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And Bible Society, Missionary, and Sabbath School Advocate.

E McLEOD, Editor.

That God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ—PETER.

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The Burden of Babylon.

ISAIAH XIII.

We now come to the prophecies which have regard to the capture of Babylon by the Persians under Cyrus. This great subject of the prophecy is again and again taken up by Isaiah, and reappears at intervals from near the commencement to near the close of his book. It will therefore now be necessary, in order to bring this into its place, as the crowning act of the great king's career, to look at these passages collectively, without regard to the position they severally occupy in the book. It is well that our plan necessarily does not confine us to the chapters, but allows us to make such an arrangement of our own as may seem most expedient, when, as in this case, it is desirable to preserve the thread which the history of an individual, as involved in these prophecies, presents. The occasion is rare, and needs this special treatment.

We will first give the account of this great transaction as it appears in the statements of ancient historians, and then we shall return to the prophecies.

The breaking up of the great confederacy against the Medo-Persian power, which Croesus had organised, at length left Cyrus free to march against Babylon, where the self-created king, Nabonadius, had, in the lapse of time, greatly strengthened his power. This personage no sooner heard of the advance of the Persians, than he marched forth against them with a large army; but he was beaten with considerable loss, and was constrained to retreat behind the walls of the town. Having suitably stationed his forces, Cyrus delayed not to take a deliberate survey of the defences of the city, around which he rode slowly attended by his principal friends and allies. He at once saw that its reduction would be no easy enterprise. The walls were of prodigious height and thickness; the number of men to defend them was very great; and in ordinary circumstances, the only mode of reducing the place would have been by cutting off its communications with the country, and so starving it into a surrender. But in anticipation of this, Nabonadius had taken immense pains to store the town with provisions, and it was reckoned to contain enough to sustain the inhabitants for twenty years—the rather, as the vast area of the city contained numerous gardens, in which no small quantities of vegetable produce might be raised. Cyrus, however, conceived that his only course was to cut off all the communications with the country; and to manifest every sign of a determination not to abandon the enterprise till the city had fallen into his hands, he caused a line of circumvallation to be drawn around it, with a large and deep ditch, and upon the banks thrown up in excavating it, he built towers at regular intervals, as watch towers and stations for the troops on guard. It is doubtful whether he then knew the city was too well provisioned for him to hope to starve it into a surrender. One would think that he could scarcely be ignorant of this fact; and although Xenophon declares that he did expect to reduce the place by famine, he assigns other reasons, which are sufficient to account for these laborious works, even in the supposition that he did not know how well the city was provisioned. These are, that he from the first contemplated the use to which these trenches were eventually made subservient; and that, by the construction of this impassable barrier, he might relieve his troops from the fatigue of constantly guarding in full force so immense a circumference. Accordingly, no sooner were the works completed than the army was divided into twelve sections, each of which was, during the year, to guard the works in monthly rotation. It is interesting to recognise here the very same principle of rotary divisional service which David had ages before introduced into the sacred services of the tabernacle, and which his son Solomon also introduced into the civil and military establishments.

The Babylonians professed themselves to be mightily diverted by these proceedings, which they overwhelmed with derisive and taunting insults from the walls, believing themselves to be quite secure from military action by the strength and loftiness of their walls, and beyond all danger of famine by the immense stores which had been laid up. After nearly two years had been thus consumed in these proceedings—which was, however, but a short time when the ordinary character of ancient sieges is considered—Cyrus heard that a great nocturnal festival of the Babylonians approached, in which the inhabitants were certain to spend the whole night in drunkenness and debauchery; and to which it seems, they were much addicted, and an instance of which occurs in the Book of Daniel, in the account of Belshazzar's feast. There is nothing among the scanty existing memorials of Babylon that might illustrate this; but the Assyrian sculptures present us with a remarkable banquet scene, in which the guests are seated four at each table, on high stools or couches, while the servants take wine from a large vase or tub, and carry it in small pails to the guests, who are seen

to hold up their cups, as if drinking healths to each other. Music is not wanting; the instruments being a kind of many-stringed lyre, with a square body and upright sides.

