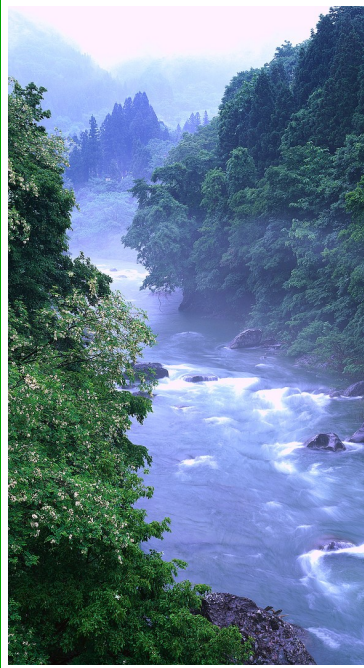


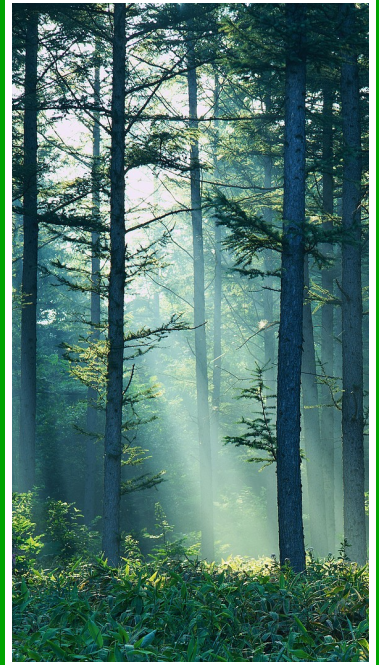
The Two Paradises



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**Revelation
Text is on
the back.**



"And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there He put the man whom He had formed. And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil. And a river went out of Eden to water the garden; and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads. And the Lord God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it. And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" Genesis 2:8-10 and 2:15-17.

The Two Paradises

Andrew Gray (Perth)

We read of two Paradises — one is described to us in the beginning of the Bible, and the other at the end of it. The book of Genesis has its Paradise, and so has the book of Revelation. There is the Paradise of the first Adam, and there is also the Paradise of the last Adam. Looking back as far as history carries us, we see a Paradise which none of us shall ever enjoy; and, looking forward, through the medium of Divine promises and predictions, we see a Paradise from which the people of God shall never depart. The one is going farther away continually, but the other is coming nearer and nearer; and its fragrance is felt in the gentle zephyrs that blow upon Mount Zion.

The descriptions cannot be perused without leading the thoughts into a comparison and contrast of the one Paradise with the other. Yielding to that guidance, our remarks will be arranged under the following heads:—

- I. The Rivers.
- II. The Trees.
- III. The Curse.
- IV. The General State of the Inhabitants.

I. The Rivers. — A river is a beautiful object. A river of clear water winding through a garden, meandering among flowers and trees, presents to the eye a lovely scene. And then, besides the beauty of a river or stream in itself, which may be called its direct contribution of beauty, much of the remaining attractions of the garden through which it passes is to be ascribed to it. The flowers and the trees are quickened and refreshed by it. Through its aid the flowers assume their fair and gorgeous array, and the trees spread out their noble arms, and are covered with foliage and fruit.

There was a river in the Paradise of Eden The benignant Creator did not leave the primeval home of man without the advantage and the ornament of a river. “A river,” we are informed, “went out of Eden to water the garden.” A river was there — a pure, majestic, and branching stream — to fertilize, embellish, and gladden the place.

In the future Paradise there is also a river. It is not behind the Paradise of the past in this respect. "And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb." The language shews that this is a spiritual river. Doubtless, the new heavens and the new earth, which are to come after the final conflagration, and to which the new Paradise belongs, will have material beauties and splendours, corresponding to the glorified bodies of Christ and His people. But it is more important and necessary for us now, that our minds should be exercised in the contemplation of the spiritual characteristics and advantages of that state of things. The former will be adjuncts, but the latter are the essentials, of the Church's promised bliss. Special preparation on our part, and in this life, is not required for the enjoyment of the former; but for the enjoyment of the latter it is. Therefore the river which is described to us is spiritual.

