

# THE HOMILETIC REVIEW.

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## REVIEW SECTION.

### I.—MISSIONARY MINISTERS.

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WHEN the church had only a few men formally consecrated to the ministry after a three years' course under the great Teacher, they were instructed to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. The obligation to prosecute this work did not become weaker, still less expire, when the church had twelve hundred, or twelve thousand, ministers. By God's grace the Master's command is now being heard by a larger number of men who love the gospel than ever before in human history. There have been periods of great missionary zeal long after "primitive piety" had passed away; but, alas! the spirit of a great ambitious corporation, which combined uncongenial elements with gospel work, superseded to a sad degree the spirit of truth and love, and men were applauded, who, by this agency or that, secured the submission of a tribe or a district to the authority of the Papacy. So, to take an example which ought to be studied to-day, poor Ireland was put by an infallible Pope under the sway of England, as a piece of the political trickery of the time to secure the submission of the Irish Church—then holding much evangelical anti-Romanist truth—to his dominion.

Great and laudable efforts are being made by Christian men and women to raise funds, occupy fields, and sustain on them such laborers as we distinguish from pastors by the name of "missionaries." The object contemplated in this brief article is the removal, in part, of the sharp line of distinction between the minister and the missionary. Of course any missionary, when God has given him some success in the conversion of souls, becomes a pastor. He is bound to feed the souls to whom God has by his efforts given spiritual life. Correspondingly, there are ways in which the minister can combine with the work of the pastor the work of a missionary. This work will be in some forms indirect and in some direct. We begin with the former.

The pastor of a church can create, diffuse and strengthen the *spirit of missions*. Reference is not now made to monthly or other missionary meetings, nor to the organization of bands and societies in the congregation. These have their places, and the pastor does

## IV.—THE MIDDLE STATE IN THE OLD TESTAMENT.

BY PROF. CHARLES A. BRIGGS, D.D., NEW YORK.

THE Middle State is the state between death and the resurrection that state into which man goes immediately after death. The ancient religions of Egypt and Babylonia fill up this state with crude speculations. Even the Canaanites had a highly developed eschatology in connection with their practice of necromancy. But the Old Testament is reserved and silent where these religions are outspoken and extravagant. Nevertheless, there is much more in the Old Testament with regard to the state that follows death than theologians usually suppose.

The Hexateuch gives little information upon this subject. The theocratic narrator represents that the soul goes forth from the body at death (Gen. xxxv : 18) ; that Abraham was to go to his fathers in peace (Gen. xv : 15) ; and that Balaam desired to die the death of the upright (Num. xxiii : 10). These terms certainly indicate that the death of a man like Abraham and the ideal Israelite had something hopeful and desirable in it. The coming to the Fathers here and elsewhere in the Old Testament is a coming to the disembodied souls of the Fathers in the realm of the dead.

The prophetic narrator tells the story of Jacob's woe when he hears of the death of his son. Jacob says, "I shall descend unto my son to Sheol mourning" (Gen. xxxvii : 35). This passage gives us the name of the abode of the dead. Sheol is derived by some from a stem that gives the meaning, hollow, subterranean, cave-like place, like the German Hölle, English Hell. Others derive it from a stem that gives the meaning, sinking down, depth. It is agreed that Sheol is the place of disembodied souls. It is a place whither the souls *go down*. It is contrasted with Heaven as a height to which there must be an ascent. Jacob expects to descend to his son Joseph in Sheol. This shows that he regarded Sheol as the abode of the righteous dead, and not a place of punishment for him and his boy. The reverse of this conception of the descent of the righteous to the righteous is given in the story of the judgment of Korah and his company (Num. xvi : 30, 33a). Sheol is falsely rendered *pit* in the A. V. a meaning that it never has. The story is "they descended alive and all that was theirs to Sheol." They did not pass through the ordinary experience of death. They were swallowed up by an earthquake without burial, they descended into Sheol with their wives and children. This passage shows that Sheol is the place where the wicked are gathered. These two passages teach that Sheol is the place whither all the departed souls go when separated from the body.

The priestly narrator gives a brief account of the translation of Enoch. "And he was no more, for God took him" (Gen. v : 24). This is contrasted with the statement made in connection with each one of

the other antediluvians "and he died." Enoch did not die as did other men. God took him without letting him pass through the experience of the death struggle. Nothing is said of the place whither Enoch was taken. There is no reason to suppose that he was not taken to Sheol, or that he was taken to Heaven or paradise. The teaching of this passage is that God took Enoch into communion with Himself after death, that God granted his presence and favor to Enoch in the abode of the dead; and that therefore there is a possibility of union and communion with God in the abode of the dead.

