

THE fourth precious stone, or the first in the second row of the breastplate of judgment, was the EMERALD, and in it was the name of DAN. The beautiful grass-green colour of this stone is well known, and a fine specimen of good quality is unsurpassed in beauty by any other gem. But where is a perfect one to be found? So rarely perfect, indeed, is this precious stone that the saying, "An emerald without a flaw," has passed into a proverb for unattainable perfection. As to the true Oriental emerald, Emanuel states that it is the rarest of all gems, and is scarcely ever seen. In the whole course of his extensive experience he has only met with one really good specimen.

In Hebrew the word for emerald is *Nophek*; in Chaldean, *Ismaragdan* or *Esmorad*; in Greek, *Smaragdos*; in Italian, *Smeraldo*.

Formerly it was supposed that the colouring matter of the emerald was the mineral oxide of chrome, but according to Emanuel, Mr. Levy has shown on analysis that this is too small in quantity to be appreciable, and he gives it as his opinion that the beautiful green tint is produced by an organic substance termed *Chlorophylle*, the same which constitutes the colouring matter of grass and green leaves; and it is certainly remarkable, as a test of this, that the emerald at a low heat does lose its colour and become white, whilst the chrome-coloured minerals remain unaffected by intense heat.

A strange mystery seems always to have clung to this precious stone—the emerald—and it has even been termed “the stone of mystery.” *Nophel* signifies nothing, for this Hebrew word stands alone, and is connected with no verb or root which might elucidate its ideal meaning. That the Greek *Smaragdos* is the emerald (as in Rev. xxi. 19) there is no doubt. It derives its name from *smarageō*, “to crash, as thunder.” Amongst the pagan Romans, emeralds were dedicated to Jupiter Tonans. Theophrastus relates that there was in Egypt, in a temple of Jupiter, an obelisk made of four emeralds, forty cubits long and four cubits thick; but it need

hardly be said that these could not have been true emeralds, but probably blocks of green malachite, or vitreous masses artificially coloured by metallic oxides. Pliny speaks with contempt of the belief amongst the Orientals that emeralds engraved with figures of eagles, or with the head of Jupiter within a coiled serpent, possessed the virtue of averting thunderstorms. Martial describes Jupiter as admiring the lustre of gold-plate inlaid with Scythian emeralds, so that goblets made of such are those which become the Thunderer. King states that both by the Persians and the Romans emeralds were preferred to all other gems for adorning jewelled goblets; hence the tradition that Solomon's sacred vessels were of this character, which in its turn gave birth to the legend of the *Sacro Catino*. This famous patera in the Cathedral of Genoa, which was found among the spoils at the capture of *Cæsarea* by the Crusaders, was held to have been used by Christ at the institution of the Lord's Supper. It has, however, been found to be merely rich green transparent glass. In Pliny's *Natural History* there is a mysterious passage in which it is said of emeralds, "No other colour is so pleasing to the sight, for grass and green foliage we view indeed

with pleasure, but emeralds with so much greater delight inasmuch as nothing equals the intensity of their green. Besides, these stones seem larger at a distance by imparting their colour all around to *reverberating air* (*repercussum aëra*)." There seems even to be, in Hebrew, some connection between "thunder" and the "green" colour of growing plants, for *rah-gam* is "thunder," and *rah-ganahn* is "green," both having the same root. And as to Greek, Homer says that the thunder of Jupiter produces green (*χλωρόν*) fright.

There is frequent mention of thunder in the Bible, and nearly always as a symbol of Divine Judgment (*Dan*), such as 1 Sam. ii. 10, "Out of heaven shall He thunder upon them: the Lord shall judge the ends of the earth."

The intimate association of the emerald with the carbuncle (which in Hebrew is derived from *barak*, "lightning") has been the cause of much confusion. The Revisers of the Old Testament have made them interchangeable both in Exodus and Ezekiel. In Emanuel's book, too, we find both *Bareketh* and *Nophék* translated carbuncle, but it is obvious that as the former is correctly rendered carbuncle, the latter must be emerald. The confusion may have

arisen from *Bareketh* or carbuncle having been translated by the Greek word *Keraunos*, "thunder-stone" or "aerolite"; and an allied stone to the emerald, the olivine or peridot, sometimes called the evening emerald, being the only precious stone ever found in aerolites.*

In the present day emeralds are chiefly obtained from Peru, but the Siberian variety surpasses all the rest in value, hardness, and comparative freedom from defects. It is found in rugged mountainous tracts, and is excavated by dint of excessive and painful toil. The griffin is said to build its nest in these mines, and to be zealously watchful in guarding their treasures—a convenient fable, no doubt, to the authorities in assisting them to ward off the too inquisitive visits of the Siberian robbers. Milton gives his serpent eyes of carbuncles, and there is an old tradition that if it fixes its eyes on the lustre of

* These two precious stones, the carbuncle and the emerald, are ranged together in the Apocrypha, as well as in Exodus and Revelation. (Ecclesiasticus xxxii. 56, R.V.)

“As a signet of carbuncle in a setting of gold,
So is a concert of music in a banquet of wine.
As a signet of emerald in a work of gold,
So is a strain of music with pleasant wine.”

emeralds it immediately becomes blind. In Moore's *Lalla Rookh* we read :

“Blinded like serpents when they gaze,
Upon the emerald's virgin blaze.”

Emeralds are somewhat brittle in texture, so that engravings are very rarely executed upon them. Dieulafait, however, gives a description of a beautiful composition executed in the middle ages upon this stone, representing the soul led away by the pleasures.

Pliny describes an extremely rare Scythian variety of great hardness and immense value, consisting, like the ruby and the sapphire, of pure alumina, and therefore the true Oriental variety.

Emeralds were of course well known to the ancients, being found, amongst other places, in the mountains bordering on the Nile (where the old mines may still be traced), and they are several times mentioned in Scripture : for instance, we read in *Ezekiel* that they were taken to the fairs of Tyre by the merchants of Syria.

These stones are most beautiful and grateful to behold. Gem engravers always look upon them when the eye is fatigued by over-exertion, and it is well known that Nero used to observe the struggles

of gladiators through an eye-glass of a pure emerald, so that his sight should not be wearied. What, indeed, is more pleasing to the sight than the green earth with its grass and foliage? How refreshing and congenial to the eye of man! But it must be remembered that it is to the eye of *fallen* man, and also that a curse had been denounced against the earth. God said to Adam, "Cursed is the ground for thy sake. . . . Thorns and thistles shall it bring forth to thee, and thou shalt eat the herb of the field. In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken; for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." Man, lost and humiliated as he was, could no longer look up to the sapphire sky and hold pure communion with his Maker, as was his wont before the fall; but it was now more grateful to him to look down upon the emerald ground.* It was therefore with sad appropriateness that the name of Dan should be in this stone. Dan was the

* Macaulay, in his "Marriage of Tirzah and Ahirad," gives a glowing account of the City and Court of Cain (who had been cursed of God for the murder of his brother), and speaks of—

"The *emerald* throne where sat the signed of God."

first among the sons of the bondwomen, born after the flesh, and the origin of his name is given in the exclamation of Rachel. "God hath judged me (*dannani*);" therefore she called his name Dan, *i.e.*, judging. The terms *damnation* and *judgment*, indeed, in their origin are from the same word, and in many passages are synonymous, as in 1 Cor. xi. 29 and 34; Rom. xiii. 2; Jude 15.

There is something inexpressibly solemn in the contemplation of Dan and his descendants. We sometimes hear of the lost tribes of Israel. There is only one lost tribe—that of Dan. Of them none were sealed with the seal of the Living God in Heaven (Rev. vii.), and there was no gate for them to enter. Their very name seems to have been blotted out of the Book of Life.

We read in the 49th chapter of Genesis that Jacob called unto his sons and said, "Gather yourselves together, that I may tell you that which shall befall you in the last days. Gather yourselves together, and hear, ye sons of Jacob; and hearken unto Israel your father." When he came to Dan and announced to him the terrible sentence of what, by prophetic insight, he knew must befall his poor condemned son "in the last days," he was so

overcome that he cried out in the anguish of his soul, "I have waited for Thy salvation, O Lord." The words, "Dan shall be a serpent by the way, an adder in the path," &c., were more than he could bear. This name "serpent" had only occurred before in Gen. iii., and was specially given to Satan, the subtle and malignant enemy of mankind—that "old serpent" who was "a murderer from the beginning."

One would think that Jacob had a prophetic consciousness of what John the Baptist would say (Luke iii. 7) to those who, even if not Danites, were typically represented by them, for by their poisonous doctrines they were ruining the souls of men, "O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?"—this following the announcement in the preceding verse (similar to Jacob's own exclamation) that "all flesh shall see the salvation of God;" and still more, as though Jacob had foreseen what our Lord Jesus Christ himself would say, with yet more awful severity (Matt. xxiii.) to those subtle hypocrites who, by their "fetish-worship of formalism," made the word of God of no effect; "Ye are the children of them which killed the prophets, . . . Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation

of hell?" No sooner, however, had Jesus proclaimed this tremendous denunciation than His anger melted, and He uttered those words of exquisite grace and tenderness, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!"

The whole history of the tribe of Dan is dark, mysterious, and meagre. When Moses said, "Dan is a lion's whelp, he shall leap from Bashan," it was doubtless in a bad sense that he said it. Dan might be active and courageous, but rather as a child of that roaring lion, the devil. Bashan, too, is generally used in an unfavourable sense in Scripture. Cunning and strength were the characteristics of the tribe of Dan, but they were, with few exceptions, exerted against God's people. Samson, the judge, was the chief and best of this tribe, and yet there was a very dark side in his character.

The children of Dan were persistent idolaters from the very beginning, even "until the day of the captivity of the land." It is believed they did not go into captivity themselves, but "went down to the sea in their ships and did business in great waters."

Their great port was the celebrated Joppa, and their southern portion of land was called the "Garden of Palestine," from its beautiful verdure and green pastures.

No mention is made of the Danites in the genealogies of the 1st Book of Chronicles, nor of their descendants, by Ezra, after the captivity. Upon the revolt of the ten tribes from Rehoboam, after the death of Solomon, when all the Levites went to Judah and Jerusalem, false priests of idolatrous Dan, taken from the lowest of the people (1 Kings xii. 30, 31), were induced by Jeroboam to take their place, and were ordained by him priests for the high places, and for the devils, and for the calves which he had made (2 Chron. xi. 14, 15).

Dan seems to have been to the twelve tribes what Judas was to the twelve Apostles. From the most ancient times there has even been a tradition that Antichrist would come from the tribe of Dan. This, of course, may have been a baseless conjecture, but in any case it is a mournful picture which this tribe presents. We are unable to fathom the mystery of the eventual fate of the tribe. We cannot but fear that they were such evil-doers and workers of iniquity as to be likened to those of whom the

Psalmist says, that they shall be cut down as the grass and wither as the green herb; but we take some hope from Ezekiel's vision, in which he saw a portion of land and also a gate for Dan. At all events, we know that God, in His infinite mercy, has offered salvation to all who are willing to receive it; and we know that Jesus Himself (to whom the Father hath committed all judgment) has said, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on Him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation."

Amongst the redeemed in the New Jerusalem, in place of Dan we find Levi. Now the emerald was always considered by the ancients a fit emblem of faith:—

" In th' *Emerald's* hue of matchless green
An image apt of *Faith's* supplied."

From Dan to Levi is, indeed, a true exercise of faith. It is to rise from rank and grovelling idolatry to the worship of the true and living God; to look up from this emerald earth—curse-stricken and tear-drenched as it is—to that rainbow (emblem of mercy and faithfulness) which St. John saw round about the throne in heaven and in sight like unto an emerald (Rev. iv. 3); round

about which throne, also, were four-and-twenty seats, and upon the seats four-and-twenty elders sitting, clothed with white raiment and having on their heads crowns of gold (verse 4). These elders may have represented the Church before and after Christ, uniting the twelve Patriarchs and twelve Apostles, sitting as assessors under the Jewish and Christian dispensations respectively; but they were probably typified by the heads of the twenty-four courses of Levitical priests instituted by David (1 Chron. xxiv).

Levi's name was not in any of the breastplate stones (as explained in the introductory chapter), for this tribe was separated from the others for the services of the Sanctuary, and was not to be reckoned amongst them. But there is no temple in heaven (Rev. xxi. 22) in which Levitical priests are needed to conduct the worship of God. The Levites are there, but the priesthood has vanished. The Lamb Himself is the Sacrifice, the Priest, and the Temple thereof.

And whose name, amongst the twelve Apostles, was seen by St. John to be in this mysterious stone—the emerald? His own. The fourth foundation of the wall of the heavenly city was an

EMERALD, and in it, therefore, the name of JOHN, the son of Zebedee and the brother of James—St. John the Divine, as he is generally called. But does this seem fitting?—that the name of the gentle, loving, tender John should be found in the emerald, in which stone on the breastplate had been inscribed Dan or Judgment? Was he not the disciple whom Jesus loved, and who laid his head on Jesus' bosom at the Paschal Supper? We are too apt to look upon him in this aspect only, as though he were of a peculiarly gentle, yielding, almost effeminate nature. Far different was his real character. His Lord and Master, to whom he was peculiarly dear, had given him, equally with his brother James, the name of Boanerges, or *Son of Thunder*.^{*} This implies vehemence, fearlessness, and burning zeal. He was really of an aspiring and impetuous temper, and even desired supernatural judgments to vindicate the honour of his Master. Peter himself did not venture to ask our Lord who should betray Him, but made use of John to put the question.

* It is, to say the least, a strange coincidence that in these two precious stones—the carbuncle and the emerald—the only ones having reference to lightning and thunder, should be the names of James and John, the two "Sons of Thunder."

John, too, was particularly constant to his Master, even when the rest of His followers deserted Him, and he is supposed to have been the young man described in Mark xiv. 51, for he must have been by far the youngest of all the Apostles, having lived sixty-eight years after our Saviour's suffering; but though he, too, fled to avoid sudden violence when Jesus was taken, he soon recovered himself and sought his Master, following Him even into the very palace of the High Priest, through his influence with Caiaphas (John xviii. 15). He resolutely ventured himself amongst the Jews during the several passages of our Saviour's trial, and was probably the only Apostle who attended Him at the Crucifixion, owning Him as well as owned by Him in the midst of armed guards and surrounded by enemies. After our Lord's resurrection, John and Peter were close and intimate companions. Together they hastened to the sepulchre; healed miraculously the poor impotent cripple at the Temple after our Lord's ascension; preached to the people, and were apprehended by the Priests and Sadducees and thrown into prison; and they were the two chosen Apostles to go to Samaria, where they settled the Churches formed there by Philip, and

confirmed the mission of St. Paul to the Gentiles. Subsequently St. John preached chiefly in Asia Minor, forming some and confirming others of the Seven Churches of Asia, and principally took up his abode at Ephesus.

When banished to Patmos, and cut off from all conversation and society with men, he bare record of the Revelation which God had given him by Apocalyptic visions and words of prophecy. In the following year (A.D. 97), when recalled from banishment, he wrote his Gospel. He is said to have died about the 98th year of his life, though some have considered, from such passages as John xxi. 22, and Rev. x. 11, that John, like Enoch and Elijah, was translated to heaven without seeing death. The writing in his Gospel is very exalted, mainly designing to prove Christ's divinity and eternal pre-existence, and also supplying chiefly what the other Evangelists had omitted.* He was of eager and resolute disposition, and easily provoked; yet

* In Dean Farrar's "Early Days of Christianity" (Chap. xxiv.) we read:— Then Satan entered into Judas, and he went forth into the night. Relieved of the oppression of that painful presence, Jesus began those Divine discourses which it was granted to John only to preserve—so "rarely mixed of sorrows and joys, and studded with mysteries as with emeralds."

humble and full of that love and charity, as well as boldness and fearlessness, which characterized all his writings. He had a passion for the lofty and sublime, and in the zeal of his temper, as well as the sublimity of his matter, he truly answered his name "Boanerges." His Epistles are characterized by a loving simplicity, though blended with wonderful elevation of thought. In the second Epistle, remarkable as it is for the spirit of Christian love which it breathes, there is shown a certain sternness in verses 10—11. When the remarkable combination of his character is considered, one does not wonder at the well-known story which is related of him: A stranger went to see him one day, and to his astonishment found him playing with a pet bird. "The bow that is always strung," he said, "loses its strength." And how did John acquire his fearlessness, so that he was even enabled to see and write his Apocalyptic visions? He tells us himself. It was his perfect love for Jesus, and the perfect love of Jesus for him. "*There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear; because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love. We love Him, because He first loved us*" (1 John iv. 18, 19). Such was the secret of John's fearlessness,

and such the secret of the confidence and security felt by all God's people. "Abide in Him; that, when He shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before Him at His coming" (1 John ii. 28). "Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment" (1 John iv. 17).

James looked upon our Lord chiefly in the light of a King,—John in the light of a Judge; and this is the witness which John gives of the words of Jesus Himself: "For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son; that all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father which hath sent Him. Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth my word, and believeth on Him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life. Verily, verily, I say unto you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live. For as the Father hath life in Himself, so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself; and hath given Him authority to execute judgment also,

because He is the Son of Man" (John v. 22—27).

John's wonderful book, the Revelation, for the most part has to do with Christ's second coming, the millennium, the general resurrection, and the great day of final judgment; as well as with temporal and national judgments.

The emerald in which was the name of John was, therefore, very different from that of Dan, though each had reference to judgment. Dan's was an earthly emerald; John's the heavenly—the "emerald without a flaw."

The name *Dan* signifies "Judgment," but the judgment that is synonymous with condemnation. The name *John* signifies "The Grace or Mercy of the Lord," and reminds us of the emerald emblem of mercy round about the throne of Grace (Rev. iv. 3).

Instead of this sin-stained, curse-stricken earth, John saw "a new heaven and a new earth," where there shall be "no more curse;" instead of the leaves which fade and wither, he saw the "leaves which were for the healing of the nations."

When the twelve tribes were marching and encamping in the wilderness, they were distinguished

by particular standards, under which they were marshalled.* That of Dan was an eagle holding a serpent. But Dan must have appropriated the serpent, while the eagle prefigured the well-known symbolic eagle of St. John—fit symbol of the eagle flight and eagle vision of this “Apocalyptic seer,” soaring aloft within the clouds, whither the weak eye of man was unable to follow him.

The emerald appropriately succeeds the carbuncle, as we know that judgment must follow the glorious coming of the King of Kings, the “Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom.”

“Make a joyful noise before the Lord the King
. . . for He cometh to judge the earth; with
righteousness shall He judge the world, and the
people with equity.”

“Thou art the King of Glory : O Christ.

* * * * *

We believe that thou shalt come : to be our Judge.
We therefore pray thee, help thy servants :
Whom thou hast redeemed with thy precious blood.
Make them to be numbered with thy Saints :
In glory everlasting.”

* See Appendix B.

CHAPTER V.

THE SAPPHIRE.

THE fifth precious stone in the breastplate was the SAPPHIRE, and it was assigned to NAPHTALI. The sapphire is a transparent stone of a beautiful azure or sky-blue colour, and consists of pure alumina. In hardness it is quite equal to the ruby, and is only inferior to the diamond; it is so hard, indeed, as scarcely to bear engraving. It is remarkably cold to the touch, by reason of its great density. It has always been exceedingly valuable, and was most highly prized by the ancient inhabitants of the East. The original Hebrew is *Sappir*, and a similar word is found in almost every language. The identity, therefore, of our sapphire with that described in the Bible is absolutely certain.

It is now found principally in Ceylon, usually in the beds of torrents, mingled with gravel, though sometimes in crystalline rocks. Pliny says that

formerly the best came out of Media—perhaps from Mount Sephar, mentioned by Moses in Gen. x. 30. To the ancients the sapphire was the gem of gems, the sacred stone *par excellence*. Rings worn by priests were always set with this stone, and superstitious people in all nations have been accustomed to attribute their happiness and success to wearing it about their person. From the commencement of the middle ages down to the present time, it has in many countries been used to adorn the episcopal ring of office. Blue is one of the four sacred colours, being so regarded because these were enjoined to be used for sacred purposes (Exod. xxv. 4). The Lord also told Moses to bid the children of Israel to make *blue* fringes to the borders of their garments, throughout their generations, that[¶] in looking upon the fringes they might remember the commandments of the Lord and do them, and be holy unto their God (Numb. xv. 37—41). The Lord Jesus Christ Himself, who was “made under the law,” wore these blue fringes, for we read of the hem or border of His garment being touched by the woman mentioned in Matt. ix. 20.