Two things are to be noted concerning this river — the water of it, and the source of it. The water is pronounced to be "water of life, clear as crystal." We cannot be at a loss, with the Bible in our hands, for the interpretation of this. "There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God" (Psa. 46:4). What can that be but Jehovah's love and faithfulness, which are always the consolation of the Church in times of trial and danger? "He leadeth me beside the still waters" (Psa. 23:2). "Thou shalt make them drink of the rivers of thy pleasures" (Psa. 36:8). "With joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation" (Isa. 12:3). What are these waters but the blessings of God's covenant, and the abundant supplies of his manifold grace, with which he gratifies his people's longings, and fills their hearts "I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring" (Isa. 46:3). Here the floods and the water are explained to mean the Divine blessing and the Holy Spirit. "He that believeth in me, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water — this spake he of the Spirit" (John 7:38-39).

Yes; the pure river of the water of life, clear as crystal, is just the unfeigned and unceasing lovingkindness of the Father. The pure river of the water of life, clear as crystal, is just the constant grace, the infinite fullness, and the unsearchable riches of the Son. The

pure river of the water of life, clear as crystal, is just the invigorating influence, the wonderful teachings, and the unspeakable solace of the Holy Spirit. The water of life is no other than the joys, and privileges, and blessings of that life eternal, which is the appointed portion of the redeemed. It corresponds to the new wine which Christ and his people drink together in the kingdom of God. And it is a river of water of life, because, as the flow of a river goes on continually, so shall there never be an end of the celestial happiness. The river, also, is pure, and clear as crystal, because the future state will be a state of unmixed felicity, and a state of glory without a cloud. The river proceeds “out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.” In the throne of God and of the Lamb it has its source. The throne of God and of the Lamb. A single throne is meant, which is occupied by God and the Lamb. This accords with the vision which the Apostle relates: — “I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne, and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain;” and with the language employed elsewhere, “The Lamb that is in the midst of the throne shall feed them.” But Christ has also a throne of his own. He sits upon the throne of David. He is a priest upon his throne. Indeed, there is, as it were, a double enthronization of Christ. Hear his own words: “To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.” It is not surprising that he, who has many crowns on his head, should sit on more than one throne. There is his own throne, which is expressive of his headship and rule over the Church; and there is the Father’s throne, his sitting upon which is expressive of the fact, that the Father has rewarded his obedience and sufferings by making him, as mediator, a sharer of his power and glory, and by putting all things into his hands. Considered as sitting on his own throne, the relation of his kingly dominion towards them who are the blessed subjects of it, is symbolised to us; and considered as sitting on the Father’s throne, we have a symbol of the relation of his royalty and power to him from whom they are derived, and the grounds of his mediatorial elevation and greatness are suggested to us. When we think of him on his own throne, we think of his people, and the privileges they enjoy from his reign: and when we think of him on the Father’s throne, we think of his work, and the

travail of his soul, and his obedience unto death, which have procured him that exaltation.

Now, it is from the Father's throne, considered as the throne of God and of the Lamb, that the river comes. The meaning is plain, and the lesson which is taught is interesting and beautiful. The lesson is, that the joys and blessings of the future Paradise are to be traced, in the first place, to the sovereign love of God; and, in the second place, to the redeeming work of Christ. The river proceeds out of the Father's throne. The whole life, and grace, and glory, which the Church ever arrives at, must be traced back through the far-reaching depths of eternity, and are connected with, and spring out of, that which was done in the beginning, when God, in the greatness, the freeness, and the sovereignty of his love, pronounced the decree of salvation. The throne of the Lamb alone could not have originated this river. The Lamb's throne, by itself originates nothing. There is infinite fullness in Christ; but it is fullness that is derived, infinite though it be: it is fullness which it hath pleased the Father should dwell in him, Christ, as our covenant head, is a reservoir of water of life, whereof we get endless supplies; but it is the sovereign and everlasting love of the three-one Jehovah, acting through the person of the Father, by which the reservoir is filled. The spring and first fountain of all our blessings, and of that river which shall gladden the Paradise of God, is in the Father's throne. But the throne, whence it comes, is not to be viewed as the Father's throne merely. It is the throne of God and of the Lamb. Without that work of the Son, — which the name of the Lamb suggests, and on account of which the Lamb has a seat on the Father's throne — without what is done by him as the second Man, the Servant of the Father, and our covenant-head — neither grace nor glory could be ours. We have called him the reservoir, wherein the water of life is stored up for us; but it is owing to his death that we are enabled to drink it. His death has made openings for its egress; and from his hands, and his feet, and his side, come the joyful waters that flow in the river of Paradise.