The story of Saul and the necromancer (1 Sam. xviii) is instructive. Saul, after he has learned that God will not answer him by any lawful method, resorts to a woman who is mistress of necromancy. Her profession was to invoke the dead to respond to the inquiries of the living. At a later date the prophet Isaiah rebukes the people for resorting to such necromancers.

"When they say unto you, seek unto the necromancers and unto the wizards:

Ye chirpers and mutterers should not a people seek unto their God?

On behalf of the living will they seek unto the dead for instruction and for testimony." —Is. viii. 19.

Necromancy was forbidden in the codes of the Hexateuch under penalty of death. The narrative makes it evident that Samuel ascended from the abode of the dead, that he was recognized, notwithstanding his supernatural form, and that he gave a decisive message to Saul that was appropriate to the occasion. His words "To-morrow thou and thy sons will be with me" (verse 19) clearly shows that Samuel, Saul and Jonathan would meet together on the morrow of the battle in the abode of the dead, and that this was a place from which Samuel ascended, and to which they would descend.

The grief of David at the death of his child finds vent in his words.

"I am going unto him but he cannot return unto me.—2 Sam. xii: 23.

David knows that he will, ere long, go to his babe in the abode of the dead.

In two of the Davidic Psalms light is cast upon the future life of the righteous in Sheol.

"Thou wilt not abandon me myself to Sheol,  
Thou wilt not suffer thy favored one to see destruction;  
Thou wilt make known to me the path to life,  
Fulness of joys is in thy presence,  
Pleasures at thy right hand for evermore."—Ps. xvi: 10-11.

"I in righteousness shall behold thy face,  
I shall be satisfied with thy form, when I awake."—Ps. xvii: 15.

These passages teach that after death the psalmist expects to be in the presence of God, to be at His right hand, to see His face, and to be satisfied with beholding His form. This is to be an experience of pleasure, satisfaction and fulness of joy. The only place that is mentioned

is *Sheol*, the common abode of the dead. We see on the one hand that the poet dreads destruction there, and is confident that God will not abandon him there. We see on the other hand that there is a path to life in the abode of the dead which God will make known, a path that leads to life and the blessed experiences the poet anticipates. The doctrine of these Psalms is that there are two conditions of life in *Sheol*, the one abandoned by God to corruption, the other taught by God, the path of life and blessedness.

The Book of Kings tells us that Elijah was caught up to Heaven in the midst of a theophany (2 Kings ii : 11). This reminds us of the translation of Enoch. The heaven here mentioned is the physical heaven whither the chariot of fire ascended. It does not determine anything as to the place whither the soul of the prophet went. There is no reason to suppose that he went to any other place than *Sheol*, the common abode of the dead. But there he was united to God and came into the goodly fellowship of Enoch and Abraham, Moses and David, and all the departed saints.

*Sheol* is contrasted with heaven as the depth over against the height (Amos ix : 2). Hosea uses *Sheol* to represent the place of exile of Israel prior to his restoration, which is conceived as a national resurrection (xiii : 14). *Sheol* is insatiable (Hab. ii : 3); it enlarges itself in order to take in all the pomp and glory of men (Is. v : 14). Hezekiah in his song describes it as a great city with gates (Is. xxxviii : 9). He takes a gloomy view of life there, and contrasts it with life in the holy city, where the praises of God are sounding forth (Is. xxxviii : 18). So a psalmist regards deliverance from *Sheol* as a blessing (xxx : 4). In the Psalms of the prophetic period there is progress in the doctrine of the condition of the departed. On the one hand the wicked are hurried into *Sheol*, cast down suddenly to destruction, and consumed by terrors (ix : 18; lv : 16). Like a flock of sheep they are assigned to death as their shepherd. Their form consumes away, they are stripped of their power and honor, and they never see the light (xlix : 15-20). This is a further unfolding of the evil condition of the wicked dead. On the other hand the condition of the righteous is one of blessedness. A psalm of Asaph grandly describes it.

“ But I am continually with Thee,

Thou hast taken hold of my right hand ;

With Thy counsel Thou wilt lead me,

And afterwards to glory wilt take me.

Whom have I in heaven ?

And with thee I have pleasure in nothing on earth.

My flesh and my heart consume.

O rock of my heart and my portion for ever!”—lxxiii : 23-26.

It is union and communion with God in this world that secures union and communion with Him in the abode of the dead. Guided in life, the poet will be guided in the abode of the dead. God is the

supreme and only object of desire in heaven and on earth. The psalmist longs for a closer union with Him afterwards in the state of glory whither he expects to be taken. The heart and the flesh of the psalmist consume away in longing and pining after the Rock on which his heart was based and his everlasting portion.