The sapphires most valued have a celestial blue tint, “like unto the vault of heaven.” According to

Professor Ruskin's view, the sapphire is "the colour of a clear sky at noon, the fulfilment of love and joy in heaven, as the emerald represents the fulfilment of joy upon the earth." Job speaks of places whose stones are sapphires (Job xxviii. 6) ; and we read in Exod. xxiv. 10, that under the feet of the God of Israel, on Mount Sinai, there was as it were a paved work of a sapphire stone, and as it were the body of heaven in clearness. . . . And the Lord said unto Moses, Come up to me into the mount, and be there : and I will give thee tables of stone, and a law, and commandments which I have written ; that thou mayest teach them (ver. 12).

The tradition has always held good amongst the Jews that the tables on which were the Ten Commandments were made of sapphire stones.

On the fiftieth day after the deliverance from Egypt the Law was given from Sinai, and annually at this time (about the end of our May) is the Jewish festival of Pentecost. On this occasion, even to the present day, that portion of the Pentateuch is read which relates to the giving of the Ten Commandments on Mount Sinai ; and also a beautiful series of poems upon the symbolical marriage of the nation of Israel with the law. To this is added the

fuller description of the wonders which Moses is supposed to have beheld, as related by Ezekiel, when he saw the likeness of the throne as the appearance of a sapphire* ; when, also, he saw the firmament of the terrible crystal, and heard the noise of wings like the noise of great waters (Ezek. i. and x.).

It was on the day of Pentecost that the Holy Spirit descended on the assembled Apostles (Acts ii.) like tongues of fire, and they were thus endowed with different languages, to enable them as missionaries to spread the Gospel throughout the world. This day was, therefore, sometimes called the birthday of the Christian Church, just as the appearance of God on Sinai was the birthday of the Jewish nation. It was the inauguration of the more excellent ministry of the Gospel of life, in place of the law of condemnation ; the declaration of the Epistle of Christ, written with the Spirit of the living God, not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart ; the glorious ministration of the New Testament, not of the letter which killeth, but of the Spirit which giveth life (2 Cor. iii.).

It was therefore peculiarly applicable that the sapphire in the breastplate should have the name of

* See Appendix C.

Naphtali, the missionary tribe;* and in the foundation of the New Jerusalem the name of Andrew, the chief missionary representative amongst the Apostles. Jacob, in his dying prophecy concerning his sons, said, "Naphtali is a hind let loose: he giveth goodly words"—a marked reference to missionary work; and Moses' dying blessing was, "O Naphtali, satisfied with favour, and full with the blessing of the Lord: possess thou the west and the south." The name Naphtali signifies "wrestling," or "that fights," and this tribe was as remarkable for courage in battle as valiant in defence of the truth. "Zebulun and Naphtali were a people that jeoparded their lives unto the death in the high places of the field" (Judg. v. 18). The south boundary of the land allotted to Naphtali was that which at a later time separated upper from lower Galilee, so that this district and its inhabitants ("the men of Galilee") became of supreme importance in the time of our Saviour. It was here, at Capernaum ("His own city") that Jesus dwelt; here where He called most

* That Naphtali may be considered the missionary tribe is generally admitted, and is well explained by Rev. C. H. Waller, M.A., in his excellent book "The Names on the Gates of Pearl."

of His disciples, wrought many of His miracles, and found a place for the home of His earthly ministry. All the Apostles became Galileans by residence, so that on the day of Pentecost the multitude were amazed, because that all men heard the disciples speak in their own language ; and they said one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galileans ?

The two tribes, Naphtali and Zebulun, forming the greater part of Galilee, were singularly banded together in Scripture, and most allusions to them thus united seem to have had a more or less spiritual significance. In the Pentecostal Psalm (Ixviii.), appointed to be used on Whitsunday, special mention is made of these two tribes in conjunction with Judah and Benjamin. Again, it is said in Matthew iv. 13—16, Jesus “dwelt in Capernaum ; that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, The land of Zabulon, and the land of Nephthalim, by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles ; the people which sat in darkness saw great light ; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up.”

It was to this tribe of Naphtali that the great prophet and evangelist of Israel, Elijah the Tishbite, belonged, though he chiefly resided in Gilead.

Tishbite signifies a man of Thisbe, which was in the land of Naphtali.* The startling appearance of this rude herdsman before king Ahab, and his subsequent history, form one of the most fascinating narratives in the whole Bible. The harsh exterior and fierce zeal of this grand man of God well fitted him for his extraordinary mission. He was "an hairy man, and girt with a girdle of leather about his loins;" but though a strict and rough Nazarite *his polishing was of sapphire* (Lam. iv. 7). So it is even with the meanest and most austere of men, provided they do God's will and publish his word. They may be unpolished, yet polished as sapphires; they may be unlearned, yet have from on high knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom (Dan. i. 17); they may be weak, but the God of Israel is He that giveth strength and power unto His people (Ps. lxxviii. 35); they may be poor and needy, yet have the blessing of the Lord, which maketh rich, and addeth no sorrow with it (Prov. x. 22); though they have lien among the pots, yet shall

* Tobit explains that he himself was of the tribe of Naphtali, and that he was led captive by the king of the Assyrians out of Thisbe, which is at the right hand of the city Kadesh-Naphtali in Galilee, above Aser. Tobit i. 1, 2.

they be as the wings of a dove covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold (Ps. lxxviii. 13).

How differently the Most High revealed Himself to Elijah, the typical forerunner of our Lord, to what He did to Moses, the lawgiver, on the same Mount Sinai—perhaps on the same sapphire-paved spot! Not in the tempest, or the earthquake, or the fire, but in the still small voice—not amid the mighty forces of nature, in all the terrors of Divine majesty, but in the tender whisper of Divine love and mercy. When the same Moses and Elias stood side by side on the Mount of Transfiguration, we see the meeting together of justice and mercy—of the law and the prophets. With regard to the departure of Moses and Elijah from this earth, at the end of their great mission respectively, there is every reason to suppose that it occurred in each instance at the same hallowed and mysterious locality. In order to follow this out, we find in the sacred record that Moses died in the land of Moab, either on the top of, or in the neighbourhood of Pisgah that is over against Jericho. And the Lord buried him in a valley in the land of Moab, over against Beth-peor: but no man knoweth of his

sepulchre unto this day (Deut. xxxiv.). Not long, however, did his body remain there, for it was soon snatched from the grasp of death and raised from the grave to be translated into heaven. Yet did not this occur without a struggle (Jude 9). Michael the Archangel and Satan the Archfiend had a contention about his body, which doubtless the devil would like to have had duly embalmed and carefully preserved in some well-known sepulchre, so as to become an object of idolatrous adoration amongst the Israelites throughout all their generations. Now to this same spot, where Moses took his departure, Elijah seems to have come at the close of his earthly career; for in 2 Kings ii. we read that the Lord sent him first to Bethel, then to Jericho, and then to Jordan, which he crossed through a miraculous division of the water. And as he and Elisha "still went on," they must soon have arrived at the very valley in the land of Moab close to Pisgah. Here Elijah was taken up direct into heaven by a whirlwind.

During the whole of his eventful life Elijah had a terrible conflict, and needed the whole armour of God to wrestle against the rulers of the darkness of this world—against spiritual wickedness in high places. The life of those who truly serve God with

all their hearts is, indeed, one of incessant spiritual warfare, and they need to be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might in order to be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand—not in their own might, for then they would come to nought; nor do they fight in order that they may obtain salvation as a reward of their own valour, for this is a free gift from the great Captain of our salvation on entering His service. Christian soldiers do not war a warfare and endure hardness in order that they may thereby receive a commission in God's army, but because they have already received it; and that they may please Him who has chosen them to be His good soldiers (2 Tim. ii. 3, 4).

The names Naphtali ("wrestling" or "that fights") and Andrew ("a strong man" or "manly") are in the sapphire, and the sapphire is emblematically the foundation of all missionary work and warfare. "O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted; behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colours, *and lay thy foundations with sapphires* . . . and all thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children" (Isaiah liv. 11—13). All who are thus taught of God, have their hearts disposed to

receive the gospel of His Son. Having learned of the Father, *they come to Jesus*, as Jesus Himself said, quoting this very passage in Isaiah (John vi. 45) ; and then coming to Jesus, *great is their peace*. Not, however, the peace of this world ; not ease and inactivity. In the world we know that the redeemed must have tribulation,—yet great their peace ! *My peace I give unto you*, saith Jesus ; not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid (John xiv. 27). Amidst the greatest spiritual conflicts and the deepest earthly trials there is peace to the tempest-tossed Christian in that still small voice—the true peace which enables him, even when most earnestly contending for the faith, to look forward to the rest that remaineth for the people of God.

ANDREW, whose name was in the SAPPHIRE foundation of the Holy City, was born at Bethsaida, a city of Galilee, and situated on the banks of the Lake of Gennesareth. As Bethsaida was located in the land of Naphtali, there can be little doubt that Andrew belonged to this tribe. He was brother of Simon Peter, and was the first of the disciples that came to Christ, who had been

pointed out to the multitude by John the Baptist as the true Messiah. Andrew then told his brother Simon Peter that he had found the Messias, and both came to Jesus (John i. 40, 41). The missionary character of Andrew is also attested by the way he acted towards certain Greeks who desired to see Jesus. Philip seems to have thought it would have been objectionable to the Jews until he consulted Andrew, and then were these Gentiles brought to Jesus. After our Lord's ascension into heaven, and the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles on the day of Pentecost to fit them to subdue the world by the doctrine of the Gospel, it is generally affirmed by the ancients that the Apostles agreed among themselves, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, what parts of the world they should severally take. In this division Andrew had Scythia and the neighbouring countries around the Euxine sea allotted to him. After preaching in all these regions, he founded a church for Divine worship at Byzantium, and ordained Stachys (whom Paul called his "beloved Stachys") as the first Bishop of that place. After this he passed through Macedonia and Thrace, preaching Christ and working miracles with great success, and finally went to Achaia,

where he received his martyrdom at Patræ. He was first cruelly scourged and then fastened to a cross in the form of a letter X, with cords instead of nails that his death might be the more lingering. All these tortures he endured with invincible patience and constancy, all the while praying and exhorting the people. After hanging two days he died, on the last day of November. His body was afterwards buried by Constantine in the great church of Constantinople. It is interesting to note that St. Andrew's Day has been appointed by Convocation for intercession for missions.

Andrew was the "first-born of the Apostolic choir, the main and prime pillar of the Church, a rock before the rock, the first fruits of the beginning;" so that of all our Lord's Apostles he had thus far the honour of being the first who was chosen to be a preacher and teacher of the Gospel. As such, his "polishing" was bright as the sapphire firmament, and to him is well applicable Jacob's prophetic blessing to Naphtali, "He is a hind let loose; he giveth goodly words:" and, with the Psalmist, Andrew might have said "It is God that girdeth me with strength. He maketh my feet like hinds' feet, and setteth me upon my high

places" (Psalm xviii. 32, 33). As is written in Isaiah, "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation" (Isa. lii. 7). The Apostle Paul quotes this passage to illustrate his statements relative to the first preachers of the Gospel (Rom. x.). How all Christians should long to possess such a missionary spirit; to faithfully follow their Aijeleth Shahar, or Hind of Dawn, (Psalm xxii.), who as the persecuted Messiah suffered so much for them; and "with their feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace," to go about and circulate those rich and blessed truths which they themselves had received! So shall they be as the stars which God set in the firmament of heaven to give light upon the earth (Gen. i. 15—17), for "they that be wise (or as in margin, teachers) shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever" (Dan. xii. 3).

CHAPTER VI.

THE DIAMOND.

THE sixth precious stone of the breastplate, or the last in the second row, was allotted to GAD, and it was said to be a *Diamond*; not, however, our well-known priceless brilliant or crystallized carbon, but the silicious diamond or ROCK CRYSTAL—the mineral diamond, and not that of organic origin.

Rock crystal is well known in this country as Bristol, Welsh, Cornish, and Irish diamond, and has occasionally been mistaken for the true diamond; but it is readily distinguished from the latter by its crystalline form (a six-sided prism) and its inferior hardness, lustre, and specific gravity. The natives of India call the true stone the ripe, and the crystal the unripe, diamond. The Greeks

originally supposed the crystal to be water permanently congealed by intense cold—hence its name, *κρύσταλλος*, frozen or congealed. Rock crystal, or the colourless variety of vitreous quartz, is composed of silica or flint in beautifully-formed crystals, and is found in rocks and water-worn pebbles in almost every part of the globe. On account of its superior hardness, transparency, and durability, it is made use of by opticians for making lenses. Silica forms a great portion of the mass of many mountains, and nearly the whole of the sand of the desert. The range of mountains in the Sinaitic peninsula consists almost entirely of this silica or flint. This is proved not only by what geologists find, but also by such passages in the Bible as that of Deut. viii. 15: “Who brought thee forth water out of the rock of flint;” and Psalm cxiv. 8: “Which turned the rock into a standing water, the flint into a fountain of waters.” From this rock in Horeb Moses had caused the waters to gush out to supply the necessities of the thirsty Israelites; and St. Paul tells us in 1 Cor. x. 4, that this water-streaming rock was really a figure and type of Christ: “For they drank of that Spiritual Rock that followed them; and that Rock was Christ.”

The Hebrew word for the stone we are now considering is *Yahalom*, from "halam," to strike—the flinty rock being probably known to the Israelites by this name after Moses had caused water to spring out by striking it with his rod (Exod. xvii. 6). This Hebrew word is in only one other passage—Ezek. xxviii. 13; whereas *Shamir* is the word for the similar stone translated adamant, which was always used for engraving, polishing, and cutting other hard stones. This is the corundum, or white sapphire, which resembles the diamond to a most remarkable degree, and is very nearly as hard. It is much harder than the *Yahalom*, or crystallized flint, and indeed is described in Ezek. iii. 9 as "an adamant harder than flint." The same Hebrew word *Shamir* happens to be translated "diamond" in Jerem. xvii. 1: "The sin of Judah is written with the point of a diamond." The point of this stone, corundum, was invariably used for engraving, and its powder, or emery, for polishing. *Smiris* is the similar Greek word for this emery, or adamantine spar.

There seem to have been significant reasons, as we presently shall see, why the name of Gad should have been in this quartz-diamond or crystal, symbolical

as it always has been of pure water.* Little or nothing is recorded of Gad except in respect of the land apportioned to this tribe, and this certainly became of the highest importance. It was on the east of Jordan, and embraced the chief portion of Gilead. This was chiefly a mountainous district, intersected by the torrent Jabbok. There were deep valleys, with meadows and numerous streams, and here and there wild rocky hills and steep ravines. So great, indeed, was the importance of this special locality that even the name of Gad, the tribe, was sometimes lost in that of Gilead, the territory. "Gilead is mine; Manasseh is mine." "Gilead abode beyond Jordan." The chief cities of Gad were Ramoth-Gilead, on which spot Jacob is said to have made his covenant with Laban; Succoth, so called as being the place where Jacob put up

* "I would I knew the name of this delicious fountain [in the desert, not far from the Dead Sea] that I might hold it in my grateful remembrance, for never did water slake more deliciously a more oppressive thirst than I have this day experienced."

"It is called in the Arabic language," answered the Saracen, "by a name which signifies the *Diamond of the Desert*."

"And well it is so named," replied the Christian—

The Talisman, by Sir Walter Scott.

“booths” for his cattle, as well as a house for himself (Gen. xxxiii. 17); and Mahanaim (“God’s hosts,” Gen. xxxii. 2), where David found a secure refuge when he was compelled to flee across Jordan on account of Absalom’s rebellion. It was close to the stream Jabbok where Jacob’s mysterious wrestling with God occurred.

The name Gad signifies a “troop” or “company,” and true it is that the Gadites were men of might and warlike; but when Leah said, “A troop cometh,” her thoughts were doubtless directed far beyond warlike prowess, and prophetically referred to the great company of the Church of Christ that should be hereafter, beginning with the preparatory baptism of John in the land of Gad. Jacob, in his benediction, said, “Gad, a troop shall overcome him, but he shall overcome at the last.” How truly this applied to the persecutions of the infant Christian Church, and its subsequent rapid increase! At first, the whole power of the Roman Empire was exerted in order to crush the followers of Christ: yet in spite of the fiercest persecutions their religion spread and their numbers increased, until they became an innumerable company. Here it may be mentioned that both as regards the significance of

the names which were given to the sons of Jacob at their birth, and the previsions of both Jacob and Moses in the blessings with which they blessed them and their descendants, and also to a certain extent the song of Deborah and Barak, each tribe not only presents the fulfilment of these prophetic utterances in its own history (as far as we are permitted to follow it out), but also represents typically those special characteristics and spiritual meanings which obviously attach themselves more or less to the whole Israel of God, as found in the universal Church of Christ.

It is evident, from what has been said, why Gad as a tribe should have become almost lost in historical associations, if not in significance of name, and become merged, as it were, in the territory allotted to them, the land of Gilead—because of the still more important historical interest which attached to the latter, consecrated as it specially was by the sojourning of Elijah and the preaching of John the Baptist. Elijah chiefly resided here, though a native of Thisbe in Naphtali; and 'it was in the wild loneliness of the hills and ravines of Gilead that the knowledge of Jehovah, the living God of Israel, had been impressed on his mind,

which was to form the subject of his mission to the idolatrous court and country of Israel; and what is of the highest importance, it was the region where John the Baptist, in Bethabara beyond Jordan, baptized, and preached the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins—probably at the very spot where his great antitype, Elijah, was fed by the ravens and drank of the brook Cherith. Truly, “the wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them” (Isa. xxxv. 1). Baptism had long before this been the symbol of purification among the Jews. ‘This ancient rite, therefore, was with great propriety renewed to the Jews themselves preparatory to the new covenant of the Gospel, analogous to the former of the law.’ The Levitical priests themselves were only admitted after having been initiated by baptism and anointing. It will be easily understood, therefore, how all men flocked to John the Baptist, whose baptism appears to have been a kind of transition from the Jewish to the Christian baptism, which latter had a deeper spiritual significance (Acts xix. 1—6). John himself said of Jesus: “That He should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water”

(John i. 31). With regard to the water itself, the references in respect of the Jewish dispensation pointed rather to the sea than to river or spring water. "Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant how that all our fathers were baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea" (1 Cor. x. 1, 2). The name of "sea" was given to the very great brazen basin (2 Chron. iv. 2—6) which Solomon caused to be made for use in the temple, to supply the place of the laver of the tabernacle. Out of the molten sea the priests drew water to wash their hands and feet, this washing of the Levites being typical of the power of regeneration in the Spirit of the living God. The word sea, too, is sometimes used in the same way as the name Gad is—to signify a multitude, especially with respect to the calling of the Gentiles and the enlargement of the Church. "The abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee, the forces of the Gentiles shall come unto thee" (Isa. lx. 5). Yea, a time will come, as has been repeatedly foretold, when all the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the Lord, and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before Him. "And it shall be, that whoso will not come

up of all the families of the earth unto Jerusalem to worship the King, the Lord of Hosts, even upon them shall be no rain" (Zech. xiv. 17). "It is He that buildeth his stories in the heaven, and hath founded his *troop* in the earth; He that calleth for the waters of the sea, and poureth them out upon the face of the earth: the Lord is His name" (Amos ix. 6).

In the foundations of the New Jerusalem the precious stone corresponding to the crystal in the breastplate is the BERYL. Now just as rock crystal represents stream water, so does beryl or aquamarine represent sea water, as its colour indicates and its name implies; and perhaps, too, it may be considered as a type of the "sea of glass like unto crystal" which St. John saw before the throne in heaven (Rev. iv.) The true beryl, which has a pale greenish-blue colour, is composed chiefly of silica, but also consists of a little alumina and glucina, and has, in fact, a very similar composition to that of the emerald. In Arabic and several Eastern languages the same word signifies both crystal and beryl. Even in Hebrew the word which is applied to the crystal, according to the Chaldean paraphrase, denotes "beryl." Quartz crystal which happens to

have a light sea-blue colour does, in fact, generally take the name of beryl or aquamarine.* Amongst the ancients, indeed, the crystal and the beryl were generally classed together as varieties of the same stone; and there was another point of connection between them in which they both played an unworthy part. They were the two stones which were made use of for divining purposes.† Divination, or the supposed art of discovering future and secret things was considered a regular system from very old times to a comparatively recent period; and although there were several forms, it generally consisted in

* A wonderful white aquamarine has lately been found in Perthshire, which, when cut, has produced one of the most brilliant gems ever seen. It is said by many competent judges to be equal to her Majesty's celebrated Koh-i-noor, its refraction being very great both by day and night. It is of a pure pellucid liquid white, and is known as the Scotch Koh-i-noor. The beautiful sea-blue beryl in a more or less perfect state has been found in various parts of the world, of a gigantic size.