II. The Trees. — The Paradise of Eden was adorned and enriched with trees — “every tree,” we are told, “that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food.” The beautiful trees and the noble

stream together must have made an exquisite scene. And two trees there were, that stood in the midst of the garden (Gen. 2:9; 3:3), and excelled all the rest. They were the tree of life, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. These were sacramental trees, as their names denote. The tree of the knowledge of good and evil was a sign and seal of the condition of God's covenant, and the tree of life was a sign and seal of its reward. The first Paradise was remarkable for its trees, it had wonderful trees. The new Paradise is not behind. It has many stately and fruitful trees. There are trees of righteousness without number, the planting of the Lord, that he may be glorified. And there is, besides, one matchless tree, that is in the midst of that Paradise of God (Rev. 2:7). There is the tree of life, which bears twelve manner of fruits, and yields her fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations. With its river of the water of life, and its tree of life, the Paradise, on which the Church's hope is fixed, is, indeed, a Paradise of life. And the tree is not a tree of life, in a sacramental and symbolical sense, like the tree of life in the garden of Eden. It is a tree of life in a sense far higher, it is a tree of life, which shall flourish and yield fruit for ever. It is a tree by which life is really and effectually imparted — by which life is upheld, not for a time, not for an age, but through all the ages to come. It is a tree by which the bodies and the souls of believers shall be preserved in all the strength, and beauty, and glory, of a sanctified and immortal manhood. They who eat of the fruit shall never grow weary of it. It bears twelve manner of fruits — every variety by which enjoyment can be enhanced; That single tree affords enough for all heaven to live upon, It is in fruit all the year round. It knows no autumnal fall of the leaf. It is never found, in wintry guise, with naked and barren arms. It bears twelve manner of fruits, and yields fruit every month; and its leaves are for the healing of the nations. The leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations. Great virtue is in the leaves of the tree. Diseases are healed by them — deadly diseases. — They can heal the foul leprosy of sin; and the wounds, and the bruises, and the putrifying sores, of souls that are ready to perish. And, although it is in the midst of the Paradise of God that the tree stands, and there alone that its fruit can be fully enjoyed, some share of its benefits is granted us even here. Now and then, perhaps, comes a basket of the

fruit, to be distributed among us; and we get, in abundance, the soul-healing leaves. At present it is with the leaves that we chiefly have to do. But we shall have done with them by and by; and if we have used them as we ought, we shall pass to that happy region where the tree that bare them is, and gather for ourselves, to our hearts' content, the fruit of that tree in the midst of the Paradise of God.

We need not say that the Tree of life is Christ. He is the goodly tree in the midst of the garden. His Word, his Gospel, his ordinances, are the means which, the Holy Spirit employs on earth for quickening, regenerating, and sanctifying the people; and the enjoyment of him is the chief ingredient, and the very essence, of the heavenly felicity. He will show his ransomed ones the path of life; out of his fullness they shall be always receiving; he will constantly satisfy them with his bounty; and the eternal ages shall glide along with increasing joys and splendours!

III. The Curse. — Of the second Paradise, it is emphatically said, "There shall be no more curse." The words, no doubt, have reference, in the way of contrast, to the state of things here and now, and are designed to intimate that the curse, which lies on the present creation, shall not be prolonged and carried onward from this state to that. "There shall be no more curse." The curse is here; but it shall not be there. At the same time, the words have a reference which goes farther back. They have in view the state of things which arose in the primeval Paradise. "There shall be no more curse." There was curse in the Paradise of Eden. The incongruity of curse in Paradise was exhibited once; but it shall not happen again. No curse shall there be in that better Paradise, where Christ himself is the Tree of life, yielding every month its twelve manner of fruit, and the river of the water of life is the grace and glory never ending, which the last Adam, and all whom he represents, shall enjoy together.