A psalm of the Korahites contains similar doctrine. Over against the wretched fate of the wicked described in the previous context, the poet looks forward to a different prospect.

“Nevertheless God will redeem me myself,  
From the hand of Sheol will he take me.”—xliv: 16.

The Wisdom Literature enlarges still further the doctrine of the Middle State. The Book of Proverbs tells us that Sheol is the place whither men descend at death (v: 5, vii: 27, ix: 18, xv: 1). It is insatiable (xxvii: 20, xxx: 16) and swallows up mankind (i: 12). This doctrine is familiar to us. But new doctrine appears in the term given to the departed, *Rephaim*. This word seems to indicate their weakness, helplessness and unsubstantial nature (Prov. ii: 18, ix: 18, xxi: 16). It corresponds with the *shades* of the Greek and Roman religions. These shades dwell in the house of the dead. They are gathered together as a congregation. The writer of the Praise of Wisdom calls attention to *Depths of Sheol*, where are the shades of the fools who have entered the house of folly (ix: 18). This seems to be the beginning of a distinction of place in Sheol as a further unfolding of the distinction of condition that we have already found. Another term now comes into use parallel with Sheol. *Abaddon* is a place of intensive loss or ruin. This is something more than Sheol, the abode of all the dead. It is specifically the place of ruin, where those only can go who are doomed to corruption and destruction (xv: 11, xxvii: 20).

The Book of Job enlarges our knowledge of the realm of the dead. There are three classes of passages. The first of these describe Sheol as a place whither men descend at death, from which they cannot return (vii: 9, 10). Their bodies are consigned to the dust; where the worm devours them (xvii: 13-16). This gives pain to the soul, which mourns over the body in Sheol (xiv: 22). Sheol is a land of darkness, and dense darkness. Its very light is gloom (x: 21, 22). It is enclosed with bars and gates (xxxviii: 17). Corruption reigns there as the father of its inhabitants (xvii: 13, 14). All classes and conditions of men go there, where all earthly distinctions cease. The slave is free, and the master can be taskmaster no more. They are all the same (iii: 17-19). Though conscious, they know nothing of what transpires in the world. Even the fortunes of their own children are unknown to them (xiv: 21). Job expects to go there himself, though a god-fearing man. He knows that Sheol is the common abode of the departed (x: 21). In all these passages he takes a gloomy view of

Sheol, and if they stood alone there would be no light in Job for the future life. But they do not stand alone; there are other passages where distinctions are drawn in Sheol like those we have seen in the Psalter.

There is a second group of passages that correspond with those in Proverbs in their use of Abaddon. Abaddon in these passages might be parallel with and synonymous with Sheol (xxviii : 21, xxxi : 12). But the context favors the interpretation of Abaddon as the place of ruin, as the lowest Sheol. Sheol and Abaddon are conceived as being situated deep down beneath the waters of the sea, and the inhabitants are shades—Rephaim—Ghosts (xxvi : 5-6).

There is one passage in Job that casts more light upon the future life. Job had longed to go to Sheol for a season and then return to the world, only to have this hope dashed to the ground as soon as it arose. He finally fixes his hopes upon God who will not desert him in Sheol.

“ Verily I know my Redeemer lives,  
And Survivor upon the dust will stand.  
And after my skin has been destroyed, even this,  
Then apart from my flesh I shall see God :  
Whom I shall see for myself.  
And my eyes shall behold and not a stranger.  
My reins consume in my bosom.”—xix : 25-27.

Here Job knows that his body is to lie in the dust and be destroyed, but that he will live apart from his flesh. In this disembodied condition he will be favored with the sight of God's face. With this blissful anticipation his reins consume with longing and pining. In the meanwhile, God his Redeemer will vindicate his good name in this world after his death. This bright hope of the vision of God after death is the same as that of the Psalms of David, Asaph, and the Korahites, already considered. The Psalm of Asaph is nearest to it, in that both passages express the same longing and consuming passion for God in similar terms.

In the period of the exile there is an elaboration of the abode of the dead as a place of the wicked enemies of God's people. In a single passage in Lamentations the ancient dead are represented as being in dark places (iii : 6). Ezekiel uses Sheol in connection with the judgment upon the nation. It is the land beneath to which they descend, the abode of the uncircumcised (xxxii : 18, xxxiii : 18-27).

A little apocalypse (Is. xiv) gives the fullest view of the condition of the departed. The prophecy is against the proud King of Babylon.

“Sheol from beneath is agitated for thee to meet thy coming,  
Stirred up for thee the shades, all the bucks of the earth,  
All the kirgs of the nations have risen from their thrones,  
All of them answer and say unto thee :  
Art thou also become weak as we are, unto us art brought down ?

