

THE KINGSHIP OF JEHOVAH.

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Human governments are a growth. First: There were families. Families multiplied and became tribes. Tribes were united and became nations. The unifying energy may sometimes have been self interest, but more frequently it was force. There were master minds among men who forged ahead to the front and became leaders among men. Some of them were city builders, like those who founded Babel and Nineveh and Rehobeth and Calah; and some of them were conquerors, like Nimrod, the mighty hunter before the Lord. There was one common characteristic of these major and minor sovereignties. They were all of them absolutely autocratic. Pharaoh's commission to Joseph was a fine illustration of the absolutism of all those nations of ancient times. "Without thee shall no man lift up his hand or his foot in all the land of Egypt." Another example was presented in the case of Nebuchadnezzar, "all people, nations and languages, trembled and feared before him, whom he would he slew, and whom he would he kept alive, and whom he would he set up, and whom he would he put down." Representative bodies among those nations there were not. Participation in the government, there was none. Constitutionalism there was none.

Jehovah was now about to give to mankind a new ideal in government. He was to inaugurate the beginning of civil liberty. He was to furnish them a constitution and by-laws. He was to allow them to have a voice in their own affairs, and he was to allow them to vote on the acceptance of their king. It is to be noted as a fact in human history that the first suggestion of a purely democratic or popular government under safe and sane limitations was never known among mankind until it was intro-

duced by Jehovah himself in the commonwealth of Israel. All popular governments ever since emanated from that one precedent.

Jehovah had an old covenant made with Abraham in reference to what he was now about to do. The covenant lay seemingly neglected, and, as Israel thought, completely forgotten by Jehovah. But not until now had the time come. Jehovah was now come down to deliver them, and to take them to himself. He was to exercise toward them, and over them, all the functions of a great and beneficent sovereign. The whole procedure is marked by the strictest diplomatic form known to the children of men.

He would not force himself upon them, nor would he ask them to take him on mere trust in advance. The events which transpired from the time Jehovah came down to deliver them down to the covenant at the foot of Sinai, were all of them of the nature of evidences of his power and fitness to rule. He broke off the chains of bondage, he plagued their enemies, he scourged them with pestilence, he swallowed them up in the sea, he brought Israel with a high hand out of Egypt. He gave them manna from heaven, and water out of the flinty rock. He sweetened the bitter waters, he covered them with his canopy of clouds from the heat of the desert sun, he lighted their pathway at night by a pillar of fire, and all this before he asked them to accept him as a king at all. Was not this evidence enough that he was able to do what he had undertaken, and, therefore, they would make no mistake in accepting him? Jehovah himself appeals to this evidence. "Ye have seen what I did, what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings and brought you unto myself." And then he went on to make an offer of himself to be their king. "Now, therefore, if ye will obey my voice and keep my covenant, etc." Ex. 19, 4, 6.

Moses hurried down from the mount. He assembled the elders—the official body of the people—and the people themselves, and laid before them the proposition of Jeho-

vah. It was accepted in full, with heartiness. It was what is technically known as a democratic vote that was called for; that is, a vote of the entire body of the people; it was given accordingly, and all the people answered, "ALL that the Lord God hath spoken we will do." Note that they said, "We will *do*" it. It was a covenant of works that was now being made. A covenant not merely of hearing, and believing, but of *doing*. Every man pledged himself personally to do and to obey. On the strength of their own doing and obeying they were now to enter into the promised land. This feature of the situation must be kept in mind in order to apprehend what is now to come. Ex. 19, 7, 9.

The preliminaries were thus completed. The people had verbally given in their adhesion. The time had come for the next step, and the Lord said unto Moses: "Go unto the people and sanctify them to-day and to-morrow and be ready by the third day." They were to get washed up and cleaned up and made respectable enough to be taken into the presence of the great king from whom they had already received so much favor, and from whom they expected so much more. They were now to have an experience with that awful majesty of which they knew so little. The base of the mountain was to be fenced off and roped in all round, lest the people should get within the danger zone. Ex. 19, 10-13.

And it came to pass in the third day in the morning that there were thunders and lightnings and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of a trumpet exceeding loud; so that all the people in the camp trembled. Sinai was all a-tremble and a-smoke because the Lord descended upon them in fire, and the smoke arose as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly. The people had to be held back, lest, in a frantic craze, they should break through the barrier and perish. In their fright they began to entreat Moses, "Speak thou with us, and we will hear thee, but let not God speak with us, lest we

die." So they stood trembling afar off. So terrible was the sight that Moses said, "I exceedingly fear and tremble." Ex. 19, 16-25.