There was curse in the first Paradise. There was curse in it the moment its peaceful and happy bowers were invaded by the devil. The being on whom God's curse alights is himself, in a sense, a curse. For this reason, even Christ, when he bore the curse as our substitute, is said to have been made a curse. There was curse, then, in the garden of Eden, when the devil was lurking among its

shrubbery, or walking on its terraces, and basking under the shade of its trees, in the form of a beast of the field. It seemed good to him, whose wisdom is never at fault, that the garden should have the serious drawback of being accessible to the fiend. We know that it was necessary, for the trial of man's loyalty and obedience. But, undeniably, a serious drawback it was: and that will be a better Paradise which is liable to no such invasion.

There was curse in the garden of Eden, for there was sin in it. Not, indeed, at first. Man was blameless and holy for a season. But sin there was at last, and probably soon. And sin came not alone. Sin, by necessary consequence, brought the curse. There is a natural and eternal link of connexion between guilt and wrath, even as there is between righteousness and peace. The sin of man's heart and hand brought down the curse of God on his guilty head.

There was curse in the garden of Eden; for there was shame, and there was slavish fear. When the privileged pair fell, they must have fig-leaves to cover them; and they must hide among the trees from the presence of the Lord. The base and dastardly emotions which they thus evinced belong to the curse, and are always in its train.

There was curse in the garden of Eden; for there was death in it. "In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." And die that day they did. The life of God went out of them. Such death as the soul sustains by separation from God passed on them in the very hour and instant of their disobedience. How could they but die, when their communion with God was broken, and sin had divided them from the fountain of life? We might as well think to retain the solar ray, when we interpose between it and the sun, as expect to keep the soul from death when its fellowship with God is dissolved. Now, death belongs to the curse, and is the main thing in it.

And there was curse in the garden of Eden: there was a curse which was spoken by the mouth of the Lord. The garden had been the scene where words of blessing and grace were wont to be uttered by the Creator, and where the holy affections of those whom He had made in his image found vent in glad songs of adoration and praise, accompanied, it may be, by a chorus of angels. But sin changed it all. The accustomed melodies of the garden ceased; and the portentous and ill-omened silence was broken by Jehovah's words of malediction: "Thou art cursed, O serpent, above all cattle,

and above every beast of the field! O woman, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception! Cursed, O Adam, 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 unto thee; in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread: dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return!”

Such was the curse; on account of which the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now! — The curse proved the ruin of the terrestrial Paradise. It led to the immediate expulsion of man; in process of time the garden itself disappeared from the face of the earth; and now the resources of literature and antiquarianism are vainly tasked to determine the spot where the garden stood.

It is gone — that Paradise — gone for ever. Let us not, however, despair. There is another Paradise. He who planted the first has planted a second. He has planted a second, which is better than the first; and concerning which he has declared, that “there shall be no more curse.”

“There shall be no more curse.” This implies that there shall be no more devil — no more Satanic intrusions. The gates are too well-kept for him to get admission, although he were to try to pass as an angel of light. The wall is too high for him to overleap it, and his dragon wings are not strong enough to carry him to its summit. And there are guardian cherubim, through whose flaming array he cannot break. Elsewhere he has had license to appear among the sons of God; but he dare not intermingle with the sons of God in the celestial Paradise. On earth he roves about, the enemy of holiness and peace, scattering his temptations, and throwing his darts of fire; and a chief scene of his malignant activity is the Church of God itself. But the Paradise of the second Man is forbidden ground to him, and he shall never set his foot in it. This world, which he has troubled so long, will see the last of his molestations. His doom is fixed, and it will not tarry. One, who is more than his match, and who has already expelled him from many a stronghold, will cast him into the abyss from which he came, and close the mouth of it for ever.

“There shall be no more curse.” The words imply that, in the second Paradise, there shall be no more sin. If there were sin, there

must be curse. But sin — there will be none of it. No, no; there will be holiness — and that without a stain to mar it. Not the spotted holiness which we see here; but holiness so pure as to content the eye of Him, to whom the azure heavens are not clean. The garden of the Lord shall be peopled, indeed, with those who were sinners before; but not with those who are sinners then. Although those who are on their way to it are not without sin, they shall be freed from sin entirely when they reach its gates. “There shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth.” As the heirs of glory appear within its precincts, they are found, one and all, to be perfectly sanctified. And they will never fall again. The crown of righteousness will never drop from their heads. Never again will they break God’s law, transgress his holy covenant, or be guilty of an act of distrust or rebellion. For one thing, they will never be tempted, as they used to be on earth, and as Adam was, in the Paradise of Eden. The tempter shall not be there. And, though he were, he would not succeed. His arts would be as ineffectual, as they were with the second man himself in the wilderness. Their knowledge of sin, from many a painful lesson, and their knowledge of Satan’s craft, will be better than that which Adam had in his state of primeval innocence.