Thy majesty has been brought down to Sheol, the sound of thy viols.  
Under thee the worm is spread, the worm is covering thee,  
How art thou fallen from heaven, O day star, son of the dawn!"

This beautiful pentameter paints the fate of the King of Babylon in strong colors. But we are not on that account to neglect the doctrine that underlies the coloring. Sheol is the place whither the proud monarch descends. There the kings, the bucks of the nations, who have preceded him in reigning and in glory, have gone before him in death. The advent of this mighty ruler among them excites the shades to the uttermost. They are welcoming him to their own gloomy lot with evil reminders. It is not merely the poet's imagination that represents activity among the dead, in recognition, in memory and in speech. It is simply the filling up of the dark outlines of Sheol with a scene that is the most natural thing in the world under the circumstances of the wonderful exaltation, pride, fall and ruin of the King of Babylon.

In the great apocalypse (Is. xxiv-xxvii) there are several passages of importance. First we notice the wretched fate of the wicked dead.

"And it will come to pass in that day, Jahveh will visit,  
Upon the host of the high ones on high, and upon the kings of the earth  
upon the earth,  
And they will be gathered together as prisoners are gathered in a  
dungeon, and shut up in prison,  
And after many days will they be visited."—xxiv: 21-22.

This passage for the first time sets forth the doctrine of a middle state, because it teaches a final judgment after a period of imprisonment in dungeons. Those thus shut up in prison in the abode of the dead were not only wicked kings, but also evil inhabitants of the heights of heaven, who are contrasted with the kings of earth. Here, then, we have the first presentation of the doctrine of the prison house of Sheol where evil angels and monarchs are reserved for judgment. This seems to be a further unfolding of Abaddon and the depths of Sheol.

This apocalypse also sets forth the idea of a national resurrection of Israel.

"Thy dead shall live; my dead body, they shall arise,  
Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust;  
For thy dew is the dew of the light of life, and the earth will cast forth  
the shades."—xxvi: 19.

Here righteous Israel is represented as existing as shades in Sheol until the time of the resurrection. This is accomplished by the light of life from God which quickens the shades as the dew quickens the grass of the earth.

The great prophet of the exile opens up the doctrine of the final judgment and redemption, but he gives us nothing upon the state of

the soul after death beyond that which is implied in his comfort for the friends of the righteous.

“The righteous perisheth and no man taketh it to heart,  
And men of mercy are gathered, with no one considering,  
That before the evil the righteous is gathered  
He cometh into Peace, they rest upon their beds, the one going straight  
before him.”—lvii : 1, 2.

Here Peace seems to be the name of the condition or place where the righteous man goes. This is regarded as a deliverance from the evil of this world. Peace here is like the Glory of the Psalm of Asaph. With other passages it shows that the people of God have something to hope for in the realm of the departed.

The Book of Daniel first teaches the doctrine of a resurrection of individuals. These are in two classes ; the one awake to everlasting life and shining as the stars forever ; the other to shame and everlasting abhorrence (xii : 2). This doctrine of a resurrection and judgment connected therewith makes all that we have found in previous Scripture refer to the Middle State between death and the resurrection. The difference of reward at the resurrection also implies a difference of condition if not of place in the Middle State.

The Book of Ecclesiastes on its dark and skeptical side represents that the dead are like the beasts, they know nothing, have no wisdom, work or plans, love or hate, envy or sorrow (ix : 5). “For there is no work or device or knowledge or wisdom in Sheol whither thou goest” (x : 10).

But on the brighter and God-fearing side the place of death is the everlasting house (xii : 5). The dust returns to the earth as it was, but the spirit returns to God who gave it. This return of the spirit to God is based upon the doctrine of the creation in the poem of the Fall of mankind which represents that God gave man his spirit. This return of the spirit to God is not conceived in the pantheistic sense, but in the sense of the earlier Wisdom Literature and the Psalms of Asaph and Korah, a return to God to see Him and know Him in blessedness. This is the bright hope which illuminates the darkness of death.

## V.—THE CULTIVATION OF PSYCHIC ENERGY.

BY J. SPENCER KENNARD, D.D., CHICAGO.

1. THE ultimate aim of the preacher is to renovate the heart and life of his hearer ; all parts of his homiletic preparation will concentrate on that goal. This aim must be constantly present and supreme in his mind and heart as he writes in his study, and as he stands before the people. To attract, interest, please, instruct, sway the emotions—all will be held valuable only as they lead to persuasion, decision, action.

Luther said, “He who can speak forcefully to men is a man.” That solitary monk who shook the world ought to know. Doubt-