The festival seemed to Cyrus to offer him a suitable occasion of putting into execution the plan which he had probably preconceived. It must be understood that the river Euphrates flowed through the midst of Babylon, and its banks were lined with walls, pierced with many gates, which afforded access to the city. The river then, as at present, overflowed all its banks in the early spring—not so much from rain, as from the melting of the snows in the regions which it traverses in its upper course. The inundation is then, in some seasons, so redundant as to prove very injurious to the buildings near the river. To avert such consequences, advantage had been taken of a spacious natural depression of the soil at some distance above Babylon, which had been artificially deepened in part, so as to form a vast reservoir, into which the waters of the river could on occasion be turned, by means of a board canal, so as for a time almost to exhaust the stream. This great basin, which in its ordinary aspect was a morass, then became a large lake, not less it is said, than fifty miles in circuit. Now, on this important night, Cyrus sent up a strong detachment to the head of the canal leading to this lake, with orders at a given time, to break down the great bank or dam that was between the lake and the canal, and so turn the whole current of the river into the lake. At the same time, he stationed one body of troops at the point where the river entered the city, and another where it came out, ordering them to march in by the exhausted channel, as soon as they should find it fordable. Towards the evening, he also opened the head of the trenches on both sides of the river above the city, that the water might discharge itself into them, by which means, and the breaking down of the great dam, the waters in this part of the river were soon exhausted. The two bodies of troops then, according to the orders they had received, marched into the bed of the river, the water reaching no higher than their knees. The gates towards the river, from which quarter no one suspected danger, had been left open, and the riot and disorder of that night, so that the Persians were enabled to penetrate without opposition, to the very heart of the city. The two parties met, according to agreement, at the palace, where they surprised the guards, and cut them in pieces. Those who were in the palace opening the gates to learn the cause of this confusion, so unusual to the festive night, the Persians rushed in, took the palace, and slew the king, who came to meet them sword in hand.

Cyrus then sent bodies of horse through the city, to clear the streets, and to proclaim to the inhabitants that they were to keep within doors, on pain of death. The next day, those who held the forts perceiving that the city was in fact taken, and that the king was dead, gave up the strongholds, of which Cyrus immediately took possession, and garrisoned them with his own troops. It was then proclaimed by the heralds throughout the city, that all the inhabitants who possessed arms, were to bring them forth and deliver them up, and that the inhabitants of any house in which arms were afterwards found should be put to death. The order was obeyed. And thus the great city, so strongly fortified, so rich, so populous, and so abundantly provisioned, fell, almost without a blow, into the hands of the Persians.

It will be seen that there were many special and singular incidents in this siege. It is one, to the description of which no vague generalities could be applicable. It is, therefore, well calculated to strengthen any wavering faith in the glorious prophecies of the Old Testament—to point out how exactly the most minute and remarkable incidents of this transaction were foretold, long before their occurrence, by more than one prophet of the Lord. The coincidences are so striking, that when Cyrus was informed of these prophecies, so soon after the event, and had the means of satisfying himself that they had been for a long time in existence, he could not, without wilful obduracy of heart, resist the conviction they were designed to produce, and which drew from him the memorable acknowledgment to which we have repeatedly referred.—*Kitto's Bible Illustration.*

Science and the Bible.

LIEUTENANT MAURY, acknowledged on all sides as one of the most eminent scientific men living, writes the following interesting letter to one of the editors of the *New York Evangelist*, on the harmony of science and revelation.

OBSERVATORY, WASHINGTON,
January 22, 1855.

MY DEAR SIR,—Your letter revived very pleasant remembrances. . . . Your questions are themes. It would require volumes to contain the answers to them. You ask about the "Harmony of Science and Revelation," and wish to know if I find "distinct traces in the Old Testament of scientific knowledge," and "in the Bible any knowledge of the winds and ocean currents." Yes,—knowledge the most correct and valuable.

"Canst thou bind the sweet influences of Pleiades?" It is a curious fact that the revelations of science have led the astronomers of our own day to the discovery that the sun is not the dead centre of motion, around which comets sweep and planets whirl; but that it, with its splendid retinue of worlds and satellites, is revolving through the realms of space at the rate of millions of miles in a year, and in obedience to some influence situated precisely in the direction of the star Aleyon, one of the Pleiades. We do not know how far off in the immensities of space that centre of revolving cycles and epochs may be; nor have our oldest observers or nicest instruments been able to tell us how far off in the

skies that beautiful cluster of stars is hung, whose influences man can never bind. In this question alone, and the answer to it, is involved both the recognition and exposition of the whole theory of gravitation.

You recollect when Galileo was in prison, a pump-maker came to him with his difficulties, because his pump would not lift water higher than thirty-two feet. The old philosopher thought it was because the atmosphere would not press the water up any higher; but the hand of persecution was upon him, and he was afraid to say the air had weight. Now, had he looked to the science of the Bible, he would have discovered that the "perfect" man of Uz, moved by revelation, had proclaimed the fact thousands of years before: "He maketh the weight for the wind." Job is very learned, and his speeches abound in scientific lore.

