

The records of Divine support afforded in ancient times to God's servants in seasons of trouble, may well console His children now under grievous trials. In the cases of Abraham, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, David, Jeremiah, &c., we see them deeply afflicted, but graciously sustained in the midst of the scenes of distress through which they were called to pass. That of Job is specially recorded to encourage the exercise of patience and hope. His afflictions were exceedingly hard to be borne; but grace marvellously upheld him, and ultimately, even in this life, joy succeeded to sorrow. So the Apostle James, after referring to the "prophets for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience," adds, "Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end [that is, the design] of the Lord, that the Lord is very pitiful and of tender mercy."

4. The instances of believing obedience recorded, with the happy results, are evidently designed to excite us to imitation. Paul, to stimulate his brethren to the exercise of faith and perseverance, produces numerous instances of these, and adds, "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience"—rather perseverance—"the race that is set before us." (See Heb. xi. *passion*, and xii. 1.) The fidelity of Joseph in resisting temptation, and of Daniel and his associates in refusing to disobey or disown JEHOVAH, when urged to it by the most alarming threats, with the narratives of the benefits that subsequently attended their unwavering course of piety, may well excite us to persevere in the obedience of faith, in the full assurance that the faithful promises of our heavenly Father will, in His cases as well as theirs, be verified, to His glory and our ultimate joy.

5. "Admonition" is mentioned by the Apostle Paul as one of the uses of the Old Testament. When he has specified various sins committed by the Israelites, and noticed some of the lamentable consequences which resulted from the commission of them, he remarks, "They are written for our admonition;" and adds, "Therefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." (1 Cor. x. 5-12.) In studying the historical and biographical parts of the Old Testament we should carefully bear in mind that, as all good examples are recorded for our imitation, so the record of those of an opposite character is designed to put us upon our guard against the errors and vices into which individuals anciently fell. There are also many direct admonitions, to which all would do well to pay strict regard. Two or three of these may be recited here. Moses says, "Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil." And Solomon cautions in like manner. "If sinners entice thee, consent thou not;" "Enter thou not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men. Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away." (Ex. xxiii. 2. Prov. i. 10. iv. 14. 15.)

6. Moral precepts enjoined in the Old Testament are of continued and universal application and utility. The decalogue, of which the substance is, "Thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind, and thy neighbor as thyself," is strictly and constantly binding upon all. So the duties of parents to their children, as well as those of children to their parents, specifically enjoined in the law of Moses, and inculcated by subsequent sacred writers, to impart to them religious instruction, &c., are obviously incumbent on all parents. (Deut. vi. 7. Ps. lxxviii. 5-7. Prov. xxii. 6.) The ceremonial law may be very usefully studied, as has been shown; but we, of course, are not required to observe it. The precepts of the judicial law given to the Israelites are not in every case adapted to our circumstances; but those that relate to the exercise of justice toward our fellow men universally, and of mercy or kindness to the needy and distressed—"to do justly and to love mercy"—are to be regarded and obeyed, at least in the spirit of them, by us under the gospel dispensation.

7. Considerable portions of the ancient sacred writings may be very profitably used for devotional purposes. The Psalms present to us the pious breathings, and the various religious exercises, of godly men of old. At times we find these servants of JEHOVAH filled with holy joy; and at other seasons greatly depressed in spirit, and having their souls disquieted within them. Their expressed delight in the service of God, and their grief when deprived of the privilege of waiting on Him in His earthly courts,

\*When *hupomene* refers to suffering it means patience, when to action, perseverance.

with their expressions of ardent desires to be enabled to keep His precepts, and to enjoy His presence, furnish scriptural marks by which persons may now form a correct judgment respecting their own spiritual state. Their diligence and perseverance in seeking and serving the Lord, with notices of the consolation obtained thereby, may well encourage believers to imitate their example.

So likewise the biographical notices of men of piety their trials and deliverances, the diversified dispensations of providence toward them, working for their good, their frequency and fervency in prayer, with statements of the answers graciously vouchsafed, and their unwavering faith and confidence in God, with narrations of the happy results, may well encourage Christians to trust in the Most High, to seek Him assiduously, and to wait patiently for Him.