These terms and conditions are contained in Ex. 20-23, all of which appear to have been communicated at one time and in one connection. They include, however, two distinct codes, sustaining to each other much such a relation as exists between a constitution and by-laws with us. The one fixed and unalterable and the other of a mobile character, subject to modification and change. It does not appear that the distribution was made on the mount at the time it was first spoken, but was made later by Jehovah himself. They are called "The Words and the Judgments."

I. The ten words, or, as we call them, the Ten Commandments, are contained in Chap. 20. They are purely religious and ethical. They express the law of religion towards God, and the law of morality towards men. They are a transcript to the Divine Nature, and cannot be abbreviated, or superseded, or changed in any way, because in order to set this forth, God with his own finger wrote the ten words on to stone.

II. The Judgments. "Now these are the judgments which thou shalt set before them." They are contained in Chaps. 21, 22 and 23. They set forth the rules and principles of conduct which Jehovah requires them to observe in various relations and conditions of society. The judgments, like by-laws, may be altered, or amended, or suspended, as may be required.

As it appears from the narrative, Moses waited on God at the close of the great audience and received these words and judgments orally. Aaron and Nadab and Abihu and seventy of the elders of Israel accompanied him part way, but were commanded to worship afar off, while Moses alone came near to Jehovah to receive details. Then Moses came back again to the people. He reported to them all the words of the Lord and all the judgments,

and now with one voice the people answered: "All the words which the Lord hath said will we *do*." So far so good. The treaty was making progress. He then gave them a night to think it over. He himself went to his tent and wrote down all that the Lord had spoken. Next day he rose up early and builded an altar. Then he sent "Young men to offer burnt-offerings." He took the blood and had it ready in vessels. He then read what he had written the night before, in the order he had received them, and gave them an opportunity to say whether, after a night's deliberation, they still agree to it. A third time the people said, "All that the Lord hath said will we do, and be obedient." The document thus prepared was called "The Book of the Covenant." It was to be then their charter of redemption. It was their fee simple to the land of Canaan. It was their oath of fealty to Jehovah their king. By virtue of its warrant they were to now enter in and possess the land and start on their career as a nation. Moses took part of the blood and sprinkled the book. That represented the sealing on God's part, binding him to the performance of his part. Then he sprinkled the blood on the people, thus affixing their seal. As he did so he said practically, "Behold the blood of the Covenant by which the Lord herewith binds you also." And now once more Moses with a copy of this blood-sealed document went up in the mount to exchange ratifications with God. Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu are sent along as representatives of the people. This time they were allowed to approach near to God. A treaty of amity was concluded. It is always a joyous time when a great treaty is concluded and ratifications are exchanged. This was to be no exception. God received them in open court, face to face. They saw the God of Israel, they saw the sapphire pavement under his feet as the body of heaven in its clearness. They saw God and did eat and drink and were not afraid.

Another thing remained of vast importance. Moses

was told to come himself higher up in the mountain. His minister Joshua was to come up with him, but Aaron and Hur and the elders were to wait, and he said, "Tarry ye here until we come again to you. And behold Aaron and Hur with you. If any man have any matters to do, let him come unto them." Moses seemed to have had some premonition that there was much work for him to do and that he would be a long time in the mountain. With this injunction to them he went up into the mountain and disappeared in the clouds. The clouds covered him six days, but over it all in dazzling brilliance the effulgence of the divine glory was like devouring fire on the top of the mountain.

Since Jehovah was to be their king he must have a palace. In this case it was to be a tent like their own. He must have a retinue of servants, and he must have an order of service. These must all be on a lofty and elaborate scale. Jehovah would furnish the design, but the people must furnish the material and put the parts together. This involved many details of construction, and in consequence, Moses must needs be a long time in the mount, studying the pattern shown him. "And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, that they bring me an offering, every man that giveth willingly with his heart, and let them make me a sanctuary that I may dwell among them." And so from Chaps. 25 to 31 of Exodus, seven full chapters in all, the kind of material called for is dwelt upon; the mode of construction, the various implements of service, and the ceremonies and rituals suitable to a royal court are all elaborated.

All at once Jehovah said to Moses, "Get thee down, for the people which thou broughtest up out of the land of Egypt have corrupted themselves. They have made them a calf and have worshiped it." Such language, "the people which thou hast brought up," implied repudiation. After a few words of despairing entreaty with God, Moses

gathered up the two tables of testimony and hurried down to the camp. It was even so. He saw the calf and the debased crowd dancing naked before it. In the heat of his anger he threw down to the ground his two tables of stone and they were broken to pieces. The covenant was broken, absolutely broken, abrogated and set aside. All that had been done was now undone. God was under no treaty obligation to take them to the land of Canaan.

