ILLUSTRATIONS

OF

THE BIBLE.

BY WESTALL AND MARTIN.

WITH

DESCRIPTIONS

BY THE REV. HOBART CAUNTER, B.D.

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CONTENTS OF VOL. I.

SUBJECTS

1 The Creation . . . . Gen. c I, v 1
2 The Temptation . . . . Gen. c 3, v 6
3 The Judgment of Adam and Eve . . . . Gen. c 3, v 8
4 The Expulsion . . . . Gen. c 3, v 8
5 Cain and Abel's Sacrifice . . . . Gen. c 4, v 9
6 The Death of Abel . . . . Gen. c 4, v 9
7 The Deluge . . . . Gen. c 6, v 11
8 The Assuaging of the Waters . . . . Gen. c 8, v 11
9 Noah's first Sacrifice . . . . Gen. c 8, v 9
10 The Tower of Babel . . . . Gen. c 11, v 5
11 The Rescue of Lot . . . . Gen. c 14, v 10
12 Abraham and the Angels . . . . Gen. c 16, v 2
13 The Destruction of Sodom . . . . Gen. c 16, v 24
14 Hagar and Ishmael . . . . Gen. c 81, v 15
15 Abraham offering Isaac . . . . Gen. c 25, v 11
16 The Burial of Sarah . . . . Gen. c 29, v 10
17 Jacob's Dream . . . . Gen. c 31, v 15
18 Isaac sacrificing his Birthright . . . . Gen. c 35, v 20
19 Isaac blessing Jacob . . . . Gen. c 27, v 30
21 Isaac soliciting a Blessing . . . . Gen. c 27, v 80
21 Jacob's altar at Shalem . . . . Gen. c 39, v 12
22 Jacob and his Daughters . . . . Gen. c 39, v 18
23 Rebekah at the Well . . . . Gen. c 37, v 55
24 Potiphar's Wife accusing Joseph . . . . Gen. c 39, v 17
25 The Cup found in Benjamin's Sack . . . . Gen. c 44, v 12
26 Jacob meeting Joseph . . . . Gen. c 45, v 29

PAINTER

J. Martin
R. Westall, R.A.
J. Martin
R. Westall, R.A.
J. Martin
R. Westall, R.A.
J. Martin
R. Westall, R.A.
J. Martin
R. Westall, R.A.
## CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUBJECT</th>
<th>GENESIS REFERENCE</th>
<th>PAINTER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>27 Jacob blessing Ephraim and Manasseh</td>
<td>Gen. c 46, v 14</td>
<td>R. Westall, R.A.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28 Jacob blessing his Sons</td>
<td>Gen. c 49, v 1</td>
<td>J. Martin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29 The Infant Moses</td>
<td>Ex. c 9, v 28</td>
<td>R. Westall, R.A.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 Moses fleeing from his Rod</td>
<td>Ex. c 4, v 3</td>
<td>R. Westall, R.A.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 The Plague of Hail</td>
<td>Ex. c 8, v 22</td>
<td>J. Martin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32 The Death of the First-Born</td>
<td>Ex. c 12, v 29</td>
<td>J. Martin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33 The Destroying Angel</td>
<td>Ex. c 13, v 37</td>
<td>J. Martin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34 Passage of the Red Sea</td>
<td>Ex. c 14, v 28</td>
<td>J. Martin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35 Moses striking the Rock</td>
<td>Ex. c 17, v 6</td>
<td>R. Westall, R.A.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36 Amalek overcome</td>
<td>Ex. c 17, v 18</td>
<td>R. Westall, R.A.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37 Moses receiving the Tables</td>
<td>Ex. c 31, v 18</td>
<td>R. Westall, R.A.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38 Moses breaking the Tables</td>
<td>Ex. c 25, v 19</td>
<td>J. Martin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39 Moses descending with the renewed Tables</td>
<td>Ex. c 34, v 28</td>
<td>R. Westall, R.A.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40 Nadab and Abihu burn Moses' robe</td>
<td>Lev. c 10, v 1</td>
<td>J. Martin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41 The Blasphemer brought unto Moses</td>
<td>Lev. c 24, v 11</td>
<td>R. Westall, R.A.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42 Miriam's Leprosy</td>
<td>Num. c 12, v 10</td>
<td>R. Westall, R.A.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43 Rebellion of Korah</td>
<td>Num. c 16, v 81</td>
<td>R. Westall, R.A.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44 The People plagued with Serpents</td>
<td>Num. c 21, v 6</td>
<td>J. Martin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45 Balaam and his Ass</td>
<td>Num. c 29, v 42</td>
<td>R. Westall, R.A.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46 Balak's Sacrifice</td>
<td>Num. c 30, v 9</td>
<td>J. Martin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47 Death of Moses</td>
<td>Deut. c 34, v 5</td>
<td>J. Martin</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
THE CREATION.

"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters."* In illustrating this sublime subject, the artist has endeavoured to realize the divine agency in producing the world. Already are the luminous portions of the chaotic mass separated from the darkness, and brought into beautiful combination. The passive elements are stirred into activity by the impulse of an Almighty will, and the process of creation is rapidly proceeding. Disorder is visibly giving place to proportion, confusion to symmetry. The fluid particles of the chaos are seen above the more solid, which, put into motion by that mysterious Power by whose omnipotent influence they were no longer to remain without form, and obeying the primitive law of gravitation, have sunk beneath the more buoyant element and become compacted into earth. The spirit of God is represented, under the shadowy resemblance of a human form, floating or brooding, as the original term expresses it, upon the face of the deep. The great principle of light is exhibited in the different vehicles by which it is conveyed to us. The moon, a comet, and the stars, appear behind the divine Energy, or Spirit, as just completed, and at the command of Omnipotence "Let there be light,"† the sun bursts, in the fulness of his glory, from that portion of inert matter which had not yet subsided into form, while a vivid flash of lightning at the same instant flickers over the still, dark waters; thus displaying at one view the principal modifications under which the God of nature exhibits an element at once the source of light and of fecundity.

* Genesis, chapter 1, verses 1 and 2. † Ibid, verse 3.
THE TEMPTATION.

In this interesting illustration, Adam appears in the foreground leaning against a bank, as if he had been absorbed in admiration of those magnificent works of his Creator by which he is surrounded. Eve approaches him with the interdicted fruit, the abstaining from which constituted the special stipulation of the first covenant. There is a shrinking timidity in her approach, indicating an awakening consciousness of which she has not yet felt the full force, that strikingly contrasts with the unembarrassed deportment of the yet innocent father of mankind. In Eve we distinguish the first symptom of guilt. In her right hand she holds the fatal object of temptation, which she had just plucked, and in her left a branch of the tree of knowledge. With this she partly covers herself, as if already conscious of her nakedness, and presents the fruit to Adam. "And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat."* The landscape is intended to convey an idea of the earthly paradise which, in the perfection of its beauty, was no doubt a type of the heavenly. Lofty hills are seen in the distance blending in most agreeable harmony with the minuter features of the scene; exhibiting at once the magnificence and variety of the primitive creation. Nearer, more gentle declivities appear sloping down into fertile valleys laved by crystal streams, that fertilize and adorn the plain. The cedar tree, which after became so celebrated as the cedar of Lebanon, here stands conspicuous, towering "in pride of place" above all the other trees by which it is surrounded.

* Genesis, chapter iii, verse 6.
THE JUDGMENT OF ADAM AND EVE.

The scene is now changed from innocence to guilt; from a condition of perfect happiness to one of "lamentation and mourning and woe." "And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden. And the Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou? And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself. And he said, Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldst not eat?"* The Schechinah, or visible glory from which the voice of God was heard, appears bursting through the lofty trees in the foreground and shining with an awful intensity, as if the anger of the Lord was visibly kindled at the base ingratitude of his creatures. That voice which had hitherto been the harbinger of joy, now thrills their souls with a presentiment of the most awful visitation. The light through which it is poured upon the ear of the conscious delinquents, has a brightness that innocence might survey with delight, but which is terrible to the contemplation of guilt. The eye of the transgressors quailed beneath the intensity of its blaze. Adam appears appalled at the sight, while Eve sinks to the earth with a mute but despairing conviction of her fall. The branch, which she had so indiscreetly plucked, lies before her, at once a memorial of her guilt and of her shame. The accession of knowledge to Adam is manifested by the consciousness of his nakedness, which he has endeavoured partly to hide. The landscape represents a retired vista of the garden of Eden.

* Genesis, chapter iii, verses 8, 9, 10 and 11.
THE EXPULSION.
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Here the fearful sentence has been pronounced upon the transgressors. The sad penalty is about to be inflicted. The guilty pair appear before their angry Judge, the one in a distracted attitude of despair, the other cowering before the terrible denunciation of an angered God. The Schechinah surrounds them with that divine light which had been so beautiful in love, but was so tremendous in wrath, and they hear from amidst its portentous blaze the dreadful fiat of condemnation. The serpent gliding round the woman's feet, seems to shrink from the awful issue of his own guile. Upon him the curse is first denounced. "Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life: And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel. Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee. And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; thorns also 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."

*Genesis, chapter iii, verse 14 to 19.*
CAIN AND ABEL’S SACRIFICE.

"In process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering: but unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth and his countenance fell."* This is the precise moment chosen by the artist. Two altars are raised in order to make an acceptable offering unto the Lord, but the smoke of Abel’s sacrifice ascends as a welcome memorial to God, which the pious brother acknowledges by assuming an attitude of absorbing devotion as the incense of his oblation rises direct to heaven. His flocks are seen in calm repose behind him. Upon Cain’s altar the fire has indeed kindled, but the blast of God’s anger has diverted it from its upward course, and it is blown aside towards the unworthy hierarch, who, as part of the unaccepted offering is scattered at his feet, assumes that demoniacal expression of wrath which was only a preliminary to the first murder. The character of the worshippers is portrayed in the earnest devotion of the one and the Indomitable ferocity of the other, who audaciously dared to reject the expostulation of his God. "And the Lord said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth, and why is thy countenance fallen? If thou dost well, shalt thou not be accepted?"† But he scorned this merciful interposition, and the blight of infamy fell upon him. Both the brothers are clothed in skins, supplied, it may be presumed, from Abel’s flocks. The occupation of each brother is indicated, by Cain holding in his left hand a wooden spade, an implement of husbandry, and by Abel being accompanied by his flock.

* Genesis, chapter iv, verses 5, 4 and 5.
† Genesis, chapter iv, verses 6 and 7.
THE DEATH OF ABEL.

Upon the rejection of Cain's sacrifice, and the acceptance of Abel's, the wrath of the vindictive brother broke out into a paroxysm which terminated in a most unnatural and horrible murder. It is supposed that Cain, shortly after God's expostulation with him on the subject of his unjust anger, enticed Abel to a distance from his home, and then having first provoked him to a quarrel, treacherously put him to death. "And Cain talked with Abel his brother. And it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him." Here was realised one of the most awful issues of sin. This is the first event of a very affliction nature mentioned in scripture after the fall, and it was, in truth, a sad evidence to Adam, that "the wages of sin is death." His best beloved son was torn from him by the desperate ferocity of a brother, who was henceforth to bear the mark of God's curse to the end of his days. To Cain the ground refused its supplies. He became a fugitive and a vagabond upon earth, and was shunned as a creature under the ban of omnipotence. The miserable man, after he had heard the divine denunciation, "went out from the presence of the Lord, and dwelt in the land of Nod, on the east of Eden." The time chosen by the artist is after the accomplishment of the murder. Abel is extended on a rocky eminence, and his mother lying beside him, overcome by grief and horror. The head of her dead son rests upon her lap. Adam has fallen on one knee; his eyes are raised to Heaven in a transport of agony, with an expression of silent reproach at the severity of the divine visitation. The scene around is wild and desolate, the perfect antipodes of that paradise in which the first man and woman had once dwelt. At a distance are visible the altars, which had been raised by the brothers for their respective oblations. On Abel's the fire still burns, on Cain's it is extinct, and just above the latter the fiery blast of God's wrath pursues the flying murderer.

* Genesis, chapter iv., verse 8.
THE DELUGE.

"In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, the seventeenth day of the month, the same day were all the fountains of the great deep broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened." The artist has endeavoured to represent this terrible scene in its most fearful and destructive climax. The abrupton of the great deep is taking place at this dreadful moment. The whole frame of nature is dislocated and convulsed. The sun, the moon and a comet are in conjunction in the sky, portending ruin, desolation, and death. On the right hand side of the picture, the waters are seen rushing down into an almost interminable gulf, formed by the upper crust of the earth giving way, and yawning to its inmost depths to receive them. Just beyond, the lower region of a precipitous mountain is crowded with persons and animals, exhibiting the most frantic expressions of horror. The former are some praying and some blaspheming, while the latter are howling their terrors to the conflicting elements. Beneath an extensive ledge on which they stand, the foaming billows are pouring downward in one wild hissing vortex, which bears away thousands in its mighty sweep. The rocks above, torn by a thunderbolt from the crest of the mountain, are toppling down upon the agonized multitude. Beyond the horizontal line the mountains are bursting, rocks are upheaved, the ocean rises from its bed, while the sluices of the skies are unloked, and the torrents which pour from them obscure the sun. In the mean time the ark rests midway upon a mountain in the distance, the holy family waiting until the arm of Providence shall raise the water to float it upon its unruffled bosom; the strife of nature being removed beyond the immediate vicinity of this frail sanctuary, by the express agency of God.

* Genesis, chapter vii., verse 11.
THE ASSUAGING OF THE WATERS.

In order to ascertain how far the flood had abated, Noah opened the window of the ark and sent forth a raven. He also sent forth a dove, but, finding no rest for her foot, she speedily returned. After this, "he stayed yet other seven days; and again he sent forth the dove out of the ark; and the dove came in to him in the evening; and, lo, in her mouth was an olive-leaf plucked off: so Noah knew that the waters were abated from off the earth." The elements had now ceased their desolating conflict, and the waters floated in undisturbed supremacy over a depopulated world. The brightness of the sun, the calmness of the liquid mirror beneath, the loveliness of the sky, fringed with a drapery of transparent clouds, seem but as the smiles of lamentation and the mockery of woe. Like funeral lamps casting their clear light through the solitary gloom of the sepulchre, they only serve to show more distinctly the surrounding devastation. The shoreless waste reflects the splendors of the scene above, as if to mask the horrors that had been but too palpably realized in the depths beneath. Here nature appears in her gentlest repose at the very moment that her capacious womb is teeming with the dilacerations of a once beautiful world. The clouds which had gathered upon the horizon disperse before the rising sun, that pours a flood of light upon the vast liquid expanse, through which small patches of vegetation from the mountain tops appear to break the measureless uniformity of the watery waste. The waters had begun to subside. The dove hovers over an olive branch, which it is about to pluck and bear to the ark that appears faintly in the distance.

* Genesis, chapter viii, verses 10 and 11.
THE TOWER OF BABEL.

By this time the posterity of Noah had immensely augmented, and their presumption had increased in proportion. All remembrance of the ravages caused by the deluge having subsided, the terrors of the Lord were no longer objects of dread. Cities began to rise from the plains, while man became vain of his power and arrogant in his imagined supremacy. "And they said, Go to, let us build us a city, and a tower whose top may reach unto heaven, and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth. And the Lord came down to see the city and the tower which the children of men builded. And the Lord said, Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech. So the Lord scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth: and they left off to build the city."* The picture represents a city, with the tower behind it enveloped in clouds, through which the lightning streams, in token of God's wrath at the presumption of his creatures in attempting to exalt their own power and withdrawing their trust from Him who had preserved their fathers from the flood, and given them a pledge of his protection against a similar catastrophe. A sudden darkness overspreads the city, which is relieved by the intense glare of the lightning that bursts from the skies, giving a more vivid reality to the awful visitation. In the foreground are seen the vast furnaces in which the workmen were busily employed preparing their brick when their language was confounded, so that they could not "understand one another's speech." The flames are magnified in the darkness, and appear to be as once a terror and a reproach to the presumptuous builders. Alarmed at the unexpected manifestation of God's anger, they are seen rushing from the upper part of the brick-kilns, terrified at the divine interposition, while beyond, on the right, an innumerable multitude is moving to and from the tower.

* Genesis, chapter xi. verses 4, 5, 7 and 8.
THE RESCUE OF LOT.

AMRAPHEL king of Shinar, Arloch king of Ellasar, Chedorlaomer king of Elam, and Tidal king of nations, having engaged in battle the armies of the princes of Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, Zeboim and Zoar, routed them and pillaged their cities. Lot, who had taken up his abode in Sodom, was consequently made prisoner and dispossessed of all his property. The news of this disaster being conveyed to Abram by a fugitive who had escaped the slaughter, he immediately armed his retainers, and, engaging the assistance of the neighbouring tribes who were confederate with him, he came upon the conquerors by night, and, taking them by surprise, overthrew them, rescued his nephew, and redeemed the property which they had carried off. "And he brought back all the goods, and also brought again his brother Lot, and his goods, and the women also, and the people."* Though in the passage of scripture here quoted, Lot is called Abram's brother, he was really his nephew, the word brother being frequently used among the primitive Hebrews, as well as the later Jews, as a general term to signify any near relationship. The point of time indicated in this illustration is immediately after the rescue of Lot by Abram. The uncle and nephew are in the act of embracing. Immediately beyond are the patriarch's servants and allies; while in the distance the armies of the discomfited kings are seen retreating in confusion before their conquerors. The moon appears rising over Sodom upon which it casts its gentle radiance, reflecting her towers in the calm lake that laves her battlements. A hill rears its broad crest majestically behind, projecting its long deep shadow over the valley beneath, while the bland repose of the distant prospect presents an impressive contrast to the bustle of the nearer plain, "where night's calm hour of silence and repose" was so lately disturbed by the shouts of battle and the shriek of death.

* Genesis, chapter xiv. verse 15.
ABRAHAM AND THE THREE ANGELS.

"And the Lord appeared unto Abraham in the plains of Mamre: and he sat in the tent-door in the heat of the day: and he lift up his eyes and looked, and lo, three men stood by him: and when he saw them, he ran to meet them from the tent-door, and bowed himself toward the ground."* Abraham was seated at the door of his tent, in order, most probably, to observe if any strangers should pass, that he might extend to them the rights of hospitality; a practice universally observed in those primitive times, especially in a country where travelling at noon day, under a vertical sun, is extremely distressing. Whilst he was thus benevolently engaged, the Schechinah poured a flood of visible glory around him, by which he instantly knew that the Lord was at hand. In order to prepare with becoming reverence for the divine communication, he immediately prostrated himself, and upon lifting up his eyes, after having performed this act of devout homage, he beheld three angels standing before him. They announce to him the joyful intelligence that his wife shall bear a son in her old age. Sarah is seen within the tent looking at the strangers with a stealthy caution, from behind the drapery; as if hesitating to appear in the presence of the celestial delegates. Two camels are ruminating on one side of the tent, signifying that Abraham was at this time rich in flocks and herds, as camels could be possessed only by the more wealthy of the early patriarchs. The three angels are grouped together, within a circle of celestial radiance, as representing the Holy Trinity, which some of the ancient fathers, who have been followed by many modern divines, imagine to be indicated in this mission of the three angels to Abraham, since he addresses them as one person. St. Cyril, a learned patriarch of Alexandria in the fifth century, maintains this argument in his first book against Julian the Apostate.

* Genesis, chapter xviii. verses 1 and 2.
DESTRUCTION OF SODOM.
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Here we behold a most awful manifestation of divine retribution. The fearful overthrow of the cities of the plain is now going on. In the distance, Sodom is represented under the influence of the burning deluge, which descends from Heaven in streams of liquid flame. Towers are falling, palaces are overthrown, the habitations of the great and little are overwhelmed in one indiscriminate ruin. Whilst the multitude are rushing towards the principal gate, the fiery flood rolls through it from without, thus terminating the last hope of escape. It quickly overspreads the whole town, in which there remains not a living tongue to tell the tale of horror. Lot, his wife, and two daughters, have escaped from the appalling conflagration. He has just reached the little town of Zoar, which was a short distance from Sodom, and whither he was permitted to find a refuge from the anger of Omnipotence. "The sun was risen upon the earth when Lot entered into Zoar. Then the Lord rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven; and he overthrew those cities, and all the plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities and that which grew upon the ground."* Lot's eldest daughter bears a vessel upon her head, containing the wine which was afterwards applied to a most unholy purpose. The mother stands at some distance behind the fugitives, having probably tarried in expectation of rescuing her daughters' husbands, and remaining too long she became an awful monument of the divine displeasure. It is supposed that some of the sulphurous shower, which was at that moment overwhelming the city, fell upon her as she stood, in defiance of God's prohibition, bewailing its overthrow, and covered her with a saline crust which quickly became so hard that she remained fixed upon the spot in an erect position, thus resembling a pillar of salt.