8. The treasuring up of portions of the Old Testament in the memory, especially in the heart, is of excellent use to preserve persons from sin. So David says, "Thy word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against thee." (Ps. cxix. 11.) When our Lord was tempted by Satan, He continually repelled the temptations by the quotation of appropriate texts from the only Scriptures then given, namely, those of the Old Testament. (Mat. iv. 4, 7, 10.) In accordance with this Paul admonishes believers, in their conflicts with the powers of darkness, while "putting on the whole armour of God," in order that they might "be able to stand against the wiles of the devil," to take the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God." (Eph. vi. 11-17.)

From the uses of the Old Testament Scriptures now noticed, we may infer the desirableness of studying them with diligence and prayerful attention. To these our Lord directly referred when He said to the unbelieving Jews, "Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of me." The benefit of yielding obedience to this injunction is evinced in the case of the Jews at Berea. Of them it is said, "These were more noble than those of Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily, whether these things were so. Therefore many of them believed." (John v. 39. Acts xvii. 11, 12.) The salutary tendency of a careful perusal of them appears also in the account of the conversion of the Ethiopian nobleman. Even while he was travelling in his chariot, he was prudently engaged in reading the prophecy of Isaiah, in the Greek translation called the *Septuagint*; though, as he frankly confessed, he did not at that time understand what he read. Inquiry, however, was excited; and when in providence an opportunity was afforded him to receive instruction, the passage which he was perusing presented to Philip an appropriate text from which "he preached unto him Jesus." Thus the reading and the preaching of the word were conjointly rendered effectual, through Divine influence, to the conversion and salvation of this eminent man. (Acts viii. 24-40.) Hence it is obviously desirable, not only for the pious, but also for the unregenerate to study with care and attention the Old Testament as well as the New. The Psalmists, of course with reference to the former, when he has proposed the question, "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way?" replies, "By taking heed thereto according to Thy [the Lord's] word." (Ps. cxix. 9.) Parents should kindly allure their children, and all persons; those who are committed to their care, to the attentive perusal of these "Oracles of God." They contain, not only numerous important and highly useful instructions, admonitions, cautions, and warnings to the young, as in the Psalms, Proverbs, &c., but also very interesting and instructive biographical accounts of pious youths, as of Joseph, Samuel, David, Obadiah, Josiah, Jeremiah, &c., which may be easily understood by children, and may, through the Divine blessing, prove exceedingly beneficial to them, both in time and in eternity.

As the young may profit greatly by the attentive study of the ancient Scriptures, so may also those in the meridian of life amid their cares, turmoils, temptations, and responsibilities. These are well adapted to teach them how to guide their affairs with discretion; or, in other words, to manage their business with prudence. (For instance, how many might have saved themselves and their families from temporal ruin by paying due heed to Solomon's cautions against "suretyship." Prov. xi. 15. xx. 16. xxii. 26.) They also instruct parents how to train up their children in the fear of God, and all persons how to discharge the various duties that may devolve on them in active life, in the diverse stations and circumstances in which they may be providentially placed.

These sacred writings are likewise adapted to sustain the aged and infirm who trust in God, under all their infirmities and trials, when earthly comforts fail. How cheering to such is the gracious promise "Even to your old age I am He; and even to your hoar hairs I will carry you!" (Isa. xlvi. 4.) How consoling are the assurances contained in them of God's merciful care over pious widows and their fatherless children! (Deut. x. 18. Ps. lxxviii. 5.)

In a word, through every stage of life, and in all the varied conditions of it, whether prosperous or adverse. They are adapted to be of inestimable service to mankind.