† In the work by William Jones, F.S.A., we find "The crystal has been the most popular of all oracles. The favourite stone was a beryl." The celebrated rock crystal of the notorious diviner, Dr. Dee, is still preserved in the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford. The infatuation of seeing things in a beryl was very popular in the reign of James I., and is alluded to by Shakespeare,

putting precious stones with water in divining cups, from which in some way to read off future events. Pliny speaks of such divinations with water and basins.

There is a remarkable passage in Isaiah (lxv. 11), referring to this subject, which has never yet been made out: "But ye are they that forsake the Lord, that forget my holy mountain, that prepare a table for Gad, and that furnish the drink offering unto Meni." In the Revised Version Gad and Meni are "Fortune" and "Destiny" respectively. Even in Gen. xxx. 11, the R.V. has "And Leah said Fortunate! and she called his name Gad (marg. That is *Fortune*). That Gad means Fortune or Luck as well as a Troop there is no doubt. But it stands to reason that the Gad mentioned by Isaiah was the name of a god among the idolaters—it may be the deified planet we call Jupiter, for this is called by the Arabs "the greater luck," as being the star of good fortune. The libations to Meni or Destiny were no doubt known to the Israelites by their sojourn in Egypt.

It will be shown in a subsequent chapter that the tenth stone of the breastplate is not the beryl now under consideration, but the chrysolite.

The name of MATTHEW was in the *Beryl*, or eighth foundation of the Heavenly Jerusalem. Matthew was a Hebrew of Hebrews, though a Roman tax-farmer. In Mark ii. 14, he was called Levi the son of Alphæus. Both his names, indeed, indicate his Hebrew extraction. His occupation was probably the same as his father's (whose name denotes "broker," or "money-changer"). It was considered a peculiarly odious one amongst his fellow-countrymen, and especially the Galileans. So bitter were the latter against every member of the family of a publican, that although Matthew, when first mentioned, was practising his obnoxious occupation at Capernaum, on the shore of the Sea of Galilee, it is not at all likely that he was a native of this region, but rather of some other part of the territory belonging to the same tetrarchy of Herod Antipas (whose dominions were Lower Galilee and Peræa). This could hardly have been other than the opposite side of the river Jordan, and therefore in the inheritance of the tribe of Gad. Most of the avaricious and degraded Israelites, indeed, in the time of Christ, seem to have been those who were natives of the eastern side of Jordan, such as the apostate and greedy swine-keepers of Gadara, who

besought Jesus that He would depart out of their coasts. Certainly no Hebrew native of Galilee would be likely to be a tax-gatherer, especially after the insurrection of Judas the Galilean (about A. D. 6) against the imposition of taxes by the Romans, as related by Gamaliel in Acts v. 37. Neither he nor his family would be safe from persecution or assassination. As Josephus describes, the revolt was headed by Judas, in company with Sadoc a Pharisee, "who both said that this taxation was no better than an introduction to slavery, and exhorted the nation to assert their liberty." Judas was slain, but long after this there were outbursts of fanatical zeal. St. Matthew himself expressly mentions that those who flocked to John the Baptist were not only from Jerusalem and all Judea, but also from all the region round about Jordan, which would be chiefly the Eastern side where John was baptizing. The publicans in Gad, whose avocation was not necessarily dishonourable, though looked upon as such, readily flocked to John the Baptist, and even requested to be baptized. When they asked him, saying, "Master, what shall we do?" John merely replied, "Exact no more than that which is appointed you" (Luke iii. 12, 13). These publicans not only

believed John (Mat. xxi. 32), and were baptized with his baptism, but also readily listened to Jesus, and "justified God" (Luke vii. 29). Most likely Matthew had been one of these publicans at Bethabara, before being stationed in Capernaum by the Government authorities, and so had been in great measure prepared to receive readily those impressions which our Saviour's call subsequently made upon him. At this time Matthew was engaged in collecting the customs of commodities which were brought by the Sea of Galilee, and the tribute which passengers were to pay who went by water; hence his office or custom-house was at the sea-side, where he sat "at the receipt of custom" (Mark ii. 13, 14). The Hebrew Gospel of St. Matthew renders publican by "the lord of the passage." Here, at his revenue-office, our Lord called him to be His disciple. Without a moment's scruple Matthew at once abandoned his lucrative though opprobrious course of life, and did not hesitate to exchange wealth for poverty in order to follow Him.

The Pharisees professed to be indignant that Christ should have thus associated with publicans and sinners, but were met with the rebuke that the

sick were they who needed the Physician, not the sound and healthy; and that He did not come into the world to bring the righteous, but sinners to repentance. There is "balm in Gilead" to all who come to the great Physician, and saving grace is wrought by the Holy Spirit in the soul of every sinner who truly repents and comes to Christ.

For some years after our Lord's ascension Matthew preached the Gospel with great success up and down Judea, and was afterwards entreated by the converted Jews, and enjoined by the Apostles, to commit to writing the history of our Saviour's life and actions. This he did while yet amongst them in Palestine. He wrote it, as is generally supposed, in Hebrew, and it was translated into Greek a few years later, it is said by St. James the Less. A Hebrew copy of this Gospel was found in the grave of St. Barnabas in Cyprus, transcribed with his own hand. The subsequent history of St. Matthew seems to have been irrecoverably lost, but he is stated to have been slain with a halberd. His Gospel was the first that was written, and was intended for the peculiar use of the Jews in their own language. It was "to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile." There are more references in this

than in any other Gospel to the Old Testament and to Jewish customs, and every circumstance was selected which was calculated to conciliate or strengthen the faith of the Jews. St. Matthew began by giving Christ's descent from Abraham and David, and he constantly alluded to the Messiah as the "Son of David." He also lost no opportunity of pointing out the fulfilment of the Messianic prophecies in the Old Testament.

Matthew's name was therefore very appropriately in the Beryl, for the Beryl and the Rock Crystal were typical, the one of Jewish and the other of Christian baptism. John the Baptist himself was the connecting-link, as it were, between the Old and the New Testament, for we read of him at the end of Malachi and the beginning of Matthew (Mal. iv. 5, 6; Matt. iii. 1; Matt. xi. 14); and St. Matthew wrote his Gospel specially for Jewish converts and in their own language, endeavouring to eradicate from their minds all those prejudices which impeded the progress of the Christian faith. He showed that there was no essential difference between the Jewish and Christian dispensations, and that all are one in Christ Jesus, who was in very truth the long-looked-for Messiah. He also explained how that

John the Baptist was sent by God to prepare and smooth the way before the Messiah, and that the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon Him. As St. Paul puts it: "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit" (1 Cor. xii. 13).

The spiritual meaning of that "living water" which we read of in various passages, receives its full and final signification in the last chapter of the Revelation: "And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, * clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. . . . And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."

The first four stones in the breastplate have been shown to be illustrative of the attributes of our Lord as Atoner, Enlightener, King, and Judge. The next two (the sapphire and the rock crystal) illustrate the duties of His disciples, as enjoined by

* That the water of life is emblematic of the Holy Spirit we know from Isaiah xlv. 3; Ezek. xxxvi. 25—28; John iii. 5; and John vii. 38, 39.

Jesus Himself, and explained by the evangelist St. Matthew in the last two verses of his Gospel, "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen."

CHAPTER VII.

THE LIGURE.

THE seventh precious stone of the breastplate, or the first in the third row, was a LIGURE, and in this stone was the name of ASHER.

The Ligure (Heb. *Leshem*) is identical with the Jacinth or Hyacinth. It was greatly esteemed by the ancients, not only on account of its great beauty and lustre, but also because it was supposed to bring riches to its owner. It is reddish in colour, but has various hues combined with red, such as purple, orange, and blue. Some are similar in appearance to the spinel and garnet, but are readily distinguished by possessing a strong double-refractive power. The finer specimens have an exceedingly brilliant appearance. They consist chiefly of

zirconia, with a small proportion of silica, and are found principally in Ceylon and the East Indies. The word Hyacinth is derived from the Arabic "*Yakut*" or red.

The ordinary colour of the best ligure or jacinth is a mixture of orange-red and purple, but the true colour of the ancient Oriental jacinth was that of the celebrated Tyrian dye. The peculiar hue of the Mediterranean before a storm has been likened to that of the gem hyacinth or jacinth, and both the one and the other have been compared by various classic writers to that of *porphyry*, a univalve shell of the genus *murex* which yields this Tyrian purple dye.* The colouring matter of porphyry was extracted from a single vessel in the shellfish, each yielding but a very small quantity: it was, therefore, rare and of high value. The enormous wealth and prosperity of the celebrated Phœnician or Canaanitish city, Tyre, was almost entirely due to this most valuable dye-producing shell, which was found on the coast.†

* See "Natural History of Precious Stones," by C. W. King, M.A. Page 249.

† Either this species of Mollusc is now extinct, or there must have been some secret in the preparation of the dye.

Red and purple robes were worn by the rich (as scarlet and purple were by sovereigns and royal personages), and were always a mark of pre-eminence and luxurious wealth. "There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day" (Luke xvi. 19). So common, indeed, had this custom become, that Cæsar made an edict prohibiting the use of purple to all persons who were not of a certain rank.

The designation of *Canaanites* in its wide or general sense was often given to all the original inhabitants west of the Jordan, but in its true and restricted sense it signified the non-Israelite dwellers in the northern strip of territory along the coast of the Mediterranean Sea, bounded by the mountain range of Lebanon on the east, and extending towards Carmel southward, the principal cities being Tyre and Sidon.

The Greeks gave this tract the name of Phœnicia or Syrophœnicia, and they called the Tyrians and Sidonians *Φοίνικες* on account of their purple garments. The Phœnicians spoke a branch of the Semitic language closely allied to Hebrew. Indeed, the alphabet used by the Hebrews was really of Phœnician origin. The word Canaanite means "merchant"

or "trader," and this connection between Canaan and commerce is well shown in such passages as Isa. xxiii. 8—11, and Hosea xii. 7 (margin).

Tyre is first mentioned in Josh. xix. 29, in reference to the boundaries of the tribe of Asher.

The fact is, the Asherites never did drive out these Canaanites or inhabitants of Phœnicia (although to themselves had the land been allotted), or even make an effort to do so, but dwelt peaceably among them, and were one with them in trade and commerce (Judg. i. 31, 32). David's emissaries, in taking the census, were even obliged to go to Tyre and Sidon to count the Israelites thus mixed up with the Canaanites (2 Sam. xxiv. 7), and there seems to have been a close alliance as well as a treaty of commerce between both David and Solomon and Hiram, king of Tyre. We also find that inter-marriages took place between the respective peoples, for the father of Hiram the celebrated artificer was a man of Tyre, and his mother of the tribe of Naphtali (1 Kings vii. 13, 14). Ezekiel gives an extraordinary account of the great glory, corrupted by sin, of the prince of Tyre (chapter xxviii.), and God's judgments are denounced against him for his sacrilegious pride. In the 13th verse is a remarkable

passage alluding (it has been thought) to the complete happiness which Adam enjoyed in Paradise before his apostasy and fearful fall. "Thou (king of Tyrus) hast been in Eden the garden of God; every precious stone was thy covering, the sardius, topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold." Arab legends tell of a garden in the East, on the summit of a mountain of *jacinth*, inaccessible to man: a garden of rich soil and of equable temperature, well watered, and abounding with trees and flowers of rare colours and fragrance.

The people of Tyre and Sidon were great idolaters, and never more so than in the height of their prosperity and wealth. Even after the capture and partial destruction of Tyre by Alexander, it again recovered much of its prosperity, and both Pliny and Strabo speak of the riches it still acquired by reason of its celebrated purple dyes. In the time of our Lord it was a populous city, and to some extent the mart of nations. Its purple or hyacinth dyes were still a source of extensive merchandise, and consequent wealth; and, happily, in the apostolic times these treasures must in some degree

have been converted to the service of the true and living God, according to the prophecy of Isaiah (xxiii. 18), "And her merchandise and her hire shall be holiness to the Lord," for we find that a Christian church was planted there (Acts xxi. 3, 4).

The people of Canaan or Phoenicia were, as stated, intimately mixed up with the tribe of Asher; and even beyond the latter, throughout the rest of Galilee, the sharp line which separated Israelite and Gentile was, partially at least, obliterated; so that the whole region was sometimes called Galilee of the Gentiles.

It was, therefore, with peculiar appropriateness that the name of Asher was in the *ligure* or *jacinth*—the special stone, as it were, of the Tyrians and Gentiles, as well as his own. Within the boundaries of the territory of Asher were included Lebanon, that grand and celebrated mountain chain; and at its southern border the erect and prominent headland, Carmel; and we read in Solomon's Song (vii. 4, 5), "Thy nose is as the tower of Lebanon which looketh toward Damascus. Thine head upon thee is like Carmel [or crimson, marg.], and the hair of thine head like *purple*." *Υακίνθινος* (hyacinthine or deep purple) was a favourite epithet

amongst the ancients as applied to dark beautiful hair, the black of which was supposed to represent the deep purple reflex of the raven's plumage. Milton thus uses the term "hyacinthine locks" ("Paradise Lost," Book iv).

The personal history of Asher, whose name signifies "happy," is almost unknown, nor is there any record of a single great man amongst this tribe. Jacob's prophetic blessing was, "Out of Asher his bread shall be fat, and he shall yield royal dainties," evidently meaning that his lot should be a rich one; and, as a matter of historical fact, we know that the territory held by his descendants did contain some of the richest soil in all Palestine, the produce of which was sufficient even to supply their neighbours of Tyre and Sidon (1 Kings v. 9—11; Acts xii. 20); and to their proximity to Phœnicia, and their intermixture with the Canaanites, were due their luxurious habits.

Seldom are jewels mentioned by Homer but with the additional circumstance that they were either of Sidonian workmanship, or imported in a Phœnician ship.

Moses in his dying words of blessing said, "Let Asher be blessed with children, let him be acceptable to his brethren, and let him dip his foot

in oil. Thy shoes shall be iron and brass; and as thy days, so shall thy strength be." The tribe of Asher did increase greatly, and they were acceptable to their brethren, who envied not their rich possessions and fruitful territory, their extensive olive plantations and valuable mineral productions; but were rather glad of the advantages which they themselves derived therefrom. Yet the leaning of the Asherites was too often towards their Gentile neighbours by the sea, for even during the great war between the Israelites and Canaanites, when Jabin King of Canaan, and Sisera the captain of his host, were defeated by Barak and their army destroyed, "Asher continued on the sea-shore, and abode in his creeks" (Judges v. 17). Still the men of Asher were willing enough to assist their own Hebrew brethren against other Gentile foes, and they readily responded to the call of Gideon to fight against and to pursue the Midianites and Amalekites and the children of the East. And if their "shoes were iron and brass," as Moses prophesied, did not David and Solomon reap great advantages thereby, as much through the influence of the tribe of Asher as by the consent of the kings of Canaan? (2 Chron. ii. 7, &c.)

The dark side in the character of the people of Asher was their inordinate love of ease and peace, and their being happy in the pursuit of the riches and luxuries of this world—the bright side, their repentance, and desire to serve the Lord, and even when others mocked, to be the first to turn unto Him (2 Chron. xxx. 8—11). “They came to Jerusalem,” when Hezekiah sent to them, and kept the feast of unleavened bread and also celebrated the Passover. “So there was great joy in Jerusalem” (ver. 26). After all, Asher was “happy” in serving and rejoicing in the Lord, far more than when seeking this world’s wealth and peace. It is only by coming to Jerusalem and rejoicing in Christ that the soul can find true joy and dwell in peace. “O rest in the Lord, wait patiently for Him, and He shall give thee thy heart’s desire.” This is what Anna did, as we find in Luke ii. 36—38. She was an aged widow “of the tribe of Asher,” and departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day.

Now Anna was a prophetess, and (like Simeon) was waiting patiently for the consolation of Israel, and she likewise gave thanks unto the Lord and spake of Him to all them that looked for redemp-

tion in Jerusalem. Being of the tribe of Asher she could the more readily prophesy to Jew and Gentile, to Israelite and Canaanite, to Hebrew and Greek alike, for all are one in Christ Jesus, the Saviour of the world. "Is he the God of the Jews only? Is he not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also" (Rom. iii. 29). "There is no difference between the Jew and the Greek; for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Rom. x. 12, 13).

Our Lord Jesus Himself, who was to be a light to lighten the Gentiles, as well as the glory of His people Israel, specially visited these regions of Tyre and Sidon (Matt. xv. 21—28, Mark vii. 24—30). No sooner had He done so than there came to Him a certain woman, whom Matthew designates "a woman of Canaan," and Mark "a Greek [or Gentile]," a Syrophœnician by nation, and therefore a mere dog in the eyes of the Israelites of the day. She fell at Jesus' feet and entreated Him to cast out an unclean spirit from her young daughter. Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou Son of David, she cried; but he answered her not a word! Not as "Son of David" could he confirm to her, a woman

of Canaan, the promises which were connected only with the Jewish dispensation. As soon, however, as she addressed Him as *Lord* alone, and showed true faith, patience, and humility, and asked merely for the crumbs which fell from the master's table—the Gentiles' portion—He graciously answered her, "O woman, great is thy faith; be it unto thee even as thou wilt."

Elijah, too, after his retirement by the brook Cherith, in the land of Gad, had been directed by the Spirit of God to go to Zarephath (Sarepta), a Phœnician town between Tyre and Sidon, and there he performed such remarkable miracles that the faith of the poor Gentile widow increased so greatly as to impel her to cry out, "Now by this I know that thou art a man of God, and that the word of the Lord in thy mouth is truth" (1 Kings xvii.).

In the JACINTH or eleventh foundation of the Holy City, the New Jerusalem, was the name of the Apostle SIMON ZELOTES, or Simon the Canaanite.

There is no record of Simon's parentage, and there have been various conjectures why he was designated Canaanite. Some have supposed that the word should have been Cananite, and that

he might have been a native of Cana in Galilee, and for the same reason he has even been made out to be the bridegroom at the marriage when our Lord was present and performed his first miracle. Some, again, have thought that it should have been Kananite, which is said to be a Chaldean or Hebrew equivalent for Zealot. Now if Canaanite is correct, as in the Authorised Version, and according to the reading of the Cambridge Greek MS., what more likely than that this Apostle Simon was of the tribe of Asher, and had resided near the sea coast, where the land (though originally the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Asher: Josh. xix. 28—31) was still called Canaan, and its inhabitants (whether Israelites or Gentiles) Canaanites? The Revised Version gives Cananæan, the original word in most of the Greek MSS. being *Kananaïos*. Assuming this to be the right word, then it is clear that Simon was a native of Kanah, a town in the inheritance of the tribe of Asher, as we find in Joshua xix. 28. In the map of Palestine in the time of Christ, revised by Major C. R. Conder, R.E., D.C.L., Kanah is the only town marked in the old territory of Asher, not reckoning Tyre, Sidon, and Sarepta, which, though originally allotted to Asher, were

never conquered and appropriated by them. It is not improbable that Simon was descended from Anna the prophetess, who was of the tribe of Asher, and that he received the designation of Zelotes by St. Luke on account of his zealous temper and eager desire to advance the religion of Christ in the world, thus following the example and perhaps inheriting the disposition of Anna, whose zeal and devotion were so intense as to merit special record by the Spirit of Truth. Nothing could be more unlikely than that Simon should have been called Zelotes because he belonged to the band of Zealots, as the majority of commentators have stated, especially as the original Greek word simply means "a zealous follower," and does not commence with the capital letter, as the word for a sect would have done. This sect or faction of the Jews originated with Judas the Galilean (Acts v. 37), who perished in leading an insurrection. His followers, who took the name of Zealots, were nothing more than lawless and fearless brigands who, because of their fierce advocacy of the Mosaic ritual, refused to pay tribute to the Romans, and made every excuse for carrying on devastation and death. They were often called Sicarii, from their use of the

sica or dagger. Josephus gives a full account of them, and bewails them as the great plague of the nation, and as being robbers and murderers, as well as betrayers of their country by joining with the Idumeans, whilst boasting that they were the benefactors and saviours of the people.