* Genesis, chapter xix. verses 33, 34 and 35
HAGAR AND ISHMAEL.
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Ishmael, jealous as it may be inferred at his father's partiality for the younger son, had jested at the weaning of Isaac. This act of disrespect was probably encouraged by his mother, who saw in Isaac's birth all her hopes defeated of beholding her son enjoy the privileges of the first born; Abraham, therefore, at Sarah's instigation, dismissed both from his family. "And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and took bread, and a bottle of water, and gave it unto Hagar, putting it on her shoulder, and the child, and sent her away; and she departed, and wandered in the wilderness of Beer-sheba. And the water was spent in the bottle, and she cast the child under one of the shrubs. And she went, and sat her down over against him a good way off, as it were a bow-shot: for she said, Let me not see the death of the child. And she sat over against him, and lift up her voice, and wept." Hagar appears seated by Ishmael under a small tree that overshadows a projecting bank. The moment chosen by the artist, is just before she quits him in order that she may not see him die. A vast wilderness lies before them, where they can see nothing but the cheerless prospect of a solitary death. Hagar abandons herself to grief ere she takes a last farewell of her only son. Ishmael is spent with thirst and fatigue, and the mother, supposing him to be dying, sits down by him and weeps. The water-vessel is overturned, and no relief appears to be nigh. The relaxed attitude of the mother indicates the total absorption of her grief, while the uplifted eyes of the boy, the depressed mouth, the nerveless position and want of tension in the limbs, show the complete prostration of bodily energy and a painful resignation to death.

* Genesis, chapter xxvi, verses 14, 15 and 16.
ABRAHAM OFFERING ISAAC.

The point of time denoted in this illustration is when the voice from Heaven is heard arresting Abraham's arm, which was already lifted up to slay his son. The knife drop from his hand at the divine interposition, and he stands devoutly attentive to the heavenly messenger. "And the angel of the Lord called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham: and he said, Here am I. And he said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me." Isaac's hands and feet are bound, and he is laid "on the altar upon the wood," as an innocent victim voluntarily submitting to the Almighty will; in which respect he appears as a type of that more eminent victim, who, being without sin, took upon himself the awful responsibility of human guilt, and "offered himself without spot to God" as a full and sufficient expiation. The countenance of the venerable father is lighted up with a blended expression of solemn devotion and meek resignation. His eyes, as well as those of the boy, are raised towards Heaven, when the welcome voice of intercession is heard, proclaiming the glad tidings of deliverance to the one, and of joyful absolution to the other. Abraham has just cast the knife from him as the merciful mandate of prohibition is pronounced. At the foot of the altar stands a vessel containing fire, with which the holocaust was to have been kindled. The artist has represented Isaac about thirteen years old: there are, however, different opinions as to his age, from one year to thirty-seven years. According to the concurrent judgments of divines, when God's command was communicated to him, he submitted to be bound and laid on the altar a voluntary sacrifice. Behind Abraham appears the vicarious lamb, "caught in a thicket by his horns," which he offered up "in the stead of his son."

* Genesis, chapter xxii. verses 11 and 12. 
THE BURIAL OF SARAH.
THE BURIAL OF SARAH.

Sarah died at the age of a hundred and twenty-seven years, when Abraham, anxious to show in death a respect equal to the attachment which he had felt for her in life, purchased from “Ephron the son of Zoar” of the children of Heth, a field in which was a cave, where he deposited the remains of his beloved Sarah. It was a custom of that time for families to have their sepulchres without the walls of their cities, and this practice prevailed up to a much later period of the Jewish history, as will appear from the funeral of the widow of Nain’s son, which our Saviour met as the procession was on its way from the city to the place of interment. It is manifest also from the raising of Lazarus, whose grave, as is evident from the context, was without the town of Bethany; and we find further that the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea, in which the Redeemer was laid, was in a garden beyond the walls of Jerusalem. Abraham purchased the cave and field of Machpelah for a hundred shekels of silver. “And after this, Abraham buried Sarah his wife in the cave of the field of Machpelah before Mamre: the same is Hebron in the land of Canaan. And the field, and the cave that is therein, were made sure unto Abraham for a possession of a burying place by the sons of Heth.” The artist has imagined the sepulchre in which the remains of this distinguished woman were entombed, to have been a natural cave. The field might have formed part of a hill in the side of which a cavern had been produced by some convulsion of the earth. It is clear that Abraham refused to appropriate to Sarah’s burial the sepulchres of the children of Heth, and no mention is made of his preparing a place of sepulture. The picture represents the body deposited in a natural cave, and surrounded by persons bearing funeral torches;—the chief mourners of the family prostrating themselves before the dead.

* Genesis, chapter xxiii. verses 19 and 20.
JACOB'S VISION OF THE LADDER.
JACOB'S VISION OF THE LADDER.

When Jacob left his father's house, in consequence of his brother's hostile threat, he proceeded on his way to Padan-aram, where dwelt Laban his maternal uncle. On entering Mesopotamia, he "went toward Haran. And he lighted upon a certain place, and tarried there all night, because the sun was set; and he took of the stones of that place, and put them for his pillows, and lay down in that place to sleep. And he dreamed, and, behold, a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and, behold, the angels of God ascending and descending on it."* In this vision the promise was renewed to Jacob, which had been already made to Abraham, "that in his seed should all the families of the earth be blessed;" and in order to commemorate so signal a visitation, Jacob "took the stone that he had put for his pillows, and set it up for a pillar, and poured oil upon the top of it," thus dedicating it to God's service. Here he was no doubt afterwards accustomed to repair, and "offer his sacrifices unto the Lord," and thus this simple stone became the mark of a sacred locality—it was in fact one of the primitive temples. This vision of Jacob has been very ingeniously expounded by the great Jewish commentator Maimonides, one of the most learned men of his age and nation. He considers the ladder to represent the providence of God which governs all things. Its being set on earth indicates the immutability of his attributes. Its top reaching to heaven denotes his ubiquity; the several steps, the various actions of his providence. The angels ascending and descending, show that they are his accredited agents and always employed in his service, ascending to receive his commands and descending to execute them. In sum, that learned man considers this vision to have been a mystical representation of the power and attributes of God.

* Genesis, chapter xxviii., verses 11 and 12.
ESAU SELLING HIS BIRTHRIGHT.

The habits of these distinguished brothers were as opposite as their characters. Though the offspring of one birth, the moral aspect of their minds, as well as the physical aspect of their bodies, was in direct opposition. "Esau was a cunning hunter, a man of the field; and Jacob was a plain man, dwelling in tents." Esau was "red, all over like a hairy garment;" Jacob was "a smooth man." One was fond of the chase, delighting in it on account of the dainties and excitement which attended this severe pursuit; the other took pleasure in remaining at home tending his father’s flocks. One was a hardy forester, the other a gentle shepherd. In one of his hunting excursions, Esau being faint with hunger came to Jacob’s tent, and observing a pottage of lentiles which the latter had just prepared, desired to be permitted to eat of it, when Jacob, taking advantage of a brother’s distress, refused to relieve it unless he immediately made him a transfer of his inheritance. Esau, being sore pressed by hunger, consented to this unnatural proposal, and having taken an oath to that effect, the stipulation became irrevocable. "Then Jacob gave Esau bread and pottage of lentiles; and he did eat and drink, and rose up, and went his way: thus Esau despised his birthright."

In the illustration, Jacob is sitting at the door of his tent with the pottage in his hand, when Esau approaches armed with his bow and quiver. The tents of the "cunning hunter" appear in the distance on the borders of the forest, to denote that he had separated from his family and the occupation in which he delighted. He was not yet married, but may be supposed to have already associated himself with those tribes, then under the Divine malediction, from whom he shortly afterwards took his two wives, "which were a grief of mind unto Isaac and to Rebekah." A well appears near Jacob’s tent, from which he watered his father’s flocks.

* Genesis, chapter xxv, verse 34.
ISAAC BLESSING JACOB.

When Isaac had attained the age of a hundred and thirty-seven years, and "his eyes were dim so that he could not see," feeling from the infirmities which had accumulated upon him, that death could not now be very remote, he was anxious to settle on his eldest son that land of promise which God declared he would confer upon the posterity of Abraham. He therefore sent for Esau in order that he might entail it upon him, accompanied with a prophetic benediction. Rebekah overhearing what passed between Isaac and the heir, who had separated himself from his father's house by a marriage she did not approve, summoned Jacob to her presence, and revealed to him a plot which she had devised to delude her husband and secure the blessing designed for the elder born, to her younger and favourite son. She commanded him to disguise himself in Esau's apparel and appear before his father with a dish of "savoury meat," which she undertook to prepare from two kids of the goats, and receive the paternal benediction, that would at once transfer to him the rights of primogeniture and entail upon his posterity the promised possession, where that miracle of love was to be consummated which has exalted the lapsed posterity of Adam from the deplorable bondage of sin to the blessed liberty of redemption. "And Isaac said unto Jacob, Come near now, and kiss me, my son. And he came near, and kissed him."* The picture represents the inside of a tent, in which Jacob appears kneeling before his blind father, who is in the act of blessing him. Rebekah is anxiously watching the success of her stratagem. A bow and quiver belonging to Esau are hung on one side over the bed, as no longer in use, denoting at once his pursuit and domestic alienation. The distant landscape appears through the opening of the tent.

* Genesis, chapter xxvii. verse 96.
ISAAC BLESSING ESAU.

No sooner had Jacob received the prophetic blessing which transferred to him the inheritance and privileges of the first-born, than Esau returned from the chase and prepared the venison as his father had commanded. The birthright which Esau had sold consisted in a double portion of the paternal estate, together with those immunities which especially belonged to the eldest son, but did not include the land of Canaan—that expected possession to which the family looked forward at some distant time as the scene of God's most merciful dispensation, when "life and immortality would be brought to light," "through the dying of the Lord Jesus." When Esau, unconscious of what had previously taken place, entered his father's presence to have that portion of the inheritance which he had not disposed of confirmed to him and his posterity in perpetuity, he was roused to the most painful excitement upon discovering how disingenuously he had been supplanted by his younger brother. As soon as he became aware of Jacob's treachery, he threw himself at his father's feet, exclaiming, in an agony of disappointment and distress, "Hast thou but one blessing, my father? bless me, even me also, O my father. And Esau lifted up his voice, and wept."* The artist has endeavoured to represent this action. The bereaved son appears on his knees at the foot of his father's couch in a posture of vehement supplication. The aged patriarch has just raised himself from his pillow on ascertaining the deceit which had been practised upon him by his younger son; there is, however, a visible resignation to that immutable will which never traverses human designs but for human benefit. The savoury meat which Esau had prepared is seen smoking upon a table beside the couch. Jacob and Rebekah are listening at the tent door with an expression of anxious apprehension; the mother instructing her favourite how he should elude the hostility of his injured brother.

* Genesis, chapter xxvii. verse 38.
JACOB'S ALTAR AT SHALEM.

"And Jacob came to Shalem, a city of Shechem, which is in the land of Canaan, when he came from Padan-aram; and pitched his tent before the city. And he bought a parcel of a field, where he had spread his tent, at the hand of the children of Hamor, Shechem's father, for an hundred pieces of money. And he erected there an altar, and called it El-e-lohe-Israel."* This latter word signifies that the altar was dedicated to the Lord God of Israel. It appears to have been customary with the early patriarchs to devote particular spots to the worship of God, by erecting altars in his name, and thus consecrating the place as a family sanctuary, whither, no doubt, all the members of the little social community were accustomed to repair to offer up their devotions to the Almighty. These elementary temples are supposed to have been hallowed by the divine glory resting upon them, as it did in after times upon the ark of the covenant, both in the tabernacle and in the temple. They were in all probability succeeded by the prosenuchæ, or houses of prayer, which were merely enclosed areas without roofs. To these succeeded the synagogue, of which there does not appear to be any trace prior to the Babylonish captivity. The prosenuchæ differed from the synagogues in several particulars. In the latter, prayers in which the whole congregation united, were delivered according to an established formulary. In the former, every individual who entered prayed apart, offering up any prayer that his feelings might dictate or his circumstances require. In the accompanying illustration Jacob is seen on his knees before an altar, which he had raised to Jehovah in a small tract of land that he had purchased nigh to the city of Shalem. He has already offered a burnt-sacrifice upon it as an act of dedication, which is favorably accepted, as is shown by the direct ascent of the smoke. His tents appear in the valley behind him, under the shelter of a precipitous hill, which is crowned with the majestic cedar,—a tree eminently associated with sacred history.

* Genesis, chapter xxxiii. verses 18, 19 and 20.
JACOB'S DAUGHTERS TRYING TO
COMFORT HIM.

When the sons of Jacob exhibited before him the well-
known coat of his favourite child dipped in blood, in order
to delude him into the belief of Joseph's death, "Jacob rent
his clothes, and put sackcloth upon his loins, and mourned
for his son many days. And all his sons and all his daugh-
ters rose up to comfort him; but he refused to be comforted;
and he said, For I will go down into the grave unto my son
mournning. Thus his father wept for him." Believing that
Joseph had been torn to pieces by some beast of prey, and
perhaps feeling that he was in a measure instrumental to
his death, as he had sent him to his brethren to see how
they and the flocks were going on, Jacob's heart was blight-
ed and he gave himself up to the agonies of despair.
The aged father, inconsolable for the loss of his son, re-
fused the consolation of his family. The artist has repre-
sented him seated in his tent clothed in sackcloth, the
deepest mourning he could assume, and which in those primit-
ive times it was the custom to put on whenever any
one died very near of kin. As Jacob had but one daugh-
ter, Dinah, she is seen leaning over his shoulder with
anxious affection, endeavouring to soothe him. The others
are the wives of his sons, two of whom are offering him
their consolations, whilst the third stands apart, overcome
with grief at beholding the mental agonies of her father-in-
law. Two of the sons appear at the door of the tent where the
whole had assembled in order to see how the bereaved father
would receive the condolence of his daughters. Afraid of in-
creasing their parent's grief by their presence, they are sup-
posed to have sent their wives to attempt what they felt
themselves unlikely to accomplish; but the patriarch "re-
fused to be comforted."

* Genesis, chapter xxxvii. verses 34 and 35.
REBEKAH AT THE WELL.

ABRAHAM being now "well stricken in age," for he had reached the patriarchal term of a hundred and forty years, was anxious to see his son Isaac settled before his death; and being apprehensive lest the "child of promise," through whom "all the families of the earth were to be blessed," should enter into a domestic alliance with the daughters of the heathen, he sent a confidential servant, probably the superintendent of his household, to Bethuel, his brother's son, to propose for his daughter Rebekah on Isaac's behalf. When this faithful delegate approached the abode of the proposed bride, he saw the object of his mission advancing with a pitcher on her shoulder. "And the damsel was very fair to look upon, a virgin, and she went down to the well, and filled her pitcher, and came up. And the servant ran to meet her, and said, Let me, I pray thee, drink a little water of thy pitcher. And she said, Drink, my lord: and she hasted, and let down her pitcher upon her hand, and gave him drink."* This is the action represented in the picture. Rebekah is dressed in a light linen robe, with a veil thrown back upon her shoulders, the general costume of her tribe and of her country. The patriarch's envoy wears a short linen tunic, with sandals strapped round the leg, and a staff in his hand, representing his pastoral occupation. Two of the camels which bare "the jewels of silver and jewels of gold and raiment," sent by Abraham as a portion for the bride, are seen behind him in charge of a menial. Just beneath Rebekah's feet is the well hollowed out of a rock, to which there is a descent by steps. Beyond the principal figures are three palm-trees which indicate the locality, this tree being always found most abundant in a level country like Mesopotamia, Rebekah's native province, situated between the two great rivers Tigris and Euphrates, and every year partially inundated by the latter.

* Genesis, chapter xxiv, verses 16, 17, and 18.
POTIPHAR'S WIFE ACCUSING JOSEPH.

Shortly after Joseph's bondage in Egypt, upon his refusal to comply with the criminal solicitations of his master's wife, that vindictive woman determined upon an immediate and base revenge. The Hebrew slave, shocked at the idea of committing so foul an act of dishonour as his mistress urged upon him, instantly fled from the temptation, but in his eagerness to escape the importunities of the tempter, he left in her hand his mantle, which she had seized in order to detain him; this she immediately resolved to make the instrument of her malice. As soon as Potiphar returned, she commenced her accusation of the object of her infamous desires. "And she spake unto him according to these words, saying, The Hebrew servant, which thou hast brought unto us, came in unto me to mock me: and it came to pass, as I lifted up my voice and cried, that he left his garment with me, and fled out. And it came to pass, when his master heard the words of his wife, which she spake unto him, saying, After this manner did thy servant to me; that his wrath was kindled."* Upon being summoned by the indignant Egyptian, Joseph stands before him in an attitude of animated astonishment at the atrocious accusation of his mistress. Potiphar appears about to visit him with a most sanguinary retribution, but is recalled by his cooler reflection to a less desperate purpose, and dismisses the supposed culprit to a prison. On the floor lies Joseph's mantle, the presumptive evidence of his guilt, whilst his base accuser appears seated on her bed, her body bent seeingly forward, in a position of tender appeal, as if clinging for protection to her injured Lord, who gently encircles her neck with his left arm, whilst with his right he grasps his dagger, to assure her of the protection which she claims.

* Genesis, chapter xxxix, verses 17, 18, and 19.
THE CUP FOUND IN BENJAMIN'S SACK.

When Benjamin had been sent down to Egypt, Joseph, considering that he had sufficiently punished the former cruelty of his brethren, determined to make himself known to them; but, in order probably to make trial of their feelings towards Benjamin, and to ascertain whether they felt envious on account of his distinguished kindness to the younger brother, the viceroy adopted an expedient which finally placed their sincerity and integrity above the reach of suspicion. He ordered the steward of his household to place his drinking cup, which was of considerable value, in the mouth of Benjamin's sack. As soon as the brothers had departed on their return to the land of Canaan, Joseph commanded them to be pursued and, upon being overtaken, to be charged with the theft. "Then they speedily took down every man his sack to the ground, and opened every man his sack. And he (the steward) searched, and began at the eldest, and left at the youngest: and the cup was found in Benjamin's sack. Then they rent their clothes, and laded every man his ass, and returned to the city."* In the picture, the principal group represents Jacob's youngest son, distinguished by his diminutive stature, in an attitude of consternation at witnessing the result of the search after the stolen vessel. By his side is the steward with the cup in his hand, which he has just taken from the mouth of Benjamin's sack. Around are the brothers clasping their hands in anguish and astonishment at this unexpected issue of their visit to Egypt. Their asses are standing under the shade of a group of trees, the sacks which had already been examined lying on the ground near them. The Nile is seen on the other side washing the walls of the regal city, which towers in gorgeous magnificence above.

* Genesis, chapter xliv, verses 11, 12, and 13.
THE MEETING OF JACOB AND JOSEPH.