A new covenant was made, but it was not a renewal of that *first* covenant. The outlook at this time was appalling. In the fury of his indignation Moses went at Aaron. Aaron excused himself, pleading that he had to yield to the vehemence of the people, and threw also some blame on Moses for being gone so long. Moses gathered the sons of Levi around him and they dashed into the mutinous crowd. Soon they made the camp a slaughter pen. After this tumultuous scene was over, and after he had allowed them a night to think over the situation, on the morrow, after the people had come to their senses, he said to them, "Ye have sinned a great sin, and now I will go up unto the Lord, if peradventure I shall make an atonement for you.

He did go and he did make the atonement, but it was at a terrible cost to himself. He returned to the Lord and began his piteous begging for forgiveness, "Oh, these people have sinned a great sin and have made themselves gods of gold. Yet now, if thou wilt forgive their sin—; and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written." These words contain the only unfinished sentence in the Bible. Spare them and take me, that's what it means. If you will not spare them, and if it must be, take me in their place. God took him at his word. Moses was doomed. Moses would be taken if they were left. Moses would have to die before they could ever enter into the land of promise. In this Moses was a type of Christ. He did for carnal Israel what Christ has done for spiritual Israel.

With this prayer of Moses Jehovah now made up with his people. The change in his manner was instantaneous and complete. "Therefore, now go and lead the people to the place of which I have spoken to thee." Observe Jehovah's speech here, he does not say "*thy* people" any more, but "*the* people," thus again accepting a partnership in them. "Behold, mine angel shall go before thee." The alienation was now over. Sinai was behind, Zion was ahead. Law was satisfied, the reign of grace had now begun.

The accompaniments of the second institution of this covenant were in direct contrast to those attendant on the first. Then the covenant had been made with the house of Jacob and the children of Israel. They all stood for themselves. Ex. 19, 3. Now it was made "with *thee* and with Israel," that is, with the children of Israel *in Moses*. Ex. 34, 27. In this the covenant of grace was conforming in its attitude to the eternal covenant made with Christ first and then with his people *in Christ*. Psalm 89, 19, 37. In the one case the entourage was fire and smoke, reverberating thunder, forked lightnings and a reeling mountain; in the other it was all gentleness. In the one case they went up into the midst of the thick darkness; in the other case God returned the call, and stood and talked with Moses face to face before his tent as a man talketh to his friend.

The change in the manner of Jehovah was so marked in its cordiality that Moses became bold and venturesome. God's method of doing things was an engima to him. It seemed inconsistent with itself. He had lashed their oppressors in Egypt with judgments, and now he seemed ready to destroy them himself. Moses sought an explanation. "Lord, I beseech thee, show me thy way," show me thy way of doing things. Show me on what principles you proceed, that I may know what to expect, and how to act as a leader of thy people. Being further encouraged, Moses said, "Show me thy glory," that is, "What con-

stitutes the glory of your character? What is it you prize most of all in the estimate of yourself?" It was a daring request, but God condescended to give him a gracious answer. He said, "I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before thee."

Great potentates, when they take their places on the seats of authority and honor to which they have been called, make to their subjects an opening address, or what we call an inaugural. This address is supposed to be a statement of the principles and the policy of the party in power. To this usage Jehovah now conformed himself. He was their king under a covenant of grace. He, therefore, started out with a proclamation that at once set forth the attributes of his personality and at the same time the principles on which he should administer his government for all coming time. In a cleft of the rock, with God's hand over him, to shield him from the fierceness of the dazzling glory, and through the spaces between God's fingers, Moses could see the ineffable splendor as it passed by, and could hear the reverberation of that glorious and fearful name, "The Lord Thy God."

JEHOVAH, JEHOVAH GOD. MERCIFUL AND GRACIOUS, LONG-SUFFERING, AND ABUNDANT IN GOODNESS AND TRUTH, KEEPING MERCY FOR THOUSANDS, FORGIVING INIQUITY, TRANSGRESSION, AND SIN, AND WILL BY NO MEANS CLEAR THE GUILTY; VISITING THE INIQUITIES OF THE FATHER UPON THE CHILDREN AND UPON THE CHILDREN'S CHILDREN, UNTO THE THIRD AND FOURTH GENERATION.