After being invested in the Apostolic office, no further mention appears to have been made of Simon the Canaanite in the history of the Gospel. What more natural than that, after our Lord's Ascension, he should first go to his native region, where, under his preaching and teaching, the Gospel would be more readily received?—and this would account for the Christians whom St. Paul found at Tyre (Acts xxi. 3, 4). On the dispersion of the Apostles up and down the world, Simon is said to have first directed his journey to Egypt and various parts of Africa, and thence to have sailed to Britain, where after zealously preaching the Gospel under extreme difficulties, and working many miracles, he suffered martyrdom for the faith of Christ by crucifixion.

The ligure of Asher, or the earthly hyacinth, in its bright and best aspect may well prefigure the

jasinth foundation of Simon the Canaanite in the New Jerusalem, but in its dark aspect is an appropriate emblem of the world with its riches and pleasures, and of professing Christians as mixed up in daily intercourse and direct alliance with the children of this world. It is a dangerous alliance. All members of the Church of Christ must at one time or other have observed its obscuring influence on the true light of the Gospel in their own souls, as well as in the souls of others. The Tyro-Israelite, if left to himself, has an overpowering tendency to prefer the riches of Tyre to the riches of Christ, and though he may hear the Word, and even have a certain desire to be a member of the true Israel of God, yet "the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful" (Mark iv. 19).

How important, then, for all the people of God, whilst in the world and performing their own proper duties in the world where God has been pleased to place them, to avoid the evil influence of contact with earthly things; and also to induce others to seek the true riches of Christ, and to endeavour by the aid of the Holy Spirit to draw them away from

the world, even as brands plucked from the burning!

Lydia, the rich seller of purple, and all her household, had been thus saved through Paul (the great Apostle of the Gentiles) and Timothy, who was himself of mixed parentage, his father being a Greek and his mother a Jewess (Acts xvi.).

It is a mighty conflict that is always raging between the rulers of the darkness of this world and the redeemed soldiers in the army of Christ; and those who have not put on the "breastplate of righteousness," how can they withstand the assaults of those deadly cuirassiers who have on "breastplates of jacinth" as well as of "fire and brimstone?" (Rev. ix. 17)—indicating an offensive and defensive alliance between earth and hell under the same captain, who is both "prince of this world" and "prince of the devils."

In such a conflict the breastplate of our own righteousness cannot for a moment serve us, however new and strong, however bright and burnished it may be; nor yet the rusty old cuirass of human tradition; nor yet the coat of mail of the strongest and chiefest amongst men (1 Sam. xvii. 38, 39); but we must put on "Christ our righteousness," our only shield against every foe, our almighty protection,

our all in all. Then may each one say, "The Lord is on my side: I will not fear" (Ps. cxviii. 6).

"Though hot the fight, why quit the field?
Why must I either fly or yield,
Since Jesus is my mighty shield?"

"Against me earth and hell combine;
But on my side is power divine;
Jesus is all, and He is mine."

CHAPTER VIII.

THE AGATE.

THE eighth precious stone of the breastplate was an AGATE, and it was with the name of ISSACHAR. There is a general consent as to this stone, ἀχάτης (LXX), and *Achates* (Vulgate), being our agate (Heb., *Shebo*). It is well known that agates have endless varieties of appearances, on account of the quartz of which they consist having earthy admixtures, produced probably by igneous fusion. They are of different colours, and variegated with every kind of fancied resemblance; when containing, for instance, apparent marks of vegetation, they are called moss agates or tree agates: there are also eye agates, ribbon agates, star agates, and fortification agates. The rough stones, when found in

abundance, are constantly manufactured into articles of utility as well as of ornament. There is no part of the world where they do not, as it were, find a home, but the best kinds are brought chiefly from India, Australia, and Brazil. The more beautiful Oriental forms, as the Chrysoprase (Ezek. xxvii. 16), and those made lustrous by polishing (Isaiah liv. 12), have a different Hebrew name, *Kadkod*. Theophrastus states that the name *agate* was originally derived from the river Achates, in Sicily, whence the finest of these stones were said to have been first brought. More probably, however, it was derived from Accho or Akka, the western section of the great plain of Esdraelon, in Issachar—a region which was very rich in minerals as well as fertile in agriculture. The word Accho, too, signifies “heated sand,” and agates are produced from siliceous sand by igneous fusion. The derivation of the Hebrew word *Shebo* has been traced by some etymologists to the proper name Sheba, “a region of Arabia Felix, rich in frankincense, spices, gold, and gems” (Gesenius. Comp. 1 Kings x. 1, 2, and 10; Ps. lxxii. 10, 15; Isa. lx. 6; Ezek. xxvii. 22). Agates were much esteemed by the Greeks and Romans. Generally they are semi-pellucid, but they may be

translucent, and some very rare Oriental kinds are perfectly transparent. There is, indeed, no actual difference of composition between the resinous or opaque agate and the vitreous or transparent variety of quartz, the chemical composition of each being the same, viz.—silica, and one may shade off into the other. Some agates, too, by perseverance in polishing, may be rendered transparent. Although the colours are various and often delicately arranged in stripes, bands, or clouds, the natural tint of the ordinary stones may be said to be a clear gray. Agates are divided naturally into two kinds—those of a single tint, as chalcedony, carnelian, and chrysoprase (the latter being by far the most beautiful), and those of several tints, as sardagate, etc. They are all composed of amorphous flint, or silica, which forms the constituent of almost all stones used by gem-engravers.

Issachar, whose name was in this stone, was perhaps the least known of all the sons of Jacob. There is no Scriptural information of his personal character and history. His name signifies “hire” or “reward.” Jacob’s prophetic blessing on this tribe was “Issachar is a strong ass (expressive of rustic labour) couching down between two burdens ;

and he saw that rest was good, and the land that it was pleasant; and bowed his shoulder to bear, and became a servant unto tribute" (Gen. xlix. 14, 15). The characteristics of the tribe of Issachar were (like the qualities of the ordinary agate) useful and practical rather than beautiful. Patient labour and domestic ease were promised to this tribe, and the territory assigned to them was well adapted to further these ends. It still is, as it always has been, the richest and most productive in the Holy Land, so much so that even in the present day all those who inhabit it have to pay special black-mail on account of the fertility of the land. Between Mount Tabor and Mount Carmel is the famous Esdraelon or Valley of Jezreel, whose very name—"God's sowing"—declared the marvellous richness of its soil. It was called by Josephus "the great plain," and extends almost from the Mediterranean Sea to the River Jordan. The eastern part, between Mount Gilboa and the Jordan, was proverbially, among the Rabbis, the gate of paradise for its fruitfulness.

Moses' blessing, before his death, on this tribe was "Rejoice, Issachar, in thy tents" (or canvas houses). To rejoice at home is the mission of Issachar, whilst resting in his own land and acting

as a tributary servant. We may rejoice in serving God by home missions as well as by foreign missions. Issachars are needed as well as Naph-talis. Every one, however obscure may be his lot in the eyes of the world, may be a missionary in his own home and immediate neighbourhood, and may commend by his silent life, if not in speech, the only Saviour. The servants of the Lord may have poor and humble homes, but God will make their windows of agates (Isa. liv. 12), and so they may look up with the eye of faith to their everlasting home above. After all

“Heaven is our fatherland,
Heaven is our home.”

Through these agate windows made by God the light of the Gospel may enter into our hearts, though naturally our agates are earthly and opaque. Now we see only through a glass darkly; but then face to face. Now we know only in part; but then shall we know even as also we are known (1 Cor. xiii. 12).

The allusion of Moses, in blessing Issachar, to “treasures hid in the sand” (Deut. xxxiii. 19) is a remarkable one, and the best commentators explain it by reference to the special manufacture of glass

from the vitreous sand found so abundantly near the mouth of the river Belus, which discharges itself into the sea at the bay of Acre or Accho, in the territory of Issachar.

The men of Issachar were not throughout their entire history mere rustic labourers, with no intellectual or noble pursuits. Far from it. They could be valiant men of might (1 Chron. vii. 5); and there were some who had understanding of the times to know what Israel ought to do (1 Chron. xii. 32). The princes of Issachar were with Deborah; even Issachar, and also Barak: he was sent on foot into the valley (Judges v. 15). And after Abimelech there arose to defend Israel Tola, a man of Issachar, and he judged Israel twenty and three years (Judges x. 1, 2).

For a time the tribe of Issachar was even a royal one, for after Jeroboam, Baasha, of Issachar, became king, "having been exalted out of the very dust" (1 Kings xvi. 2). The prophet Hosea, too, was said to belong to the tribe of Issachar. These, however, were instances of exceptional greatness and energy. The natural habits and character of the tribe were to settle down to a quiet life of agricultural toil. Gradually they degenerated to a

grovelling submission to, even if not a selfish love of, the world, until at last they willingly surrendered the worship of Jehovah, and were content to bow the knee to the golden calves which Jeroboam had set up. All throughout their history, the men of this tribe, like the stones of agate, exhibited the greatest possible diversity. There had been some bright and precious ones amongst them, but the great majority were of the earth, earthy. They saw the land that it was pleasant, so they bowed the shoulder to bear. They sought after earthly things rather than heavenly, and so were borne down by their burdens, and gravitated more and more towards the earth. What a contrast to those of whom the Psalmist wrote, "The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree!" (Ps. xcii. 12). It is well known that the palm tree cannot grow crooked or be pressed downwards to the earth, whatever heavy weights or burdens may be attached to it; indeed, the more it is oppressed, the higher and more upright it grows, and the more it is fruitful and flourishing at the top.

But though the character and history of the tribe were strongly marked by conduct such as has been described, there was, happily, a brighter side, and one which on certain occasions was brought prominently

into play. Thus on the occasion of Sisera's invasion, Issachar rose to a sense of the duty which others overlooked, and contributed in no small degree, perhaps, to the common victory. So again, when in the first year of his reign Hezekiah held a Passover and invited thereto all the tribes of Israel, although the larger part of the kingdom of Ephraim laughed the messengers to scorn and mocked them, many Issacharites joyfully accepted the invitation to repair to Jerusalem, and ate the Passover. They afterwards gladly assisted the royal reformer in the purification of the land.

Before another ten years had elapsed Issachar with the rest of Israel had been carried away into captivity by Shalmaneser, king of Assyria.

It should be mentioned that there are two towns in the land of Issachar, viz., Nain and Shunem, remarkable for the great miracles of raising from the dead; the man of Nain by our Saviour, and the rich Shunammite's son by Elisha, who was himself a native of Abel-meholah in Issachar.

It was on the eastern side, too, of Carmel, overlooking Jezreel (so long the residence of the kings of Israel), that Elijah cried out to all the people, "How long halt ye between two opinions? If

the Lord be God, follow Him ; But if Baal, then follow him."

The name of the Apostle JUDE, called also Leb-bæus, was in the tenth foundation of the New Jerusalem, or the CHRYSOPRASE. This precious stone is by far the most beautiful of all agates, as has already been stated, and as may be gathered by the marginal note of Ezek. xxvii. 16.

The colour of the Chrysoprase is a combination of leek-green and gold—not separately or in layers, for it is a single-tinted stone, and is said to owe its peculiar colour to an oxide of nickel.

Jude or Judas was a name so common amongst the Hebrew nation that other proper names were generally added: hence to the Apostle Jude were also given the designations Thaddæus and Lebbæus. The word Thaddæus has precisely the same meaning as Jude, viz., "He that praises;" and Lebbæus is said by Lightfoot and others to be derived from the place of his nativity, Lebba, a town in the province of Galilee and in the territory of Issachar—not far from Carmel.* It was this Judas who

* Jude has also been termed Jude *the brother* of James; but James, as well as Jude, was an exceedingly common name, so that his identification (according to Dr. Smith) is

said unto Jesus, Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world? (John xiv. 22). What a commentary our Lord's gracious reply was on such characteristics as those of the home-loving and peace-seeking tribe of Issachar, who, whilst couching down between two burdens, saw that rest was good, and the land that it was pleasant! Jesus said, "If a man love *me*, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and *make our abode* with him. . . . Peace I leave with you, *my peace* I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid" (vv. 23 and 27). What a contrast between this world's rest, and such peace as that which arises from a sense of pardon of sin and assurance of everlasting salvation! Only peace such as this can give consolation and a power of endurance under the heavy burdens on the right hand and on

one of the most difficult questions in the Gospel history. The most eminent critical authorities give the rendering "Judas *the son of James*." Whoever James may have been is not important, however, as it is clear his association with Jude was merely as a distinguishing mark of the latter, whose name was too common to be recognized without some such means of identification.

the left which all must bear during their earthly pilgrimage. Could any words be more comforting amidst all our toils and troubles than those of our Saviour which we read at the end of the 11th chapter of St. Matthew?—"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." In connection with this subject we can well understand the words of Isaiah (liv. 11—13), "O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted, behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colours . . . and I will make thy windows of agates . . . and great shall be the peace of thy children." That is to say, all stains and opacities of earthly agates will be removed until they become perfectly transparent, and so admit not only the full light of the Gospel, but also the gracious influence of the Holy Spirit, the Comforter. And again, the dull and gray earthly agates of Issachar will be laid with fair colours and become like the heavenly chrysoptase of Jude.

Nothing is known, except by tradition, of the later history of the Apostle Jude. He is mentioned as

being present at the first gathering of the Christian Church after our Lord's Ascension (Acts i. 13), but does not appear again upon the page of Holy Scripture, save in his short Epistle. We may conclude that, having been baptized with the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost, he spent the remainder of his life in earnest but unobtrusive efforts to extend that kingdom, the real power and glory of which were but just beginning to dawn upon his soul. As to the localities and manner in which his last days were spent, the sum of the accounts is that, after having preached the Gospel in Galilee, he laboured in Arabia—the very district, as it happens, from which, as has already been said, the "Shebo" derived its name—and eventually suffered martyrdom in Persia for his bold and determined opposition to the debased rites of certain superstitious Magi. A story is related in the page of history that two of his grandchildren were brought before the cruel and jealous Emperor Domitian, who enquired of them concerning Christ, and the state of His kingdom, what kind of empire it was, and when and where it would commence; to which they replied, whilst holding up their hands hardened by daily toil, that His kingdom was not of this world,

nor of the seignories and dominions of it, but heavenly and angelical, and would finally take place in the end of the world, when coming with great glory He would judge the quick and the dead, and award all men recompenses according to their works. In consequence of this answer they were dismissed without any severities having been used against them.

The general Epistle of Jude is addressed to all Christians without any distinction. In his lowliness he calls himself only the servant of Jesus Christ, although he was a true Apostle. The design of the Epistle is to guard Christians against false teachers and vicious practices, lest communicating with these pernicious seducers in their sins they perish with them in the punishment which must overtake them. St. Jude begins by praying that mercy, peace, and love may be multiplied unto them, yet in the very next verse he exhorts them to *earnestly contend* for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. Peace, yet earnest contention! Certainly the world can give no real peace. We may long for it amid the trials which thicken around us day by day, and in our anxious struggles and desires for it we may sometimes even flatter ourselves that we deserve it ;

but, in spite of all our own earnest efforts, this world's peace is not for us, if we are Christ's. In the tenth chapter of St. Matthew, Jesus Himself says over and over again, "Fear not, therefore;" and yet in verse 34 He also says, "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth; I came not to send peace, but a sword." . . . "And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me" (ver. 38). The disciples, like Issachar, were then looking for an immediate temporal peace, not peace in a spiritual sense—peace with God.

If, too, we set our hearts on earthly happiness—if, like Issachar, we look on our land, how pleasant it is! and on rest, how good it is!—we shall find ourselves sooner or later terribly mistaken. Why, this very land of Issachar, pleasant and peaceful as it seemed, and giving every promise of domestic ease and agricultural prosperity, was that which above all others became the territory of the Church Militant and the battle-field of nations. Here Barak fought against Sisera; here, on Mount Gilboa, took place that disastrous battle in which Israel was defeated and both Saul and Jonathan were slain; here Josiah was killed in the struggle

with Pharaoh Necho, King of Egypt; here, above all, is to be the battle of Armageddon—that last great struggle between the hosts of Good and Evil.

Again, St. Jude in his Epistle exhorts all Christians to keep themselves unspotted and undefiled, and to be constant in the faith, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, who alone is able to remove all their spots and stains and to present them *faultless*. “And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of Hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels” (Mal. iii. 17).

CHAPTER IX.

THE AMETHYST.

IN the ninth precious stone of the breastplate, or the AMETHYST, was the name of ZEBULUN. This stone—*Achlamah* in Hebrew, and *Ἀμέθυστος* in Greek—is agreed upon by all as being our well-known Amethyst. It has a beautiful violet colour, said to be due to a minute proportion of oxide of manganese. That with which we are so familiar is a vitreous or transparent variety of quartz. It is the least hard of all jewels, and not much esteemed. Formerly the best kinds were more highly valued, but since large quantities have been brought from the Brazils, in addition to those found in Arabia, India, Hungary, &c., their value has greatly diminished. That variety which is called the Oriental amethyst consists of alumina instead of silica—being, in fact, violet-coloured corundum—and is an

exquisitely lustrous as well as rare stone. The Greek word is derived from *ἀ μεθύω*, "not to inebriate," because it was believed by the ancients that wine taken from an amethyst cup lost the power of causing intoxication. There also arose a superstition that it had the power of dissipating as well as of preventing drunkenness. According to Plutarch, it took its name from its hue being *nearly* but not quite that of wine, resembling, in fact, wine mixed with water. In the middle ages it was believed to be a sure antidote against any kind of poison. At all times and in all countries the amethyst has been specially symbolical of *humility*. Marbodus wrote of it :—

"The humble heart it signifies
Of him who in the Saviour dies."

The ordinary silicious variety of amethyst, which is so cheap and abundant, has always been essentially the jewel of the poor. Although it is much admired as to its lovely violet colour, yet it is of very little worth as to price. It is only the very rare Oriental kind which has an inestimable value as well as extreme beauty. The amethyst was allotted to the last of the sons of Jacob, except those who sprung from Rachel (the wife of his love), and who,

as it were, took precedence of the rest. This stone was also the last of those described in Revelation as forming the foundations of the New Jerusalem, and in it was the name of Matthias, who was not only the last and least of all the Apostles, but may be said to have been a vicarious one. Of the teaching of this stone and all connected with it, humility—that most excellent grace of the spirit—is the essence. This is the great characteristic of all true saints, and without it no one can enjoy the presence of God. “For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones” (Isa. lvii. 15). The example of our Saviour Himself is given us:—“Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly;” and we are told by Him that we must even become as little children, in order to enter the kingdom of heaven; also that “Whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted” (Luke xiv. 11).

Zebulun was the sixth and last son of Jacob by Leah. He must have led a retired life of quiet

humility, for there is no record whatever of his personal history in Scripture. We only read, indeed, the bare fact of his having three sons, Sered, Elon, and Jahleel; and on comparing the second census with the first, we find that the tribe had greatly increased in numbers. There is no recital of any great men, as rulers or warriors, amongst the tribe, with the single exception of Elon, who was one of the judges of Israel; and even with regard to him the entire Scripture narration is simplicity itself:—
“And after him Elon, a Zebulonite, judged Israel; and he judged Israel ten years. And Elon the Zebulonite died, and was buried in Aijalon in the country of Zebulun” (Judg. xii. 11, 12).