After the departure of Benjamin, Jacob being at length persuaded to go down into Egypt in the hope of meeting his long-lost son Joseph, "rose up from Beer-sheba; and the sons of Israel carried Jacob their father, and their little ones, and their wives, in the wagons which Pharaoh had sent to carry him. And they took their cattle, and their goods, which they had gotten in the land of Canaan, and came into Egypt, Jacob, and all his seed with him: his sons, and his sons' sons with him, his daughters, and his sons' daughters, and all his seed brought he with him into Egypt."* In the scene which the artist has so strikingly depicted, the venerable father and the newly discovered son are represented as meeting just without the suburbs of the Egyptian capital, which rears its magnificent towers and battlements on the banks of the Nile, while they are beautifully reflected in its transparent waters. Beyond, the pyramids elevate their colossal heads, at once a signal monument of human labour and of human enterprise. Below the horizon, dimly appears the island of Rhouda, upon which stood the celebrated Nilometer, said by some writers to have been erected by Joseph, during his regency in Egypt. The base of this column, which is the site of the tower now standing, is supposed to be the spot where Moses was left by his mother, in order to elude the cruel edict of Pharaoh. In the group on the foreground, Jacob and Joseph are seen embracing. Behind the latter is a splendid Egyptian car from which he had just descended, drawn by three milk-white steeds, richly caparisoned. By the former is the wagon in which he had travelled from the land of Canaan, drawn by two asseas. Judah, who had pledged himself to his father for Benjamin's safety, appears behind the venerable man, raising his hands in an ecstasy of joy at the happy meeting; and near him are the several members of the patriarchal family with "their cattle and their goods."

* Genesis, chapter xlvi, verses 5, 6, and 7.
JACOB BLESSING EPHRAIM AND MANASSEH.

Jacob falling sick, Joseph went to see him, and took with him his two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim, in order that he and they might receive the patriarch's blessing. He found his father in bed, but the old man rose upon hearing of his entrance, and felt so far revived as to be able to descant upon the glorious promises which God had made unto Abraham, concerning the land of Canaan coming into the possession of his posterity. He concluded by telling Joseph that his two boys, born in a foreign country of an alien mother, and who, according to the usual order of inheritance, could only claim a minute subdivision of the promised inheritance, should be placed in the rank of his own sons, and be made the heads of two distinct tribes. When Jacob was informed of the presence of his grandchildren, "Joseph took them both, Ephraim on his right hand towards Israel's left hand, and Manasseh in his left hand towards Israel's right hand, and brought them near unto him. And Israel stretched out his right hand, and laid it upon Ephraim's head, who was the younger, and his left hand upon Manasseh's head, guiding his hands unwittingly; for Manasseh was the first-born."* When Jacob, in giving the blessing to his grandchildren, crossed his hands, placing his right hand on the head of the youngest, Joseph thought that he had erred, on account of his blindness, and was about to rectify the imagined mistake; but the venerable patriarch briefly told him that what he did was according to Divine appointment, as the younger boy was designed by the Almighty's will to receive the prior nomination, and a more considerable blessing than the elder. Joseph instantly bowed to the Divine determination, and his sons received the blessing in that order to which God directed the venerable hierophant. Shortly after this the aged man summoned the rest of his sons, gave them several his parting benediction, then "gathered up his feet into the bed, and yielded up the ghost."

* Genesis, chapter xliii. verses 13 and 14.
JACOB BLESSING HIS SONS.

Jacob, after he went down into Egypt, lived in the land of Goshen seventeen years. He was at this time a hundred and forty-seven years old, and feeling the hand of death upon him, he called his sons together in order to confer upon them his departing blessing. This blessing, like Isaac's benediction upon a similar occasion, was prophetic, and was most signally realized in them and their descendants. "And Jacob called unto his sons, and said, Gather yourselves together, that I may tell you that which shall befall you in the last days."* In obedience to this injunction, they assembled round the couch of their dying father, which is spread upon a raised platform, and overhung by a cloth canopy. The ten elder sons kneel before the venerable man, while the two younger stand apart from the rest, as if unable to endure the sight of their expiring parent. The sacrificial vessels are seen on the left hand side of the bed near the pillow of the dying man, who may be supposed to have been their sole repository since his departure from Canaan, his house being the most proper sanctuary whither the families of the twelve tribes resorted, as it is supposed they had neither tabernacle nor temple in the strange land where they had now become domesticated. The distant capital of Egypt is seen through the open entrance of the chamber, which, according to the custom of eastern countries, has no doors, but is surround-ed by a veranda. While the sons are kneeling round their father's couch, listening with reverential sorrow to his prophetic communications, he blesses them severally; when, having delivered his injunctions as to the place and mode of his burial, he was "gathered unto his people." "And his sons carried him into the land of Canaan, and buried him in the cave of the field of Machpelah."*

* Genesis, chapter xlix, verse 1.
THE INFANT MOSES.

In consequence of the rapid increase of the Hebrew population, a successor of that Pharaoh who had advanced Joseph to such distinguished honours in Egypt, fearing that the Israelites might in time endanger the security of his realm, came to the savage resolution of having all their male infants destroyed: he accordingly ordered two of the Hebrew midwives to strangle them immediately after their birth, but to preserve the females alive. This command, however, they evaded by an ingenious and humane artifice: they represented to Pharaoh that the Hebrew women, being much stronger than the Egyptian, were generally delivered without assistance. The king therefore issued a proclamation commanding that every male child born of a Hebrew mother should be cast into the Nile. Some time after this edict had been promulgated, Jochebed, the wife of Amram and mother of Miriam and Aaron, was delivered of a son. Anxious to save the life of her infant, a beautiful boy, she concealed him for three months; but at length, fearing the penalty which would attach to such an infraction of the law, she resolved to commit him to the protection of that Providence whom not only the winds but the waves also obey. In conformity with this resolution, she constructed a "ark of bulrushes, and daubed it with slime and with pitch, and put the child therein, and she laid it in the flags by the river's brink." In the illustration we see the anxious mother just as she has quitted her babe, which is asleep in its fragile bed, unconscious of its peril. Her hands are clasped, and she moves in an attitude of resigned sorrow; her aspect betokens a blending of maternal emotion with that resignation which was afterwards repaid by the salvation of her beloved offspring, who eventually became, after Christ, the greatest among the sons of men.

* Exodus, chap. ii. verse 3.
THE ROD OF MOSES TURNED INTO A SERPENT.

While Moses was tending the flocks of his father-in-law Jethro, the priest of Midian, driving them from place to place where the best pasture was to be found, he came at length to Mount Horeh, whither, from what follows, it is evident that he was conducted by the immediate providence of God. Here he witnessed an awful manifestation of the divine presence; for "the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush; and he looked, and behold the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed." Perceiving that the bush did not burn, for it was the Shechinah that appeared from it and not material fire, Moses approached in order to ascertain the cause of so singular a phenomenon, when the Lord announced his presence and appointed him his special messenger to the tyrant of Egypt, demanding through him, the release of his people Israel from a long and laborious servitude. The inexperienced shepherd, alarmed at the responsibility and apprehended perils of the trust, expressed his doubts at once of his own sufficiency to perform so dangerous a mission, and of the willingness of the Israelites to receive a minister so miraculously accredited. In order to confirm the doubting Hebrew, "The Lord said unto him, What is that in thine hand? and he said, A rod. And he said, Cast it on the ground. And he cast it on the ground and it became a serpent; and Moses fled from before it."* The future lawgiver of the Jews appears on a gentle acclivity of the mountain before the bush, which is enveloped by the divine glory, in the act of fleeing from the miraculous form which his rod had assumed in obedience to the divine volition; when he is arrested by the voice of God, calling to his attention this token of power to uphold him in the work given him to do, and at the same time confirming him in his arduous ministry.

* Exodus, chapter iv. verses 9 and 3.
THE SEVENTH PLAGUE.

After six awful manifestations of the Divine anger at the obstinacy of Pharaoh, who still refused to let the people of Israel quit his dominions, God visited him with a plague still severer than any that had yet fallen upon the land of Egypt. At the command of the Almighty, "Moses stretched forth his rod towards Heaven, and the Lord sent thunder and hail, and the fire ran along upon the ground, and the Lord rained hail upon the land of Egypt. So there was hail and fire mingled with the hail, very grievous, such as there was none like it in all the land of Egypt, since it became a nation."* Moses and Aaron appear on the roof of a low house overlooking the river, that here forms an estuary, round the shore of which the imperial city exhibits its magnificent array of gorgeous palaces, temples, and stately edifices. The lightning pours over the river a volume of liquid fire, which scatters destruction and terror before it. The Nile is swollen, and its waves are lashed into formidable commotion by the tempest, awakened at the Divine command by the rod of Moses. Behind the city, the pyramids uplift their huge masses amid the portentous raging of the elements which scatter their terrors harmlessly over them. The multitudes running hither and thither show the consternation under which they are labouring. The hail, "and fire mingled with the hail," was an event unknown in the mild climate of Egypt, which is but seldom visited with rain, and then it falls only in light showers, so that the terror of Pharaoh and his subjects was great in proportion to the singularity of this awful visitation. The most extraordinary part of the miracle was that this plague was felt throughout the whole territory of the Egyptian king, except only the land of Goshen, spreading devastation and death through a country extending to the length of nearly six hundred miles.

DEATH OF THE FIRST-BORN.
THE DEATH OF THE FIRST-BORN.

The tenth and last judgment upon Pharaoh and his people was the death of the first-born of every family throughout Egypt, save the families of the Israelites in the land of Goshen. The obdurate king having hitherto defied the judgments of the living God, a punishment, as signal as it was terrible, fell upon him. At midnight, when everything was prepared for the departure of the seed of Jacob from the scene of their captivity—for they no longer enjoyed that freedom which Joseph had secured to their forefathers—the divine fiat went forth for the bereavement of every Egyptian parent. "And it came to pass, that at midnight 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. And Pharaoh rose up in the night, he, and all his servants, and all the Egyptians; and there was a great cry in Egypt; for there was not a house where there was not one dead."* Who shall attempt to represent the confusion and dismay of that appalling night, when parents were suddenly awoken by the dying groans of their children, upon whose tender frames the blight of the destroying angel had passed. The mother beheld her infant, and the matron her adult son struck dead before them by an omnipotent angel. The picture represents a magnificent hall of the palace where the heir and hope of Egypt is laid out for embalming. The king stands over the unconscious corpse of his son in an attitude of distracted grief. The other members of the royal family are mourning around him. The mother has thrown herself upon the body in a paroxysm of woe. The splendour around appears in melancholy contrast with the sad scene. Towards the entrance of the gorgeous edifice are two functionaries announcing to the anxious multitude the affliction which has overtaken their sovereign and their country.

* Exodus, chap. xii. verses 29 and 30.
THE DESTROYING ANGEL.

"And it came to pass, that at midnight the Lord smote all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh that sat on his throne unto the firstborn of the captive that was in the dungeon; and all the firstborn of cattle." The destroying angel is here represented under the gigantic form of a human agent hovering over the imperial palace, and scattering from his awful grasp the destruction which was to rend every Egyptian parent a mourner, from the sovereign to the slave. The lightning is hurled from his hands with an unerring fatality that raises the wall of sorrow through the devoted city. The capital of the now heart-stricken Pharaoh is partially illumined by the desolating beam that pours along the horizon a stream of lurid light, which only imparts a deeper hue of horror to the surrounding darkness. Thousands of the bereaved inhabitants, in the agony of their sudden desolation, are seen crowding through the gates, spreading over the plain, and "mourning with a sore lamentation." Some are already busy preparing the rites of sepulture, which in so warm a climate, and after a death so sudden in the full energy of health, will not admit of delay. In the foreground is a group commencing the process of embalming. The corpse is laid out and the physicians are extracting the brains and intestines, in order to introduce the desiccative drugs which dry up the juices of the body and thus prevent it from putrifying. The whole scene exhibits the appalling activity of funereal preparation and the fearful solemnity of sorrow. The palace of Pharaoh rises conspicuously amid the splendid edifices of the capital in which the hope of the empire lies dead. The pyramids stand on the distant plain, and appear before the luminous horizon as if looking in solemn mockery upon the scene of desolation which is passing so near.

* Exodus, chapter xi. verse 50.
PHARAOH AND HIS HOST DROWNED IN THE RED SEA.

After the Israelites had quitted the land of Goshen, they encamped by Divine appointment before Pi-hahiroth, a narrow glen bounded on either side by two great mountains. This was done to deceive the Egyptian king, who imagining them to be “entangled in the land,” pursued after them with his armies, to whom he thought, in their present straitened position, they must fall an easy prey. He therefore followed with a resolution to exterminate them; but Moses was enabled by a miracle to divide the waters of the Red Sea, and make a way “for the ransomed to pass over.” To the astonishment of Pharaoh the waves divided at the lifting up of the rod of the Jewish lawgiver, and the host of Israel passed on dry land through the “depths of the sea.” Pharaoh, in spite of the repeated warnings which God had already vouchsafed to him, impiously followed. “And the waters returned and covered the chariots and the horsemen, and all the host of Pharaoh that came into the sea after them: there remained not so much as one of them.”* In the accompanying illustration the waters are seen closing upon the Egyptians, governed by the uplifted rod of Moses, who stands with Aaron upon the ledge of a rock that abuts upon the shore of the Red Sea, now roused into violent commotion at the fiat of an Almighty will. The sky exhibits the tumult of a mighty tempest breaking over the agitated waters. Upon the distant horizon the pyramids are dimly perceptible, irradiated by the glare of the lightning, and indicating the locality whence the armies of Pharaoh had poured forth their strength to crush God’s chosen people. The pillar which guided the Israelites is partly hidden by the tempest, but the head of the sacred column is visible, pouring forth the fire of God’s wrath upon the disastrous hosts of Egypt. In the distance the grateful posterity of Jacob are offering a sacrifice to the Lord for their late deliverance.

MOSES STRIKING THE ROCK.
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In the first month of the fortieth year after the Exodus of the Israelites, they came to the wilderness of Zin, which has often been confounded with the wilderness of Sin, mentioned in the seventeenth chapter of Exodus, though quite a different station, the former being on the confines of the land of Edom, towards the Red Sea. Here Miriam died, at the age of a hundred and thirty-two years, four months before her brother Aaron, and eleven before Moses. On arriving in this desert, the water which had continued to follow the Israelitish camp from the rock in Horeb smitten by the rod of Moses nearly forty years before, ceased its supplies, and the Israelites in consequence began again to suffer the extremities of thirst. As this was a new generation, the water was probably withheld by the Divine will, in order that the descendants might show whether they had greater faith in God than their forefathers, of which they proved the negative by murmuring with equal bitterness and uttering threats of mutiny. Moses was therefore commanded by the Almighty to proceed with Aaron towards the rock nearest at hand. When they reached the place where this second miraculous supply of water was produced, "Moses lifted up his hand, and with his rod he smote the rock twice: and the water came out abundantly, and the congregation drank and their beasts also." No sooner was the rock smitten than such a copious stream flowed as immediately supplied the whole host of the Israelites and their cattle. The artist has endeavoured to express the distress of the people by the almost frantic eagerness with which they rush to the water. Some are lifting up their hands in astonishment at the miracle, while others appear to have no other thought than that of allaying the agony of a long and desperate thirst.

* Numbers, chapter xx, verse 11.
AMALEK OVERCOME.
AMALEK OVERCOME.

Just after the miraculous supply of water obtained by Moses for the Israelites, by smiting the rock in Horeb, the king of Amalek came upon that timid people with a mighty army and threatened to exterminate them. Moses, accompanied by Aaron and Hur, the latter supposed to be the husband of Miriam and consequently their brother-in-law, "went up to the top of the hill," in order to see the battle and encourage the children of Israel. He bore in his hand the miraculous rod, the mysterious ensign of the Divine agency, and to which is supposed to have been attached the Hebrew banner; so that when he lifted it up, the Israelites were encouraged and exerted themselves with redoubled energy; but when he dropped it, in consequence of his arms declining from fatigue, their spirits drooped and the enemy, taking advantage of their panic, obtained a momentary ascendency. In order, therefore, to sustain the courage of God's chosen people and secure the victory, Aaron and Hur "took a stone, and put it under Moses, and he sat thereon; and Aaron and Hur stayed up his hands, the one on the one side, and the other on the other side; and his hands were steady until the going down of the sun. And Joshua discomfited Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword."* The artist has represented the Jewish lawgiver, in accordance with the views of many respectable commentators, as raising his hands in solemn supplication to Heaven. He is seen "on he top of the hill," probably Horeb, which was in this neighbourhood, with Aaron and Hur on either side of him sustaining his hands, which he had lifted up in prayer for the success of the Israelites who appear in the plain below, discomfiting "Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword." An altar was eventually raised on the spot where Moses sat, in commemoration of this signal victory, and was called Jehovah-nissi, or "The Lord, my banner."

* Exodus, chapter xvii verses 12 and 13.
MOSES RECEIVING THE TABLES.
MOSES RECEIVING THE TABLES.

Three months after the departure of the Israelites from Egypt, they encamped in the plain at the foot of Mount Sinai. Here it was that God summoned Moses to ascend the sacred hill and receive the tables of the law. Moses accordingly ascended the mountain, and received from the hands of God "when he had made an end of communing with him upon Mount Sinai, two tables of the testimony, tables of stone written with the finger of God."* In the picture, the summit of the holy mountain is seen enveloped in dark clouds, which surround as with a girdle, and veil from human sight what is passing upon it. Moses appears upon his knees in the divine presence, reverently taking from the Almighty Dispenser of good those tables of the moral law which were to be binding upon Jews and Christians to the end of time. The tables are presented from a cloud by an invisible hand, and received by the Jewish lawgiver in an attitude of deep and solemn devotion. As a token of his entire subserviency to the Almighty will, he has with him the rod through whose agency he performed so many miracles, for God had made it a vehicle of the divine power. Though the Godhead was not visibly revealed to Moses, he was nevertheless conscious of this august presence by the celestial light that illumined the consecrated spot to which he had been summoned. From the summit of this holy hill the Deity proclaimed in an audible voice the terms of the covenant which he made with his chosen people, together with the precepts of the moral law; and when this was done, he delivered to his accredited ministers Moses, the tables of stone upon which these precepts were "written with the finger of God," and designed to be a rule of life "for perpetual generations."

* Exodus, chap. xxxi. verse 18.
MOSES BREAKING THE TABLES.

While Moses was upon Mount Sinai, receiving the Divine instructions, the people began to be impatient for his return, and at length, supposing that some fatal accident had befallen him, surrounded Aaron's tent, manifesting symptoms of rebellion. As they fancied themselves to be now without a leader, they insisted, in the most imperious manner, that Aaron should make them gods to go before them. The timid hierarch, though astonished at this demand, had not the courage to refuse his compliance with it, and ordering them to bring him a quantity of their golden ornaments, he immediately converted these into an idol, to which the infatuated Israelites offered sacrifices, concluding their unholy worship with the most unbecoming revelry. Moses being warned by God of what was taking place, hastened down the mount, with the tables of the law in his hand, "And it came to pass, as soon as he came nigh unto the camp, that he saw the calf, and the dancing: and Moses' anger waxed hot, and he cast the tables out of his hands, and brake them beneath the mount."* In the picture Moses appears upon a high ledge of the mountain, where he could overlook the whole encampment of the rebellious Israelites, accompanied by Joshua, who is seen at a little distance behind him on the right. On the tabular summit of a small detached portion of the hill appear those who had refused to join in the profane rites which the disaffected Hebrews were then in the act of celebrating, and had advanced to meet Moses and welcome his return to the camp. Upon the plain at the base of the mountain are seen the ungodly worshippers engaged in the solemnization of their forbidden rites with feasting and dancing, when Moses, indignant at the sight of such impiety, dashes the tables from his hands and breaks them.

* Exodus, chap. xxxii. verse 19.
MOSES DESCENDING WITH THE RENEWED TABLES.

When Moses had destroyed the golden calf, reducing it to powder and mixing it with water, which he obliged the idolatrous Hebrews to drink, and punished the ringleaders with death, he promised the repentant people that he would once more intercede with God for them. To show them, however, how grievously they had offended the Lord by their apostacy, he pitched a tent at some distance without the line of the encampment, and called it the Tabernacle of the Congregation. The cloudy pillar was immediately withdrawn from the camp and rested on the tabernacle, to show the lately disaffected Israelites that God would no longer dwell in the midst of them, as he had hitherto done. To this tent Moses was henceforth accustomed to repair whenever he wanted to consult the Lord. Shortly after he had pitched the tabernacle without the camp, he ascended the mount again, where the Almighty revealed to him as much of his glory as Moses was capable of beholding, when, prostrating himself before the Lord, he succeeded in propitiating the divine mercy for the sins of the people. Having renewed the tables, the Hebrew lawgiver pledged himself in behalf of the people that they would henceforth cease from disobedience and rebellion. "And it came to pass, when Moses came down from Mount Sinai with the two tables of testimony in Moses' hand, when he came down from the mount, that Moses wist not that the skin of his face shone, while he talked with him. And when Aaron and all the children of Israel saw Moses, behold, the skin of his face shone; and they were afraid to come nigh him."* This illustration represents the Hebrew lawgiver descending from the Mount with the renewed tables, and the chief persons among the Israelites, who had gone out of the camp, accompanied by Aaron, to meet him, alarmed at the supernatural radiance of his countenance.