While this declaration of the significance of God's name satisfied some of the perplexities of Moses, it introduced others, which he could not then comprehend, for God had said, "Forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin," and then added in the same breath, "and will by no means clear the guilty." How could both these things coexist? He will, and yet he won't. He won't, and yet he will. The mystery is solved in the seventeenth chapter of John.

That chapter is an antitype of the present one. The proclamation of God's name was a shadow and a prediction. The real proclamation of God's name took place when Christ passed up and down before the land for the space of three years, making all his goodness pass before men. Christ illustrated what it was for God to be merciful and gracious, to forgive iniquity, transgression, and sin. Christ's own words evidently point back to this very scene in which Moses was a participant. He says: "I have manifested thy name unto the men whom thou gavest me out of the world." But though he had illustrated several syllables of the name, there was one that he had not spelled out. At the close of his address to God he said, "I have declared thy name, and will declare it." There was one thing more for him to do. He was to show how God would by no means clear the guilty. He himself on the morrow was to give himself up as a ransom. The words which he uses evidently refer to something immediately at hand. That something could only be his crucifixion.

Now that the chasm was bridged over, and now that the king had delivered his address from the throne, it was proper to resume the preparations for the pavilion, which was to be built for God. Much progress had been made, as we learn from the twenty-fifth chapter and onward, but now it had all to be gone over again. This explains the seeming "repetitiousness," as some undiscerning critics have called it, of chapter thirty-five following chapter twenty-five. The criticism is made by those who seem to be ignorant of diplomatic form and of Oriental usage. When a main treaty is broken, all the minor steps fall with it. If a new treaty is made, the specifications have to be repeated. This explains why the giving of the material and the work of construction is repeated a second time. The tabernacle procedure, beginning with the twenty-fifth chapter, was a part of the Covenant of Works, now abrogated. The collection of material men-

tioned in the thirty-fifth chapter and onward to the end of Exodus, was a part of the Covenant of Grace.

Three books of the Pentateuch, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy, while they contain a history of the people of Israel during their desert life, contain also what is more germane to our present consideration, a portraiture of the character and the ways of their king. These three books are a practical commentary on the royal proclamation by Jehovah, which attendeth the institution of the Covenant of Grace. Ex. 34. Jehovah appears all the way through as a sovereign just and righteous and merciful, and yet absolute in all matters of state and matters of religion.

I. He issues definite instructions about his pavilion that is to be erected. He himself furnishes all the specifications with the greatest minuteness of detail.

II. He names all the officers of his court and prescribes all the duties that are to be discharged by each one. Aaron and Joshua and Bezaleel and Aholiab are all his appointees. Moses was the great prophet, Aaron was the great priest, and Joshua was the great general. All of these persons received their commissions direct from God.

III. He prescribes the way he is to be served by all who would approach him. There is a system of offerings and of sacrifices and of sacred festivals, all of them being typical of things to come. The whole burnt-offering contained in the first chapter of Leviticus represents Christ giving himself in his entirety as an offering for sin. The meat-offering in the second chapter of Leviticus represents Christ as an offering of righteousness for his people, and the peace-offering in the third chapter of Leviticus represents Christ being made a feast of reconciliation between God and man.

IV. While Jehovah governs by a deputy and a mediator, he himself is always at hand for reference and for appeal.

V. Their king was not only their political head and their religious head, but he was also their military leader. As such he marked out their campaign of conquest. He ordered the sending forth of the spies. He numbered those fit for war and located them in their camps and under their banners, and he devised all their strategies for them.

What impression did these new subjects of Jehovah get of their king? There were certain persons among them who were what the Scriptures call "profane persons," with proclivities for wrong-doing, who were prone to evil continually. Their conception of Jehovah was unspiritual and unworthy. He was a great God, a mighty God, a shelter and a hiding-place, but they never could appreciate either his spirituality or his holiness. There were other persons again in ancient Israel just as there afterwards were in Christ's day, and just as there are now, who come to the light that their deeds may be manifest, and who with a seeming instinct seemed to take kindly to the truth.

The history of the reign of Jehovah as king began with the thirty-second chapter of Exodus and it includes also the books Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, and Judges, and I Samuel down to Chap. 10, when the people rejected him and wanted a human king of their own. Thirty-eight years of that reign had passed already, but though they were a nation of subjects, they had no kingdom territory; they were in search of one. Joshua and Judges are called the Books of the Theocratic Régime proper, because God was now king over them in the land he had promised them; and because they were now in the kingdom land the administration of their king took on new features. To these new features attention is now to be directed. Moses himself was dead. Jehovah had removed him in accordance with the declaration recorded in Ex. 32, "When I visit I will visit." His life for theirs. His life had been mortgaged for thirty-eight years. Now

God foreclosed so that the people might go in and take possession. The official and the legal character of the transaction was manifested from the fact that God took charge of the body himself. He was the sexton who officiated at his interment and certified to his death accordingly. There was something strange about it. Whether Satan thought that he ought to have the body as being the body of a criminal, as was the goat that was given to Azazel, we do not know. But it is certain that Satan made an attempt to get it and Michael opposed it. God buried him, and no man knoweth his sepulcher to this day. To our own minds it would not be strange if some day or other God may not allow men to find the body of Moses. These are wonderful times for the exhuming of buried evidences according to the declaration, "found after many days."