The persecutors of the old astronomer also would have been wiser, and far more just, had they paid more attention to this wonderful book, for there the world over has learned that "He stretcheth out the earth upon nothing." Here is another proof that Job was familiar with the laws of gravitation, for he knew how the world was held in its place; and as for the "empty places" in the sky, Sir John Herschel has been sounding the heavens with his powerful telescope, and gauging the stars, and where do you think he finds the most barren part—the empty places—of the sky? In the north, precisely where Job told Bildad the Shuhite that the empty place was stretched out. It is there where comets most delight to roam, and hide themselves in emptiness.

I pass by the history of creation as it is written on the tablet of the rock and in the Book of Revelation, because the question has been discussed so much and so often, that you, no doubt, are familiar with the whole subject. In both the order of creation is the same,—first the plants to afford sustenance, and then the animals; the chief point of apparent difference being as to the duration of the period between the "evening and the morning." "A thousand years is as one day," and the Mosais account affords evidence itself that the term day, as there used, is not that which comprehends our twenty-four hours. It was a day that had its evening and morning before the sun was made.

I will, however, before proceeding further, ask pardon for mentioning a rule of conduct which I have adopted, in order to make progress with these physical researches which have occupied so much of my time and many of my thoughts, and that rule is never to forget who is the Author of the great volume which nature spreads out before us, and always to remember that the same Being is also the Author of the book which revelation holds up to us; and though the two works are entirely different, their records are equally true; and when they bear upon the same point, as now and then they do, it is as impossible that they should contradict each other, as it is that either should contradict itself. If the two cannot be reconciled, the fault is ours, and is because in our blindness and weakness we have not seen, or both.

Solomon, in a single verse, describes the circulation of the atmosphere as actual observation is now showing it to be. That it has its laws, and is obedient to order as the heavenly host in their movements, we infer from the fact announced by him, and which contains the essence of volumes by other men. "All the rivers run into the sea; yet the sea is not full: unto the place from whence the rivers come, thither they return again."

To investigate the laws which govern the winds and rule the seas, is one of the most profitable and beautiful occupations that a man, an improving, progressive man, can have. Decked with stars as the sky is, the field of astronomy affords no subjects of contemplation more ennobling, more sublime, or more profitable than those which we may find in the air and the sea.

When we regard them from certain points of view, they present the appearance of wayward things, obedient to no law, but hokle in their movements, and subject only to chance. Yet, when we go as truth-loving, knowledge-seeking explorers, and knock at their secret chambers, and devoutly ask what are the laws which govern them, we are taught in terms the most impressive, that when the morning stars sang together, the winds also lifted up their voice, and the winds, too, joined in the almighty anthem. And as discovery advances, we find the marks of order in the sea, and in the air,—that is, in tune with the music of the spheres,—and the conviction is forced upon us that the laws of all are nothing else but perfect harmony.—*Yours respectfully, M. F. MAURY.*

"I Can Do Little."

"It is not in my power to do any good; I am but a poor woman, and have no influence." Such was a remark I heard but yesterday; but, to speak with all frankness, I did not believe a word of it, and, indeed, doubt whether the good woman who uttered the remark would like any one of her friends to tell her it was true. However humble in station, every Christian has a degree of influence over others, and he who has but one talent is under as much obligation to improve it for the glory of God as he who has ten.

"Well, Mary," I once heard the excellent Joseph Ivey, of London, say to a female servant who had called to take her leave of him, because she was going from the city to reside in a country town: "Well, Mary, you know you must try to do good. The Baptist church at — is in a very sad state; yet you had better go there, and pray and labour for its revival. I will," he added, "give you a few hundred tracts for distribution, and make the best use of them you can."

I have never seen that lively young Christian since, but I have heard of her. Some year or two after the interview I have described, I dined with Ivey again, when he said, "Were not you here when a young servant girl called on me before she went to —?" "Yes," I replied, "and what did she ever do?" "Why, she went down there, and in a meeting-house that seats five hundred, she found about a dozen Antinomian professors, who had neither Sabbath-school nor prayer-meeting. She distributed her tracts, opened her Sab-

bath-school, collected a few pious people together, made the place too hot for an old drunken pastor, got him away, and a lively young man was placed in the pulpit. The house is repaired, a new church is organized, having about a hundred members, a crowded congregation, a grand Sabbath-school, and large prayer-meetings two or three times a week. Hallelujah, my brother. Who says a poor servant girl can do nothing?" Who, indeed! the very thought is libellous against the God we serve, and the instrument for good,—his own Word—which he has placed in our hands.