And, above all, there is their vital union with Christ. Through that union it is, as a uniform and infallible consequence, that they are holy, and without all sin, when they enter into Paradise. And, while that union lasts, the freedom it has wrought for them is safe, and their holiness cannot be tarnished. He that is holy, must be holy still. The Church is sorely infested with sin on earth. In her purest days, hypocrisy has been within her pale; and avarice, and pride, and strife, as well as other evils, have never been kept altogether outside. Her discipline, even when there were apostolic hands to wield it, although it could cast out such members as Ananias and Sapphira, Demas, and Diotrephes, and Simon Magus, could not prevent them from creeping in. And the strong ties of apostolic brotherhood could not withstand the sharp contention which broke up the fellowship of Paul and Barnabas. We need not say that, in our own time, the Church of Christ is greatly damaged and disfigured by sin. Were the habits and secret practices of all those who occupy our places of worship from week to week told over in public, and made known to us as they are known to him who says to

every Church and to every professing Christian, “I know thy works” — what a history they would form!

And if all the hearts of the multitudes who throng the communion tables in our land were open to our view, as they are to the eyes of the King himself — what a spectacle we should have! And what a spectacle have we, in point of fact, in the inconsistencies into which Christians are often betrayed, and in their deplorable jealousies among themselves, and their bitter disputes with each other? There will be none of all this, when the Church gets to Paradise. Hypocrisies, self-seeking, pride, jealousies, backslidings, discords, and uncharitableness, will all be left behind. There never was but one here below, who was holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners. But this will be the character of all at the table in the Church above. There will be no need of discipline. All will be worthy; all will be pure. Truth, holiness, and love, will fill every heart, and irradiate every face. There will be no misunderstandings, no controversies, no reproaches. There will be knowledge, without any mixture of error; brotherly-kindness, without a shade of suspicion or reserve; and the sweetest reciprocities of intercourse. The fulfilling of the law will be reached by all — not partially, as believers reach it here; but perfectly. The fulfilling of the law will be reached, because all will own in everything the gentle sway of love. Dwelling in love, they shall dwell in God, and God will dwell in them.

“There shall be no more curse.” The declaration implies that God shall no more pronounce any curse. It has been impossible for him, hitherto, as the moral ruler of a sinful world, to dispense with the use of the curse. And the most dreadful anathema of all is to come; but, happily, it will be the last. After the words, “Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire,” have issued from the lips of the Judge on the great white throne, there will never be another anathema. Contemporaneously with that curse, there will be a blessing. “Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you.” Thenceforward he will speak only peace to his people, and bless his people with peace. No angry sound or denunciation of woe shall disturb the repose of the second Paradise.

“There will be no more curse.” It implies that the effects of the curse will cease. Believers have deliverance from the curse itself, as

soon as they believe, and while they are yet on earth. “Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law.” “Ye are not under the law” — that is to say, not under its curse. But the effects of the curse remain. Although the curse itself is taken off, hunger and thirst, pain, sorrow, and death, are still to be endured. In the second Paradise, not a trace of the curse will be found. None of its dismal brood will be there. No more hunger and thirst. No more thorns and thistles in return for the vain and wasting toil of man. No more famine. No more shall be heard the cry of want. “They shall hunger no more; neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat.” There shall be no more pain. “The inhabitant shall not say, I am sick.” No more shall they say in the morning, would God it were even; and at even, would God it were morning! There shall be no more affliction and sorrow. No more desolate families; no more bereaved and breaking hearts. No more the wailing cry, Have pity upon me, have pity upon me, O my friends; for the hand of God hath touched me.

Sometimes, here, believers are led to say, all things are against me. But then they will say, he hath done exceeding abundantly, above all that we asked or thought; eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath entered into the heart of man the things that God hath prepared for us. Sometimes, here, they are driven, like Job, to the poor relief of cursing the day of their birth; but there is not one of them there who does not feel: O happy the day I was born! And that is Job’s mind now. Here the Lord permits his people’s tears to flow; there he will dry them up. Here he puts their tears into his bottle, and records them in his book; there he will wipe away all tears from their eyes. And there shall be no more death. No more death by violence, by sharp disease, or slow decay. No more death by any means, or in any form. Death is an old enemy. But never was foe so baffled and beaten as death will be. He has taken up his ground at the very gate of the heavenly Paradise. He is there to resist the believer’s entrance. Has he much success? He has none. He is foiled in every case. Each individual of the multitude whom no man can number, overcomes in the conflict with death, and has cause to sing, “O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory!”