The minister is dead, "Long live the minister." Jehovah the king now appoints Joshua to be his generalissimo, and puts him at the head of his army. He issued his instructions and his assurances to the new commander and bade him "Arise and take the people over Jordan." The royal insignia was to be continued unchanged. Taking precedence of everything else in the procession was that awe-inspiring Ark of the Covenant. That ark was the throne room of Jehovah, between the out-stretched wings of the golden cherubim of which, in blinding splendor, blazed the Shekinah, the symbol of his immediate presence.

They came to the Jordan; the bearers of the throne went down into the water. The moment their feet touched the current, the affrighted waters fled. "What ailed thee, O thou sea, that thou fledest, thou Jordan, that thou wast driven back?" A highway was made for them and they went over dry-shod. What a king of tremendous power Jehovah was! The earth trembled at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of the God of Jacob. If he could do such things as those, what could he not do?

And now that they were in their own land the king showed them what kind of a people he must have to serve him. A new kingdom must be occupied by a new kind of people. He commanded Joshua to take sharp knives and to circumcise the people; but true circumcision is of the heart, and means regeneration. The people that served the king must be a regenerate people.

Now came Jericho. It is to be seen what Jehovah can do here. Jericho was a great city, a city of lofty, resisting walls, nor could those gates, braced with iron as they were, be rushed by any Israelitish host that could be hurled against them. But there was no need of anything of the kind. Jericho was to fall without hands, without battering rams and catapults. Yet the whole host must be mustered. A vast column of forty thousand now formed into a line preparatory to a march around the city. Some went ahead and some followed after. The most conspicuous thing in the whole procession was that Ark of the Covenant. There lay the hiding of the nation's power. Around the city they went. They repeated the performance the second day and on the third day and on the fourth day and on the fifth day and on the sixth day. The wonderful thing about it was the absolute stillness that attended their movements. There was no noise and no talking in the ranks; as in the silence of death they made their daily rounds and then went into camp. To the denizens of Jericho there must have been something surpassingly absurd in all this. On the seventh day they went around seven times. When the seventh round was completed there went up a single shout from that tremendous host: "Shout, for the Lord hath given you the city." And Jericho's walls came tumbling down on the run before the beleaguering hosts. Israel thus saw what Jehovah could do. Next Jehovah appears as a strategist at the taking of Ai. Then he appears as a criminal judge, in the case of Achan. He appears as a law-maker. He appears as an executive. More than all he appears now

as a divider up of the land and the giver of land titles to the various tribes of Israel. The book of Joshua, therefore, is a history of the conquest of the land and is also typical as a history of the conquest of this world by the forces of the church in the coming ages.

The book of Judges has a historic and pedagogic purpose of its own. The key to it is the oft-repeated sentence, "for there was no king in Israel, and every man did what was right in his own eyes." That means there was no human king. God was their king who reigned through a premier, but the people were willful and disobedient and prone to rebellion. They chafed under his righteous administration. God allowed them to have their own way and permitted them, as he so often does in his method of pedagogy, to do as they pleased for a time. It seems to have been a part of the purpose of Jehovah to allow samples of all sorts of government and also all samples of no sort of government, as was the case now.

Accordingly, we have an utter and wholly irresponsible kind of democracy, the most perilous that can be found. In fact it was an approximate anarchy, an anticipation of modern nihilism, and a lesson of warning on that account. Every man was his own king, autocratic and reckless and caring very little about his neighbor. Robbery, pillage, and violence as a consequence filled the land. The very high ways were deserted. The disregard of God's law which produced that state of things will produce it again, whenever it gains ascendancy, as it did in the days of the Judges. Nowadays men are divided on the question of "the source of authority." We have had up the question of the source of authority in the state, and men have been divided over it; some contending that kings rule by divine right, and others that the source of all political authority is the consent of the governed, a principle which is not to be applied too rigidly, for that would de-throne Christ. If the question of the kingship of Christ were put to people to-day, it is doubtful whether men,

even in this land of our own, would give him the majority, yet Christ intends to reign all the same, whether here or there. To him every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall confess.