While contemplating the excellency and value of the Old Testament, from the beginning to the end, one can scarcely fail to wonder that any rational man should ever pretend to believe in Jesus Christ, and yet deny the inspiration of Moses. Our Lord repeatedly referred to Moses as a writer divinely inspired, and appealed to his testimony in proof his own Divine mission. "If," said He, "they heed not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead." "Had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me, for he wrote of me." (Luke xvi. 29. 31. xxiv. 27. John v. 46.) To pretend to believe either, and not to believe the other, is obviously preposterous.

Those who would study the Bible profitably, should diligently compare the Scriptures of the Old Testament with those of the New; and earnestly pray for Divine illumination; as the Psalmist does, saying, "Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law." (Ps. cxix. 18.) Where this course is pursued with a sincere desire to know and do the will of God, undoubtedly the usefulness of the Old Testament will become increasingly apparent.

It may be remarked here, that it is highly desirable for those who have it in their power, to peruse the Old Testament in Hebrew, and compare with the original the Septuagint, and the New Testament in Greek. The perusal also of the whole in Syriac, and indeed in various languages, may be very advantageous to the critical student.

In conclusion a suggestion may be offered with reference to a profitable manner of perusing the sacred Oracles in a continuous course. Let the reader commence at the beginning of Genesis, Psalms, and Matthew, and read a portion in each of these three parts daily, till the whole is read. He can easily, by numbering the chapters, or the pages, ascertain how much should be read in each place daily in order to complete the perusal of the whole at one time, say, in a year. If the Bible be thus perused with an attentive and enlightened mind, one part will cast light upon another, and the whole will be read with an increase of interest, pleasure, and profit. In the first of three divisions the attentive reader will meet with references to the coming of the Messiah, in most cases brief and comparatively obscure, contained in prophetic declarations and the appointment of sacrifices typical of His efficacious sacrifice; in the second he will see plainer, fuller, and more minute descriptions of this wonderful personage, including His Deity, His humanity, His deep humiliation, extreme sufferings, cruel death, and subsequent resurrection, and the blessed effects that would follow; and in the third he will read in plain narrative the accomplishment of the types and predictions of the Old Testament by the actual appearance of the Son of God in human flesh, by the wondrous works of beneficence which He wrought, the ill-treatment which He received, the patience and meekness exercised by Him, the inexpressible sufferings which He submissively endured, and the ignominious and agonizing death by which He expiated the sins of guilty men, His triumphant resurrection, and His glorious ascension into heaven, to appear in the presence of God on behalf of His people, as their all-prevailing Intercessor.

The more frequently, attentively, and prayerfully the Old and New Testaments are perused and compared, the more clearly will the harmony of the whole appear; and the greater will be the measure of consolation and delight enjoyed by the pious reader.

## Parliamentary.

The third session of the DOMINION PARLIAMENT at Ottawa was opened on Tuesday, the 15th Inst. The Senate Chamber was filled, by a brilliant assemblage of ladies and gentlemen. Prince Arther had a seat on the right of the Governor General. At 3 o'clock, His Excellency read the following

### OPENING SPEECH:

*Honorable Gentlemen of the Senate: Gentlemen of the House of Commons:* I recur with confidence to your advice, and have much satisfaction in being enabled on the present occasion to summon you to the discharge of your public duties at a season of the year most convenient to you. The circumstances under which we meet, are in many respects auspicious. The bounty of Providence crowned the harvest with abundance and made the fisheries unusually prosperous. In many districts existing industries have

been enlarged and new enterprises have started into activity, furnishing fresh avenues for commerce and additional employment for our people. Whilst every day new sections of country are being opened to the labors of the husbandman, the trade and wealth of the Dominion are on the increase, and the equal administration of the law maintains, as heretofore, the enjoyment of a general sense of security.

I have watched with much anxiety the course of events in the North-West territories. Unfortunate misapprehension of the intentions with which the country was sought to be acquired by Canada, have led to complications of a grievous character. With a view to their removal, I have thought it desirable to exhaust every means of conciliation before adopting other measures, and the latest advices lead me to expect that the groundless alarms entertained by a portion of the inhabitants, have given place to a desire to listen to the explanations which I have caused to be made to them. Efforts made in the spirit which has animated my government throughout, can scarcely fail to accomplish an equitable and peaceful solution of the existing difficulty, and thereby secure the speedy incorporation of the North-West territories with Canada,—an object so earnestly desired by the Empire and the Dominion. As the Act for the temporary government of the territories when united with Canada, will expire at the close of the present session, a measure providing for their government will be submitted for your consideration.