Leah called her last son Zebulun, or “dwelling,” for God, she said, had endued her with a good dowry, and now would her husband dwell with her, because she had borne him six sons. She was wrong. The name, indeed, was divinely inspired, but her own inference was based rather on her earnest desires than on any reasonable prospect. She was the wife of Jacob by purchase and deception, as it were; but Rachel in the bond of love. Leah truly loved Jacob, but “Jacob loved Rachel, and hated (or less loved) Leah.” And at length

God remembered Rachel, and she bare Joseph and Benjamin. Jacob's prophetic blessing on Zebulun seemed to allude only to the geographical allotment of his territory:—"Zebulun shall dwell at the haven of the sea; and he shall be for an haven of ships: and his border shall be unto Zidon." As to Zebulun himself and the characteristics of his tribe, Jacob held absolute silence. The blessing of Moses was, "Rejoice, Zebulun, in thy going out;" and, conjointly with Issachar, "they shall call the people unto the mountain; there they shall offer sacrifices of righteousness: for they shall suck of the abundance of the seas, and of treasures hid in the sand." The land of Zebulun became peculiarly sacred. Here at Nazareth Mary and Joseph occupied their humble dwelling. Here the angel Gabriel came from God to announce to Mary the birth of the Saviour. Here our Lord had His place of abode for thirty out of the thirty-three years of His life on earth. Here it was that in the synagogue, on the Sabbath day, He said (quoting Isaiah), "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He hath anointed me to preach the Gospel to the poor." It was Cana in Zebulun, not far from Nazareth, which was the scene of Christ's first and second miracles—that

of changing water into wine at the marriage-feast ; and that of healing the nobleman's son. In this canton, also, was the Mount of Beatitudes, where our Saviour delivered that most momentous sermon, commencing "Blessed are the poor in spirit (that is, the humble and lowly-minded) for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." When Jesus heard that John was cast into prison, He (leaving Nazareth) came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is upon the sea-coast, in the borders of Zebulun and Nephthaliim (Matt. iv.), as spoken by the prophet Esaias (Isa. ix. 1, 2). What Jacob said, therefore, concerning Zebulun is explicable by looking upon his words as having a prophetic reference to the fact of the territory of this tribe containing the chief place of abode of our Saviour, and of its being the principal scene of His earthly pilgrimage. "Zebulun shall dwell at the haven of the sea . . . and his border shall be unto Zidon." This latter town was the furthest limit of our Lord's "going out ;" and even in regard to the western boundary of the land of Zebulun, the reference was also really correct, although at first sight it does not seem to be so on the map ; but Zidon sometimes stands for all Phœnicia, or the land of the Zidonians as it has been

called. This extended to near Carmel, and is just touched by the extreme western limit of Zebulun.

As to Capernaum itself, it was truly a haven of ships in the time of Christ, for there is historical evidence that 4,000 ships of various descriptions were plying on the waters of the Sea of Galilee at that period. Again, well did Moses say in his typical blessing "Rejoice, Zebulun, in thy going out," for we read in Matt. iv. 23, "And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people."

It is generally believed that most of the seventy disciples who followed our Saviour from the beginning must have been Zebulonites; and it was just after summoning His immediate followers and selecting the seventy, that Jesus bade His last farewell to the land of Zebulun, where nearly all His earthly sojourn had been hitherto spent.

It is nowhere directly related in Old Testament history that the people of Zebulun were carried off to Assyria, but we gather from Isa. ix. 1, 2, that many of them at least were so, and more than once; but some doubtless remained, and others probably

returned, the descendants of whom dwelt there in obscurity, and it may be in poverty, until the time of our Saviour. The tribe of Zebulun has, in fact, been designated the poor man's tribe. The last historical record of them in the Old Testament is that divers of them, as well as of Asher and Manasseh, *humbled* themselves, and came to Jerusalem (2 Chron. xxx. 11).

As regards those of the various tribes who remained in the Holy Land, or who were subsequently enabled to return from their captivity, they doubtless took up their residence as far as possible each in his own tribal territory, both on account of their natural selection of such, and also by reason of greater convenience as regards taxation. Although Joseph and Mary resided at Nazareth (according to prophecy), yet they were obliged to go to Bethlehem, the city of David (because they were of the house and lineage of David), in order to be taxed, or registered for taxation (Luke ii. 4).*

The tribe of Zebulun had formerly been deeply

* Public registers had always been kept, even to the time of Christ, and all infants were entered in the list of the respective families of their own tribe. Intermarriages between members of different tribes were not allowed,

attached to David. Their allegiance to him was so perfect that in this respect it was said in 1 Chron. xii. 33, "They were not of double heart."

Besides the disciples who belonged to this tribe, it is interesting to note that both the first and the last of the Old Testament prophets were also amongst them, viz.—Jonah and Malachi. Well might Deborah and Barak say, "Out of Zebulun they that handle the pen of the writer" (Judges v. 14). Jonah was the son of Amittai, of the tribe of Zebulun, and was born at Gath-hepher, in the land

except under very special circumstances; so that it was well known to which tribe any individual belonged, even when residing in any other territory. Anna the prophetess, for instance, was the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher; and the fact of this being recorded in Scripture is one proof that this tribal relationship still existed. We read, too, of the *twelve tribes* in the New Testament, and remnants of the Israelites are known to have returned to their own land even after the dispersion, and to have recognised Jerusalem as their metropolis. Wherever they were, they perfectly understood, as of old, the proclamation "Every man to his city, and every man to his own country." The command of Moses had never ceased to operate as a religious ordinance "So shall not the inheritance of the children of Israel remove from tribe to tribe; for every one of the children of Israel shall keep himself to the inheritance of the tribe of his fathers (Numb. xxxvi. 7).

of that tribe. His sepulchre is still shown there. He wrote in the reigns of Joash and Jeroboam II., kings of Israel. Although placed fifth in the order of the minor prophets, he is generally considered to be the most ancient of all the prophets whose writings we possess. Jonah had the same failings as those of the Zebulonites in the time of Christ. So strong were his national feelings, that for God to show mercy to Gentiles, and to make them even partakers of salvation, caused him to be exceedingly angry. And we find that when Jesus at the commencement of His ministry returned to Nazareth, after His baptism and temptation, and stood up in the synagogue on the Sabbath day to read, there was delivered unto Him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when He had opened the book, He found the place where it was written, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord" (Luke iv. 16—19). All the people wondered at His gracious words, for they readily applied them to themselves ;

but as soon as Jesus quoted instances of God's gracious announcement of mercy towards Gentiles also, such as the widow of Sarepta, and Naaman the Syrian, both of whom, too, were rich in this world's goods, these same Zebulonites, as exclusive as they were poor, were filled with wrath, and would have cast Him down the brow of the hill. To the Israelites in the time of Malachi it must have been the very acme of bitterness to learn from this Zebulonite native of Sapha such words as these: "I have no pleasure in you, saith the Lord of Hosts, neither will I accept an offering at your hand. For from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same, my name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering; for my name shall be great among the heathen, saith the Lord of Hosts" (Mal. i. 10, 11).

The name of the Apostle MATTHIAS was in the AMETHYST or the twelfth and last foundation of the Heavenly City.

Matthias who as one of the seventy was doubtless, as already explained, of the tribe of Zebulun, must

have constantly attended our Lord during the whole course of His ministry; for in the first chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, we find St. Peter, after he had explained how Judas by transgression fell and died, saying these words, "Wherefore of these men which have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from the baptism of John, unto that same day that He was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of His resurrection." Judas having thus (according to prophetic prediction) fallen from his ministry, it was necessary that the vacancy should be filled. Two were selected for election, and the choice fell upon Matthias; so he was numbered with the eleven Apostles.*

* The way of election was by lot, accompanied by earnest prayer to the Lord Jesus. This course was adopted because the Holy Ghost, whose inspiration was the chief guide afterwards, had not yet been given. Election by lot was in frequent use both by Hebrews and Gentiles in deciding on different cases and in electing officers; and indeed it had been a divinely-appointed institution, as we find in Numb. xxvi. 55; Lev. xvi. 8, 9, &c. "The lot is cast into the lap (or urn); but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord."—Prov. xvi. 33.

“Elect in His foreknowledge,
To fill the lost one's place ;
He form'd His chosen vessel
By hidden gifts of grace,
Then, by the lot's disposing,
He lifted up the poor,
And set him with the princes
On high for evermore.

“For on the golden breastplate
Of our great Priest above,
Twelve are the stones that glisten
As throbs that heart of love ;
And twelve the fair foundations
Of Salem's jasper wall ;
And twelve the thrones predestined
Within her judgment-hall.”

J. ELLERTON.

Matthias, whose name signifies “The gift of the Lord,” is not again mentioned in Scripture, but according to historical records of him, he is believed to have spent the first fruits of his ministry in Judea, whence, after having reaped a considerable harvest, he betook himself to other provinces. He is said to have been particularly humble, and yet most bold and fearless in promulgating the Gospel. Together

with a truly amethystine humility, he combined an adamantine strength of character undaunted by any peril. As an instance of his peculiar indifference to danger—an instance which probably has some reference to the signification of the word amethyst “not to intoxicate”—one author (Petr. de Natal Histor. Sanct. lib. 3, c. 149) tells a fabulous tale that when St. Matthias was preaching the Gospel in Macedonia, the Gentiles, to make an experiment of his faith and integrity, gave him an intoxicating potion of a poisonous nature, which he cheerfully drank off in the name of Christ without the least prejudice to himself. The Greeks report him to have travelled into parts of the East, where he was treated with great inhumanity by the fierce and intractable inhabitants, and at last he proceeded to Ethiopia and preached to a low and barbarous people, by whom he was treated with great rudeness and cruelty, and from whom, after all his great labours and sufferings, and a numerous conversion of men to Christianity, he at length obtained the crown of martyrdom. There is little certainty as to the manner of his death, which is said to have taken place on the 24th February, the day still kept sacred to his memory.

In allusion to the character of St. Matthias we find

the following "Thoughts in Verse," in Keble's Christian Year:—

"Who is God's chosen priest ?

He, who on Christ stands waiting day and night,
Who trac'd His holy steps, nor ever ceas'd,
From Jordan banks to Bethphage height :

"Who hath learn'd lowliness

From his Lord's cradle, patience from His cross ;
Whom poor men's eyes and hearts consent to bless ;
To whom, for Christ, the world is loss ;

"Who both in agony

Hath seen Him and in glory ; and in both
Own'd Him divine, and yielded, nothing loth,
Body and soul, to live and die,

"In witness of his Lord,

In humble following of his Saviour dear :
This is the man to wield th' unearthly sword,
Warring unharm'd with sin and fear."

The Amethyst, then, is the last stone in the third row of the breastplate, the other two being the Ligure (or jacinth) and the Agate. The signification and teaching of these respectively, in relation to God's chosen people, are, as already explained, mixing with Gentiles, patient labour, and humility. Such qualities are now as ever appropriate to the whole Israel of God—are necessary for all who are

instrumental in extending the kingdom of our Lord as teachers and missionaries, thus following the example of Christ Himself, as well as of His first disciples. In a word, God's people must be cosmopolitan, laborious and humble.

We cannot but notice particularly that, in the remarkable passage in Ezek. xxviii. 13, all the stones of the breastplate are specified except these very three:—"Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God; every precious stone was thy covering, the sardius, topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold." The three stones of the third row were even inserted in the Septuagint version of the Bible, as though they must have been accidentally omitted; but it is obvious that in Paradise before the fall of Adam such symbolical gems as these three were not needed; for there were no Gentiles to mix with, patient labour had not been enjoined, and humility arising from a knowledge of the sinfulness, nakedness and misery of the human nature, was not yet brought about. Adam and Eve were supremely happy in the "Garden of God," and needed not either to go out into the world, to toil, or to be abased. After their fall they were driven

out of Eden, were subjected to sorrow and to labour, and humiliated even to the very dust of the ground. Paradise was lost ; but, thanks be to God for His infinite mercy, it was yet to be regained.

CHAPTER X.

THE CHRYSOLITE.

THE tenth precious stone of the breastplate, or the first in the last row, was the CHRYSOLITE, and in it was the name of BENJAMIN. The Hebrew word, *Tarshish*, was translated *Beryl* in the Authorised Version, for formerly the beryl and the chrysolite were considered as merely different names for the same stone. In Smith's Dictionary of the Bible, however, we find it stated that the rendering of the word "beryl" in the A.V. is unsupported by any kind of evidence. In the Vulgate the word was *Chrysolithus*, and in the Greek Version *Chrysolithos*. Josephus also states that the tenth stone was a chrysolite, and Kalisch, who follows not only Josephus but also the best ancient commentators, explains that it was a true golden chrysolite, and not one with a green tinge. Again, according to Rosenmüller, the word *Tarshish* is rendered chrysolite by

all the ancient interpreters. The very high-priced and brilliant Oriental chrysolite (an aluminate of glucina) takes also the name of chrysoberyl. It approaches the sapphire in hardness and specific gravity. In Parkhurst's Hebrew Lexicon, too, we find that what was translated beryl was really the chrysolite of the ancients; and in Ezek. xxviii. 13, against the word beryl there is chrysolite in the margin.

There is, therefore, a general consent as to the chrysolite being the correct name for the precious stone now under consideration. It is one of those gems which are found only in the round or pebble form. They are transparent, of a fine yellow colour, similar in appearance to the topaz; but sometimes they have also a delicate green tinge. The finest of all have a true and perfect gold colour, though some are deeper, and others extremely pale. These stones were formerly found chiefly in Arabia, Ethiopia, and India. When finely cut, they are exceedingly lustrous, and have the appearance of yellow diamonds. The references in Scripture connecting the chrysolite (from χρυσός, gold, and λίθος, a stone) with the appearance of gold itself, are shown in various passages, such as that in Dan. x. 5, 6, where Daniel in a glorious vision sees the Son of

God as High Priest of the Church, "whose loins were girded with fine gold of Uphaz: His body also was like the beryl" (chrysolite). This also corresponds with St. John's description of Christ in Revelation i. 13. Again, with regard to the whirlwind containing an appearance of wheels, which we read of in Ezek. i. (bearing a similarity to that described in 2 Kings ii. 11), "the appearance of the wheels and their work was like unto the colour of a beryl (chrysolite)" (ver. 16), *i.e.* having a golden-yellow appearance, called in ver. 4 "the colour of amber."* The spirit of the cherubim was, as it were, in the wheels (vv. 20, 21), reminding of the cherubim of gold on the mercy seat, in Exod. xxv. 18 and 1 Kings vi. 28. Between the cherubim the Lord Himself dwelt, the symbol of His presence being a fiery cloud, which the Jews termed the "Shekinah," derived from the Hebrew word *shakan*, to dwell or abide. In the first chapter of Ezekiel, the Lord appeared as a "fire infolding itself" (ver. 4), similar to the appearance of the Shekinah in Gen. iii. 24, "Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way," the strict translation in place of a flaming sword being a flame

* The Greek word ἤλεκτρον, *electron* (whence our word electricity) signifies both "amber" and "burnished gold."

of heat. In every passage, indeed, of the Bible where the cherubim are spoken of, the presence of God is to be found.

Benjamin, whose name was in the chrysolite,* was the youngest of the children of Jacob. Rachel, just before her death, called his name Benoni, "son of my sorrow;" but Jacob named him Benjamin, "son of my right hand." As to his personal history we know little, except that he was fondly beloved by his father, and tenderly treated by his brethren. The narrative of his having to leave his heart-broken father in order to go to Egypt by Joseph's special desire, and his return home after the exciting and touching events which took place there, is one of the most affecting in the whole Bible. Jacob's blessing on Benjamin was not such as we should have expected from our knowledge of his intense fondness for this son of his right hand and old age. We know with what agonized feelings he must at length have parted from him, after he had said to his other sons, "My son shall not go down with you; for his brother is dead, and he is left alone; if mischief befall him by the way in the which ye

* Tarshish (or "chrysolite") was a family name amongst the sons of Benjamin.—1 Chron. vii. 10.

go, then shall ye bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to the grave" (Gen. xlii. 38). And yet his prophetic words were, "Benjamin shall ravin as a wolf : in the morning he shall devour the prey, and at night he shall divide the spoil" (Gen. xlix. 27).

In nearly every instance the words of Jacob, in his prophecy concerning his sons, seemed harsh and indicative of the darker points in their character ; but they were divinely inspired predictions rather than blessings in themselves. Yet it is said that he blessed every one. The fact that each one should be the head of a tribe, and should inherit a portion of the Holy Land, was in itself a blessing indeed. There are numerous records of the extreme bravery and insatiable ambition of this tribe. In one instance they went to war with the whole of the other tribes, and even overcame them in two pitched battles ; but the tide of war eventually turned against them, and they were almost annihilated, only 600 remaining (Judg. xx.).

When Moses blessed the children of Israel before his death, he said of Benjamin :—"The beloved of the Lord shall dwell in safety by him ; and the Lord shall cover him all the day long, and he shall dwell between his shoulders" (Deut. xxxiii. 12). Here

is an allusion to the holy city "Jerusalem the Golden," and to the Temple or place of God's special residence amongst the Israelites. The land of Benjamin was between Ephraim and Judah, and its southern border, about the centre, projected into that of Judah, and as it were went out of its way purposely to include Jerusalem. Everything connected with Benjamin seems merged and centred in this one spot, Jerusalem. It is not a little remarkable that Benjamin himself was born here. Indeed, he of all the sons of Jacob was the only one who was born in the Promised Land, and after Jacob had received the name of Israel or "Prince of God." We read in Gen. xxxv. that Jacob and Rachel were journeying from Bethel, and there was but a little way to come to Ephrath which is Bethlehem (the site of Jerusalem was on the direct way from Bethel to Bethlehem and only about four miles distant from the latter place), when Rachel died immediately after giving birth to Benjamin. She was buried two or three miles further on towards Bethlehem. After her burial, Israel must have returned to the site of Jerusalem, for we read afterwards (ver. 21), "And Israel journeyed and spread his tent beyond the tower of Edar." Now, we find

in Mic. iv. 8, that this same tower of Edar was at Jerusalem. When Samuel anointed Saul the Benjamite to be the first king of Israel, he sent him to Zelzah by Rachel's sepulchre in the border of Benjamin (1 Sam. x. 2).

Jerusalem ("the vision of peace") was originally called Salem, where Melchizedek was king at the time when he blessed Abram, and as Priest of the Most High God gave him bread and wine (Gen. xiv. 18, 19). Here, on Mount Moriah, Abraham was commanded to offer as a sacrifice his son Isaac, on one of the mountains which God told him of (probably Calvary), and after this trial of his faith Abraham called the name of that place Jehovah-Jireh, that is, the Lord will see or provide: as it is said to this day, In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen (Gen. xxii.). The word Jireh being added to the former name Salem made it Jerusalem. It is called simply Salem in Psalm lxxvi. 2, "In Salem also is his tabernacle, and his dwelling-place in Zion."

When Jacob was mourning, and lingering in holy meditation on this hallowed spot, the knowledge of the Messiah might have been revealed to him, and he might perhaps have been taught to see in his father

Isaac a type of vicarious sacrifice and willing obedience, and in his son Benjamin a type of resurrection to the new and heavenly Jerusalem.

On this same Mount Moriah, near Mount Zion, Solomon built the Temple, and on Mount Zion itself was erected the sepulchre of David. The name Jerusalem first appears in Josh. x. 1; and in xv. 8, are mentioned its southern boundary and former name. Jebus had been that name when it was possessed by the Jebusites. "And the children of Benjamin did not drive out the Jebusites that inhabited Jerusalem; but the Jebusites dwell with the children of Benjamin in Jerusalem unto this day" (Judg. i. 21). The fort of Zion was held by them even until the time of David, who on being anointed king immediately stormed the castle and captured the fortress, clearing it completely of the Jebusites. And David dwelt in the castle; therefore they called it the city of David. Joab, the leader of the storming party, was made his chief captain (1 Chron. xi. 3—7). Thus did Jerusalem, beautiful for situation, become the city of the great King.

Dean Stanley states that to a traveller approaching the city from the east or west it must always have presented the appearance beyond any other capital

of the then known world, or that has existed since, of a *Mountain City*, breathing a mountain air, and enthroned in a mountain fastness.

It is as nearly as possible the centre of Palestine, and in the belief of nearly all Jews to this day the centre of the world, the "umbilicus terræ," as Jerome called it. This belief was probably derived from, or seemingly ratified by, the passage in Ezek. v. 5, "Thus saith the Lord God; This is Jerusalem: I have set it in the midst of the nations and countries that are round about her." The Talmudists, always relying more on legends and traditions than on the written word of God, assert that "Jerusalem is the centre of the earth. Near the Holy City was created Adam. It was near the city, but not on its site, that the first blood was spilt. The body of Adam, taken by Noah into the ark, was by him distributed among his sons; Shem, receiving the head, gave it to his son Melchizedek, by whom it was buried in Jerusalem, on the hill called Golgotha. The city itself was founded by Melchizedek. It was on the rock of Moriah that Abraham prepared to offer up Isaac. And when the days of exile are concluded, Jerusalem will be again the capital of the new and more glorious

Kingdom, and the site of the new and more glorious Temple." It has even been fancifully held by others, besides the Talmudists, that Jerusalem stood on the site of the original Garden of Eden, the courses of the Euphrates and Tigris, which originally bounded it, having been diverted by the Great Deluge from the Mediterranean to the Persian Gulf. Eden was afterwards called Paradise (a word of Persian origin), and so translated in the Septuagint. At all events, there is a remarkable similitude between the Paradise described in the 2nd chapter of Genesis, and that in the last chapter of Revelation which is indissolubly connected with Jerusalem. Amongst Jews and Christians alike, there is a general looking forward to the coming of our Lord, when He shall stand on Mount Sion, the city of the Great King, beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth; when, as is written in Isa. xxiv. 23, "the Lord of Hosts shall reign in Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously."