* Exod. chap xxxiv. verse 29 and 30.
NADAB AND ABIHU BURNT.

Eight days after the consecration of Aaron to the high priest's office, the venerable hierarch offered a burnt offering for himself and for the people, "and there came a fire out from before the Lord, and consumed upon the altar the burnt offering and the fat; which when all the people saw, they shouted, and fell on their faces. And Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took either of them his censer, and put fire therein, and put incense thereon, and offered strange fire before the Lord, which he commanded them not. And there went out fire from the Lord, and devoured them, and they died before the Lord." The fire which had kindled Aaron's sacrifice was, by God's especial command, to be kept continually burning upon the altar, and no other was to be used in their burnt offerings. Nadab and Abihu, the two eldest sons of the high priest, in defiance of this prohibition, took common fire from some unhallowed place without the sanctuary, instead of from the altar of burnt offering, and whilst they were in the act of desecrating the altar of incense, by putting strange fire thereon, the wrath of God was awakened, and they were struck dead before they could consummate the unholy rite. The artist has taken quite an original view of this impressive subject. The two rash ministers are represented as in the act of kindling fire upon the altar of incense by some chemical process, when an explosion takes place, by which they are both destroyed, each being killed by his own censer. The picture exhibits the interior of the tabernacle, on either side of which, and on the roof, "cherubims of cunning work" are distinctly visible, an ornament expressly commanded by God to be wrought in the curtain of this moveable sanctuary. On one side of the altar, from which the sons of Aaron are struck dead, is the golden candlestick with six branches; on the other side is the table on which the twelve cakes, called the shew-bread, were deposited. This tablet was of pure gold, and the number of loaves was fixed according to the number of the tribes.

* Leviticus, chap. ix., verse 24; and chap. x., verses 1 and 2.
THE BLASPHEMER BROUGHT BEFORE MOSES.
THE BLASPHEMER BROUGHT BEFORE MOSES.

It happened that while the Almighty was communicating to Moses his will concerning the daily services of the tabernacle, "the son of an Israelitish woman, whose father was an Egyptian, went out among the children of Israel: and this son of the Israelitish woman and a man of Israel strove together in the camp; and the Israelitish woman's son blasphemed the name of the Lord and cursed; and they brought him unto Moses." The father of this man, though an Egyptian, was evidently a proselyte, and had no doubt accompanied the host of Israel in their flight from the tyranny of Pharaoh; his son was therefore admitted to the privileges of the Jewish covenant. It is supposed that an altercation took place between him and some other Jew upon his right, as the offspring of an Egyptian father, to number himself among any of their tribes, and being defeated by his adversary he blasphemed God in his anger. The man was immediately brought before Moses, as the supreme judge: for the law not having yet declared any specific punishment against blasphemy, the lesser courts did not know how to deal with the criminal. Moses immediately ordered him into confinement, until it should be known what punishment would be awarded to an offence so aggravated. The Almighty, when consulted by the Jewish lawgiver, commanded that the offender should be taken without the camp and stoned to death. From this time lapis- dation became the punishment of blasphemy. In the picture Moses is seated in the presidential chair, with his left hand upon the tables of the law, and in his right the mystical rod, at once the ensign of his office and the symbol of his delegated power. Beyond the stone tablets stands Aaron, and behind him Hur, the supposed husband of Miriam, a person high in the confidence of the Hebrew legislator. The blasphemer is forced into the sacred presence by two armed Israelites.

* Leviticus, chapter xxiv. verses 10 and 11.
MIRIAM STRICKEN WITH LEPROSY.
MIRIAM SMITTEN WITH LEPROSY.

Shortly after the plague which had taken place, in consequence of the Israelites rejecting the manna so miraculously provided for them by a merciful Providence and demanding flesh, Aaron and Miriam "spoke against Moses," whilst they were encamped at Hazeroth; at which God's anger was kindled and he summoned the three to repair to the tabernacle of the congregation. They immediately obeyed the summons, when the Shechinah appeared in the door of the tabernacle before which they stood; and here the Deity exhibited his displeasure by a most fearful visitation. "And the cloud departed from off the tabernacle; and, behold, Miriam became leprous, white as snow: and Aaron looked upon Miriam, and, behold, she was leprous."* This awful infliction, however, was removed at the intercession of Moses, who "cried unto the Lord, saying, Heal her now, O God, I beseech Thee," and after seven days' exclusion from the camp—among the Jews the ordinary period of purification from personal defilement—she was restored to her family healthy and unblemished. The illustration represents the door of the tabernacle, in the centre of which Moses stands, partially enveloped by that divine irradiation through which the heavenly oracle was always pronounced. He has with him the rod which had been the vehicle of so many miracles and was, in his hand, a consecrated instrument of divine benefaction. At a short distance from the entrance of the sanctuary stands Aaron, supporting in his arm the unhappy Miriam, upon whom the divine visitation had just fallen. The eyes of the high priest are directed towards Moses, supplicating his interposition with the Deity to remove the curse of leprosy from their guilty but penitent sister, whose look of agony indicates the dreadful nature of the plague with which she is visited.

* Numbers, chapter xii. verse 10.
THE REBELLION OF KORAH.

At what period, or in what encampment the rebellion of Korah took place, the sacred history does not inform us. But it appears that the jealousy of this refractory Levite was excited at seeing Aaron and his family raised to the highest office in the priesthood. Having seduced Dathan and Abiram, who were heads of the tribe of Reuben, into a belief of their ruler's tyranny, and prevailed upon a vast number of the dissatisfied Israelites to join his party, he appeared at the head of his faction, and publicly accused Moses and Aaron of intrenching upon the liberties of the people. Moses, shocked at the charge, sent to Dathan and Abiram, who he supposed had been seduced into the conspiracy, with the hope of persuading them to return to their allegiance, but received from them a most insolent reply to his kind overtures of pacification. This so incensed him, that he appealed to God in justification of his own acts, and the Almighty immediately suggested the course he should pursue. In obedience to the Divine will he commanded Korah and his company to repair next morning before the tabernacle, each with his censer in his hand, two hundred and fifty censers, with fire in them and incense. This they accordingly did, accompanied by a vast multitude of their disaffected adherents. After the Lord had commanded Moses to bid the congregation separate themselves from the rebels, which was immediately done, "The earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up, and their houses, and all the men that appertained unto Korah, and all their goods. They, and all that appertained to them, went down alive into the pit, and the earth closed upon them: and they perished from among the congregation. And all Israel that were round about them fled at the cry of them: for they said, lest the earth swallow us up also. And there came out a fire from the Lord, and consumed the two hundred and fifty men that offered incense."*

* Numbers, chapter xvi. verses 38 to 35.
THE PEOPLE PLAGUED WITH SERPENTS.
THE ISRAELITES BITTEN BY SERPENTS

The time was now approaching when the people of Israel were to take possession of the land of Canaan. During their encampment at Kadesh, Miriam died in the hundred and thirty-third year of her age, and Aaron about four months after, in his hundred and twenty-fourth year. During their latter sojourn at Kadesh, the Israelites fell into their old habits of murmuring and rebellion. Moses, after satisfying their tumultuous demands by a second miracle of bringing water out of a rock, sent an embassy to the king of Edom, soliciting a free passage through his dominions. This was not only refused, but hostilities were immediately commenced on the part of the Edomites, who marched to attack the people of Israel in their encampment. Upon this the latter removed to Mount Hor, where Aaron died. After they had mourned for him thirty days, they encamped at Zalmanah, which derived its name from the brazen serpent set up by Moses in this station. Here it was, that in consequence of their renewed murmuring on account of the length andasperity of their journey, God visited them with a plague of a most novel and destructive kind. "And the Lord sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and much people of Israel died. Therefore the people came to Moses, and said, We have sinned, for we have spoken against the Lord, and against thee: pray unto the Lord, that he take away the serpents from us; and Moses prayed for the people. And the Lord said unto Moses, Make thee a fiery serpent and set it upon a pole: and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live. And Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole, and it came to pass that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived."* This serpent was a type of the Saviour—that bodily cure which all they who turned to it received, symbolizing the spiritual healing of those who turn to the cross of Christ in "full assurance of faith."

* Numbers, chapter xxii. verses 6 to 9.
BALAAM AND HIS ASS.

After the Israelites, in their progress towards the promised land, had routed Sihon King of the Amorites, and Og the King of Basan, they marched to the plains of Moab, and encamped on the banks of the river Jordan, opposite Jericho. Balak, king of the country, fearing their power, and jealous of their success, entered into an alliance with the Midianites and Ammonites, in order at once to crush the strangers by a powerful confederacy. Afraid, however, still to attack them, he thought it advisable to send for Balaam, a noted sorcerer in Pethor, a city of Mesopotamia, to see if by his magical arts he could not bring a curse upon Israel. Balaam, who "loved the wages of unrighteousness," having first obtained the divine permission, proceeded towards Moab with Balak's messengers. During the journey, an angel intercepted his progress, invisible to himself, but perceptible to the ass which Balaam rode. In his hand the heavenly messenger held a naked sword, expressive of the divine wrath. The ass, terrified at the seraphic presence, turned aside, and Balaam smote her in his anger. Advancing further, he came to a narrow path with a wall on either side, and here the ass, alarmed at the threatening aspect of the angel, crushed Balaam's foot against the wall, and he smote her a second time. At length, urging her forward, she came into a place so narrow as to admit only one passenger at a time. In the midst of this strait stood the angel, and the ass was so terrified that she fell down under Balaam, and he smote her the third time, when the Lord opened her mouth, and she expostulated with him in the language of men. "Then the Lord opened the eyes of Balaam, and he saw the angel of the Lord standing in the way, and his sword drawn in his hand, and he bowed down his head and fell flat on his face." *

* Numbers, chap. xxii. verse 31.
BALAK'S SACRIFICE.

When Balaam arrived at the capital of Moab, Balak went as far as the confines of his dominions to meet him, and having gently upbraided him for the reluctance he showed in accepting his invitation, the prophet, in reply, stated, that although he had come to Moab at the king's bidding, still he could say nothing prophetically but what the Almighty should dictate. Balak, however, relying upon Balaam's love of money, had no doubt that he would utter a favourable prophecy; he consequently took him to the high places consecrated to Baal, whence he might behold in the distant plains, the encampments of Israel. When they had reached the place of sacrifice, Balaam said unto Balak, 'Build me here seven altars, and prepare me here seven oxen and seven rams. And Balak did as Balaam had spoken; and Balak and Balaam offered on every altar a bullock and a ram.'* When the sacrifice was completed, the prophet retired to ascertain the Divine answer, and upon his return, communicated to the king of Moab, the impossibility of cursing his enemies, and concluded by magnifying their prosperity. Disappointed at the issue of this first essay, Balak, imagining that by going to another place his desire might be accomplished, took Balaam to the top of Mount Pisgah, where the sacrifice of seven bullocks and seven rams was repeated, still with no better success; the result was, as before, a blessing from the lips of the prophet instead of a curse. Mortified at this unexpected result, he made a third attempt by again changing the place and repeating the sacrifice; the issue, however, was precisely similar, which so enraged the king of Moab, that he upbraided Balaam with blessing those enemies whom he had especially sent for him to curse. The time chosen by the Artist is the first sacrifice upon the high places of Baal.

* Numbers, chap. xxiii. verses 1 and 2.
DEATH OF MOSES ON MOUNT PISGAH.

Moses, by his legislative sagacity, having put the Israelites in a condition to enter into the promised land, took an affectionate leave of the elders and people of Israel, and "went up from the plains of Moab," which were on the borders of Canaan, "unto the mountain of Nebo, to the top of Pisgah, that is over against Jericho."* Nebo was the highest part of the mountains of Abarim, a ridge of hills on the east of the river Jordan, and Pisgah was the highest elevation of Mount Nebo. Here the venerable lawgiver of the Jews, at the age of a hundred and twenty years, with the energies of his mind and body still unimpaired, was summoned to that better land of promise of which the earthly Canaan was but an imperfect type. Having cast his eyes upon the holy region which, after the lapse of a few generations, was to be the scene of the greatest miracle in the records of time—the death and humiliation of an incarnate God—he calmly expired in the confidence of a glorious immortality. The place of his burial was unknown, and is supposed to have been withheld from the knowledge of the Israelites lest they should offer him divine homage, as they afterwards did to the brazen serpent in the reign of Hezekiah, who in consequence had it broken in pieces, and, by way of contempt, gave it the name of Nehuashtan, which signifies a brazen bauble. Satan endeavoured to discover the grave of Moses, but Michael the archangel frustrated the sinister attempt, so that the sepulchre of the Hebrew legislator was never ascertained. In the picture he appears on Mount Pisgah, casting a farewell glance over the plains of Palestine. Before him is seen the city of Jericho, and the fertile valleys of the Holy Land, upon which his eyes are still fixed, when the lingering soul is summoned to a state of more exalted enjoyment.

* Deuteronomy, chapter xxxiv. verse 1.
ILLUSTRATIONS

OF

THE BIBLE.

BY WESTALL AND MARTIN.

WITH

DESCRIPTIONS

BY THE REV. HOBART CAUNTER, B.D.

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## CONTENTS OF VOL. II.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUBJECT</th>
<th>REFERENCE</th>
<th>PAINTER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>43 Joshua and the Angels</td>
<td>Josh. c 5, v 13</td>
<td>R. Westall, R.A.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49 The Walls of Jericho fall</td>
<td>Josh. c 6, v 30</td>
<td>J. Martin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 The Sun and Moon stand</td>
<td>Josh. c 10, v 12</td>
<td>J. Martin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51 Joel killeth Sisera</td>
<td>Jud. c 4, v 21</td>
<td>R. Westall, R.A.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52 Manoshe's Sacrifice</td>
<td>Jud. c 13, v 90</td>
<td>R. Westall, R.A.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55 Ruth gleaning</td>
<td>Ruth c 2, v 5</td>
<td>R. Westall, R.A.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56 David draweth Saul asleep</td>
<td>1 Sam. c 2, v 10</td>
<td>R. Westall, R.A.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>57 The Fall of Dagon</td>
<td>1 Sam. c 5, v 4</td>
<td>J. Martin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>58 Saul and the Witch of Endor</td>
<td>1 Sam. c 9, v 5</td>
<td>R. Westall, R.A.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59 David findeth Saul asleep</td>
<td>1 Sam. c 20, v 11</td>
<td>J. Martin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60 Nathan reproving David</td>
<td>2 Sam. c 18, v 7</td>
<td>R. Westall, R.A.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61 Death of Abasalm</td>
<td>2 Sam. c 16, v 9</td>
<td>J. Martin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>62 David renewing his Oath</td>
<td>1 Kings c 1, v 80</td>
<td>R. Westall, R.A.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>63 The Dedication of the Temple</td>
<td>1 Kings c 2, v 8</td>
<td>J. Martin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>64 The Wife of Jeroaboam and Ahab</td>
<td>1 Kings c 14, v 6</td>
<td>R. Westall, R.A.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65 Elijah and the Widow's Son</td>
<td>1 Kings c 17, v 19</td>
<td>R. Westall, R.A.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>66 Elijah's Sacrifice</td>
<td>1 Kings c 18, v 80</td>
<td>J. Martin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>67 Elijah and the Earthquake</td>
<td>1 Kings c 19, v 12</td>
<td>J. Martin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>68 Elisha on his Death-bed</td>
<td>2 Kings c 13, v 17</td>
<td>R. Westall, R.A.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>69 An Angel slayeth the Assyrians</td>
<td>2 Kings c 19, v 35</td>
<td>J. Martin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70 Jerusalem taken captive into Babylon</td>
<td>2 Kings c 24, v 18</td>
<td>J. Martin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>71 Josiah saved by Jehoahbeath</td>
<td>2 Chron c 30, v 11</td>
<td>R. Westall, R.A.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>72 Nehemiah mourning over Jerusalem</td>
<td>Neh c 1, v 4</td>
<td>J. Martin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUBJECTS</td>
<td>REFERENCE</td>
<td>PAINTER</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ezra reading the Law</td>
<td>Neh. c 8, v 3</td>
<td>J. Martin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Esther kissing the Sceptre</td>
<td>Est. c 8, v 8</td>
<td>R. Westall, R.A.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mordecai's Triumph</td>
<td>Est. c 6, v 11</td>
<td>J. Martin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Esther's Feast</td>
<td>Est. c 7, v 7</td>
<td>J. Martin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>God answering Job from the Whirlwind</td>
<td>Job, c 40, v 6</td>
<td>R. Westall, R.A.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Wicked watching the Righteous</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Death of the First-born</td>
<td>Psalm 105, v 20</td>
<td>R. Westall, R.A.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Daughters of Jerusalem weeping</td>
<td>Psalm 137, v 1</td>
<td>J. Martin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Unfeeling Creditor</td>
<td>Prov. c 26, v 27</td>
<td>R. Westall, R.A.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solomon's Change</td>
<td>Cant. c 5, v 7</td>
<td>R. Westall, R.A.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The peaceable Kingdom of the Branch</td>
<td>Isal. c 11, v 6</td>
<td>R. Westall, R.A.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hezekiah beholding the Scandal</td>
<td>Isal. c 36, v 8</td>
<td>R. Westall, R.A.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Strangers' Sacrifice</td>
<td>Isal. c 36, v 7</td>
<td>J. Martin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeremiah foretelling the Fall of Jerusalem</td>
<td>Jer. c 51, v 3</td>
<td>R. Westall, R.A.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Fall of Babylon</td>
<td>Jer. c 51, v 27</td>
<td>J. Martin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Death of Ezekiel's Wife</td>
<td>Ezek. c 34, v 16</td>
<td>R. Westall, R.A.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Destruction of Tyre</td>
<td>Ezek. c 29, v 15</td>
<td>J. Martin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego</td>
<td>Daniel, c 3, v 24</td>
<td>J. Martin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belshazzar's Feast</td>
<td>Daniel, c 5, v 5</td>
<td>J. Martin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daniel in the Lions' Den</td>
<td>Daniel, c 6, v 16</td>
<td>R. Westall, R.A.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jonah cast into the Sea</td>
<td>Jonah, c 1, v 16</td>
<td>R. Westall, R.A.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Fall of Nineveh</td>
<td>Jonah, c 3, v 1</td>
<td>J. Martin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Vision of the Four Chariots</td>
<td>Zec. c 6, v 1</td>
<td>R. Westall, R.A.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Destroyers of Jerusalem destroyed</td>
<td>Zec. c 14, v 4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
JOSHUA AND THE ANGEL.

After Joshua and his army had made their miraculous passage over the river Jordan, having gained the plains of Jericho, they encamped in a place which thenceforward took the name of Gilgal, from the circumstance of the rite of circumcision, which had been for nearly forty years disused by the Israelites, being here renewed. Gilgal was about two miles from Jericho, and while Joshua was probably reconnoitring the latter city to ascertain how he might best direct the siege, a figure suddenly appeared before him in a hostile attitude, having a drawn sword in his hand. "And it came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted up his eyes and looked, and, behold, there stood a man over against him with his sword drawn in his hand: and Joshua went unto him, and said unto him, Art thou for us, or for our adversaries? And he said, Nay, but as captain of the host of the Lord am I now come. And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and did worship, and said unto him, What saith my Lord unto his servant? And the captain of the Lord's host said unto Joshua, Loose thy shoe from off thy foot; for the place whereon thou standest is holy. And Joshua did so." This is the moment chosen by the artist. Joshua has just recognized the divine messenger, in obedience to whose command he has cast aside his shield and is taking off his sandals, as Moses did on a similar occasion. Behind him, dimly seen in the distance, is the encampment of the Israelites. That the messenger was one endued with divine authority is evident from the command given by him to the Israelites in general. And, as it has been very justly observed by a learned Jew, "This angel who suffered himself to be worshipped, and by whose presence the place where he appeared was sanctified, so that Joshua was commanded to put off his shoes, was, no doubt, the very same whom all the angels of heaven worship."