The seraphic Samuel Pearce was asked to preach at the dedication of a meeting-house, about twenty miles from his residence, whose pulpit he had often occupied. When he arrived there, he witnessed a church very few in number, and its members almost poverty personified. Several brethren of other denominations expressed their fears that the cause could not be sustained, and the neighboring Baptist churches kept aloof from it as altogether hopeless.

Pearce, however, was seldom discouraged, and when he entered the pulpit, delivered to them a most encouraging sermon on "Great events from small beginnings." He most cordially congratulated them on the fewness of their number, and the poverty of their condition, and declared his heartfelt persuasion that God was about to do great things at B—. Coming, then, to the consideration of their duties, he told them that to crowd the house, few as they were at present, was one of the easiest things in the world. Every one, he maintained, had some influence; and that now they must exert it. No one could pretend to be unable to bring one person to the house of prayer, which would double the congregation the very first Sabbath, and, persevered in, would soon fill the house. The idea, as he presented it, seemed a new one, and easy to be carried out. They tried it, and found it entirely successful. Away, Christian reader, with all those proud excuses of ours, cherishing our own indolence while thousands around us are going down to perdition. Be it remembered that our churches are not parlors, in which we are to loiter at ease, but vineyards in which we are to labour; we are not called to enjoy ourselves in inglorious ease, but to be "laborers together with God" in the advancement of his glory. "Blessed are they that sow beside all waters." "Woe unto them that are at ease in Zion."—*Watchman and Reflector.*

What is it to be Saved?

READER,—I dare say you have often heard ministers say, "I have been saved in your city, and when you die, you would like to be saved." But after all, what is it to be saved? Listen to me, and I will try to tell you what the Bible says about it. Alas! there are many who talk of "being saved," and yet know nothing of the meaning of the words.

To be saved, is not merely to profess and call yourself a Christian. You may have all the outward parts of Christianity, and yet be lost after all. You may be baptized into Christ's Church—go to Christ's table,—have Christian knowledge, be reckoned a Christian man,—and yet be a dead soul all your days;—and at last be found on Christ's left hand, among the goats. No! reader, this is not salvation. Salvation is something far higher and deeper than this.

To be saved, is to be delivered in this present life from the guilt of sin, by faith in Jesus Christ, the Saviour. It is to be pardoned, justified, and freed from every charge of sin, by faith in Christ's blood and mediation. Whosoever with his heart believes on the Lord Jesus is a saved soul. He shall not perish. He shall have eternal life. This is the first part of salvation, and the root of all the rest. But this is not all.

To be saved, is to be delivered in this present life from the power of sin, by being born again, and sanctified by Christ's Spirit. It is to be freed from the hateful dominion of sin, the world and the devil, by having a new nature put in us by the Holy Ghost. Whosoever is thus renewed in the spirit of his mind, and converted is a saved soul. He shall not perish. This is the second part of salvation. But this is not all.

To be saved, is to be delivered in the day of judgment from all the awful consequences of sin. It is to be declared blameless, spotless, faultless, and complete in Christ, while others are found guilty, and condemned for ever. It is to hear those comfortable words—"Come ye blessed," while others are hearing those fearful words—"Depart ye cursed." It is to be owned and confessed by Christ, as one of His dear children and servants, while others are disowned and cast off for ever. It is to be pronounced free from the portion of the wicked,—the worm that never dies,—the fire that is not quenched,—the weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth, that never ends. It is to receive the reward prepared for the righteous,—the glorious body,—the kingdom that is incorruptible,—the crown that fadeth not away,—and the joy that is for evermore. This is complete salvation.

Such is salvation. It is to be saved from the guilt, power, and consequences of sin. It is to believe and be sanctified now, and to be delivered from the wrath of God in the last day. He that has the first part in the life that now is, shall undoubtedly have the second part in the life to come. Both parts of it hang together. What God has joined together, let no man dare to put asunder. Let none dream he shall ever be saved at last, if he is not born again first. Let none doubt if he is

born again here, that he shall assuredly be saved hereafter.

Reader take notice, the chief object of a minister of the Gospel, is to set forward the salvation of souls. I lay it down as a certain fact, that he is no true minister who does not feel this.