The testimony of St. John in Rev. xxi. is, "And I John saw the Holy City, New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven (ver. 2) . . . and the City was pure gold, like unto clear glass (ver. 18) . . . and the street of the City was pure gold, as it

were transparent glass" (ver. 21). What description could more exactly depict the appearance of chrysolite, or gold-stone crystal, than this? How appropriate, then, that the name of Benjamin should be in this stone in the breastplate of the high priest! Benjamin, "beloved of the Lord," notwithstanding his wolf-like courage, had for his inheritance this holy city Jerusalem, and the Temple or place of God's special residence amongst the Israelites.

With regard to the special characteristics of this tribe nothing is more remarkable than the strong love which all Benjamites had for each other, as well as the great attachment and firm union between Benjamin and Judah, whose history, indeed, became identical. In their love, their hatred, their bravery, and their obstinate unbelief, they were as one.

The seventh foundation of the wall of that great city, the Holy Jerusalem, was CHRYSOLITE, and in this foundation was the name of the Apostle THOMAS. This golden-coloured stone, as already explained, is a type of the glory of the Heavenly City. The name Thomas in Hebrew, as well as his other name Didymus in Greek, signifies "a twin." He is said to have been born in Syria, or Asia

Minor, but to have been brought early in life to Jerusalem, probably his tribal city. There is, indeed, every reason to suppose that Thomas was of the tribe of Benjamin, for his characteristics, like theirs, were impulsiveness, fortitude, and strong personal affection. When the rest of the Apostles tried to dissuade our Saviour from going into Judæa (by reason of the Jews having recently threatened to stone Him) on hearing that Lazarus was dead, Thomas alone of all the disciples showed his courage as well as his great love for the Benjamite native of Bethany by crying out, "Let us also go, that we may die with him," probably concluding that instead of Lazarus being raised from the dead, they all would be sent to their own graves. He seems neither to have been convinced nor converted by any of our Lord's discourses, and it was evidently his habit not to believe what he had not actually seen. When Jesus, in His solemn utterances just before His last sufferings and death on the cross, told His disciples about the many mansions in His Father's house, and that they knew whither He was going and the way there, Thomas said unto Him, "Lord, we know not whither thou goest, and how can we know the way?"

We may well believe that Thomas was the disciple alluded to in Matthew viii. 19, where it is said "A certain scribe came, and said unto Him, Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest. And Jesus saith unto him (who doubtless had a comfortable home in Jerusalem), The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay His head;" just as it is stated in the next verse, "And another of His disciples said unto Him, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father," and this disciple was always assumed to have been Philip, who had already been called, probably a second time as Peter and Andrew were, and soon after the call of both them and of James and John (Matthew iv. 18—22); for in the next chapter (ix.) we find that Matthew was called, and yet in chapter x. Matthew places Thomas's name before his own. It is true our Lord classed Scribes generally as Pharisees and severely reproved them, but we know that there were great exceptions, as Gamaliel and others, such as those mentioned in Acts xxiii. 9. Scribes are also identified with lawyers, who were always accustomed, as Thomas was, to look at all the difficulties of a case, and to require positive evidence of facts before believing

them. Dr. Smith, in his Dictionary, says that in the famous statue of St. Thomas by Thorwaldsen in the Church at Copenhagen, he stands, the thoughtful, meditative sceptic, with the rule in his hand for the due measuring of evidence and argument.

On the evening of our Lord's resurrection the disciples were assembled together with closed doors for fear of the Jews. It seems strange that Thomas only was absent. Were the rest of the disciples afraid of him? or did he absent himself merely out of a despairing mind and through his obstinate unbelief? It is not easy to say, but it was ominous that just at this time, when the disciples were obliged to meet with closed doors out of fear, a certain man was breathing out threatenings and slaughter against all the followers of Jesus. That man was Saul, of the tribe of Benjamin, and a Benjamite (equally strong in his hatred as in his love) seldom threatened without striking. Very naturally, therefore, the rest of the Apostles might have been not a little nervous at the Benjamite Thomas being one of their number. Although he, as well as they, had heard Christ's discourses, had observed His miracles, had a vivid remembrance of His lifeless body on the cross (John xx. 25), and

must have been a witness of the darkness and all the miraculous events which made even the Roman centurion exclaim, "Truly this was the Son of God,"—yet for all this Thomas was an unbeliever. His fellow Apostles might even, therefore, have looked upon him as possibly a second Judas amongst them, and have feared that they ran the terrible risk of being betrayed into the hands of Saul* or of some

* In two foot-notes of Chapter xviii. in Dr. Farrar's "Life of Christ," it is stated that according to some traditions Thomas was a twin-brother of James; according to others of Matthew or of Thaddæus.

That he was a twin is obvious by the fact that both the names Thomas and Didymus signify "a twin." By the light of these precious stones one would rather suppose that he was a twin-brother of the Apostle Paul. This supposition is borne out by the following:—

1. It is more than probable, as shown in this chapter, that Thomas, as well as Paul, was a Benjamite.
2. Paul might well have been a twin, and perhaps prematurely born, for he was of very short stature and of naturally feeble constitution. The name Paul signifies "little," and he himself tells us that he was subject to infirmities and that his bodily presence was weak (see Gal. iv. 13; 2 Cor. x. 10; 1 Cor. xv. 8, margin; Gal. i. 15).
3. After our Lord's resurrection the rest of the Apostles seem at first to have manifested some fear of Thomas, as well as of Saul.

of the persecuting Jews. On the following Lord's day they again met "within," the doors being shut, and Thomas this time was with them. We can well understand how their hearts were again filled with fear, and the more so *because* Thomas was there too. Not only was he still an unbeliever, but he had not received the Holy Ghost, as they had (John xx. 22) the previous week, he having been then absent. Suddenly appeared Jesus, and stood in the midst, and said unto these tremulous believing Apostles, "Peace be unto you;" then turning to Thomas

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4. The conversion of both Thomas and Saul was so far similar that it was by the direct interposition of the risen Saviour, and was accompanied by calling them by name—"Thomas!"—"Saul, Saul!"
 5. Paul went to Arabia, after his conversion, for about three years, but we know nothing whatever of the objects and incidents of this visit. According to tradition Thomas was also in Arabia at this time; if so, it is not improbable that Paul learnt from him all those particulars of Christ's ministry and teaching which we know he was so well acquainted with on his return from Arabia.
 6. Paul was an Apostle extraordinary, appointed by Christ Himself; but on which foundation of the Heavenly Jerusalem would his name be placed, if not on the chrysolite foundation, conjointly with Thomas as his twin-brother?

He said, "Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing." Thomas's conversion was instantaneous and perfect, and he called out impulsively, "My Lord and my God." There was a lesson to all mankind, as well as a tender rebuke to Thomas, in what Jesus then said: "Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed." What an apt commentary on this were the words which St. Peter addressed to the dispersed believing Jews in Asia Minor, when he said, "That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ: Whom having not seen, ye love; in Whom, though now ye see Him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls" (1 Peter i. 7—9).

The next time Jesus showed himself unto the Apostles, when seven of them were at the Sea of Galilee, Thomas was ranked in order next after Simon Peter (John xxi. 2).

After our Lord's Ascension, we are informed by Origen that Thomas went to Persia, where he is said to have met and baptized the Magi or wise men who came that long journey from the East in order to bring presents to our new-born Saviour, and took them along with him as companions and assistants in the propagation of the Gospel. He then passed into Arabia, or Asian Ethiopia, as it was sometimes called, full particulars of which journey were given by Benjamin the Jew in his Itinerary. Thomas at last went to India, and even to the Island Taprobane, now called Ceylon, where by gentle and persuasive means he induced large numbers to give up their gross superstitions, and to embrace Christianity. He then returned to India, and when one day at his private devotions, in a large temple-like tomb, he was attacked by Brahmins* armed with darts and stones; and at last one ran him through with a lance.

Amongst other eminent individuals of this tribe were, in the Old Testament, Saul, the first king of Israel, and his son Jonathan; also Esther, queen of Persia; and in the New Testament, Saul of Tarsus

* The Brahmins are said to be the descendants of Abraham by his wife Keturah.

(the word for Tarsus in Hebrew being *Tarshish*, or "chrysolite").

Saul, from being the persecutor of the followers of Christ, became St. Paul, the great Apostle of the Gentiles. Though he was not one of the Twelve, yet had he the honour of being an Apostle Extraordinary, and to have been immediately called in a way peculiar to himself. In a very special manner he fulfilled Jacob's prophecy: "Benjamin shall ravin as a wolf; in the morning he shall devour the prey, and at night he shall divide the spoil." With regard to his Hebrew name Saul, it was a common one amongst the tribe of Benjamin ever since Saul, the first king of Israel, was chosen out of that tribe. His other name Paul ("little") was, according to some, assumed by him at his conversion in token of his humility, or had been previously given him in consequence of his shortness of stature; but by Origen he is said to have had a double name given him originally, just as Thomas had also been called Didymus; and certainly the only passage in Scripture referring to this would seem to favour this view: "Saul, who also is called Paul." As to his person, he was said to be low and small of stature, and of naturally feeble constitution. He plainly

intimates this himself when he tells us that he was subject to bodily infirmities, and that others said of him that "his bodily presence is weak" (2 Cor. x. 10).

He looked upon himself as one born out of due time, and the least of the Apostles, yet for all this as "not a whit behind the very chiefest Apostles," with respect to the office itself. So intense was his love for his fellow-tribesmen (as was the case with all Benjamites) that he affirmed on oath he could even wish himself accursed from Christ for his brethren, his kinsmen according to the flesh (Rom. ix. 3). Yet though a "Hebrew of Hebrews" (and his writings are full of Hebraisms), he became above all others the great Apostle of the Gentiles.

He pronounced all Christians free from the Jewish ceremonials—nay, he clearly showed the imperfection of the Jewish, and the perfection of the Christian religion, and illustrated the difference between the two dispensations of the Law and the Gospel by the allegory of Abraham's wives and sons: Sarah, the mother of Isaac, denoting the spiritual Jerusalem, that is the Christian Church; but Hagar, the mother of Ishmael, denoting the law or Jewish covenant, given from Mount Sinai in

Arabia, answering to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all (Gal. iv.). This is what he alludes to in Heb. xii. 22 as "the City of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem."

To this Chrysolite City, Jerusalem the Golden, the redeemed of the Lord shall come "with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away" (Isa. xxxv. 10).

"Jerusalem, my happy home,
Name ever dear to me,
When shall my labours have an end
In joy, and peace, and thee?

"When shall these eyes thy heaven-built walls
And pearly gates behold,
Thy bulwarks with salvation strong,
And streets of shining gold?

* * * * *

"Jerusalem, my happy home,
My soul still pants for thee;
Then shall my labours have an end,
When I thy joys shall see."

CHAPTER XI.

THE ONYX.

THE eleventh stone in the breastplate of the ephod was an ONYX, and contained the name of MANASSEH. It is impossible to know what was the exact appearance of this precious stone in the breastplate, for there is no record or commentary which can assist one in detecting its nature and distinguishing characteristics. Indeed, the various explanations on the subject only seem to add to the obscurity. The name in this stone might well, therefore, be *Manasseh*, which signifies "That is forgotten," or "That makes forget." The Hebrew word, *Shoham*, indicates nothing which will throw light on the difficulty, except that it is said to be derived from the Arabic *Sachma*, signifying blackness; and the Greek word "ὄνυξ" signifies merely "a nail," from the resemblance which the white portion of this precious stone bears to the human nail growing out of the flesh.

There are five varieties of Onyx, viz. :—

1. All white.
2. White and red (the sardonyx).
3. White striped with black.
4. All black.
5. Black striped with white (the true onyx).

Whenever onyx simply is spoken of in the present day, this last is the kind indicated. We can, therefore, only suppose that the onyx in the breastplate was that stone with which we are so familiarly acquainted. Ours, however, can hardly be otherwise than a degenerate form of a most beautiful stone, "black yet comely," which Job called "the precious onyx." With regard to the onyx stone which was specially spoken of as being in the Garden of Eden (Gen. ii. 12), we know not, and cannot expect to know, what it was like as to its exquisite beauty and signification. Probably it was exceedingly splendid sardonyx (having stripes of blood-red and snow-like white), for it was sardonyx which St. John saw as constituting one of the foundations of the Heavenly Jerusalem (Rev. xxi. 20). These two layers of red and white seem like two stones firmly united, but they are absolutely and inseparably one, and symbolical of everlasting covenant. The blood-red sard of the sard-onyx is derived from the Greek

word σάρξ, flesh, on account of its having the colour and appearance of flesh with blood. When found separate it takes the name of carnelion, from the Latin *caro, carnis*—flesh. The sardonyx is the gem which above all others is used for engraving purposes and for making cameos. Josephus states that the eleventh stone in the breastplate was an onyx, but that the two “onyx stones” on the shoulders of the High Priest were really *sardonyxes*, and this is probable enough, for it is said in Exod. xxviii. 11, “With the work of an engraver in stone, like the engravings of a signet, shalt thou engrave the two stones with the names of the children of Israel.” The sardonyx would naturally exhibit the names thus engraven better than any other known gem, the names being cut out of the white layer, while the red semi-transparent layer formed the ground. They were thus to be “stones of memorial unto the children of Israel” (ver. 12), and Aaron was to bear their names upon his shoulders for a memorial before the Lord, who had promised to remember His holy covenant—the covenant which He had made with Abraham, and with Isaac, and with Jacob. As also in Exod. ii. 24, 25, “God remembered His covenant. And God looked upon

the children of Israel, and God had respect unto them."

Numerous are the passages in Scripture relating to covenants, which this flesh-and-blood stone symbolizes. It is only necessary here to refer to the following :—1. The covenant which God had made with Adam, the terms of which were "obey and live, disobey and die." But Adam broke this covenant, and in so sinning brought death into the world; and now the sardonyx of Eden was exchanged for the earthly onyx, or the stone of death and mourning. 2. The covenant with Noah between God and all flesh (Gen. ix. 17). 3. The covenant which God made with Abraham (fully described in Gen. xvii.), and also ratified with Isaac and with Jacob; this covenant of works culminating in the law of Moses, with its rites and ceremonies, its carnal ordinances, and the ten commandments, which are themselves sometimes designated "The covenant," as in 1 Kings viii. 21. 4. The new covenant, or covenant of redemption and salvation by grace in Christ, the Mediator. This new covenant is fully set forth in Heb. viii. and ix., and was prophesied by Jeremiah (xxx. 31—34). Man had been of himself utterly unable to keep God's commandments or to walk in

the laws which He set before them ; nay, His people rebelled against the words of God ; they sinned more and more, and contemned the counsel of the Most High (Ps. cvii.), insomuch that the Lord abhorred His own inheritance. Nevertheless He remembered for them His covenant, and repented according to the multitude of His mercies (Ps. cvi.). He gave His only begotten Son, who, by His own blood, put away sin, and obtained redemption for all who believe in Him, so that they might not perish, but have eternal life. But he that believeth not is condemned already. And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil (John iii.). When sin entered into the world, death passed upon all men ; but now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, being dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord (Rom. vi.).

Our well-known onyx stones (looking like little black clouds with silver linings) have always been the symbols of death, and the jewels of mourning. Very appropriately they might be termed "stones of darkness, and the shadow of death" (Job xxviii. 3). The finest onyxes are brought

from India and Arabia, having a circular or oval form, rounded at the top, and with a white stripe running round the margin. They are opaque, or at least only semi-pellucid. Probably they are similar to those which were found in the time of King David, for he made a difference between onyx stones and glistering stones (1 Chron. xxix. 2).

Manasseh, whose name was in the onyx, was Joseph's elder son by an Egyptian mother. His inheritance in the land of Canaan was divided into two portions and separated by the river Jordan; the eastern portion having been given by Moses, representing the covenant of works; and the western portion by Joshua, representing the covenant of grace—symbolized respectively by the black and white layers of the onyx. Jacob, in blessing Manasseh, said "He also shall become a people, and he also shall be great," at the same time giving the pre-eminence to the younger brother Ephraim. Moses did the same in speaking of the ten thousands of Ephraim, and the thousands of Manasseh. Joshua gave a special blessing to the tribe of Manasseh (Josh. xxii. 7, 8).

The territory of the half tribe east of Jordan embraced the volcanic and impregnable region of

Argob, which was part of the dominions of Og, king of Bashan, with its threescore giant cities, rugged heights, and impassable ravines. It also included the wild and romantic region of the Gergesenes and Gadarenes, near the Sea of Galilee. Gadara was formerly a strong and important city, the dismal ruins of which even now are two miles in circumference, and it was, as Josephus informs us, the capital of Peræa. This mysterious necropolis (the numerous tombs and caverns of which still dot its site and the surrounding country) was the scene of our Lord's miracle in healing the demoniacs. The territory of the other half tribe reached from the Jordan to the Mediterranean, and was on the north of Ephraim.

The children of Manasseh were carried away into captivity by Pul and Tilgath-pilneser, kings of Assyria (1 Chron. v. 25, 26). Amongst the prominent men who belonged to this tribe were Gideon and Jephthah. Gideon was the fifth judge of Israel, and his great achievements were the destruction of Baal's altar, and the successful midnight attack upon the Midianites, which brought about a peace of forty years. In the last stage of his life he committed the irregular act of making and consecrating

a jewelled ephod out of the rich spoils of the Midianites,* which (unconsciously, perhaps, on his part) was the occasion of idolatry to the Israelites and of ruin to his own house.

Jephthah belonged to the trans-Jordanic portion of Manasseh, and was originally captain of a band of freebooters. He judged Israel six years.

The name of the Apostle PHILIP was in the SAR-DONYX foundation of the New Jerusalem.

It is not known who Philip's parents were, but he was born at Bethsaida, on the shore of the Sea of Galilee, and was probably an intermediary agent between the fishermen Apostles and Nathanael (Bartholomew).

It is recorded that "Jesus findeth Philip, and saith unto him, Follow me," the usual address to

* The astonishing discoveries by Capt. Burton of the mineral wealth of the land of Midian ratify in a remarkable manner the description in Judges viii. of the riches of gold and precious stones which the Israelites then found in Midian, and which, unfortunately, induced Gideon to make an ephod. Besides 1,700 shekels of gold which Gideon took as spoils from the Midianites, there were also ornaments and "sweet jewels" (margin), and chains that were about their camels' necks (ver. 26); together with ornaments like the moon (margin) that were on the camels' necks (ver. 21).

those who inseparably attended upon Him. "Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found Him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph. And Nathanael said unto him, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, Come and see" (John i. 45, 46).

There were two cities having the name of Bethsaida, one "Bethsaida of Galilee," in the land of Naphtali; the other, sometimes called "Bethsaida-Julias," on the eastern side, close to where the river Jordan enters the lake. This was in the land of Manasseh, and in the Tetrarchy of Herod Philip.

Bethsaida signifies "house, or place, of fish," so that probably the two were affiliated cities connected with the extensive fish commerce for the supply of the inhabitants on either side of the sea of Galilee as well as along the upper Jordan. Most likely, indeed, they constituted one and the same city, only separated by the mouth of the Jordan. The exact locality of the western city cannot now be ascertained, any more than can that of Chorazin; and no wonder, since the terrible doom was uttered by our Saviour Himself, "Woe unto thee, Bethsaida!" Dr. Thomson asserts that there was but one city;

that it was built on both sides the Jordan, and therefore partly in Galilee. As there was no bridge between the two, there was a regular traffic by means of ferry boats and ships. It was when passing from the one to the other (Mark vi. 45, *et seq.*) that the ship conveying the disciples was suddenly carried by a storm into the midst of the sea. When Philip as a young man was carrying on his occupation, he dwelt in the western portion, for it is said he was of Bethsaida of Galilee, the city of Andrew and Peter—just as Capernaum, because it became the residence of our Lord, was called His own city, and He is said to have been “at home” there: but for the following reasons Philip was, doubtless, born in Bethsaida-Julias, in the land of Manasseh, and therefore belonged to this tribe:—1. Alone of all the Apostles Philip had a Greek name, and as Dr. Farrar suggests, from the Tetrarch Philip, since the custom of naming children after reigning princes has always been a common one. 2. Philip seemed quite at home in the eastern or Manasseh portion of the lake, for when Jesus crossed over to that side and a great company came to Him there, it was to Philip He said, Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat? Philip answered Him, Two hundred

pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them, that everyone of them may take a little (John vi.). All this occurred in "a desert place belonging to the city called Bethsaida" (Luke ix. 10).