*Joshua, chap. 5, verses 13, 14, and 15.
THE WALLS OF JERICHO FALL DOWN.

The first town besieged by Joshua after he had made his miraculous passage over the river Jordan, was Jericho, a considerable city in the tribe of Benjamin, about seven leagues from Jerusalem, and called the city of Palms, in consequence of the great numbers of those trees that grew upon the plain in which it stood. Before he commenced the siege, the Israelite general sent into the town two spies, who, after they had executed his orders, went into a house of public entertainment, kept by a woman named Rahab. When search was made after them, the hostess hid them under some stalks of flax which were drying upon the roof, and they thus escaped detection. After the search was over, her house being situated upon the city wall, and the gates being shut to prevent their escape, she let them down by a silken cord from a window which opened upon the country. For this service, Joshua ordered that, upon taking the city, the two spies should enter Rahab's house, and protect her and all her relations from violence, and that the whole of her property should be secured from plunder. The siege was undertaken at the express command of God, and was to be pursued as follows. All the army was to march round Jericho, accompanied by seven priests walking in procession before the ark, having in their hands trumpets made of rams' horns. This was to be repeated for six successive days. On the seventh day, the whole army was to pass in battle array round the city seven times, when, on a given signal, the priests were to blow their horns, and the people to shout, upon which the divine oracle declared that the walls should fall down, and the city be taken. These orders were obeyed to the minutest particular. "So the people shouted when the priests blew with the trumpets: and it came to pass, when the people heard the sound of the trumpet, and the people shouted with a great shout, that the wall fell down flat, so that the people went up into the city, every man straight before him, and they took the city." The point of time taken by the artist is the first crash of the tumbling walls, caused by the miraculous blast from the rams' horns, and the shout raised by the people. Joshua appears in the foreground, raising the voice of thanksgiving to God.

* Joshua, chapter vi., verse 20.
JOSHUA COMMANOING THE SUN TO STAND STILL.

The Gibeonites having by a crafty device beguiled Joshua into an alliance with them; in consequence of their desertion from the common cause and their league with the invaders of Canaan, four kings of the Amorites, under the command of Adonizedek, king of Jerusalem, confederated against Gibeon and encamped before it. The Gibeonites, unable to resist so powerful a combination, in their extremity sent to Joshua, who, coming immediately to their rescue, engaged the enemy and routed them. As the confederates fled from the pursuit of the victors they were overtaken by a storm of hail, which fell upon them in such large masses that few escaped alive; and in order to enable the host of Israel to accomplish their entire destruction, the setting of the sun was protracted, and the moon remained stationary in her course until the extermination of the Canaanites was completed. "Then spake Joshua to the Lord in the day when the Lord delivered up the Amorites before the children of Israel, and he said in the sight of Israel, Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon; and thou, Moon, in the valley of Ajalon. And the sun stood still, and the moon stayed, until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies."* In the illustration, Joshua is seen upon an eminence above the armies, in the act of commanding the sun to stay his course. Beside him are the high priests of Israel, whom the artist supposes to have borne the ark of the Covenant to the battle. On the summit of a distant hill appears the city of Gibeon, whence the Gibeonites are issuing to support their allies. They advance and attack the Amorites in the rear, already discomfited by the Israelites, who are pursuing them towards Bethhoron, which appears in the perspective above the camp of the confederates. In the extreme distance Mount Lebanon is just visible.

* Joshua, chapter 10, verses 12 and 13.
JAEL KILLETH SISERA.

After the death of Ehud, the Israelites as they had before done, embraced the idolatries of the heathen. To punish them for this debasing vacillation, the Almighty delivered them into the hands of Jabin, who, assuming the title of King of Canaan, fixed his imperial residence at Hazor. Having appointed Sisera, an experienced general, to the command of his army, he ordered him to attack the Israelites, already appalled at his formidable preparations. In the midst of their dismay, Deborah, an eminent prophetess, who had become a person of considerable repute in Israel as a dispenser of justice, induced Barak, after some unmanly reluctance on his part, to march against Jabin's general. Barak posted his army in an advantageous position on Mount Tabor, and there waited the enemy's approach. Sisera, in the full confidence of victory, advanced without delay from Harosheth, crossed the river Kishon, and encamped at the foot of the mountain, in hopes of cutting off the Hebrew leader's retreat. But Barak, anticipating his purpose, marched suddenly forward, and coming unexpectedly upon the hosts of Canaan, engaged and totally routed them. Sisera, seeing his army discomfited, fled for security to the tent of Heber the Kenite, who being absent, the Canaanitish general claimed the rights of hospitality from his wife, as Heber was Jabin's ally. Deceived by her promise of protection, and having refreshed himself with a draught of milk, first claiming from her a promise to admit no one into the tent, he lay down upon the floor and fell asleep, when his treacherous hostess "took a nail of the tent, and took a hammer in her hand, and went softly unto him, and smote the nail into his temples, and fastened it into the ground (for he was fast asleep and weary); so he died."

MANOAH'S SACRIFICE.
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Under the administration of the judges, Israel had enjoyed a peace of more than twenty years’ duration, when the people again provoked God, as they had before done, by the most abominable impieties. The Philistines now, taking advantage of the security in which a long peace had involved the Israelites, invaded their territories, and reduced them to great distress. It was at this period that the Almighty raised up a deliverer in Sampson, who discomfited the Philistines in every encounter, and rendered himself a terror to those enemies of his nation. His birth was attended with some remarkable circumstances. His mother having been a long time barren, was visited by an angel, who assured her that she would shortly bear a son, who should be a Nazarite, that is, a person dedicated to God from his birth. Upon this assurance the woman, whose name is nowhere recorded in Scripture, sought her husband Manoah, and related to him the divine promise; he immediately petitioned the Almighty to grant him an interview with his messenger. The requisition was complied with. The angel soon after appeared to the woman as she was in the field, where she was probably engaged in some agricultural occupation; she immediately sought her husband, who, being apprised of the circumstance, demanded of the heavenly messenger what he should do with the child, when the injunctions which had been before given to his wife were repeated to him. Upon asking the name of the messenger, Manoah received a rebuke. Then “Manoah took a kid with a meat offering, and offered it upon a rock unto the Lord, and the angel did wondrously,” (that is, acted in a supernatural manner, probably in bringing fire out of the rock to consume the sacrifice,) “and Manoah and his wife looked on. For it came to pass when the flame went up towards heaven from off the altar, that the angel of the Lord ascended in the flame of the altar; and Manoah and his wife looked on it, and fell on their faces to the ground.”

* Judges, chapter xiii., verses 18, 20.
DEILAH AND SAMSON.

The extraordinary prowess of Samson had rendered him so formidable a foe to the Philistines, that they made many efforts to get him into their power, which he invariably baffled. Having suffered himself to be bound with new cords exceedingly strong, as soon as his enemies approached to seize him he burst the cords as if they had been threads, and having no weapon at hand he took the jaw-bone of an ass which happened to be lying near, and with it slew no less than a thousand men. Soon after this exploit, despising the power of the Philistines, he went to Gaza, and entering the house of a courtesan remained there till midnight. Having received intelligence that the men of the city were approaching to secure him, he arose, took the two gates of Gaza, with all their appurtenances, posts, bars, and chain, placed them upon his shoulders and carried them to the top of a hill, that is before Hebron, which is supposed by some commentators to have been twenty miles distant. Shortly after this, however, that unfortunate event befell him which was the ultimate cause of his death. Happening to meet with a beautiful woman, named Delilah, in the vale of Sorek, a place famous for its vines, he fell in love with her, but whether he married her or took her as a concubine does not appear, though the general character of Samson renders the latter at least probable. The chief men among the Philistines observing the madness of his passion, bribed this mercenary woman to extract from him the secret of his wonderful strength. Having secured the bribe, she at length succeeded in winning from him the important communication, which was, that his vigour lay in the preservation of his hair. This she immediately revealed to his enemies, and having lulled him to sleep with her caresses, she "called for a man, and she caused him to shave off the seven locks of his head; and she began to afflict him, and his strength went from him."*

* Judges, chapter xvi. verse 19.
THE DEATH OF SAMPSON.

No sooner had Sampson fallen into the snare laid for him by Delilah than he was seized by the Philistines, and cast into prison in their city of Gaza. Here he remained about a year in solitary confinement, no doubt exposed to the severest privations, as he was in the power of a cruel and revengeful enemy. He was bound in strong fetters of brass, and "did grind in the prison-house," as slaves were accustomed to do, subjected to the most degrading indignities. In the course of time his hair grew to its original length; thus, although his great strength was interrupted by losing those consecrated locks wherein that strength lay, it was renewed as soon as they had attained their former growth. About this time, the princes of the Philistines, not in the least suspecting that his vast bodily energies would ever be restored, assembled in the temple of Dagon to commemorate the deliverance from their most formidable enemy. Being a day of national festivity, all the princes and nobles were present before that huge idol, to which they bowed in senseless adoration. After they had performed their impious devotions, the feast was spread for them, and, "when their hearts were merry," they sent to the keeper of the prison, commanding that Sampson should be brought before them, in order that they might amuse themselves at his sufferings, and triumph in his degradation. When they had "made sport with him" for some time, indignant at their unmanly cruelty, Sampson desired his guide to allow him to seat himself against the pillars that supported the edifice, in which his cowardly foes were deriding him, and which was at this time full of people both above and below the galleries. His request was no sooner complied with than he "took hold of the two middle pillars upon which the house stood, and on which it was borne up, of the one with his right hand, and the other with his left. And Sampson said, Let me die with the Philistines; and he bowed himself with all his might; and the house fell upon the lords, and upon all the people that were therein, so the dead which he slew at his death were more than they which he slew in his life*.

* Judges, chapter xvi., verses 30 and 31.
RUTH GLEANING IN THE FIELD OF BOAZ.

During the forty years' peace which ensued upon Deborah's triumph over Sisera, general of Jabin's forces, the Israelites incurred the anger of God, who visited them with a grievous famine; in consequence of which a man of Bethlehem, named Elimelech, with Naomi his wife, and his two sons, Mahlon and Chilion, went to dwell in the land of Moab. Elimelech died there, and his sons married two women of the country named Orpah and Ruth. About a couple of years after these marriages the young men died, when Naomi, their mother, having determined to return to her own country, requested the widows of her sons so remain in their native land, probably being unwilling to introduce her heathen relatives among the people of her own nation. Orpah took leave of her mother-in-law with tears and lamentations, but Ruth was determined to accompany her, and her appeal was so earnest, that Naomi at length consented. They quitted Moab, and reached Bethlehem about the time of barley harvest. Naomi had a rich relative, named Boaz, in whose fields Ruth proposed gleaning, and it so happened, that while she was thus occupied, Boaz saw her, and, being struck with her beauty, inquired of the person that was appointed to overlook the reapers who she was. "Then said Boaz unto his servant that was set over the reapers, Whose damsel is this?" Having ascertained that she was the daughter-in-law of his kinswoman, Naomi, he treated her with a most delicate and tender gallantry. When Ruth related the kind reception she had met with from Boaz, the wily mother-in-law instructed her how she should act, in order to strengthen the favourable impression already made upon her kinsman, the end of which was, as Naomi had foreseen, that Boaz married the beautiful Moabitess. This is one of the most beautiful episodes in the Bible, and the whole narrative is very touchingly detailed in the book of Ruth.

* Ruth, chapter ii., verse 5.
SAMUEL AND ELI.

After the birth of Samuel, when he had attained a competent age, his mother brought him to Shiloh, and having made a vow to devote him to the service of that God who had removed her barrenness and blessed her with a son, she presented him to Eli the high priest, in order that he might be instructed in the service of the tabernacle. The old man immediately received him, and girded him with a linen ephod, which was not a sacred garment, but one of mere honorary distinction, and worn by the subaltern ministers. It was a short tunic that hung loose from the shoulders without a girdle. As Samuel was too young to be admitted to the sacred office, it was a very distinguished honour to be so clothed. Now it happened that the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, were great profligates, ill-using the men who frequented the tabernacle, violating the women, and profaning the sacrifices. The father, though aware of their licentiousness, instead of chastising them, suffered their gross offences to pass with merely a slight rebuke. The Almighty was so incensed at this weakness on the part of his holy delegate, that after having warned him of the misery that should befall his house in consequence of the depravity of his two sons, called Samuel to the prophetic office, and made him the instrument of more fully communicating to the unhappy Eli the doom with which he was about to visit him. Perceiving that Samuel had received a divine communication, the venerable man, suspecting, probably, that he himself was the subject of it, charged the young prophet, in the most solemn form of adjuration, to reveal to him what the Lord had declared, "And Samuel told him every whit, and hid nothing from him. And he said, It is the Lord: let him do what seemeth him good." The death of his sons and his own almost immediately followed.

1 Samuel, chapter iii. verse 18.
THE FALL OF DAGON.

As a punishment to Eli for the misconduct of his sons, whom he neglected to correct, God caused the Israelites to be discomfited before the heathen. They were vanquished by the Philistines with great slaughter, the two Libertine sons of the high priest being among the slain, and the ark of the Lord fell into the enemy’s hands. Upon hearing the disastrous result of the conflict, the venerable hierarch, being heavy and very old, fell from his seat, dislocated his neck, and died, after he had held the sacerdotal office forty years. The Philistines, elated at having obtained possession of the ark, carried it in triumph to Ashdod, one of their principal cities, and placed it in the temple of their god, Dagon, close by his image. "When the Philistines took the ark of God, they brought it into the house of Dagon, and set it by Dagon. And when they of Ashdod arose early on the morrow, behold, Dagon was fallen upon his face to the earth before the ark of the Lord, and they took Dagon and set him in his place again. And when they arose early on the morrow morning, behold Dagon was fallen upon his face to the ground before the ark of the Lord, and the head of Dagon and both the palms of his hands were cut off upon the threshold, only the stump of Dagon was left to him."* This heathen idol represented a monster half man and half fish, whence some derive its name from Bag, a fish—fish and pigeons being sacred to this monstrous deity of Ashdod. In the picture the image is seen prostrate before the ark of the Lord, which was a posture of the most humble adoration, as if to show to the Philistines the supremacy of the God of Israel, that he was a God above all Gods. The people of Ashdod are seen thronging to the temple to offer their adorations to the idol, when they are overwhelmed with consternation at beholding the object of their profane worship cast headlong upon the floor of the sanctuary before the ark of the Lord.

* I Samuel, chap. 5, verses 2, 3, and 4.
SAUL AND THE WITCH OF ENDOR.

When Saul was menaced by the Philistine army, encamped at Shunem, a city belonging to the tribe of Issachar, fearing the issue, and apprehending, from his numerous delinquencies, that God had abandoned him, the dejected king adopted a singular expedient to ascertain the result of a conflict with the enemy. He had assembled his forces upon Mount Gilboa, whence he could overlook the encampment of the foe. Losing his confidence at the sight of their prodigious numbers, he determined to consult a celebrated sorceress living at Endor, a small town belonging to the tribe of Manasseh, and about eight miles from that part of Mount Gilboa where the army of Israel was encamped. In conformity with this resolution, Saul visited Endor in disguise, accompanied only by two attendants upon whose fidelity he could rely. Coming by night to the woman's house for the better security against surprise, Saul desired her to raise up him whom he should name unto her. Having assured her of indemnity against punishment for the exercising of her unlawful calling, he commanded that she should call up Samuel. This she immediately did, and learnt from the spectre that it was Saul who had commanded her to raise the dead prophet. "And the king said unto her, What sawest thou? And the woman said unto Saul, I saw gods ascending out of the earth. And he said unto her, What form is he of? And she said, An old man cometh up, and he is covered with a mantle. And Saul perceived that it was Samuel, and he stooped with his face to the ground, and bowed himself."* This fully explains the picture. The apparition inquiring why he was raised, was answered by the trembling king that he was about to be attacked by the Philistines, and being deserted by God in his distress, he desired to know of Samuel what he should do. The answer was wofully prophetic: he was told that the next day his army should be routed by the enemy, and he and his sons slain. The prediction was accomplished.

* 1 Samuel, chapter xxviii., verses 13, 14.
DAVID FINDETH SAUL ASLEEP IN THE TRENCH.

Saul having learned from the Ziphites where David had concealed himself in order to escape his vengeance, took with him three thousand men, and encamped in the neighbourhood of Hachilah, a hill among the defiles of which David and his men had sought refuge from the royal tyranny. Anxious to ascertain the strength of Saul's army, "David arose, and came to the place where Saul had pitched his tents: and David beheld the place where Saul lay, and Abner the son of Ner, the captain of his host: and Saul lay in the trench, and the people pitched round about him." David was accompanied upon this occasion by his nephew Abishai, who, when he found that Saul and all his host were wrapped in sleep, proposed putting the king to death at once, and thus securing his uncle's future safety; but to this David objected, considering it a crime of the highest enormity to slay the Lord's anointed. In order, however, that he might prove his forbearance at a suitable time, he desired Abishai to remove to their secret abode in the mountain, a crust of water and a spear, which were placed at Saul's head. Then David, having retired to a distance, ascended an eminence, and in a loud voice upbraided Abner for his remissness in leaving his master exposed to the sword of an enemy. Upon which Saul, hearing his voice, rose, and perceiving the peril from which he had escaped through the generosity of the man whom he had so long and grievously wronged, invited his approach in accents of kindness and encouragement. David then expostulated with him much in the same manner that he had done after Saul's escape from the cave, adding to what he had formerly said, that by obliging him to quit the land of his nativity, the king had forced him to associate with heathens and idolators, by which he had reduced him to the necessity of joining in their unholy rites. Saul immediately acknowledged his error, charged himself with cruelty, applauded David's generosity, and gave him his most solemn assurance that he would never again make any attempt upon his life.

* 1 Samuel, chapter xxvi, verse 5.
NATHAN REPROVING DAVID.

David having become enamoured of the wife of an officer in his army which was then besieging Rabbah, a chief city of the Ammonites, had criminal intercourse with her during her husband's absence, and concluded by sending private orders to his general, Joab, to have the husband slain. Accordingly, in an assault upon the Ammonitish city, being abandoned by the soldiers, as had been preconcerted between them and their general, the deserted Hittite was immediately surrounded by the enemy and slain. As soon as Uriah was dead, his wife made a show of mourning for him, though her sorrow was shortly "turned into joy" by her becoming the spouse of her sovereign upon the expiration of the days of her mourning. The happiness of the royal criminal and the adulteress, whose husband he had caused to be murdered, was soon interrupted by God sending a prophet to announce to David the penalty which he had incurred by this grievous crime. Nathan having represented to him in a beautiful parable a picture of his iniquity, induced the king, before he was conscious of the application of this parable to his own crimes, to pronounce himself deserving of the most exemplary chastisement. No sooner had Nathan obtained this admission from the royal offender, than with the sacred privilege which his prophetic office conferred upon him, he "said to David, thou art the man!" and concluded by foretelling at considerable length the miseries that would eventually befall his family, which would be preceded by the death of the issue of his criminal intercourse with the wife of Uriah. In the illustration, the king appears cowering under the awful denunciation of the prophet, who stands before him exercising the authority of a delegate of the Most High.

* 2 Samuel, chap. xii. verse 7.
THE DEATH OF ABSALOM.