The charters of most of the Banks of the Dominion were last session extended for a limited period, with the view that during the interval, the institutions of banking and currency should receive the consideration which their importance demands. A measure intended to insure safety to the community without interfering with the legitimate operations of the Banks, will be submitted for your consideration, and will, I trust, be found calculated to place these important schemes upon a sound and suitable basis.

The laws in force on the subject of the elective franchise, and the regulation of Parliamentary elections in the several provinces of the Dominion, vary much in their operations; and as it is important that uniform provision should be made, settling the franchise and regulating the election of members to the House of Commons, a measure on this subject will be submitted for your consideration.

Under the operation of an Act of the Imperial Parliament passed in the year 1869, to amend the laws relating to the coasting trade and merchant shipping in British possessions, a period of two years is given to the legislatures of the several Colonies of the Empire to make provision for the regulation of their coasting trade. In the absence of legislation on the subject within the period named, the provisions of the Imperial law will be in force. The extent and value of our internal commerce render legislation on this subject desirable, and a measure with regard to it will be submitted for your consideration.

The creation of a Court of Appeal under the powers conferred upon you by the Union Act, is a matter deserving your attention. A measure will be submitted to you for the establishment of such Court, and for conferring upon it certain original jurisdiction.

The year 1871 is that on which the next decennial census is fixed by law to take place. As there are different laws on the subject in several provinces, it will therefore be necessary to pass a general act to establish a uniform and accurate system throughout the Dominion. Steps have already been taken to secure the co-operation of Newfoundland and Prince Edward Island, and I trust a census upon one system will be made simultaneously in all Her Majesty's British North American possessions. I need not expatiate on the importance of the information which the tables of census are calculated to afford, as in addition to their interest and value on general grounds, it must be recollected that upon them depends the re-adjustment of the parliamentary representation.

### Gentlemen of the House of Commons:

I have directed that the accounts of last year shall be laid before you. Estimates for the present financial year will also be submitted. They have been framed with every regard to economy, compatible with the exigencies of the public service, and you will, I trust, be of opinion that the finances are in a satisfactory state, and that the people can without inconvenience afford for the services of Her Majesty the supplies which it will be the duty of my Government to ask you to vote.

### Honorable Gentlemen of the Senate: Gentlemen of the House of Commons:

The Act respecting the Militia and Defence of the Dominion has not failed to engage my attention. The high spirit and loyalty of the people are placed in a clear light by the fact that the active Militia have voluntarily come forward largely in excess of the quota required, as well as by the zealous attendance of various corps at annual training and by the promptness with which they assembled in force at the call of duty on more than one occasion when Fenian marauders threatened the peace of the country.

I have observed with great satisfaction, efforts which have been made in several of the provinces of the Dominion to foster and encourage immigration to our shores. The continued progress of great public works in many portions of the country will afford the opportunity of early employment to intending immigrants; and I look forward to the addition of a large and valuable class of settlers to our population during the coming season.

During the last summer and autumn I had an opportunity of visiting different parts of the Dominion. I proceed first to Quebec, thence to the Maritime Provinces; at Halifax I had the honor of receiving His Royal Highness Prince Arthur. Subsequently I attended His Royal Highness on a tour through the Province of Ontario. Everywhere, the great capabilities of the country and proofs of vigorous industry made themselves apparent, and it became my pleasing duty to report to Her Majesty's Government, as the result of my observations, that the inhabitants of the Dominion were contented with their position and prospects, and that the wish nearest their hearts is to avail themselves of the franchise and full powers of legislation which they possess in order to build in this portion of the British Empire, institutions of their own choice by laws of their own making.

I now leave you to the labours of the session, with earnest aspiration for your success.