When the Greek proselytes came up to the Passover at Jerusalem they seemed as a matter of course to address themselves to Philip, when they desired to have an interview with Him of whom they had heard so many and wonderful things, saying unto him, "Sir, we would see Jesus." When Philip and Andrew told Jesus, He answered them, saying, The hour is come, that the Son of Man should be glorified. Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit. . . . And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me. This He said, signifying what death He should die (John xii.). In thus entering on the subject of death with Philip, Jesus explained how that He must soon suffer and die, and be laid in the earth, and that then would be a great harvest of the Gentile world as well as of the Hebrew nation. And neither ought His disciples to fear death for the sake of their great Master and His gospel. It is generally believed, and assumed

as a recognized fact by Clement of Alexandria, that it was Philip who, when Jesus said Follow me, replied "Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father." Jesus said unto him, Let the dead bury their dead: but go thou and preach the kingdom of God (Luke ix. 59, 60). Philip's heart was then more taken up with the subject of bodily death than of spiritual life—more with those things which are symbolized by the onyx than by the sardonyx. At the very time that he was specially commanded to follow Jesus, he was thinking too much of the duty of attending to the rites of burial and the paraphernalia of mourning; and too little of that of promulgating the covenant of redemption. Though it was natural and not wrong that Philip should wish to attend the burial of a beloved parent, yet his affections should have been more intent than they were on distributing the bread of life amongst the thousands of lost and "forgotten" ones. Let the spiritually dead, let the Gergesenes and Gadarenes, attend to all the details of funeral ceremonies, to hiring minstrels, building sepulchres, erecting monuments, and wasting precious time amongst the tombs and catacombs of the dead for the thirty or forty days, according to the custom of the period. Philip

might appropriately have acted upon the words of Joseph at the birth of his elder son, "And Joseph called the name of the firstborn Manasseh: For God, said he, hath made me forget all my toil, and all my father's house" (Gen. xli. 51). Even so must all the members of the redeemed Church of Christ be prepared to forget their own people and their fathers' house (Ps. xlv. 10). Nevertheless, Philip's name was in the sardonyx foundation of the Heavenly City. He was, after all, a true Apostle of the Lamb, obedient even unto death; and an inheritor of the everlasting covenant.

When Jesus (the Mediator of the New Covenant) was foretelling to His disciples His own death (by which He ratified afresh the Old Covenant which His Father had made from everlasting), and said unto them, "No man cometh unto the Father, but by me," it was strange that Philip should have manifested such forgetfulness on the subject of the Deity as to say, "Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us." Jesus gently reprov'd his ignorance, and said unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father: and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father? . . .

Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father in me. . . . And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son (John xiv.).

After our Lord's Ascension into heaven, Philip is said to have planted Christianity in Scythia and Upper Asia; and after gaining numerous converts in these parts, to have preached in Phrygia, where he met his death at the city of Hierapolis, having been first crucified and then stoned to death.

The name of Manasseh, "forgotten," and the onyx stone were fitly united with regard to their symbolisms of forgetfulness and death. The black of the onyx represents man's sinful nature, and death by sin; but the white of the same stone represents the righteousness of Christ, the great Sin-bearer, who, while He knew not sin, yet bore it by the grace of God in death for us. The 88th Psalm most plaintively illustrates these subjects of death and forgetfulness. "Free among the dead, like the slain that lie in the grave, whom thou rememberest no more; and they are cut off from thy hand" (ver. 5). To our Saviour Himself, the Man of Sorrows, the bitterness of death was separation from the Father, which for our sakes He endured. "Wilt thou show

wonders to the dead? Shall the dead arise and praise thee? Shall thy loving-kindness be declared in the grave? or thy faithfulness in destruction? Shall thy wonders be known in the dark, and thy righteousness in the land of forgetfulness?" (vv. 10, 11, 12). Intense sadness and sorrow pervade the whole of this Psalm, the only bright rays in it being those which emanate from the implied hope of resurrection and the direct allusion to salvation. And we believe that if we be dead with Christ, we shall also live with Him, who is the Resurrection and the Life. Though here we are in a body of sin and death, yet we know that the "land of forgetfulness" must give up its dead, and resurrection must follow; and so we look forward to that better country which is an heavenly. But before we reach those heavenly shores, how needlessly do we fear to walk that last walk along the valley of the Shadow of Death; and with what unreasonable timidity do we dread crossing the dark river!

In a sermon preached at the Chapel Royal by the late Canon Kingsley were the following beautiful and appropriate words:—"Those who die in the fear of God and in the faith of Christ do not really taste death; to them there is no death, but

only a change of place, a change of state ; they pass at once into some new life, with all their powers, all their feelings, unchanged ; still the same living, thinking, active beings, which they were here on earth. . . . Perfect rest in perfect work. To rest from sin, from sorrow, from fear, from doubt, from care ; this is true rest. . . . Death is not death, if it raises us from darkness into light, from weakness into strength, from sinfulness into holiness. Death is not death, if it brings us nearer to Christ, who is the fount of life. Death is not death, if it perfects our faith by sight, and lets us behold Him in whom we have believed."

CHAPTER XII.

THE JASPER.

THE twelfth and last stone in the breastplate of the ephod was called a *Jasper*, and in it was the name of EPHRAIM.

It is evident that the Greek *Ἴασπις* (*Jaspis*) in Rev. xxi., and the Hebrew *Jashpeh* in Exod. xxviii., refer to the same precious stone, but that cannot possibly be the jasper of the present day; it can only be our brightest and best *diamond*, the most beautiful and precious BRILLIANT. We always find that Scripture itself best explains and illustrates Scripture; and in regard to this point we read the following pertinent remarks in Smith's Dictionary of the Bible: "The characteristics of the stone, as far as they are specified in Scripture, are that it was *most precious*, and *like crystal*; we may also infer from Rev. iv. 3, that it was a stone of brilliant and

transparent light. The stone which we name jasper does not accord with this description. There can be no doubt that the *diamond* would more adequately answer to the description in the Book of Revelation." Ebrard, too, successfully shows that by *Ἰασπις*, the diamond must be meant. The Septuagint and Vulgate make the *sixth* stone of the breastplate a jasper, instead of a diamond as that stone was rendered in the Authorized Version.

Our jasper is of various colours—white, red, green, brown, yellow, and bluish-green. The stone may be of one or more colours, and sometimes it is striped or spotted. Occasionally all the colours are seen on the same specimen, like Joseph's coat of many colours. The jasper, then, has all the colours which the diamond refracts and reflects so beautifully, only in a separate manner, and with a fixed and dull appearance. It is a stone of very little value, and so opaque is it that no ray of light can penetrate even the thinnest flakes. Not possibly, therefore, can it have been that described in Rev. xxi.—the light of that great city, the holy Jerusalem, was "like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal." The diamond, on the other hand, is well known to be perfectly transparent, and

so clear is the crystal that the term "adamantine lustre" is given to it, and it alone amongst gems has the property of being luminous for a time in a dark room, after being exposed to a bright sun. Again, our jasper is a somewhat brittle stone, and yet the wall of the New Jerusalem was built of it (Rev. xxi. 18), which could, therefore, only apply to that which is the hardest stone of all, the diamond. Besides, it is not to be supposed for a moment that the diamond, which is by far the most beautiful and pure of all jewels, would be left out of the number of precious stones described in connection with the heavenly city. From other sources, too, it is evident that in ancient times the most valued of all stones had the name of jasper, for we find in Ovid (who wrote at the commencement of the Christian era) the following passage:—What is better than Gold? Jasper! and what is better than Jasper? Virtue!

The diamond is not a natural mineral substance, but of organic origin. It consists of only one element—carbon. It is highly electric, and far surpasses all other precious stones in lustre and hardness. It would be extremely difficult to cut or cleave it, even by the point of another diamond, except in a direction parallel to the planes of

crystallization. No one has yet been able in the slightest degree to account for the formation of the diamond from simple carbon; the commonest and most abundant material in creation, and the chief element of food, thus becoming in a mysterious manner the most beautiful and valuable of all nature's products.

The diamond is chiefly found in India, Brazil, and South Africa. When perfect, it is as clear as a drop of the purest water. It has been stated that on account of its extreme hardness no engraving could possibly be made on it, but this is incorrect. For instance, Mary Queen of Scots had her coat-of-arms engraved on a large brilliant, and several cases have been recorded, on undoubted testimony, in which intagli have been produced on the diamond, of course only by the instrumentality of another diamond. Mr. Bryce Wright has had in his possession an engraved diamond of some note, set in a ring, which was kept for many years in the treasury of the Mogul Emperors of Hindustan. The engraving, composed of the two Arabic words "O Ali," is believed to have been by a Persian artist, and must have cost years of incessant labour. The date of the work is supposed to have been A.D. 1200. With respect to the reputed value of some of the finest

specimens of this most precious stone, it may be mentioned that the Koh-i-noor, or "mountain of light," now amongst the Crown Jewels of England, is said to be worth two millions sterling.

The history of the tribe of Ephraim (whose name was connected with this, the highest and purest of gems) is perhaps the most remarkable of all, as well as in many respects the first in importance. Although Ephraim himself was the last born, and therefore placed last in order, yet this tribe became the acknowledged head of the ten tribes of Israel, after their separation from the tribes of Judah and Benjamin; and not only so, but the "fulness of the Gentiles" is, in a mysterious yet unmistakable manner, connected with Ephraim, who himself had a Gentile mother, and a prince over a Gentile land for his father. Ephraim means "fruitful." His father Joseph had given him that name: For God, he said, had caused him to be fruitful in the land of his affliction (Gen. xli. 52). The name of Joseph, too, signifies "adding" or "increase." Ephraim was about twenty-one years of age when his grandfather Jacob, on his dying bed, gave him his blessing. In doing so, he purposely crossed his hands, in order to put his right hand on Ephraim's

head, and so to give him the chief blessing. Although his elder brother, Manasseh, was to be great, yet Ephraim would be greater than he, and his seed would become a multitude of nations. Not only was Ephraim to take precedence of Manasseh, but even the birthright of Reuben, the first-born of Jacob, was taken away and given to Ephraim. "The birthright of Reuben, the first-born, was given unto the sons of Joseph, the son of Israel. . . . Of Judah came the chief ruler; but the birthright was Joseph's" (1 Chron. v. 1, 2). "I am a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my first-born," saith the Lord (Jer. xxxi. 9). Judah, the royal tribe, took the lead of the first half of the camp in the wilderness; Ephraim, of the second half. Judah's camp was on the east of the tabernacle; Ephraim's on the west. Though they became separated into two kingdoms, the time would eventually come when they were again to be re-united into one kingdom, under Christ their King (Ezek. xxxvii. 16—22), and when Ephraim shall not envy Judah, and Judah shall not vex Ephraim (Isa. xi. 13). Of the twelve heads of tribes who were sent as spies to search the land of Canaan, only two were saved, Caleb of Judah and Joshua of Ephraim, and these two were

the only persons of their generation who lived to enter Canaan (Numb. xiii. and xiv).

There could be no greater or more important representative of the tribe of Ephraim than Joshua, the son of Nun, who established in safety God's chosen people in the land of promise. His name is indicative of *salvation*, for Joshua, as well as Jesus, signifies "Saviour."

In Scripture, the diamond, which is the purest, the most brilliant, and the strongest substance on earth, is symbolical of *salvation*. St. John not only saw that the *light* of the New Jerusalem was like unto a stone most precious, even like a "jasper" stone, clear as crystal (Rev. xxi. 11), but also that it had a *wall* great and high . . . and the building of the wall of it was of "jasper" (Rev. xxi. 12, 18). In connection with this, we read in Isaiah lx. 18). "Thou shalt call thy *walls Salvation*."*

* It is impossible to avoid noticing a remarkable coincidence between several other verses in these same chapters of Isa. lx. and Rev. xxi. respectively; as for instance—

Isa. lx. 1	with Rev. xxi. 11
„ 3	„ „ 24
„ 11	„ „ 25, 26
„ 19	„ „ 23
„ 21	„ „ 27

One could not possibly conceive anything in all nature so exquisitely beautiful or so infinitely strong as a diamond rock, from which to build the walls of the heavenly city. "In that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah; We have a strong city; *salvation* will God appoint for walls and bulwarks. . . . Trust ye in the Lord for ever; for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength (or the *rock of ages*, as in margin)" (Isa. xxvi.).

"Though Jeshurun (Israel) had forsaken God which made him, and lightly esteemed the Rock of his salvation" (Deut. xxxii. 15), he would yet cry with the Psalmist "O Lord, my Rock and my Redeemer" (Psa. xix. 14) and sing the glad song "O come, let us sing unto the Lord, let us make a joyful noise to the Rock of our salvation" (Psa. xcv. 1). Vain would have been all the valiant efforts of the Ephraimite Joshua against the enemies of Israel unless he had put on the whole armour of God, and above all "the helmet of salvation." With it he was more than conqueror, and was an instance of those inspired words of David, "Ephraim is the strength of mine head" (Psa. lx. 7). To Ephraim belonged the high honour of having his name in

the "jasper," and yet this tribe is not mentioned in Rev. vii. as being amongst the number of the sealed, the name of Joseph being substituted, in consequence, probably, of the Ephraimites having so long been promoters of idolatry. But besides the sealed ones of the tribe, may not Jacob's prophetic words respecting the seed of Ephraim becoming *a multitude of nations* (Gen. xlviii. 19) have reference not only to the fulness of the Gentiles on earth, but also to those redeemed ones described in Rev. vii. 9, 10? "After this [the sealing of the twelve tribes] I beheld, and lo, *a great multitude*, which no man could number, *of all nations*, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; and cried with a loud voice saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb."

Jeroboam, the first king of the separated kingdom of Israel, was an Ephraimite. After his successful revolt the history of Ephraim is really the history of the kingdom of Israel, which was always headed by Ephraim; and the prophecies addressed to Israel, as distinct from Judah, pointed first to Ephraim. It was Jeroboam who set up the golden

calves, and made Israel to sin; and so grievous and inveterate became their idolatrous practices, that at last the ten tribes were uncovenanted and "given up," no longer to be called the people of God until restored to the covenant by their conversion to Christ. "Ephraim is joined to idols: let him alone," had been God's judgment upon him (Hos. iv. 17); yet further on we meet with the following passages:—"How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? How shall I deliver thee, Israel? . . . I will not execute the fierceness of mine anger, I will not return to destroy Ephraim: For I am God, and not man" (Hos. xi. 8, 9). "Is Ephraim my dear son? Is he a pleasant child? for since I spake against him, I do earnestly remember him still" (Jer. xxxi. 20).

When the Israelites had been taken into captivity, the king of Assyria peopled the cities of Ephraim with idolaters, who combined their idolatry with some worship of the true God, and were the ancestors of the people of Samaria in the time of our Lord. They were a combination of various Gentiles, with a remnant of the tribe of Ephraim.

The future bringing in of the Gentiles is inseparably bound up with the restoration of the Israelites, who are to be gathered from all lands

and from the isles of the sea to which the Lord had driven them, where they were to become lost in name, as well as a multitude of nations. "They of Ephraim shall increase as they have increased. And I will sow them among the people; and they shall remember me in far countries: and they shall live with their children, and turn again" (Zech. x. 7-9).

The boundaries of the portion of Ephraim in the Promised Land are given in Josh. xvi. The children of Ephraim, however, drove not out all the Canaanites, those dwelling among them serving under tribute. The territory was bounded on the north by Manasseh, on the south by Benjamin, on the east by the River Jordan, and on the west by the Mediterranean Sea. It consisted of an elevated district, and combined both richness and security. It was at Shechem, or Sichem (called also Sychar in John iv. 5), in this district of Ephraim, where Abraham first rested, and God said unto him, "Unto thy seed will I give this land" (Gen. xii. 6, 7). At or near this place, too, are Jacob's well (John iv. 6) and Joseph's tomb (Josh. xxiv. 32). Here Joshua gathered Israel to receive his last instructions; and here was the seat of the new monarchy under Jeroboam (1 Kings. xii).

In the Palestine of prophecy, as described in Ezek. xlvii. and xlviii., Shechem seems, by carefully following out the measurements in the mystical description, to be the exact site of the Sanctuary in the most holy portion for the priests; the city itself and its suburbs still occupying the same position as Jerusalem does at the present time and always has done.

It may be here mentioned that Benjamin, Manasseh, and Ephraim, whose names were in the last three stones of the breastplate, were the three who were born after Jacob had received the name of Israel, or Prince of God; and they were descended from Rachel, the wife of Jacob's love. These three marched together, under the leadership of Ephraim, on the west side of the sacred tent, when on their march to Canaan; and in the Holy Land they possessed adjoining territories. In Ps. lxxx. 1, 2, we read: "Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, thou that leadest Joseph like a flock: thou that dwellest between the Cherubims, shine forth. Before Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh, stir up thy *strength*, and come for *salvation* to us" (as in margin). And in Ps. lxxvii. : "Thou hast with thine arm redeemed thy people, the sons of Jacob and Joseph."

The first foundation of the wall of that great city, the Holy Jerusalem, was "*Jasper*"; and in this foundation was the name of the Apostle PETER.

Peter was born at Bethsaida in Galilee, in the division belonging to the tribe of Naphtali. He was the son of Jonas, and brother of the Apostle Andrew, who first brought him to Christ. The name originally given him was Simon. Jesus Christ Himself gave him the additional title of Cephas, which is the Syriac word for "a stone," the Greek being Πέτρος, or Peter. Our Saviour does not appear to have conferred upon him any real supremacy over the rest of the Apostles. There was a precedence, indeed, but not a superiority. He was a "lively stone" of the spiritual house or Church which was built on the true Πέτρα or rock, that rock being Christ, whom Peter himself (quoting Isaiah) also designated "chief corner stone" (1 Pet. ii. 6).

"The Church's one foundation

Is JESUS CHRIST, her LORD."

In the various enumerations of the twelve Apostles, Peter is always placed first. He and the two sons of Zebedee were selected by our Lord to be His more intimate companions. Peter had a peculiarly eager

and resolute disposition, and yet more than once even he required such a reproof as "O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?" When Jesus said unto His disciples, "But whom say ye that I am?" Peter, who was always the most forward to reply (so that he has been termed "the mouth of the Apostles"), said, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." By such firm faith in and ready confession of Christ as the Son of the living God, we find the true rock of our salvation. Against such, even the gates of hell cannot prevail. The twelve Apostles (of whom Peter was *primus inter pares*) were the first stones or pillars, built upon the chief corner stone, of Christ's Church upon earth, and their names were also in the twelve foundations of the Heavenly City. When Peter trusted to his own strength, as he was too apt to do, instead of relying on the Rock of Ages, he failed, even to the denying of his Lord and Master. After our Lord's resurrection, He was seen first of Peter alone, before manifesting Himself to the rest of the Apostles, as we find in 1 Cor. xv. 5, and Luke xxiv. 34. Probably Peter alone had the firmness of faith and adamant strength of mind sufficient to enable him to bear the sight, notwithstanding his recent

denial. When, after this, the Apostles had been commanded to go into Galilee, and some of them had arrived there and were following their former avocation, Jesus again showed Himself unto them. Peter, with his usual impulsive zeal, threw himself into the sea and swam to shore. When they had dined, Jesus addressed Himself to Peter, who, though he had thrice denied Him, yet now thrice declared with vehemence that he loved Him. Each time Jesus told him to feed the flock of God. He, who was *a stone* of Israel, was told also that he was to be *a shepherd* of the Israel of God. Might not the parenthetical sentence in Gen. xlix. 24 be a prophetic allusion to Peter, whose name was connected with the same precious stone as Ephraim's? Jacob said, in blessing Joseph, the father of Ephraim, and speaking of the arms of his hands being made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob: "From thence (*i.e.*, the mighty God of Jacob) is *the shepherd, the stone of Israel.*" These were exactly the two designations which Peter derived directly from our Lord Himself. When Jesus first beheld him He said, "Thou shalt be called Cephas, which is by interpretation, A stone" (John i. 42); and His last injunctions to him were,

“Feed my sheep,” “Follow me” (John xxi.). Jesus is the only true Shepherd, who had even laid down His life for His sheep, and whom Peter himself called “the chief Shepherd” (1 Pet. v. 4), and “the Shepherd and Bishop of the souls” of His flock (1 Pet. ii. 25); and again, He alone is, as St. Peter said, the living Stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious (1 Pet. ii. 4). “Who is God save the Lord? or who is a rock save our God? It is God that girdeth me with strength” (Ps. xviii. 31, 32).