In those days of the Judges the source of authority in the state and the source of authority in religion were up at the same time and were truthfully a part of one and the same question. With them at the start Jehovah was their king and the source of both kinds of authority. But they had backslidden from Jehovah, and as a consequence respect for all authority, religious as well as political, waned among them. The whole state of things culminated in one of the most revolting and blood-curdling iniquities that ever disgraced human history. It is told at the close of the book in the story of the Levite and his concubine.

But it is not the evil doings of the people that we are now looking at, but at the character of the king as he appeared in his administration; Jehovah was dethroned in heart long before he was in name. The way was being slowly prepared so far as it was in their power to bring it about; Jehovah was to be retired and Saul was to be exalted. But God was gracious to them and wonderfully generous and forgiving. To punish them he brought down upon them the heathen, but did not outright destroy them. When afterwards they were crushed under a heathen yoke and lifted up their prayer, in anguish crying unto their neglected king, then he raised up a deliverer and started them off again. That these proceedings in the times of the Judges have a modern application is evident from examples which can be given. The pieces of the dismembered body of the concubine sent round among the tribes shocked them awfully. The bloody appeal they dared not ignore, so they got together a vast host of them to consider. The first move was a demand on the tribe of Benjamin to deliver up to national justice the sons of Belial, who had been guilty of the dreadful crime. But Benjamin revolted and refused outright.

They intended to maintain their refusal by a battle against all Israel if need be. Israel made ready an army. Before they went up to fight they inquired of God if they should go up against Benjamin their brother? Jehovah said, "Yes, go up." But they were driven back with a frightful loss. Again they asked the Lord, "Shall we go up against our brother?" Again the answer of Jehovah was, "Yes, go up." And again they were beaten. Once more they asked counsel of God. Again God told them to go up, and the third time they nearly wiped Benjamin out.

Why was it that since Benjamin had committed so great a wrong they were allowed to inflict upon Israel two such heavy defeats, one of twenty-two thousand and one of eighteen thousand? The explanation is here. Benjamin was not alone guilty of the awful degeneracy which led to that horrible crime. The whole nation was guilty, therefore the whole nation was to be punished. Jehovah's plan was first of all to use Benjamin to scourge Israel, and then to use Israel to scourge Benjamin to the verge of destruction.

A parallel to this was found in the recent Civil War of our country. People of the North maintained that they were right, that slavery was an abomination in the sight of God, and therefore God would bless the Northern army from the start; but the fact is that slavery was not simply a Southern sin; it was a national sin. We all were guilty of it together. We had profited by slavery; therefore, when the time came God executed judgment at Bull Run, using the South to scourge the North, but before the war was over he used the North to vanquish the South.

The Book of the Kingdom Literature contains I, II, Samuel, I, II, Kings, I, II, Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther. The period covered by these books is about seven hundred and twenty-five years. They contain the history of the king and his subjects during that time.

The history of the people is a varied one. When it commenced Jehovah was still their king. Some time

afterwards, however, they became discontented and clamored for a human king to head the nation. This involved the superseding of Jehovah. Nevertheless, by the order of Jehovah it was granted. Then followed a marvelous succession of kings of one kind and another—some good, some bad, and some indifferent. Saul led off, a self-willed, self-opinionated, intractable monarch who was repudiated by Jehovah before he had been two years on the throne, though he was allowed to reign the full forty years. After the two years David became God's appointee, and after him again Solomon. For many long years David, the duly appointed successor, was a fugitive and a wanderer. After Saul and David and Solomon, each of whom was a representative of a typical king, and after the kingdom was rent in twain, there followed a long succession of monarchs, but none of whom seemed to be particularly articulated in the typical genealogy. The books, however, which describe them come to us with God's imprimatur as genuine history. Though men were largely responsible for the make-up, God was responsible for the final overruling. They abound in material for character study. They involve also many illustrations of the interworking or co-ordinating of human freedom and divine sovereignty. In the affairs of ordinary life with us nowadays everything moves along seemingly a purely human substratum, but in the book of the kingdom history we see both the divine and the human working together like two wheels in a cog system, and from them we learn to discern providential overruling as well as human agency.