Absalom, taking advantage of his father'sindiscreet partiality towards him, determined to usurp the crown, and, sending emissaries throughout Israel, ordered himself to be proclaimed king at Hebron. He was almost immediately acknowledged by the great majority of the nation. Multitudes daily flocked to his standard. David, therefore, fled from Jerusalem, whither Absalom immediately repaired, and was acknowledged sovereign. Ahithophel advised him to pursue his father with an army; but Hushai, who pretended to take part in his rebellion, and to be a bitter enemy of the deposed monarch, diverted him for the moment from this unnatural purpose. Shortly after, however, Absalom marched against David with a numerous army, and having crossed the river Jordan encamped near the spot where his father had retired. David had a comparatively small but resolute band commanded by Joab, Absalom's uncle, one of the most experienced officers of his time. After a short conflict the rebel army was defeated with the loss of twenty thousand men slain upon the field of battle. When Absalom perceived the sad reverse which had overtaken him, he fled through the forest of Ephraim. "And Absalom rode upon a mule, and the mule went under the thick boughs of a great oak, and his head caught hold of the oak, and he was taken up between the heaven and the earth; and the mule that was under him went away". Thus, that beautiful hair, of which he felt so vain, ultimately proved his destruction; for while he was suspended from the branch of the oak, Joab, having received information of his disaster from a soldier who had been in pursuit of the retreating troops, took three darts, and coming to the oak on which the rebellious prince was hanging, thrust them through his heart; after this ten of Joab's armour-bearers surrounded and despatched him; then, taking his body from the tree, they threw it into a pit in the wood and covered it with a heap of stones. When his melancholy end was communicated to David, he mourned for him "with overmuch sorrow."

* 2 Samuel, chapter xviii., verse 9.
DAVID RENEWETH HIS OATH TO BATHSHEBA.
DAVID RENEWETH HIS OATH TO BATHSHEBA.

ADONIJAH, David's eldest surviving son, presuming upon the partiality of his aged father, whose years and increasing infirmities rendered it more than probable that another sovereign must shortly sit upon the throne of Israel, determined, if possible, to be proclaimed king. For this purpose, he seduced Joab, general of the forces, and Abiathar, the high priest, to espouse his cause. By their advice he invited all his brothers, except Solomon, to a sumptuous entertainment, when he unfolded to them his ambitious designs. Nathan, the prophet, having gained intelligence of this, and knowing that Solomon was designed by his father to succeed him in his regality over Israel, informed Bathsheba of the conspiracy against her son, at the same time advising her to persuade David to issue an immediate proclamation appointing Solomon his successor. Bathsheba repaired to the king's apartment, and having acquainted him with the designs of Adonijah, besought him to confirm the oath which he had formerly made to her, by declaring that her son should succeed to his throne. To this he consented without the slightest reluctance, in the presence of Nathan the prophet, Zadok the priest, and Benaiah captain of his guards, whom he had summoned to his presence for the purpose of authenticating this solemn transaction. "The king also said unto them, Take with you the servants of your lord, and cause Solomon my son to ride upon mine own mule, and bring him down to Gihon: And let Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet anoint him there king over Israel: and blow ye with the trumpet, and say, God save king Solomon." In the picture, Bathsheba appears on her knees at the foot of the royal couch, and by her side are the prophet, priest, and captain of the guard. Behind stand several servants of the household.

* 1 Kings, chapter i., verses 33, 34.
THE DEDICATION OF THE TEMPLE.

The Temple being finished, Solomon determined to postpone the dedication of it to the following year, as it was a year of jubilee. Some days before the feast of tabernacles, all the princes of the tribes and heads of families being assembled to solemnize so essential a rite, he commanded the priests and Levites to bring the different presents which David had bequeathed for the temple service. The numerous vessels appointed for the altar and sanctuary were next brought in, and lastly, with great solemnity, the Ark of the Covenant, and the Tabernacle of the Congregation. As soon as the Ark was deposited, the whole of the sacred building was filled with a miraculous cloud, upon which Solomon, prostrating himself towards the sanctuary, addressed a solemn prayer to God. "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, which spake with his mouth unto David my father, and hath with his hand fulfilled it, saying, Since the day that I brought forth my people Israel out of Egypt, I chose no city out of all the tribes of Israel to build an house, that my name might be therein; but I chose David to be over my people Israel. And it was in the heart of David my father to build an house for the name of the Lord God of Israel." He concluded by beseeching the Lord Jehovah to fulfill the promise which he had made to David in favour of his successors. The picture represents the court of the priests: Solomon is seen in the foreground, standing before the brazen sea, which appears in the centre of the area. The king is raising his hands towards heaven, in an attitude of holy supplication. Below, on his left, are the Levites, with their harps, chanting those spiritual songs appointed for the temple service. Beyond them is the brazen altar of sacrifice. It has an ascent by steps, being sloped like the roof of a modern dwelling-house. Three priests are seen near the summit conducting the sacrifices.

* 1 Kings, chapter viii., verses 15, 16, 17.
THE WIFE OF JEROBOAM AND AHIJAH.

Not long after the withering and restoration of Jeroboam's hand, as described in the thirteenth chapter of the First Book of Kings, the son of Jeroboam, a prince of great promise, fell sick. The father, anxious to know the probable fate of his child, prevailed upon his queen to disguise herself in the dress of an ordinary person, and repair to Shiloh, to inquire of the prophet Ahijah what was likely to be the issue of the prince's disorder. As the venerable man was blind, she conceived there could be little likelihood of his detecting her, her person more than probably being unknown to him, and consequently expressed no reluctance in acceding to the king's wishes. The whole matter, however, had been revealed to the prophet by a divine communication, and therefore "it was so, when Ahijah heard the sound of her feet, as she came in at the door, that he said, Come in, thou wife of Jeroboam; why feignest thou thyself to be another? for I am sent to thee with heavy tidings." The indignant old man now upbraided Jeroboam with ingratitude to God, who had made him king, and distinguished him by such signal displays of his benevolence; charged him with impiety and apostacy in setting up images as objects of religious worship; foretold the extinction of his race, and the death of the child then sick; threatened grievous calamities to his people for their wickedness in conforming to the idolatrous worship which he had introduced among them, and then dismissed his royal visitor. On her return to the palace, she found the young prince in the agonies of death. This calamity did not deter the king from his impious career, and he was shortly after cut off in the midst of his sins. The print represents the venerable Ahijah, seated in his chair in a state of prophetic rapture, raising his hand and impregating the divine malediction upon the race of Jeroboam. The queen has fallen to the earth under the shock of her feelings at hearing the awful denunciation of God's judgments. The attendant stands in mute astonishment at hearing his master declare the presence of the queen.

* 1 Kings, chapter xiv., verse 6.
ELIJAH AND THE WIDOW’S SON.

After Elijah had announced to Ahab the famine with which God was about to visit his people on account of their apostacy from the true religion, the prophet, as soon as the divine threat was realised, retired to the brook Cherith, where he continued concealed for the space of a whole year, in order to avoid the persecution of Ahab’s wicked queen. Here he was miraculously supplied with food every day by ravens, and the brook furnished him with a wholesome and refreshing beverage. At length, from the long continuance of drought, the brook dried up, and Elijah was in danger of perishing for want of water, when the Almighty commanded him to repair to Zarephath, or, as it is called in the New Testament, Sarepta, a city of the Sidonians, situated between Tyre and Sidon, where he had appointed a poor widow to entertain him. The prophet immediately took his journey to Zarephath, where the famine had already reached and spread over the whole neighbouring country. As Elijah approached the city, he met the poor widow without the walls, gathering sticks, and, upon asking her to give him a little water and a morsel of bread, she replied that the famine had reduced her to the last state of destitution, having only a handful of meal, and a little oil in a cruse, which she was going to make into a cake for herself and child, being the last meal she should be able to provide. The prophet, however, desired her to do his bidding; at the same time assuring her that she and her son should be supported during the famine by the merciful interposition of that God who had visited the land with dearth and drought. Relying upon the promise of the holy man, she obeyed his commands, after which she, her son, and Elijah, lived upon the meal and oil for the space of two years. During this period the widow’s son fell sick and died, when she upbraided the prophet as the cause of her calamity: "he said unto her, Give me thy son. And he took him out of her bosom, and carried him up into a loft where he abode, and laid him upon his own bed.*" Having offered up a prayer to Heaven, "the soul of the child came into him again, and he revived †."

* 1 Kings, chapter xvii., verse 19.  † Ibid., verse 22.
ELIJAH'S SACRIFICE.

In the third year of the famine with which God had visited the land of Israel on account of the impiety of Ahab, who encouraged the most abominable idolatries among his people, the Almighty sent Elijah to inform the wicked king that he should shortly send rain upon the earth. When Ahab first saw the prophet he began to upbraid him as the cause of the calamity under which his countrymen were then suffering; but Elijah, recriminating, fearlessly charged it upon the sins of the king. Ahab being a worshipper of Baal, the Tishbite declared that the gods which he worshipped were false gods, and that he would undertake to prove this if Ahab would summon his people to meet upon Mount Carmel, and bring thither the four hundred and fifty priests of Baal, together with the four hundred priests of Astarte, who were supported at Jezebel's table. This was accordingly done, when the prophet made the following proposal: that the priests of Baal should take an ox, cut it into pieces, lay it upon an altar, on which there was no fire, and that he would do the same, they calling the while upon their Gods and he upon his. Then the God who consumed the sacrifice by a fire from Heaven, whether Baal or the Lord Jehovah, should be confessed by the whole assembled multitude to be the only true God. This proposal was unanimously agreed to. The priests of Baal immediately prepared their oblation, and, after calling loudly upon Baal, cut themselves with knives to render him propitious, while Elijah mocked the impotence of their fanaticism. Their invocation remained unanswered. Elijah having prepared his sacrifice, called upon the God of all the earth, when fire descended in a stream from Heaven, "consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench ." Thus the prophet triumphed, and all the false priests of Baal were immediately slain.

*1 Kings, chapter xviii., verse 38.
ELIJAH AND THE EARTHQUAKE.

No sooner had Elijah slain the prophets of Baal than intelligence of it was conveyed to the implacable Jezebel, who vowed an immediate and sanguinary revenge, of which she sent him word. The prophet in consequence quitted the dominions of Ahab, withdrew into the wilderness a day's journey from Beer-sheba, a town situated at the southern extremity of the Holy Land, and bordering upon the desert. Having walked all day, towards evening, overcome by fatigue, and depressed at the melancholy prospect before him, he cast himself under a juniper tree. Here he fell asleep, when he was awaked by a messenger from Heaven, who invited him to arise and refresh himself. Upon looking round him he saw close at hand a baked cake, and a cruse of water. Having partaken freely of this welcome repast, his strength was so renovated, and all his faculties so miraculously fortified, that "he went in the strength of that meat forty days and forty nights," without requiring any further nourishment until he arrived at Mount Horeb. Here he entered a cave, in which he lodged, and where the Almighty, by several emblematical displays of his power, made him not only sensible of his omnipotence, of which he was already fully assured, but gave him to understand that he would not fail to take vengeance upon the house of Ahab for its abominable idolatries. After the prophet had expressed his sore regret at the iniquities of God's people, the Lord said, "Go forth, and stand upon the mount before the Lord. And, behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the Lord; but the Lord was not in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake." The print represents the prophet upon a ledge of the mountain, and before him the mighty wind is rushing, which rends asunder the rocks and cleaves the solid earth. The earthquake has already begun to give its awful warning of succession, but the man of God calmly stands awaiting the consummation of the Divine Intention, which was ultimately revealed to him by the still small voice that followed the several manifestations of Almighty power, exhibited in the wind, the earthquake, and the fire.

* 1 Kings, chapter six., verse 11.
ELISHA ON HIS DEATH-BED.

Soon after Jehoash ascended the throne of Israel, the prophet Elisha fell sick, on which account the King of Israel came to visit him, and having mourned over him with tears, and declared what Israel would lose by his death, received Elisha's blessing and a prophetic promise of success against his enemies the Syrians. "And Elisha said unto him, take bow and arrows: and he took unto him bow and arrows. And he said to the king of Israel, put thine hand upon the bow: and he put his hand upon it: and Elisha put his hands upon the king's hands. And he said, open the window eastward: and he opened it. Then Elisha said, shoot: and he shot. And he said, The arrow of the Lord's deliverance, and the arrow of deliverance from Syria: for thou shalt smite the Syrians in Aphek, till thou have consumed them." The prophet soon after died.

"Shooting the arrows," says Le Clerc, in his commentary upon the passage, "was a symbolical action, whereby the prophet meant to represent more fully and plainly to the king of Israel the victory which he had promised him against the Syrians. His shooting the first arrow eastward, or towards that part of the country which the Syrians had taken from his ancestors, was a declaration of war against them for so doing: and his striking the other arrows against the ground, as described in the eighteenth verse, was an indication how many victories he was to obtain. But his stopping his hand too soon, denoted the imperfection of his conquests, which did not please the prophet so well." In the accompanying illustration, Elisha appears upon his bed, pointing through the window towards the east, where lay those conquered lands which Jehoash was to redeem, according to the prediction of the dying man. The king has his bow bent, and is in the act of discharging an arrow in the direction pointed out by Elisha. Behind him stands a priest, ready to offer the last consolations of religion to the expiring prophet, together with an attendant of his household.

* 2 Kings, chapter xiii., verses 15, 16, 17.
THE ANGEL SLAYETH THE ASSYRIANS.

When the Assyrian army was before Lachish, Sennacherib sent a peremptory message to Hezekiah king of Judah, commanding the surrender of Jerusalem. The unhappy king, terrified at the demand, rent his clothes, and put sackcloth upon his loins, then went into the Temple to humble himself before God, and despatched a message to Isaiah, informing him of the whole proceeding. The prophet sent an answer to the terrified king, advising him to treat with contempt the menaces of the tyrant, and commit himself to the protection of God, who would not suffer the heathen to prevail against Jerusalem. Just at this time news was brought to the Assyrian monarch that some part of his dominions were invaded by the king of Ethiopia, but before he raised the siege of Libnah, then invested by his troops, he sent another message to Hezekiah, if possible, more peremptory and insulting than before. This was delivered in a letter, which Hezekiah had no sooner read, than he went into the Temple and spread it before the Lord, imploring deliverance from the enemy. Meanwhile the Assyrian general having engaged and routed the Ethiopian army, marched towards Jerusalem, fully bent upon accomplishing its destruction. Flushed with his late victory, he had determined, not only to destroy all the inhabitants of the holy city, but to raze it to the ground. Hezekiah's terrors were now excited to the utmost pitch of distress, when he received assurance from Isaiah that God would not permit the capital of Judah, which he had taken under his protection, to be destroyed, but that the heathen, notwithstanding his vaunts, would be foiled in his undertaking. On the very night after this declaration of the prophet, while the army of the enemy was hushed in sleep, "the angel of the Lord went out, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians an hundred four-score and five thousand: and when they arose early in the morning, behold they were all dead corpses." 

2 Kings, chapter xix., verse 35.
JERUSALEM TAKEN CAPTIVE INTO BABYLON.
JEHOIAKIM AND THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL LED INTO CAPTIVITY.

JEHOIAKIM ascended the throne of Jerusalem in the six hundred and tenth year before Christ, but continuing to follow the vicious course of his predecessor, he drew down upon himself the indignation of heaven, and was visited with a signal chastisement. Within a few years after his accession to the throne, having grievously oppressed the people with taxes to satisfy the avaricious demands of Pharaoh king of Egypt, who had placed him upon the throne, Nebuchadnezzer with a large army approached Jerusalem, to which he laid siege. Jeholakim, who was a dastardly and weak prince, was so terrified at the approach of the Babylonish army, that he went out to meet the invader, accompanied by his mother and all the chief persons of his kingdom; and supplicating the clemency of Nebuchadnezzar, resigned his crown, and submitted to the degraded condition of a captive. He was immediately put in chains and sent to Babylon with his family, and a vast number of captives. This happened in the eighth year of his reign. Nebuchadnezzar not only made the king of Jerusalem and his people captive, but "he carried out thence all the treasures of the house of the Lord, and the treasures of the king's house, and cut in pieces all the vessels of gold which Solomon, king of Israel, had made in the temple of the Lord, as the Lord had said. And he carried away all Jerusalem, and all the princes, and all the mighty men of valour, even ten thousand captives, and all the craftsmen and smiths; none remained save the poorest sort of the people of the land."* In the accompanying illustration, the immense host of the Jews are seen on their march as captives towards Babylon, which appears in the distance, its mighty walls laved by the river Euphrates, flowing in tranquil majesty beneath them. In the foreground are the waggons loaded with the rich spoils of the temple. On the left, behind the captives, appears the rear guard of the Babylonish army.

* 2 Kings, chapter xxiv. verses 13 and 14.
JOASH SAVED BY JEHOSHABEATH.

Athaliah, daughter of Omri king of Samaria, and wife of Jehoram king of Judah, was, next to Jezebel, one of the most profligate women mentioned in sacred history. Upon the death of Ahaziah, who was slain by a party of Jehu's troops, which, pursuing him as he fled from the presence of the king, mortally wounded him in his chariot,—his ambitious mother usurped the kingdom, and, with a view to her political security, ordered all the children which Jehoram had by another wife to be destroyed, together with all their offspring. "But Jehoshabeath, the daughter of the king, took Joash the son of Ahaziah, and stole him from among the king's sons that were slain, and put him and his nurse in a bedchamber. So Jehoshabeath, the daughter of King Jehoram, the wife of Jehoiada the priest, (for she was the sister of Ahaziah,) hid him from Athaliah, so that she slew him not." Jehoshabeath was the sister of Ahaziah by a different mother; she was however the daughter of Jehoram, and therefore one of those whom the vindictive queen had doomed to destruction. While the royal mandate was in course of execution she escaped the family massacre, and taking the infant son of her late brother, kept him and his nurse concealed for the space of six years, in an apartment of the temple. How signally did the divine chastisements fall upon the families of the idolatrous kings of Israel! The whole offspring of Jeroboam, Baasha, and Ahab, was cut off. The kings of Judah, likewise, having contracted an affinity with the house of Ahab, and being by them seduced into the practice of idolatry, their families were destroyed by three successive massacres. First, Jehoram slew all his brethren: then Jehu put to death all his brother's children; and next Athallah destroyed all that remained. Thus are human delinquencies visited with the severest punishments. In the print, Jehoshabeath is seen fleeing with the infant, accompanied by its nurse, from the destroyers of her relatives; when her husband, Jehoiada the priest, receives them, and conducts them into a place of security.

* 2 Chronicles, chapter xxii., verse 11.
NEHEMIAH MOURNING OVER JERUSALEM.
NEHEMIAH MOURNING OVER JERUSALEM.

NEHEMIAH, who was cup-bearer to Ahasuerus, the Artaxerxes Longimanus, according to Dr. Prideaux, of Profane History, having been informed by some persons lately arrived from Jerusalem, that the city was in a deplorable state of desolation, was sorely distressed at the sorrowful recital. He learned to his great grief that its walls were broken down, its gates destroyed, and its inhabitants exposed to the incursions of their enemies, who were every day taking advantage of their unprotected state. The mournful relation affected him so deeply, that he "sat down and wept, and mourned certain days, and fasted, and prayed before the God of heaven." He supplicated the Almighty to favour the design which he entertained of beseeching the king's permission to repair to that capital, which had fallen into the most deplorable disorder, for the purpose of regulating the administration, and of ameliorating the condition of his miserable countrymen. When Nehemiah appeared the next time before the king, Ahasuerus, perceiving by his melancholy bearing that he was under some sorrowful influence, inquired what caused his depression. Encouraged by this condescension, the cup-bearer related to his royal master the cause of his distress, and, at the intercession of Queen Esther, the sovereign granted him leave to go immediately to Jerusalem to repair the walls, set up the gates, regulate her civil and ecclesiastical administration, and fortify the city against the incursions of its neighbours. He proceeded thither without delay; when, in spite of the opposition of Sanballat, a chief of the Cuthites or Samaritans, who were sworn enemies to the Jews, he eventually accomplished his purpose. In the print the artist has supposed him to have arrived by moonlight before Jerusalem; when beholding its external desolation, its walls broken down, and many of its gorgeous edifices overthrown, he goes apart upon an elevation where he can overlook the holy city, and "pours out his soul in tears."

* Nehemiah, chapter i., verse 4.
EZRA READING THE LAW.
EZRA READING THE LAW.