“Thanks be to God who giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ.” Not one believer will be missing, for all that death

can do. But may not death enter, and make havoc within? No; death recoils from the sight and fragrance of the Tree of Life, and can no more be where that tree is, than darkness can be in a place which is full of light. And, when the end comes, and all the children of God have won the battle with death, there shall be no more death: for death and hell shall be cast into the lake of fire!

“There shall be no more curse;” and so there shall not be another expulsion from Paradise. If Adam and Eve be among the number of the saved, as there is sufficient reason to think, this is good news for them. They must well remember the misery of the hour, when God “drove out the man,” and placed the cherubim and the flaming sword to prevent his return. Good news for them — and for all. Nor can it fail to be perceived why the tenure of the second Paradise is better than was that of the first. The new covenant has a better Head than the old one had. Adam himself will not be the last to acknowledge that the keeping of his interest in the second Paradise, along with that of his glorified descendants, is in better hands than his.

IV. The General State of the Inhabitants.

1. The state of man was, in the old Paradise, and will be, in the new, a state of honourable service. Man was placed in the garden of Eden, to serve God with his physical powers. “The Lord God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden, to dress it and to keep it” It was a service, but not a drudgery. It was a service which afforded bodily exercise of a pleasing and exhilarating nature. And it was a service which could not be unworthy of man, in the case, especially, of a garden which the Creator himself had laid out, and the shrubs and trees of which had never been planted, or the flowers sown, by human hands.

But man was employed on a higher service than the culture of the garden. Made in the image of God, he was chosen to illustrate the Divine perfections, and to exemplify the essential strictness of the holy law. And more than this. He was the chosen instrument of a great trial. It was a trial, indeed, which could convey no knowledge to him who is infinitely wise. But it was fit to make it, nevertheless, for the instruction of the intelligent and holy creation, and for declaring the glory of God. The trial was, how far a perfectly holy

creature, endowed with all moral powers, and acted on, externally, by every motive to incline him to his duty, but without other aid or influence, internally, than that which the freedom of his own will supplied, might be reckoned on for a steadfast loyalty to his Creator, and for a constant, unswerving, and complete obedience to the Divine commandments. It pleased the Lord God to commit the solution of the mighty problem to man. A distinguished service was this. But, from its very nature, it was perilous. He could not fail to solve the great problem, indeed, whatever he might do. But no merit was his — a dreadful penalty was all his gain — if the way he took to solve it was to break God's law. His position was essentially insecure. God was not to blame for the insecurity. It was insecure, because it depended on himself. The covenant of his service was firm on God's side; but that was not enough: it required to be firm also on his. His ignominious discharge was a possible thing. He might incur the forfeiture of all that he enjoyed, be turned out of the garden, and driven from God's presence. And, from his relation to mankind as their federal head, he might become the guilty author of a depravity and ruin that should spread themselves over every age and generation. The service of the second Paradise eclipses that of the first. High is the place of those servants of the King, who have other servants of the King to attend them. High, indeed, must it be, when their attendants and ministers are the great ones, the principalities and powers, of the kingdom. Thus high shall the place of believers be as the servants of their God. If angels are sent to be their ministering spirits now, their honours will not be diminished, — when they are exalted and glorified. The worm Jacob will not be less an object of angelic ministrations, after he has been raised from his dunghill, and this corruption has put on incorruption, and he has been transformed into the likeness of Emmanuel Himself. The first man had angels for his companions: the second man, and all whom he is not ashamed to call his brethren, shall have them as ministers.