Human judicature in every nation is guided, in its decision, partly by enactments and partly by precedents, the latter being presumably based on the former, and are often more determined. A Book of Divine Revelation, of Divine Laws and Commandments, would be incomplete without an attendant exhibit of precedents illustrating and confirming. The value of these Old Testament books

for that purpose cannot be over-estimated. One will be surprised to find how many of the moral, social, and religious problems of our day have light thrown upon them by a comparison with similar examples in the Old Testament. With that we leave the subject in that form, and turn our thoughts to the contemplation of the king himself, as he appears in the administration of his kingdom and his people.

And first of all we are now to see Jehovah the king exercising a universal prerogative of royalty when it removes cabinet ministers and whole cabinets with them. In this case it was old Eli that was removed and the child Samuel was inducted into his place. A very old man and a very young child are the human parties in this strange affair. It was not simply old Eli that was now condemned, but it was the whole Aaronic priesthood in him. When a king enters into a treaty with another power, two agents are employed. The first is called a minister plenipotentiary, the second is a minister resident. The first has a specific commission and has no lineal successor, but the second has a continual succession. So when God made a treaty with Israel, Moses was his plenipotentiary. After the treaty was made, then Aaron and his sons after him were the administrators of it. But in the course of hundreds of years that elapsed the whole priestly administration had become corrupt and degenerate. Eli's sons were vile beyond description. Their end had come, and with them the end of an official recognition of the Aaronic priesthood.

But is it not true that the Aaronic priesthood continued in power? Yes, but when Eli was rejected the inadequacy of the whole of them was declared. It will be noticed how little God himself seemed to have to do with them from that time on. And as if to confirm all this, it will be noted how little Christ had to do with the high priests when he was upon earth. Communication had been broken off in the days of Eli and no man had ever been found to

take his place. The next priest whom God recognized after Eli was Christ himself.

The change was now to take place from the priestly to the prophetic. What Israel now needed was a line of prophets. Samuel being a very little boy was taken to signify the inauguration of the new prophetic line, to be continued until Christ should come.

An appalling disaster now happened to Israel. As intimated above, religious work had become grossly secularized under the elders of Israel. The Ark of God, instead of being the symbol of holy worship, became like a fetish or something to conjure by. There came a war between Israel and Philistia. Heavy forces were out on both sides. There were collisions and conflicts, but no conclusive results. The elders said, "We will bring out the ark of God to turn the scale." Such a thing was unprecedented. When the ark reached the camp the elation of the people was unbounded. A shout went up which was heard across the plain like the roar of the tempest, and the heavens rang again. The people thought that now certainly Jehovah would have to fight for his own, if he could not be made to fight for them in any other way. Surely Jehovah would not allow his very throne to be captured by an enemy, it would be too much of a disgrace; and so every man of them was braced up for a fight and confident victory.

Over in the camp of the Philistines excitement and alarm reigned supreme. They asked, "What meaneth all this shout from the Hebrew camp?" They were told that they had brought the ark of God into the camp. These lords of the Philistines knew all about Jehovah, though none of them worshiped him. It is a fashion in the East not to worship the gods of other nations. They knew Jehovah to be a mighty and a terrible God. They said one to another, "These are those mighty gods that smote the Egyptians. Now then we shall have to fight not only men, but gods. So brace up, ye Philistines, and fight for

your liberties and your lives." They rushed into the battle with the fury of desperation. To their surprise they won from the start. The Israelites fell in multitudes, the slaughter was prodigious. Thirty thousand of them were stretched out upon the plains and the two sons of Eli were slain.

The ark itself, the throne room of Jehovah, became a captive and a fugitive.

Old Eli, sitting in his seat at Shiloh, was anxiously awaiting tidings. All at once a fugitive from the battlefield came tearing into the camp. His garments were rent and he had dust upon his head. That meant disaster beyond question. Immediately the whole camp was in a tumult. Old Eli heard the uproar and sat trembling. The messenger went into detail before him. The army was hopelessly beaten. The dead were scattered all over the plain. The ditches ran with their blood. Eli trembled, but still listened.

The messenger continued. The two guardians of the Ark, Hophni and Phinehas, are dead. Eli continued to tremble, but still listened. The messenger went on with this terrible sentence, "AND THE ARK OF GOD IS TAKEN." As these words fell from his lips, old Eli, as if brained by a bludgeon, dropped from his seat and was dead. He was a very old man, ninety-eight years old, and a man of heavy physique.

The Aaronic line was now ended. Then was fulfilled the words of God, in which he said that the iniquity of Eli's house should not be purged with sacrifices and offerings forever. That meant that the growing degeneracy of three hundred and eighty-nine years had culminated and rejection was now reached.