As soon as the walls of Jerusalem were rebuilt, after the return of Nehemiah, which was accomplished in fifty-two days, the governor ordered the signal success of his countrymen to be celebrated with suitable thanksgivings. "And all the people gathered themselves together as one man into the street that was before the water gate; and they spake unto Ezra the scribe to bring the book of the law of Moses, which the Lord had commanded to Israel. And Ezra the priest brought the law before the congregation both of men and women, and all that could hear with understanding, upon the first day of the seventh month. And he read therein before the street that was before the water gate from the morning until mid-day, before the men and the women and those that could understand; and the ears of all the people were attentive unto the book of the law. And Ezra the scribe stood upon a pulpit of wood, which they had made for the purpose; and beside him stood Mattithiah, and Shema, and Aniaiah, and Urijah, and Hilkiah, and Maaseiah, on his right hand; and on his left hand, Pedaijah, and Michael, and Malchiah and Hashum, and Hashbadana, Zechariah, and Meshullam. And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people; (for he was above all the people;) and when he opened it, all the people stood up: and Ezra blessed the Lord, the great God. And all the people answered, Amen, Amen, with lifting up their hands: and they bowed their heads, and worshipped the Lord with their faces to the ground."* In the accompanying illustration, Ezra appears upon a raised pulpit of wood, just before one of the principal gates of the city, accompanied by the Levites, mentioned in the text, who are supposed to have severally assisted him, when he was weary, as the sacred ceremony occupied several hours, from morning to mid-day.

* Nehemiah, chapter viii., verse 1-9.
ESTHER TOUCHING THE SCEPTRE.

Esther was a Jewess of the tribe of Benjamin. Being left an orphan, her uncle Mordecai became her guardian. Ahasuerus, the reigning king of Persia, having divorced his queen Vashti because she refused to appear before his court, which he had summoned for the purpose of beholding and admiring her beauty, ordered search to be made throughout his dominions for the most lovely woman, that he might elevate her to share his throne. Esther was selected, and immediately conducted to court. When the proper time arrived she was led into the royal presence, and being approved of by the sovereign, he married her without ascertaining who she was, satisfied with the beauty of her person and the modesty of her demeanour. Mordecai, her uncle, was keeper of the palace gate, a place no doubt of considerable trust, though, by Calmet and other commentators, he is supposed to have repaired to this place daily to inquire after his niece's health. He did not make known his relationship to the queen, fearing, probably, that it might prejudice her in the eyes of her royal consort. Mordecai, by refusing to honour Haman an Amalekite, of the race of Agag, and the king's favourite, drew upon himself that officer's indignation, who in revenge induced his sovereign to issue a proclamation, condemning to death all of the race of Abraham then dwelling within his dominions. Esther was apprised of this by her uncle, who urged her to lose no time in counteracting the sanguinary schemes of this pampered minion. She consequently prepared herself to appear before the king. After three days she put on her royal apparel and placed herself at the door of an inner chamber in which her royal lord was seated in state. "And it was so, when the king saw Esther the queen standing in the court, that she obtained favour in his sight: and the king held out to Esther the golden sceptre that was in his hand. So Esther drew near, and touched the top of the sceptre." The issue of this interview was, that she obtained the revocation of the decree against her countrymen, the execution of the treacherous Haman, and the exaltation of her uncle Mordecai.

* Esther, chapter v., verse 2.
MORDECAI'S TRIUMPH.

After king Ahasuerus had married Esther, a jewess, and niece to Mordecai, who seems to have been one of the porters to the royal palace, or some inferior officer of the household, Haman, an Amalekite of the posterity of Agag, and a chief favourite of the sovereign, took a dislike to Mordecai, who refused to do him that homage which the pampered minion required. In consequence, Haman prevailed upon the king to issue a decree against the Jews as rebels against his government, by which all of that nation within his dominions were ordered to be put to the sword. Upon the publication of this edict, Mordecai, who, being a Jew, was included in the proscription, prevailed upon his niece to intercede with the king to annul the fatal proclamation. After obtaining an interview, and permission to address the sovereign, which was an especial favour, she solicited a boon, and, upon his promising to grant it, requested that he would honour her with his presence at a banquet which she had prepared, accompanied by his favourite. Upon his arrival, the king asked Esther what she desired, but all the favour she solicited was, that he and Haman would honour her with their presence at a similar banquet on the following day. The favourite, proud of the queen's notice, and relying upon his sovereign's favour, determined to obtain the king's grant to have Mordecai hanged, and anticipating the fulfilment of his revenge, ordered a gallows fifty feet high to be immediately erected. The next day at the banquet, it having been brought to the king's recollection that Mordecai had once saved his life by discovering to him the treason of two of his chamberlains, he asked the favourite how he would advise him to reward a man who had deserved the most signal marks of his favour. Haman, thinking he was the person meant, gave his advice accordingly. Then the king ordered the Amalekite to do unto the Jew as the former had advised, under the impression that himself was the person to be honoured. "Then took Haman the apparel and the horse, and arrayed Mordecai, and brought him on horseback through the street of the city, and proclaimed before him, Thus shall it be done unto the man whom the king delighteth to honour."*

* Esther, chapter vi. verse 11.
ESTHER'S FEAST.

When Haman appeared at the feast to which Esther had invited him, with the king, the latter begged to know what the request was which she proposed making to him, and which he had promised to grant, even though it should extend to the half of his kingdom. The queen then, to the astonishment of Haman, made her solicitation, which was, that her lord would spare the lives of her people, the Israelites, against whom the royal favourite had induced him to publish a decree devoting them to death. "Then the king Ahasuerus answered and said unto Esther the queen, Who is he? and where is he, that durst presume in his heart to do so? And Esther said, The adversary and enemy is this wicked Haman. Then Haman was afraid before the king and the queen. And the king arising from the banquet of wine in his wrath went into the palace garden; and Haman stood up to make request for his life to Esther the queen; for he saw that there was evil determined against him by the king. Then the king returned out of the palace garden into the place of the banquet of wine; and Haman was fallen upon the bed whereon Esther was. Then said the king, Will he force the queen also before me in the house? As the word went out of the king's mouth, they covered Haman's face." This was done to signify the king's indignation against him. The chamberlain who had summoned his royal master to the banquet, having seen the gallows which Haman had prepared for Mordecai, who had saved the king's life, and having ascertained the purpose for which it had been erected, acquainted his sovereign with the circumstance. Ahasuerus gave immediate orders that the unworthy favourite should be hanged upon it, and his estate, which was very large, given to the queen. This was instantly done. Thus Haman expiated his crimes upon the gallows he had erected for an innocent man, and that man was promoted to the honour of being at once the queen's steward and the king's favourite.

* Esther, chapter vii., verses 5, 6, 7, and 8.
GOD ANSWERING JOB FROM THE WHIRLWIND.

Job, a man celebrated for his patience and piety, dwelt in the land of Uz, in the eastern part of Edom. The origin of this holy person, and the age in which he lived, are mere matter of conjecture; some learned men making him cotemporary with Moses, and others supposing that he lived before the time of that great lawgiver. Job, who was in a very prosperous condition, had seven sons and three daughters, a vast number of servants, flocks and herds, and was the greatest man of the country in which he dwelt. He was as remarkable for his piety as for his wealth; but God allowed the devil to subject him to a severe trial, knowing that the holy man would come out of it to the discomfiture of his enemy, and to his own honour. Satan was permitted to destroy all that he had, which Job bore with the most remarkable fortitude, submitting resignedly to the visitation, and blessing God, who, having bestowed upon him children and wealth, had a right to take them away. The devil, not contented with this proof of Job's submission to his Divine Master, was allowed to try him still further, and to visit his body with any torments his malice could devise, so long as he did not touch his life. For a long time Job bore the most dreadful agonies without a murmur. He was covered with boils that tormented him night and day, but he lay down on a dunghill, and with a potsherd scraped his ulcerated body, mildly upbraiding his wife, who advised him to reproach his Maker with undue rigour. At length, overcome by the extreme severity of his sufferings, he cursed the day of his birth, when he was reproached by three friends, Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar. A controversy of great interest ensues between the sufferer and his three friends, in which Job finally proves that they had accused him falsely. This is at length confirmed by "the Lord answering unto Job out of the whirlwind," and declaring his own omnipotence; after which he reproves the officious friends, and not only relieves the Patriarch from his sufferings, but gives him greater wealth than he had lost, and another family.

*Job, chapter xli., verse 6.*
THE WICKED LYING IN WAIT FOR THE
RIGHTOUS.

The Psalm which has furnished the subject for this illustration seems to have been intended by the royal author to impart consolation to the righteous who suffer oppression in this world through the machinations of triumphant wickedness. It establishes an important scriptural truth, to use the beautiful imagery of the same inspired author, that "they who sow in tears shall reap in joy;" and that though the ungodly may for a while "behold prosperity," yet the triumph of their wickedness is short. The whole Psalm, as Bishop Horne truly remarks, is rather a collection of divine aphorisms on the same subject, than a continued and connected discourse; and it is, in fact, one of these aphorisms which the artist has selected, as giving the most picturesque illustration of the doctrine which the inspired writer designed to enforce. "The wicked watcheth the righteous and seeketh to slay him." It is the character of wicked men to set themselves in hostile array against the righteous, and bloodshed is but too frequent an issue of this sanguinary feeling. The mere circumstance of being better than themselves is, in their estimation, a sufficient provocative of such savage hostility. The more righteous, therefore, a man is, the more deadly is their animosity towards him. In the picture we see a righteous man, with his eyes directed towards heaven, to indicate that his mind is occupied with holy thoughts, unconsciously approaching the lair of two desperate ruffians, who are lying in wait to destroy him. They appear to have just issued from a cave, the one armed with a sword, the other with a dagger, and to be awaiting the approach of their victim. A large mound of earth, overshadowed by a tree, shrouds them from present detection, while the stealthy action of the one, and the grim features of the other, sufficiently attest their desperate ferocity of purpose.

• Psalm xxxvii. verse 32.
DEATH OF THE FIRST-BORN.

This was the last and most fearful of those plagues with which the king of Egypt provoked the Almighty to visit him as a punishment for withholding that freedom from the children of Israel which God had determined they should enjoy. Egypt had long been the scene of a tyranny so burdensome to the Israelites, that they suffered a bondage worse than death under a despot who despised the Lord and his people. Hard was the heart of Pharaoh, it was not impenetrable, and the sudden stroke which cut off the hope of Egypt, in his own first-born son, rived that obdurate bosom which a sight of the severest daily sufferings had hitherto left without an impression. The wrath of God was at length terribly roused at the daring and obduracy of the Egyptian king and of his idolatrous subjects. After having visited them with divers plagues, which failed to bring them to a proper sense of their impious rebellion in resisting his will, by refusing liberty to the Israelites, he at length, as a climax of infliction, "smote all the first-born in their land, the chief of all their strength." At midnight the messenger of death passed through the royal city and throughout the whole land of Egypt, and there was not a family spared. "While all things, O Lord, were in quiet silence, and that night was in the midst of her swift course, thine Almighty word leaped down from heaven out of thy royal throne, as a fierce man of war into the midst of a land of destruction, and brought thine unfeigned commandment as a sharp sword, and standing up, filled all things with death; and it touched the heaven, but it stood upon the earth. Then suddenly visions of horrible dreams troubled them sore, and terrors came upon them unlooked for." In the picture the first-born of Pharaoh appears stretched upon his couch a corpse. The bereaved king stands gazing upon him in silent agony, while the physician, placing his hand upon the breast of the body to ascertain if any pulsation were still perceptible, turns with a gesture of reproach towards the nurse, who expresses her grief by vehement cries. The mother, meanwhile, has thrown herself upon the corpse, which she clasps in a mute paroxysm of woe.

* Psalm cv., verse 26.
† Wisdom, chapter xviii., verses 14 to 16.
THE DAUGHTERS OF JERUSALEM WEEPING.
THE DAUGHTERS OF JERUSALEM WEEPING.

It is a conjecture of Saint Chrysostom, that the Israelites, when sent captive to Babylon, were not permitted to dwell within any of the towns or cities of the empire, but were dispersed upon the banks of different rivers, where they erected dwellings; and in consequence of the continual overflowings of those streams, were kept in perpetual alarm for their security: being moreover obliged to drain the land in which they were allowed to colonize in order to render it habitable. From the incessant hardships to which they were exposed, they were constantly mourning their miserable condition. Their cries were loud and bitter, when they remembered the happiness they had quitted for the privations of captivity. "By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion. We hanged our harps upon the willows in the midst thereof."* They had no longer a tabernacle; their harps, with which, in their own happy Palestine, the land of joy and gladness, they used to sing praises to the Lord Jehovah, now remained unstrung, for how should they "sing the Lord's song in a strange land," where they were most probably forbidden to erect a synagogue, and where their worship was derided by their tyrants, who heaped upon them the degradations of a most odious vassalage? The artist has represented the daughters of Jerusalem bewailing, upon the banks of the Euphrates, the wretched state of their country and themselves. Their harps are hung upon willows that droop over the placid waters, betokening the perfect desuetude of that sacred ministrelsy to which they had been so joyously attuned in the land of Judea. In the distance the gorgeous city of Babylon is in its "pride of place," towering above the calm surface of the river, as if in imperious mockery of the woes which its sovereign had accumulated upon the unhappy seed of Abraham, whom he is supposed to have treated with the most unrelenting tyranny.

* Psalm cxxxv. verses 1 and 2.
THE UNFEELING CREDITOR.

In this chapter of Solomon's Proverbs, there are some severe strictures upon the rich, against taking from the poor to increase their own wealth, which has evidently been a sin of high antiquity. Throughout the writings of this wise king, we find threatenings continually denounced against rich oppressors, and encouragements given to the suffering and patient poor; whence we might assume that the immense riches of this celebrated and prosperous monarch were dispensed with a liberal hand to his more needy subjects. It is evident from that portion of the sacred scriptures, which contains his history, that he diffused his treasure unsparingly. He raised the most superb edifices and palaces of any Hebrew sovereign before him, which must have employed multitudes of his destitute subjects, and thus provided them with a liberal maintenance. The whole tenor of his writings evinces that he had an especial regard to the needy, and there is perhaps no human composition in which are to be found so many excellent maxims of conduct, social, political, and moral, as in the proverbs which he has left for the benefit of succeeding generations, to the end of time. It appears that in his days, the creditor was frequently as unrelenting as in these times of more social refinement, which may be assumed by the question chosen by the artist for illustration. "If thou hast nothing to pay, why should he take away thy bed from under thee?" An expostulation that seems in too many cases to have been little attended to in all ages of the world. In the print, the poor debtor appears lying in the saddest extremity, upon a miserable pallet, the only article of furniture, save a rude stool, which his wretched apartment exhibits. A priest stands by the bedside, expostulating with an unfeeling creditor, who appears at the foot, pointing to the amount of his claim upon a scroll, which he clutches with usurious eagerness in his left hand. The poor debtor clasps his hands in earnest supplication.

* Proverbs, chapter xxii., verse 27.
SOLOMON'S CHARGE.

"I CHARGE you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, by the roes and by the hinds of the field, that ye stir not up nor awake my love, till he please." The artist has differed in his view of the passage from the generality of commentators, who consider this verse to be spoken by the bridegroom, while in the picture the interlocutor is the bride. There is, however, a doubt which is the speaker here, and therefore the artist may possibly be right in his view of the subject. The bridegroom is represented as being asleep under a temporary awning spread by the hand of his love. She is cautioning two shepherdesses, who approach, not to disturb her beloved. The upraised hand and depressed body express her anxiety for the repose of him in whom her whole soul is centred. This portion of the Bible has presented great difficulties to expositors, but it is now pretty generally agreed that Solomon's song is an allegory, in which a spiritual marriage between the Redeemer and his church is expressed. "Seven nights and seven days are distinctly marked in this song, because weddings among the Hebrews were celebrated seven days; and it relates poetically the transactions of these seven days. The Hebrews apprehending it might be understood grossly, forbad the reading of it by any person before the age of forty." (See Calmet, article Canticles). We may take the allegorical signification of the spouse's charge to be a caution from the church to her disciples not to interrupt that tranquillity which the bridegroom desires to enjoy in the love of his bride, the church, the blessings of that union which he has established between himself and her, being "quietness and assurance for ever." Where there exists in the soul a sincere love for Him who laid down His own life for the salvation of sinners, there will be an anxiety to manifest that love by holding His wishes sacred, and by "endeavouring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace." The picture gives a very striking symbolical lesson of the love due from us to our Redeemer, and of the manner in which it behoves us to express that love.

* Canticles, chapter ii., verse 7.
THE PEACEABLE KINGDOM.

"The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf, and the young lion, and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them." This is the portion of Isaiah's beautiful prophecy, picturing the blessings of the Redeemer's kingdom upon earth, which the artist has chosen to illustrate the subject. We see the lion and the fatling led by a little child; the leopard and the kid, the wolf and the lamb, lying down in the most perfect harmony together, thus symbolizing the universal union that shall prevail when the gospel has fully accomplished its work. This chapter of Isaiah contains, at great length and given with much minuteness of detail, an eloquent prediction of Christ's advent, and of the advancement which his kingdom should make in the world. This progress, however, is made by several steps; thus the latter part of the chapter relates to those latter times, when the holiness of the Jews and Gentiles is to be consummated in the Church, and to the universal harmony that shall then prevail, of which the text quoted above, and the immediate subject of the accompanying illustration, convey a most exquisite representation. The figurative expressions made use of by the prophet denote the return of that primitive peace which existed at the creation, when hostility was unknown even among the very beasts of the forest. When the consummation of the gospel dispensation takes place, we are given to suppose that this peace will be restored,—that the oppressor and the oppressed shall no longer recognise any temporal distinctions, but "dwell together in unity and godly love." This condition of things is aptly signified by animals, whose natures are the most repugnant, lying down together in slumber; as if the natural ferocity of the one had given place to the gentleness of the other, and the harmony of Eden was restored. But, as Bishop Louth observes, the words of the sixth verse may "further imply that God will protect his people against all persecution and outward violence, which is elsewhere expressed by his making a covenant for them with the beasts of the field! Hosea, ii., 18, compared with Levit., xxvi., 6, John, v., 23, Ezekiel, xxxiv., 25."

* Isaiah, chapter xi., verse 6.
HEZEKIAH BEHOLDING THE SUN-DIAL.

As soon as Hezekiah succeeded to the throne of Judah, he destroyed the high places, cut down the groves, and broke the images, to which the people had impiously offered adoration. He destroyed the brazen serpent, to which his subjects paid divine honours; and repaired the gate of the temple, ordering it to be purified and restored to its original sanctity. He was a wise and good prince. Some years after his accession he shook off the Assyrian yoke, possessed himself of the country of the Philistines, repaired and fortified the walls of Jerusalem, and put the city in a condition to withstand a vigorous siege, then threatened by the Assyrian monarch. Sennacherib had at this time subdued almost the whole kingdom of Judah, but disappointed of succours which he expected from Egypt, and his own army probably being weakened by constant exertion, he made overtures of peace to Hezekiah, which the latter thought it prudent to accept: in order, however, to fulfil the severe conditions of the Assyrian king, he was obliged to strip the gold from the temple doors. When the stipulated sum was advanced, the wily foe refused to quit the kingdom of Judah, but demanded from Hezekiah an unconditional surrender. Having received the most blasphemous letters from Sennacherib, Hezekiah went up into the temple, placed them before the Lord, and prayed for deliverance. His petition was accepted, for shortly after a hundred and eighty-five thousand men were destroyed in one night in the hostile camp. Soon after this the King of Judah fell dangerously ill, when his prayers for restoration to health were heard, and he was assured by the prophet Isaiah that he should live. But demanding a sign from the prophet, by which God's intended mercy might be confirmed to him, Isaiah said—"Behold, I will bring again the shadow of the degrees, which is gone down in the sun-dial of Abaz, ten degrees backward. So the sun returned ten degrees, by which degrees it was gone down." Hezekiah shortly after recovered, and composed a song of thanksgiving, which the prophet has preserved,—chapter xxxviii, verses 10, 22.

Isaiah, chapter xxxviii., verse 8.
THE STRANGER’S SACRIFICE ACCEPTED.