This service will not come to an end. The servants will never be dismissed. The covenant is firm on both sides. It is as firm on their side, as it is on God's. As firm, because it is not made with them by themselves, but made with them in Christ, and with Christ for them. As firm, because it is not so much a covenant in which God stipulates with man, as a covenant in which God stipulates with God

— God the Father, with God the Son. They are servants whose ears have been bored; and their Almighty and Gracious Lord will keep them in the honours of their high place for ever. It is not needful to inquire minutely what the service will consist in. We may know ere long, by experience. God grant it so! Meanwhile, it is enough to say that it will partake of the same general nature as the service of the believer on earth, and be characterised by a holy conformity to the law of God, a joyful obedience to the intimations of his will, and an active promotion of his glory. They will have powers of which, at present, we have no conception — mental and corporeal powers, that will be worthy of the station to which they are exalted. And ample opportunity will be given for the exercise of their powers. “His servants shall serve him;” and. “His name shall be in their foreheads.”

2. The state of man, in the garden of Eden, was a state of enjoyment and privilege. The fact that he was placed in a garden, which the Lord God had planted and prepared for him, is a proof that it was designed to be, and must have been, a state of enjoyment. So also is the fact that the Lord God took a rib from his side, and made for him a holy companion, who was bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh, with graces and attractions peculiarly her own. He had the intimacies and endearments of social life in their sweetest earthly form. And brief as the record of that happy time is, it contains enough to show that his privileges were great. The fact that the Lord God condescended to bring to Adam every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air, to see what he would call them, and that, whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof, proclaims a marvellous familiarity of intercourse and fellowship between him and his Creator. If it was granted to Moses that the Lord spake to him face to face, as a man speaketh to his friend, much more must it have been granted to Adam in the garden of Eden.

But the second Paradise, also, will have enjoyment and privilege. It will have such enjoyment and privilege as to afford no occasion of regret for what has been lost. The old men, who had seen the temple of Solomon, wept when they thought how inferior must be the temple that was to succeed it. The contrast between the first and the second Paradise will draw no such tears from our original

progenitors. "They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house; — and thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures." "I am come into my garden, my sister, my spouse . . . eat, O friends; drink, yea drink abundantly, O beloved." "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the Tree of Life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God." "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna." "The Lamb that is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and lead them to living fountains of waters." They shall have the richest social delights. They shall dwell together, the incorporated members of a family, having God the Father as their Father, God the Son as their Brother, and the Spirit of love resting on them all. They shall see God. They shall see his face. The veil, which was always interposed before, shall be removed. They shall see His face; and the sight will be life to them, not death — life, and joy, and glory. And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and the glory of God doth lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.

3. The pristine state of man was a state of power and glory. He was a king. The earth was his kingdom; the fish of the sea, the fowls of the air, and every living thing that moveth upon the earth, were his subjects. God gave him authority and dominion over them all, and crowned him with glory and honour as the monarch here below. Believers will be kings. They are kings already by right. They are kings, who are not yet of age, and who must wait a little for the actual commencement of their reign. A kingdom is prepared for them. They shall be greater kings than Adam was, and have a wider and more illustrious dominion. Their kingdom shall be immoveable and undecaying. They shall be enthroned with Christ. They shall be crowned with righteousness and glory. And "they shall reign for ever and ever."

The old Paradise is gone But we need not care. True it is that we should seek it in vain, if we fell in love with it. But why fall in love with it? There is a better Paradise, which is not gone — which has not vanished among the things of the past. Let us fall in love with that. The old Paradise is a pleasing dream; the new paradise is more beautiful than the dream; and it is a reality. The old Paradise is not the only one ever provided for man: the new Paradise also is

provided for him. Let us, then, set out for it. But which is the way? The way! Would you know the way to it? Listen to a voice Divine, that says, "I am the way!" Yes, thou art the way, O Jesus, Lamb of God! Thou art the way to Paradise. We will go to it by the way of thy blood and thy righteousness. And thy person, thy work, thy mediation, thy offices, are the ladder, by which we shall ascend, from the murky vale of this world, to the happy clime on high! Jesus is the way. Let us walk in him. Let us walk in him by faith. "We walk by faith." We walk in him by acts of acceptance, and habits of trust. Let us trust him, and love him, and serve him. He is the Priest, the Prophet, the King, who is freely offered to us. Let him be the Priest, the Prophet, the King, who is gladly accepted by us; and let our minds and hearts cleave to him accordingly. So shall we walk in him; and, walking thus, we shall go from strength to strength, and none shall stop our onward march, till we arrive at the Paradise of God.



"And He shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him: And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads. And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever."

Revelation 22:1-5.