After our Lord's Ascension, when the disciples were met together in an upper room, in number about one hundred and twenty, Peter acted as president of the assembly; and he was also chief spokesman in addressing the multitude on the day of Pentecost. Through the eloquence of his inspired words there were on that day added to the Church about 3,000 souls (Acts ii.). Many more were converted when he subsequently preached to them and worked miracles at the Beautiful Gate of the Temple (Acts iii. and iv.). Of course, the Sadducees, the rulers, the priests, the elders, and the scribes were all angry and indignant, and demanded of him by what power he had worked so

great a miracle as healing the man born lame. Peter said, by the power of the crucified Jesus alone, "This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in any other, for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts iv. 11, 12). It would be out of place here to go into details respecting the most eventful life of Peter: the miracles which, under God, he was enabled to perform, even to the raising to life of Dorcas, as well as to the dooming of Ananias and Sapphira to instant death; his own miraculous deliverance from prison by an angel of God; his remarkable vision at the house of Simon the tanner, so as to prepare him for the work of the conversion of the Gentiles, and for his admitting Cornelius, the first Gentile convert, into the Christian faith. The partition-wall was thus broken down, and now Peter taught openly that with respect to not only the children of Israel, but also every nation of the earth, whosoever believeth in Christ Jesus shall receive remission of sins. Similarly through Ephraim God had determined to bring in the fulness of the Gentiles. The Gentiles were to be no longer strangers and foreigners, but

fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God. In fulfilling all ancient prophecy that the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs with Israel of the promise, it was ordained that by means of Peter the door should be set open.

The last we learn of St. Peter in Scripture history is his being at Antioch about A.D. 54, when St. Paul resisted him for refusing to eat with the Gentiles, fearing them of the circumcision (Gal. ii. 11). He appears to have been the great preacher to the dispersed of All-Israel scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia. His chief desire was to confirm and comfort them under their persecutions, and his great theme was salvation in Christ as the end of their faith. He calls himself merely a fellow Elder, and for their great reward he points them to the Chief Shepherd (1 Pet. v. 1—4). He is said to have at length proceeded to Rome, where he was crucified, with his head downwards (according to his own entreaty), about the year 66. His mode of death by crucifixion was foretold by Christ (John xxi. 18, 19), and alluded to by himself (2 Pet. i. 14).

In connection with the subject of the diamond in Scripture, there can be little doubt that the *Bdellium*

(Heb. *bedolach*) mentioned in Gen. ii. 12, as being in a district of Eden, is really this priceless stone of stones in its natural, unpolished, and somewhat rounded condition.* Some have considered the bdellium a vegetable exudation, but this would not be of a precious nature; moreover it is classed with gold and the onyx stone. Probably these precious stones of Eden were specially mentioned, like the tree of life,† and the tree of knowledge of good and evil, as being the signs and pledges of the covenant engagement between God and man (as partially explained in the chapter on the onyx). Others again have supposed that the pearl was intended, but from the locality in which it existed, in the *land* of Havilah, this of course could not have been the case. The only other allusion to bdellium in the Bible is in Num. xi. 7, in which it is said, "And the manna was as coriander seed, and the

* Professor Ruskin quoted this passage in Genesis as his text in a very interesting lecture on "The Symbolical Use of the Precious Stones in Heraldry." For bdellium he read "crystal," and stated that it was translated in the Septuagint by *κρύσταλλος*, crystal, or that which is congealed by cold. He discussed the references to manna as dew found in the morning, and said that it was pure as Alpine snow.

† See Appendix D.

eye of it as the eye of bdellium." This is further explained in Exod. xvi., "And the house of Israel called the name thereof manna: and it was like coriander seed, white" (ver. 31). Also, "In the morning the dew lay round about the host. And when the dew that lay was gone up, behold, upon the face of the wilderness there lay a small round thing, as small as the hoar frost on the ground. And when the children of Israel saw it, they said one to another, It is manna (or, What is this?); for they wist not what it was. And Moses said unto them, This is the bread which the Lord hath given you to eat" (vv. 13—15). Manna, which thus, in its elementary form, is compared to the bdellium, is typical of Christ, the true bread of life, as the bdellium itself is of salvation (as already explained). "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it" (Rev. ii. 17). These words were given as a glorious promise in the address to the Church in Pergamos, which was a city full of the grossest idolatry. This white stone is not *albidus* or dull white, but *candidus* or bright and glistening, it being the characteristic of intense

white to be shining. Trench thus explains that the ψῆφος λευκή, or white stone, must be the diamond, the former Greek word signifying a precious stone, and the latter connected with the Latin word *lux* or light. Such a precious stone (or stone of grace, as in margin) is indeed an unspeakable gift "in the eyes of him that hath it; whithersoever it turneth, it prospereth" (*i.e.* gives light or understanding)—(Prov. xvii. 8).

By the light of these precious stones and their significations, it is not difficult to detect the meaning of that otherwise most obscure passage in Rev. iv. 2, 3, "And immediately I was in the Spirit: and, behold, a throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne. And He that sat was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone" (*sardius* R.V.). These stones are the white resplendent diamond, betokening righteousness and salvation; and the blood-red ruby, symbolical of the atoning blood of Christ (as fully explained in the first of these chapters). "My beloved is white and ruddy" (Song of Sol. v. 10). He is the Lamb of God, without blemish and without spot, "slain from the foundation of the world" (Rev. xiii. 8), in whose blood His redeemed ones "have washed their robes and made them white."

“Jesu, thy blood and righteousness
My beauty are, my glorious dress.”

And the Lamb, which is in the midst of the throne, is also the *light* of the heavenly city (Rev. vii. 17 and xxi. 23); the light being “like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal.” Our Saviour, who was thus to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone, white and red, is the final and glorious Antitype of the High Priest under the law, who, wearing a vestment of pure white, entered the Holy of Holies, and sprinkled before the cherubim on the mercy seat the blood of atonement for the sins of the people. This occurred once a year, on the great day of atonement, and it was to be a Sabbath of rest, or, as in the Hebrew, a Sabbath of Sabbaths (Lev. xvi. 30, 31). Yet were the people *then* to afflict their souls. But in heaven itself, where Christ is entered as our great High Priest and Intercessor (Heb. ix. 24—28), there is an eternal Sabbath for the people of God, where sin will be for ever put away. “And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away” (Rev. xxi. 4).

Again, these two stones—the sardius and the jasper—were the first and the last in the peculiarly sacred and symbolical breastplate. “Hearken unto me, O Jacob and Israel, my called: I am He: I am the first, I also am the last” (Isa. xlviii. 12). “And He that sat upon the throne said . . . I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely. He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son” (Rev. xxi. 5—7). Thanks be to God, which giveth us this victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. To Him be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.

APPENDIX A

(page 5).

HYSSOP.

PROFESSOR ROYLE has clearly shown, after most careful investigations, that the Hyssop of Scripture is the *Capparis Spinosa* of Linnæus. The original Hebrew word is *Esav*, and the modern Arabic *Asuf* or *Aszev*. A bunch of this thorny plant would, from its peculiar nature, readily absorb any liquid in which it might be dipped, and thus it could be conveniently used as a sprinkler. It is thickly covered with small spines or thorns, and is a very different plant from the common hyssop of our waysides—an insignificant herb, with labiate flowers. The *Capparis Spinosa* possesses no medicinal qualities of a detergent nature; and, indeed, it is clear that when the Psalmist said, "Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow" (Ps. li. 7), he did not allude to any medicinal properties of the plant, but to the sprinkling of blood by its instrumentality, representing and prefiguring the saving virtue of the blood of Christ. The plant has been found growing in Lower Egypt, the desert of Sinai, and the neighbourhood of Jerusalem, chiefly on walls or in rocky places.

God commanded the Hebrews, when they came out of Egypt, to dip a bunch of hyssop in the blood of the paschal lamb, and to sprinkle the lintel and two side posts therewith (Exod. xii. 22); and in Leviticus xiv. we also find that hyssop was similarly used in the ceremonial purification of lepers. St. Paul, in his Epistle to the Hebrews (chap. ix. 19, &c.), shows how these Mosaic rites of blood-sprinkling, with scarlet wool and hyssop, were typical of Christ's blood-shedding and the remission of sins thereby.

The slain bird and the bird set free (as described in Levit. xiv. 4—7) are considered types of our Saviour's death and resurrection. When one of the birds was killed, the hyssop, together with cedar wood and scarlet, as well as the living bird, were to be dipped in the blood of the slain bird, and then the living bird let loose.

Similarly, the priest was instructed to take cedar wood, hyssop, and scarlet, and to cast them into the midst of the burning ashes of the spotless red heifer which had been slain, and the ashes of which, mixed with running water, were to be accounted as a purification for sin (Numb. xix. ; see also Heb. ix. 13, 14).

Now, with regard to this typical representation of hyssop, scarlet, and cedar wood, dipped in blood, as described in Levit. xiv., where do we find its exact counterpart, its supreme and perfect antitype? Surely in the solemn description of Christ, our great Sacrifice, when crowned with thorns. "And they stripped him, and put on him a scarlet robe. And when they had platted a crown of thorns, they put it

upon his head, and a reed in his right hand" (Matt. xxvii. 28, 29). With regard to the crown of thorns, we find the following in Smith's "Dictionary of the Bible":—"The Rhamnus, or *Spina Christi*, although abundant in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem, cannot be the plant intended, because its thorns are so strong and large that it could not have been woven into a wreath. Had the Acacia been intended, as some suppose, the phrase would have been different. Obviously, some small flexile thorny shrub is meant; perhaps *Capparis Spinosa*." Everything, indeed, tends to show that this is not a mere probability; for not only would the hyssop correspond to the crown of thorns with regard to its description and typical signification, but also at the very time that Christ suffered was the Feast of the Passover, when the hyssop would have been gathered ready for use; and that it was so at hand we know from its stem being made use of to convey a sponge dipped in vinegar to the mouth of Jesus (John xix. 29).

The scarlet robe, of course, is the counterpart of the scarlet wool; and with regard to the reed which they put into the right hand of Jesus as a mock sceptre, this was obviously not a flexible water-reed, for the soldiers smote Him on the head with it, in order that they might inflict pain and cause the thorns to pierce the skin and draw blood. The Greek word *κάλαμος* means a rod, as well as a reed, and we find both in Ezekiel and Revelation that a measuring rod was termed a reed. Such rods were almost invariably made of cedar, this wood not only being in common use amongst the Jews, but

also being solid and beautiful in appearance. Especially would it be found amongst the furniture of the palaces of the high priest and the governor, as well as in the apartments of the temple. The forms of punishment by bruising or beating with rods, and by scourging or the infliction of stripes, were commonly practised in the time of Christ, and both were endured by our Saviour. "He was bruised for our iniquities . . . and with his stripes we are healed" (Isa. liii. 5). St. Paul also relates how that he himself of the Jews five times received forty stripes save one, and thrice was *beaten with rods* (2 Corinth. xi. 24, 25).

LEVITICUS XIV. 6.

MATTHEW XXVII. 28, 29.

The hyssop (*Capparis Spinosa*), = The blood-soaked crown of
dipped in blood. thorns (*Capparis Spinosa*).

The scarlet (scarlet wool, Heb. ix. 19), dipped in blood. = The blood-sprinkled scarlet robe.

The cedar wood, dipped in = The blood-stained rod or
blood. reed.

APPENDIX B

(page 77).

STANDARDS.

THE tribes of Israel had Standards or Banners, by which they were distinguished when marching and encamping in the wilderness, and under which they were marshalled when going to war. "And the children of Israel shall pitch their tents, every man by his own camp, and every man by his own standard, throughout their hosts" (Numb. i. 52).

According to Stackhouse, each standard is supposed to have been of the colour of that stone in Aaron's breastplate in which was the name of the particular tribe. The standards of Judah, Reuben, Ephraim, and Dan were specially distinguished as being those under which four divisions of three tribes each were respectively marshalled (Numb. x. 2—34; x. 14—28). According to Hebrew writers and rabbins, the ensign carried in the divisional standard of Judah was a lion; in that of Reuben, a man; in that of Ephraim, an ox; and in that of Dan, an eagle soaring with outspread wings and taking hold of a serpent. It is remarkable that these represented the appearances of the four cherubim described both in Ezek. i. 10 and Rev. iv. 7. Between the cherubim over the lid of the ark the glory of

the Lord resided. Hence God is said to dwell between the cherubim. It would appear, therefore, that the ensigns on these four leading standards were really cherubic signs, and emblematic of the four living creatures or cherubim; these again being, in the most sublime manner, symbolical of the true Israel of God—those redeemed elect who are nearest to the throne of God, and whose office it is to give glory and honour and thanks to Him that sits on the throne for ever and ever.

That Ephraim had the ox for an ensign is perhaps the reason why calf-worship is so often mentioned in connection with this tribe. Were not the two golden calves which Jeroboam set up an unauthorised and sinful imitation of Ephraimic cherubim, he thereby hoping that God would dwell with His subjects, without the necessity of their going up to Jerusalem? If we compare Ezek. x. 14 and 22 with i. 10, we find that cherub and ox were in a certain sense synonymous, the words cherub signifying “strong” or “mighty,” and the ox being symbolical of strength.*

Benjamin and Manasseh were under the standard of Ephraim, on which was the ox; hence we read in Ps. lxxx. 1, 2: “. . . Thou that dwellest between the cherubim, shine forth. Before Ephraim, and Benjamin, and Manasseh, stir up thy strength, and come and save us.”

* The Hebrew word *ox* denotes strength; hence Eng. *ox*, from his strength; and Lat. *os*, a bone (Parkhurst).

APPENDIX C

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THE THREE CELESTIAL THRONES.

THE Throne of God is variously spoken of in Scripture as the Seat of His Sovereign Majesty, whence are dispensed grace and mercy as well as justice and judgment.

Three Celestial Thrones have been particularly described:—

1. THE SAPPHIRE THRONE, or Throne of Justice and Holiness, as described in Ezekiel i. 26 and x. 1. “Above the firmament that was over the heads (of the Cherubim) was the likeness of a throne, as the appearance of a sapphire stone (terrible crystal i. 22): and upon the likeness of the throne was the likeness as the appearance of a man above upon it (see Daniel vii. 9). . . And I saw as it were the appearance of fire, and it had brightness round about . . . This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord.”

Such was the Throne of Majesty, whence proceeded the requirements of the Law, and threatenings against disobedience.

When the God of Israel appeared on Mount Sinai to give tables of stone, and a law, and commandments, there was under His feet as it were a paved work of a sapphire stone.

And the sight of the glory of the Lord was like devouring fire on the top of the mount in the eyes of the children of Israel (Exod. xxiv. 10 and 17).

2. THE THRONE OF GRACE AND MERCY, or the Mediatorial Throne of Christ.

This is symbolically described in Rev. iv. "A throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne, and He that sat was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone (sardius, R.V.). The latter is the blood-red ruby, and the former the brilliant diamond, as explained in Chapters i. and xii.—the symbols respectively of the blood of atonement, and of perfect righteousness or spotless perfection.

This is the throne of grace to which we are invited to come boldly that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need (Heb. iv. 16); and also forgiveness through that blood which cleanseth from all sin, even "the precious blood of Christ, as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot" (1 Peter i. 19). "It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us" (Rom. viii. 34).

3. THE GREAT WHITE THRONE, or Throne of Final Judgment. The white colour of the throne is that which is bright and shining, "white as the light," and (like the white stone in Rev. ii. 17) symbolized by the diamond, that precious stone of dazzling whiteness and perfect purity.

This is the throne to which the Psalmist alluded—"The Lord shall endure for ever: He hath prepared his throne for judgment. And He shall judge the world in righteousness,

He shall minister judgment to the people in uprightness" (Psalm ix. 7, 8). It is called "the throne of His glory" in Matthew xxv. 31, when describing the process of the Last Judgment. We read in Rev. xx. 11, "And I saw a great white throne, and Him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them." Satan had just been cast into the lake of torment for ever. He whose ambition had been the original cause of so much woe, had said in his heart, "I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will be like the Most High" (Isaiah xiv. 13—15). But he was now cast down into hell, never again to be deceiver, tempter, or accuser. The redeemed by the blood of the Lamb, whose names were found written in the Book of Life, are for ever with the Lord in everlasting felicity; but to the unredeemed comes from the Great White Throne the dread sentence, "Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels" (Matt. xxv. 41). By these unredeemed ones all the warnings and threatenings from the terrible crystal Throne of Sapphire had been cast aside, the Mediatorial Throne had never been approached, and the blood of the all-righteous Saviour had for them been shed in vain. For them the doom has gone forth which not rivers of tears nor agonies of penitence can now avert. Final and irrevocable are the words "These shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal."

APPENDIX D

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THE TREE OF LIFE.

WITH regard to the Tree of Life, there seem to be good Scriptural reasons for considering it to be THE VINE. In other trees of the Garden of Eden there was *nourishment* for man; but in this a *sacrament* also. It was a symbol of eternal life with God. No other tree would so well correspond with the description in Gen. ii. and Rev. xxii. In the latter chapter, verses 1 and 2, we read, "And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations." Now, this description agrees with all that has been written in Scripture respecting the vine as being perfect in fruitfulness and beauty when growing by the waters. "It was planted in a good soil by great waters, that it might bring forth branches, and that it might bear fruit, that it might be a goodly vine" (Ezek. xvii. 8. See also Ezek. xix. 10, Ezek. xlvi. 12; Ps. i. 3; Jer. xvii. 8).

It was from the *brook* of Eshcol that the spies sent by

Moses to search the promised land cut down the typically magnificent cluster of grapes (Numb. xiii. 23).*

The Vine has been specially selected to indicate the spiritual union of Christ with His Church. This was fully explained by Jesus Himself (as found in John xv.), the theme of whose memorable discourse was, "I am the vine, ye are the branches. Abide in me." In the Old Testament, the Jewish nation and Church had often been symbolized by the vine. "Thou hast brought a vine out of Egypt: thou hast cast out the heathen, and planted it. Thou preparedst room before it, and didst cause it to take deep root, and it filled the land. The hills were covered with the shadow of it, and the boughs thereof were like the goodly cedars. She sent out her boughs unto the sea, and her branches unto the river" (Ps. lxxx. 8—11). But at last, alas! this choicest vine brought forth wild grapes (Isa. v. 1—7), and so it was trodden down and laid waste. "Yet had I planted thee a noble vine, wholly a right seed (saith the Lord): how then art thou turned into the degenerate plant of a strange vine unto me?" (Jer. ii. 21).

* Even in the present day there are found in various parts of the world large and spreading vines of a similar kind, though, of course, now of extreme rarity. In a former number of *The Garden* there is a description of a vine, situated about three miles and a-half from Sante Barbara, California, which has a trunk 4 feet 4 inches in diameter. It begins to branch out about 6 or 8 feet from the ground, and covers over an acre of land. The annual yield of grapes is from 10,000 to 12,000 lbs. The clusters average, when ripe, from 2 to 2½ lbs. each. It is specially remarked that the growth of this vine is assisted by a stream of water running near it.

Evil would have been the case, and altogether lost the condition, of God's chosen people and all mankind, had not a rod come forth out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch grown out of his roots, as prophesied in Isa. xi. 1. "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In His days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely; and this is His name whereby He shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS" (Jer. xxiii. 5, 6). He was both the root and offspring of David (Rev. xxii. 16), the true and living vine, severed from whom we can do nothing (John xv. 5).

With regard to the Tree of Life which we read of as being removed from the earthly Eden to the heavenly Paradise, whoever partakes of that tree receives immortality.* It was removed when man had disobediently eaten of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, lest he should eat also of the tree of life, and so live for ever in his sin, for ever separated from the presence of his Maker. When Christ came down from heaven to save mankind from their lost condition, by His own perfect obedience and death on the cross, He ordained before His death that the members of His Church on earth should from time to time drink of the fruit

* "It is permitted no single mortal," says the Book of Enoch, "to touch this tree of sweetest fragrance till the time of the Great Judgment; but when everything shall be reconciled and made perfect for ever, it will be given over to the righteous and lowly.

of the vine, not only in remembrance of His most precious blood-shedding, but also as a sacramental pledge of eternal life. "I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom" (Matt. xxvi. 29).

"Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city" (Rev. xxii. 14).