"Also the sons of the stranger that join themselves to the Lord, to serve him and to love the name of the Lord, to be his servants, every one that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it, and taketh hold of my covenant: even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer: their burnt offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon mine altar."* During the captivity of the Jews, many of the heathen became proselytes to their religion; indeed, so considerable was the number of Gentile converts, that God made a revelation in their favour through the mouth of his prophet Isaiah. Though they were not admitted to similar privileges, either spiritual or civil, with the stock of Abraham, they were nevertheless encouraged by the prophetic declaration of a chosen minister of God, that in process of time many other Gentiles of different nations would be added to his church, when both Jews and Gentiles would forsake a less perfect for a purer worship, and become "one fold under one shepherd, Jesus Christ the righteous." The words of the prophecy evidently have a primary reference to the temple at Jerusalem, in which there was a place set apart for the worship of proselytes, called "The court of the Gentiles." But they have also an ulterior reference to the gospel dispensation. The object of the artist has been to exhibit the picture conveyed to the prophet's mind when under the influence of the Divine afflatus. The mountain is an imaginary representation of the holy hill of Zion, upon which two proselytes have made an acceptable sacrifice unto the Lord. Seeing that the Deity has vouchsafed to receive it, and overcome by a simultaneous emotion of reverence, they have retired to a distance, and are lifting up their hands in devout acknowledgment. The universality of the Divine dispensations is here prefigured; for "God is no respecter of persons, but in every nation he that feareth him and worketh righteousness is accepted with him."

* Isaiah, chap. lv. verse 6 and 7
JEREMIAH FORETELLING THE FALL OF JERUSALEM.
JEREMIAH FORETELLING THE FALL OF JERUSALEM.

In the seventh year of his reign, Zedekiah, king of Judah, entered into a confederacy with Hophra, king of Egypt, who marched to the relief of Jerusalem, which Nebuchadnezzar was then besieging. The Chaldean king immediately raised the siege to meet and give him battle. Zedekiah conceiving that the hostile army having left his capital, would be too much engaged with his new allies to renew the siege of Jerusalem, recalled the proclamation of manumission to all Hebrew slaves which he had issued throughout his dominions, when subdued by the terrors of another captivity under a stern and unrelenting conqueror, and issued a counter proclamation, commanding all persons under bondage to continue in their odious servitude. Anxious, however, to know how far he might trust to the future security of his capital, upon the retreat of the Chaldean army, he sent two messengers to Jeremiah, Pashur the son of Melchiah, and Zephaniah the son of Maaseiah the priest, to ascertain the events of the war, and if he was likely again to be molested by the enemy. The messengers repaired to the prophet, and laid before him the demands of their king. "Then said Jeremiah unto them, thus shall ye say to Zedekiah: Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Behold, I will turn back the weapons of war that are in your hands, wherewith ye fight against the king of Babylon, and against the Chaldeans which besiege you without the walls, and I will assemble them into the midst of this city. And I myself will fight against you with an outstretched hand and with a strong arm, even in anger, and in fury, and in great wrath. And I will smite the inhabitants of this city, both man and beast: they shall die of a great pestilence. And afterwards, saith the Lord, I will deliver Zedekiah king of Judah, and his servants, and the people, and such as are left in this city from the pestilence, from the sword, and from the famine, into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and into the hand of their enemies, and into the hand of those that seek their life: and he shall smite them with the edge of the sword; he shall not spare them, neither have pity, nor have mercy."

* Jeremiah, chapter xxxi., verses 3 to 8.
THE FALL OF BABYLON.

"Though Babylon should mount up to heaven, and though she should fortify the height of her strength, yet from me shall spoilers come unto her, saith the Lord. Because the spoiler is come upon her, even upon Babylon, and her mighty men are taken, every one of their bows is broken, for the Lord God of recompenses shall surely requite. And I will make drunk her princes, and her wise men, her captains, and her rulers, and her mighty men: and they shall sleep a perpetual sleep, and not wake, saith the king, whose name is the Lord of hosts. Thus saith the Lord of hosts; The broad walls of Babylon shall be utterly broken, and her high gates shall be burned with fire; and the people shall labour in vain, and the folk in the fire, and they shall be weary." This prophecy was fulfilled in the destruction of Belshazzar, the grandson of Nebuchadnezzar the Great. Cyrus had invested Babylon with his army, and subjected it to a most rigorous blockade for two years. Finding all his efforts vain to reduce the besieged to a surrender, he diverted the course of the river, turning its waters into a deep ditch which he had drawn round the Assyrian capital, and entering the bed of the river at midnight with the choicest troops of his army, obtained possession of Babylon, and put its dissolute sovereign to death. On that very night the king had been feasting with his court, and had profaned the golden vessels which Nebuchadnezzar had taken from the Jewish temple, and consecrated to the rites of the Assyrian worship. In the midst of their revelry the handwriting appeared upon the wall, which announced the death of Belshazzar, and the dissolution of the Assyrian empire. On the right hand side of the picture appear the celebrated hanging gardens built by the grandfather of the reigning monarch. They surmounted his palace, which was eight miles in circumference, and were supported upon double arches of immense thickness. They were one of the marvels of that age. In the foreground is the king, accompanied by his favourite concubines, stabbed by assassins who had approached him in disguise. Below, the bed of the river is covered with the enemy, who are rushing on to secure their success.

* Jeremiah, chapter ii., verses 58 and 59-56.
DEATH OF EZEKIEL'S WIFE.
THE DEATH OF EZEKIEL'S WIFE.

"Son of man, behold, I take away from thee the desire of thine eyes with a stroke; yet neither shalt thou mourn nor weep, neither shall thy tears run down. Forbear to cry, make no mourning for the dead, bind the tire of thine head upon thee, and put thy shoes upon thy feet, and cover not thy lips, and eat not the bread of men. So I spake unto the people in the morning: and at even my wife died; and I did in the morning as I was commanded." The prophet here describes how, during the prophetic afflictus, it had been revealed to him that his wife should shortly die. This mournful event took place in the evening, and on the following morning Ezekiel declared to the people the injunctions which the Almighty had laid upon him not to mourn for the deceased by shaving his head and putting on sackcloth, as was the usual custom; thereby signifying that the calamities about to fall upon the Jews should be so astonishing as to be beyond all expressions of sorrow. In the former part of the chapter, Ezekiel symbolises the destruction of Jerusalem and its inhabitants by the figure of a boiling pot in which the scum has been suffered to remain; and in order to give a more solemn aspect to the prophecy, which the Jews did not appear to regard, he mentions his own severe domestic affliction, and the command which the Deity had laid upon him not to mourn for his wife, when he would so soon have much more serious cause for lamentation. He tells his infatuated countrymen that such will be their grief upon the coming visitation, that, like him, "they shall neither mourn nor weep," for the divine judgments will strike them with such astonishment, and overwhelm them with such terrors, that they shall neither be able to express it by words nor actions, which eventually came to pass. The print represents Ezekiel standing by the couch of his deceased wife, and relating to some of the most influential persons among his countrymen the prohibition which he had received from God, and what it portended.

* Ezekiel, chapter xxiv., verses 16, 17, and 18.
THE DESTRUCTION OF TYRE.

"Thus saith the Lord God to Tyre: shall not the isles shake at the sound of thy fall, when the wounded cry, when the slaughter is made in the midst of them. Then all the princes of the sea shall come down from their thrones, and lay away their robes, and put off their brodered garments: they shall clothe themselves with trembling; they shall sit upon the ground, and shall tremble at every moment, and be astonished at thee." In this chapter the prophet foretells the destruction of Tyre by Nebuchadnezzar, who took it after a siege of thirteen years, in the thirty-second year of his reign. This siege forced the inhabitants upon a rocky island in the immediate neighbourhood, about half a mile from the mainland. Here they built another city, afterwards called new Tyre, which in process of time became a place of immense wealth. Old Tyre was built by a company of Zidonians, and Isaiah therefore calls it the daughter of Zidon. It was situated upon a considerable eminence on the continent, and bore originally the name of Palestyris. As there are some expressions in Ezekiel's prophecy which are admitted by Dr. Prideaux, in his "Connection of the History of the Old and New Testament," to be applicable only to the destruction of the new city of Tyre by Alexander the Great, the artist has attempted to represent the latter celebrated siege in the accompanying illustration. It was with the greatest difficulty that this mighty conqueror was able to obtain possession of this wealthy capital. The siege was continued for seven months with the most determined perseverance on the part of the Macedonians, and was as obstinately protracted by the spirited efforts of the Tyrians. The city was at length carried by Alexander's troops, constructing through the sea, with incredible labour, a causeway from the continent to the island on which the city stood, a distance of four furlongs. In storming this celebrated capital, the carnage was prodigious: eight thousand of the inhabitants were slain, two thousand crucified, and thirty thousand sold as slaves. The wealth which fell to the conqueror was immense.

* Ezekiel, chapter xxvi., verses 15 and 16.
SHADRACH, MESHACH, AND ABEDNEGO.
SHADRACH, MESHACH AND ABED-NEGO.

Shortly after Nebuchadnezzar's return from Jerusalem, having reduced the wretched inhabitants to a degrading captivity with the spoils which he brought from their capital, he constructed a gigantic image, ninety feet high, and of proportionable bulk. This large statue, entirely composed of pure gold, he set up in the plains of Dura, just without the walls of Babylon. In the pride of his heart at having obtained so splendid a conquest as the entire subjugation of the Jews, and probably with a view to humble them, he caused proclamation to be made through his capital, that every order of his subjects, whether bond or free, should be present at the dedication of this image, and, upon a certain signal, fall down and worship it. Now it happened that among the captive Israelites were three men of some distinction, friends of the prophet Daniel, who refused to obey this tyrannical order, upon which the incensed monarch commanded a furnace to be heated seven times hotter than it was usual to heat it upon similar occasions, and the three offenders to be cast into it. The furnace was no doubt constructed for the imposition of capital punishment upon violators of the laws, burning criminals alive being practised by the Babylonian government. Immediately upon the king's order, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, were thrown bound, into the flaming furnace, and so intense was the heat, that the persons who threw them in were scorched to death, but, to the astonishment of all the assembled host, the condemned Jews appeared walking in the midst of the flames, accompanied by a fourth person. "Then Nebuchadnezzar the king was astonished, and rose up in haste, and spake, and said unto his counsellors, did not we cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? They answered and said unto the king, True, O king. He answered and said, Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God."  

Daniel, chapter iii., verses 24, 25.
BELSHAZZAR'S FEAST.

BELSHAZZAR, the son of Evilmerodach and grandson of Nebuchadnezzar the great, was one of the most vicious princes of his time. He ascended the throne of Chaldea in the year of the world 3444. Four years after he gave a great entertainment to a thousand of his courtiers, at which every one drank according to his age. This entertainment terminated with his life, and his reign, therefore, continued but four years. During his impious revelry upon this memorable occasion, Belshazzar, heated with wine, sent for the gold and silver vessels which his grandfather had brought from Jerusalem, where he despoiled the temple and laid sacrilegious hands upon its sacred utensils, used by the Jews in their temple service. These, the Chaldean King deposited in the sanctuary of Baal his God; thus his grandson was guilty of a double impiety in profaning them at a public banquet. When they were brought into the court of the palace where the entertainment was given, Belshazzar, placing them before his wives, his concubines, and his drunken courtiers, commanded that they should drink out of them. This daring desecration of the sacred vessels did not pass without its punishment. In the midst of their abominable festivity, while "they drank wine and praised the gods of gold and of silver, of brass, of iron, of wood, and of stone; in the same hour came forth fingers of a man's hand, and wrote over against the candlestick upon the plaster of the wall of the king's palace; and the king saw the part of the hand that wrote." Belshazzar, confounded at the sight of so unexpected a phenomenon, summoned all the diviners, astrologers and sages of Babylon, but sought in vain an explanation of the mystery. None of them could read the writing. At length Nicodris, the king's grandmother, advised that Daniel should be sent for, who accordingly came and expounded to the trembling king the record of his doom, which was accomplished that very night. Before the close of the revels Cyrus entered the city, by the bed of the river, the waters of which he had diverted from their channel, and thus made a passage for his troops.

* Daniel, chapter v., verses 4 and 5.
DANIEL IN THE LIONS’ DEN.

Darius had so great an esteem for Daniel, that he made him the principal minister of his empire. This excited the jealousy of his subjects, who sought to render the favourite odious to his master. Daniel’s administration of affairs, however, was so just, that they could find no room for censure; they therefore laid a plot against his life. Knowing him to be a strict observer of the religious forms of his nation, they prevailed upon the king unguardedly to issue a decree that whoever, for the space of thirty days, should make a petition, either to God or man, except only to Darius himself, should be cast into the lions’ den—probably a vault where these animals were kept for the king’s pleasure. Darius, looking upon this as a proof of their affection to his person, unhesitatingly complied with their wishes. Daniel was not ignorant of what had taken place, but, although he knew there was a design against his life, he, nevertheless, did not omit to perform his customary devotions. As this was done openly, his enemies had no difficulty in detecting him committing a breach of the royal ordinance, which they immediately reported to the king. Darius, who now perceived, too late, that he had been betrayed into a rash proclamation, endeavoured to evade enforcing it against his favourite minister: but his courtiers reminding him that, according to their laws, a decree once passed was irreversible, he had no alternative but to deliver Daniel up to them, when they immediately cast him among the lions. Having done this, they rolled a large stone over the mouth of the den, and had it sealed both with their own and the royal signet. Meanwhile the king, having passed a night of sleepless anxiety, repaired next morning to the den, where he cried with a lamentable voice, and asked Daniel if he were alive. ‘Then said Daniel unto the king, O king, live for ever. My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions’ mouths, that they have not hurt me: forasmuch as before him innocency was found in me; and also before thee, O king, have I done no hurt.’

* Daniel, chapter vi., verses 21 and 22.
JONAH CAST INTO THE SEA.
JONAH CAST INTO THE SEA.

JONAH was the fifth of the minor prophets, and various have been the opinions among the Jewish Rabbins who he was, and where born. Some imagine him to have been that son of the widow of Sarepta whom Elijah restored to life. Others maintain that he was the son of the Shunamite woman, whose child was raised from the dead by Elisha, while others again are of opinion that he was the prophet whom Elisha sent to Jehu, to anoint him king of Israel; but for none of these suppositions is there sufficient authority. He is now admitted, by Christian commentators, to have been the son of Amittai, and born in Gath-hepher, a town of Galilee, supposed to be Jotapata, celebrated for the siege maintained by Josephus the historian against the Roman army, before the destruction of Jerusalem. The Prophet Jonah was commanded by God to repair to Nineveh, and proclaim its destruction to the profligate inhabitants; but in order to avoid fulfilling the sacred appointment, either from personal diffidence or want of confidence in the divine communication, he embarked at Joppa and directed his course to Tarshish. During the passage a violent storm arising and the ship being in jeopardy, the prophet, conceiving that the Almighty Indignation was directed against him on account of his shameful defection from his sacred office, desired that he might be thrown into the sea, imagining that God's anger would be diverted from the ship as soon the cause of it should be removed. The crew concurred in his proposition, "so they took up Jonah, and cast him forth into the sea, and the sea ceased from her raging. Then the men feared the Lord exceedingly, and offered a sacrifice unto the Lord, and made vows. Now the Lord had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah, and Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights*." After his deliverance he received a second command to go to Nineveh, which city he immediately visited, and by his preaching converted the people "from the ways of Satan unto God."

* Jonah, chapter 1., verse 15.
THE FALL OF NINEVEH.

"Woe to the bloody city! it is all full of lies and robbery; the prey departeth not; the noise of a whip, and the noise of the rattling of the wheels, and of the prancing horses, and of the jumping chariots. The horseman lieth up both the bright sword and the glittering spear: and there is a multitude of slain, and a great number of carcases; and there is none end of their corpses; they stumble upon their corpses. And it shall come to pass, that all they that look upon thee shall flee from thee, and say, Nineveh is laid waste: who will bemoan her? whence shall I seek comforters for thee?" It is the fulfillment of this remarkable prophecy that the artist has here endeavoured to represent;—a prophecy singularly accomplished in all its particulars, not long after it was delivered. The infamous life of Sardanapalus, the king, had so disgusted his subjects, that a conspiracy was formed against him, at the head of which were Arbaces, the Mede, and Beleses, a Babylonian priest, who seduced from his fealty Rabaris, the bosom friend of the sovereign, and father of his chief concubine. The conspirators were defeated in three pitched battles, when they prevailed upon the Bactrians, who had marched to the king's aid, to join them. With this reinforcement the rebels twice defeated the troops of Sardanapalus, who shut himself up in the city, which sustained a vigorous siege of three years. The effeminate monarch at length, dreading to fall into the hands of his rebellious subjects, ordered a vast pile of wood to be raised in the court of his palace, upon which the whole of his immense treasures were heaped. When this was done, all his concubines and eunuchs were dragged to the pyre, and enclosed within a space formed to receive them. The wretched king then mounted the pile, and, ordering it to be fired, perished, with a host of unwilling victims, in the flames. In the front of the picture he appears pointing to the pyre, surrounded by his favourite women. Behind is the splendid capital of the Assyrian empire, the grandeur of which Babylon is supposed scarcely to have eclipsed, its wall broken down, and the enemy rushing into the breach, at the moment the king is about to expiate his dissolute career by a voluntary death.

* Nahum, chapter iii., verses 1, 2, 3, and 7
THE VISION OF THE FOUR CHARIOTS.

"And I turned, and lifted up mine eyes, and looked, and, behold, there came four chariots out from between two mountains; and the mountains were mountains of brass." Horses and chariots are the usual emblems of conquerors in this prophecy. The four chariots denote "the four great empires," which subdued the greatest part of the known world; and they are represented as coming from between two mountains, because mountains are the natural barriers which divide kingdoms, which are here, though they be strong as brass, supposed to be broken through by those who invade and conquer their neighbours. And it is observable that some of the mighty conquerors owed the beginning of their greatness to their successful passage through the straits of mountains, where a small force might have maintained the passes against a powerful army. So the beginning of Alexander's success against the Persians was his passing through the Porte Cilicie without any opposition; and a like success the Roman emperor Severus had against Pescenninus Niger at the same place. Also the great incursion the Turks made through the Porte Caspia, was the first step towards making them appear formidable in the world. "In the first chariot were red horses;" to signify the bloody persecutions of the Babylonian empire, especially towards the Jews. "And in the second chariot were black horses;" this denotes the mournful state of the Jews, under the successors of Cyrus in the Persian empire, when the whole nation was in danger of being destroyed by the interest of Haman at the Persian court. "And in the third chariot were white horses;" signifying the victories of Alexander, the third great monarch, and his kindness to the Jews in confirming their religion, laws, and liberties. Conquerors used to ride on white horses in the day of triumph. "And in the fourth chariot were grisled and bay horses." These may denote the various forms of the Roman governments, the fourth great empire. (See Louth on the Prophecies, ad loc.)

* Zechariah, chapter vi., verse 1.
THE DESTROYERS OF JERUSALEM DESTROYED.

The commencement of this chapter refers to the sacking of Jerusalem by the Roman armies, and all the excesses enumerated by the prophet were awfully realised when that renowned capital was taken by the gallant son of Vespasian, about thirty-two years after the crucifixion of our blessed Lord. Upwards of a million of souls are said to have perished within the walls during the progress of that memorable siege. So great was the number of Jews crucified before Jerusalem by the cruel besiegers, that there was not found wood enough in the neighbourhood for crosses to execute their work of torture and of death. Pestilence shook from her wings that mortal taint which swept thousands to their graves, and, mingled with the joyous shouts of triumph from without and the din of ferocious despair from within, were heard the cries of "lamentation, and mourning, and wo." Famine also raged with so mighty an ascendency, that mothers crept to the deserted houses of the dead, whither they bore their unsuspecting progeny, and having with their own lips drained the sluices of life, appeased the cravings of their rabid hunger upon the tender but emaciated flesh. Amid these horrors, rapine and lust were rife among the living, as if the awful mortality by which they were surrounded offered neither a lesson nor a warning. Ruffians stalked through the streets among the gaunt spectres, crawling forth to die as far as possible from the power of the pestilence, only to be murdered by those ruthless bands which coveted their gold. Finally, the city was raised, so that there "was not one stone upon another which was not thrown down." Zechariah, after having briefly detailed some of the horrors which should be witnessed at the destruction of the Jewish capital, foretells what shall befall the posterity of those who compassed its ruin. "Then shall the Lord go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle. And his feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the Mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it towards the south." *

* Zechariah, chapter xiv., verses 8 and 9.