But is it not true that there were to be high priests down to the time of Christ? Yes, but they were not God's appointees, as was Aaron and his house down to Eli, who was also of their line. So far as God's appointments were concerned, there was now to be a long hiatus in the

priesthood. For no less than eleven hundred and forty-one years God appointed no one to be priest, but there was to come some day a priest after God's own heart. As he said, "I will raise me up a faithful priest that will do according to all that is in my heart and my mind, and I will build him a storehouse and he shall walk before mine anointed forever." That priest was Christ. The intervening priests from Eli to Christ were not to be officially recognized. In confirmation of this view it will be noticed, as we have already said, that Christ when on earth never recognized a high priest. On the contrary, he refused to be interrogated by them.

The Philistines were exultant. It was the day of their lives. They had captured Generals and captured Princes, but this time they had captured a God, for they had his throne in their possession. There stood the ark, in all probability bespattered with the blood of its defenders. Uncircumcised hands took hold of its handles and carried it off, no doubt with many a jeer and jest. The mysterious chest, from which fiery lightnings were reputed to have darted forth, was now silent. It did nothing and said nothing, and was seemingly unable to help itself. All the more the merriment of the Philistines, as they lugged the hapless Ark back to their capital city. As the ancient manner was, they presented it as a trophy in his temple to their fish-god, Dagon. And there they left it. The next morning, lo and behold, Dagon was flat on his face. Had the Ark begun to assert itself? They seemed to have been scared only a little. It might have been an accident, for even their gods meet with mishaps. During the day they put Dagon on his feet and started him off all right again. The next morning he was down worse than ever. His hands and feet were cut off, and the only available part of him was a wooden stump. Could there be power in that ark after all to do these things? But there the ark stood, just where they put it, motionless and voiceless.

Next something like what we call nowadays bubonic

plague broke out among them, and they died off like sheep. But all the time the chest did nothing and manifested nothing. They concluded, however, that after all that chest was the danger spot. So they hurried it off to another one of their great cities, called Gath, but the plague was there as soon as they were, and the Gath people began to die off as rapidly as the others had done. Then they moved it off to Ekron, but the Ekron people began to protest; they did not want the ark there. The consternation was great among them. The bewildered heads of the Philistines resolved to send it back. They treated it at last with great distinction. They built a new cart especially to carry it back, drawn by new oxen that never before had been under the yoke; and they sent along presents of gold, and imitation emeralds of gold by the way of an apology to the God of Israel. They followed it at a safe distance. The oxen, guided by an unseen power, made straight for the border. The lords of the Philistines breathed freely and came back home. This was the first campaign of Jehovah among the heathen, lasting seven months and a half. The Philistines had captured it with glee. Their sense of relief was great when they got rid of it.

And now occurred an appalling and wicked incident in their national history. Influenced by the heathen nations around them, they had been gradually working toward the notion of a man-king, whereas God was their king. Samuel was indignant and shocked at their disloyalty. He remonstrated with them. He thought perhaps that it was because of dissatisfaction, possibly with himself, and still more with his sons, who were not proving themselves to be worthy judges of Israel. But God told him to accede to their wishes, for it is not you they reject, but me, said Jehovah. God selected a man for them; that man was Saul, the son of Kish. Saul was a great burly fellow, possessed of much physical stateliness, was a resolute, impulsive leader, with much daring and also

much rashness in his composition. The latter soon brought him to his ruin. Samuel was sent to anoint him. It was a simple ceremony, but the essentials were all observed. Thenceforth Jehovah was to be relegated to a subordinate dignity.

This did not mean, however, that Jehovah intended to allow the reins of power to drop from his hands. He did not allow it then, and he has not done it since, and he never will do it. However, if he did not reign over these rebellious subjects as king, he would persist in reigning over them as God. The fathers rejected Jehovah as king. Not Jehovah, but a man-king; in the same manner, at a later day, the children said, "We will not have this man 'to reign over us,' not Jesus, but Barrabas." In turn both Jehovah and Jesus have been rejected as king over men.

The divinely appointed and articulated kingships of Israel were five in number:

Jehovah	.....	Reigned.....	389 years.
Saul	.....	Reigned.....	40 years.
David	.....	Reigned.....	40 years.
Solomon	.....	Reigned.....	40 years.
Jesus the Anointed,		whose reign is	everlasting.

The interim kings of Judah and Israel, of the lines of Rehoboam and Jeroboam are entered into the scripture records by divine appointment, and were under divine supervision. They were not, however, of the articulated line. It has been already stated that the priestly line ended with Eli, the others had no divine appointment, but existed by sufferance. The next priest of God's appointment was Christ himself. In like manner the next divinely appointed king after Solomon was Jesus himself.