For what purpose do you suppose we ministers are sent forth? Is it merely to wear a surplice, and read the services,—and preach a certain number of sermons? Is it merely to get a comfortable living, and be in a respectable profession? No! indeed! We are sent forth for other ends than these. We are sent to turn men from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God. We are sent to persuade men to flee from the wrath to come. We are sent to draw men from the service of the world to the service of God,—to awaken the sleeping,—to arouse the careless,—and by all means to save some.

Think not that all is done when we have set up regular services, and persuaded people to attend them.—Think not that all is done when full congregations are gathered, and the Lord's table is crowded, and the parish school is filled. We want to see manifest work of the Spirit among people,—an evident sense of sin,—a lively faith in Christ,—a decided change of heart,—a distinct separation from the world,—a holy walk with God. In one word, we want to see souls saved, and we are fools and impostors,—blind leaders of the blind,—if we rest satisfied with anything less.

Reader, take notice, that the grand object of having a religion, is to be saved. This is the great question that you have to settle with your conscience, and to which I want you to attend. The matter is not whether you go to church or chapel,—whether you go through certain forms and ceremonies,—whether you observe certain days, and perform a certain number of religious duties. The matter is, whether, after all, you will be saved. Without this, all your religious doings are weariness, and labor in vain.

Never, never be content with anything short of a saving religion. Surely to have a religion which neither gives peace in life, nor hope in death, nor glory in the world to come, is childish folly.—*Rev. J. C. Ryle.*

The Little Deaf Boy.

Our readers who may have been interested in the articles on the History of "Ceyrus" which we have been publishing, and the last of which appears on this page, may also be interested in the history of the author of these articles. Here it is:—

Several years ago, there lived at Plymouth a Cornishman, named Kitto. He had a little son called John, who, when he was only eleven years old, used to help his father in his work. This poor boy had not much education. At the age of twelve he wrote imperfectly, and knew a little arithmetic, but he was very fond of reading. About this time he was one day assisting in roofing a house, when he lost his footing, and fell to the ground, a height of thirty-five feet. For nearly a fortnight he was useless. Then he began to recover, but in consequence of the injury he had received, he was quite deaf. What a sad thing this was! He could not hear his friends when they talked to him, and he was strong enough to work now. He longed for books, but his father had very few, and these the poor lad read for hours. At last the father's poverty became so great that he could not tell how to support his deaf son, and John was taken into the workhouse. There he was taught shoemaking, and at the age of seventeen, was bound apprentice to a person of that trade in the town. His master was most unkind to him, and required him to work from six in the morning, till ten at night. Yet even then, when he used to come home very tired in the evening, instead of going to sleep at once, he would sit up to read and study. How many boys who think it a hardship to go to school, might learn from John Kitto to value their privileges. At last a person who had become interested in him, told the magistrates how unjustly his master treated him, and he was removed from his situation and went back to his father's house again. He wrote a statement to his master's unkindness for the magistrates to read. This was so well expressed that it attracted attention, and some gentlemen raised money for him, took him from the workhouse, and for the next twelve months he was occupied in studying and improving his mind. One of his friends was proprietor of a newspaper, and he invited John Kitto to write for this newspaper, which he did; and afterwards wrote and published a small book. For several succeeding years he was engaged in different situations and employments, some at home and some abroad. He accompanied two gentlemen on a voyage up the Mediterranean, and was two years at Malta; then he went to Asia, and was three years at Bagdad. Indeed, he visited a great many foreign countries—Russia, and Spain, and Italy, and several of the places we read of often in the Bible. When he returned to England, he published a work which established his reputation as a scholar. This was the "Pictorial Bible"—that is, the Bible printed with pictures and descriptions of the different nations, and animals, and countries, and plants spoken of in the Scriptures. He wrote many other valuable books afterwards. And all these things were done by a man who had once been a poor workhouse boy, and who was quite deaf. He could speak himself, you know; but when persons wanted to converse with him, as he could not hear them speak, they were obliged either to write what they had to say, or else to talk by means of the finger alphabet. Can you tell what I mean by that? It is a plan that some people invented to help deaf people, by which letters are made by putting the fingers in different positions. Thus the thumb stands for A. Clapping the hands together is W—and so on, a different sign for every letter in the alphabet.

John Kitto, or as he was now called, Dr. Kitto, wrote, as I said before, many excellent books. He married, and had several children; and he supported his family by his writings. A few years ago his health began to fail. The Queen then gave him a