

account. The necessary presupposition for divine thrones is that the people which sets these up conceive of the god as king, which is possible, however, only if they themselves are ruled by a king. This condition is not satisfied in the case of Israel at the period when, according to its own tradition and according to Reichel's opinion, that people received the ark. If, then, the latter was a throne, either Israel must have taken over the Jahweh-worship from a more highly civilized people which was ruled by kings, or the ark must have been of much later origin and never have accompanied the journeyings of Israel at all. Both these alternatives I must hold as excluded.

The validity of the above objections can be tested by the later development and be thereby established. In Is 6<sup>1</sup> Reichel recognizes an *after-effect* of the conception of the ark which he contends for. Quite on the contrary, Isaiah is the first to call Jahweh 'king' (6<sup>6</sup>). He sees Him (6<sup>1</sup>) *in the temple*, 'upon a throne high and lifted up, so that the skirt of his robe filled the temple.' It is plain that this throne is *not* the ark, nay, that Isaiah cannot have regarded the latter as Jahweh's throne. Had he done so, then in his temple vision he would have seen Jahweh seated not upon a throne but upon *his* throne (the ark) once for all indicated as such. From the time of Isaiah on-

wards the title 'king' and the 'throne of Jahweh' occur more frequently in the Old Testament, and it can excite no surprise that the latter idea gradually attaches itself also to the ark. Another appellation has to do with this, namely, 'He that sitteth upon the cherubim,' which in 1 S 4<sup>4</sup>, 6<sup>4</sup> is a later interpolation. Specially strong, however, in this direction is the tendency of the Priestly Writing in the Hexateuch. Reichel is right in citing especially Nu 7<sup>89</sup>; the significant rôle assumed by the כַּפֹּרֶת (E.V. 'mercy-seat'), which is found only in P, is certainly due in large measure to the above tendency.

It is unfortunate for Reichel's theory that from first to last he follows calmly the description of the ark in Ex 25<sup>10 ff.</sup> (which he cites after the LXX), and gives his confidence throughout to this source. Thus he obtains the latest instead of the earliest conceptions, and can gain no proper ideas regarding what is genuinely Hebrew. Yet, although one must here oppose him in the main, it is a circumstance of sufficient importance that the ancient wholly different conceptions of Israel pass in later times into others which held sway over so wide a circle as Reichel has made probable. And if those are right who hold that in Rev 2<sup>13</sup> it is the altar at Pergamum that is called 'Satan's throne,' certainly, as Reichel insists, a new and clear light is thrown upon the expression by his conclusions.

## The Great Text Commentary.

### THE GREAT TEXTS OF ST. JOHN'S GOSPEL.

JOHN xvii. 3.

'And this is life eternal, that they should know Thee the only true God, and Him whom thou didst send, even Jesus Christ' (R.V.)

#### EXPOSITION.

'This is life eternal.'—The article is used before 'eternal life' in order to carry our thoughts back to the 'life eternal' of v. 2; and the conception involved in these words is now dwelt upon in meditation, which find utterance because of the disciples who heard (cf. chap. 11<sup>42</sup>). Therefore, when Jesus, with His mind full of the thought of the glorification of the Father and the Son, speaks of the eternal life bestowed upon His people, He turns to the manner in which, through the reception of that life, such

a glorification shall be effected by them.—MILLIGAN AND MOULTON.

'That they should know Thee.'—In such a connexion 'knowledge' expresses the apprehension of the truth by the whole nature of man. It is not an acquaintance with facts as external, nor an intellectual conviction of their reality, but an appropriation of them (so to speak) as an influencing power into the very being of Him who 'knows' them. 'Knowledge' is thus faith perfected; and in turn it passes at last into sight.—WESTCOTT.

ETERNAL life is a *knowledge*. This knowledge is not simply verbal and rational. Scripture always uses the word *know* in a deeper sense. When it is applied to the relation between two persons, it denotes the perfect intuition which each has of the moral being of the other, their near mutual approach in the same luminous medium. Jesus described in 14<sup>21, 23</sup> the revealing act which should,

in the case of His people, result in this only real knowledge of God. It is the work of the spirit glorifying Jesus, and with Him God, in us.—CODET.

'The only true God.'—The knowledge is a knowledge of God in His sole supreme majesty, and a knowledge of the revelation which He has made in its final consummation in the mission of Christ.—WESTCOTT.

'And Him whom thou didst send, even Jesus Christ.'—Eternal life consists in the knowledge of the Father as the only being answering to the ideal thought of God; and in this knowledge manifested in Him, whom God anointed and sent into the world to declare His attributes and character. Only in the Word made flesh can we hear the voice of mercy, forgiveness, love, fatherhood; which comes to men as the breath of life, so that they become living souls.—WATKINS.

THE knowledge of the only true God is really conditioned by the knowledge of Him who was indeed the great Revelation, Organ, and Effluence of the Father's glory. The fulness of this knowledge is the end of all Christian striving. Paul said, 'I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus . . . and that I may know Him' (Ph 3<sup>10</sup>).—REYNOLDS.

IN the clauses attached to 'learn to know' there is probably a fusion of two thoughts—

Learn to know {that Thou art the only true God.  
                  {Thee as the only true God.

Learn to know {that Jesus whom Thou sentest is Christ.  
                  {Jesus whom Thou sentest as Christ.

The predicative 'Christ' requires the verb to express knowledge of a *fact*; the impression given by the verse is that great stress belongs to 'know' in the sense of acquaintance with a *person*.—MILLIGAN AND MOULTON.

#### METHOD OF TREATMENT.

*By the Very Rev. R. W. Church, D.D.*

#### To Know God.

What is it to know God? Let us first see what it is not.

1. It is not to have been taught about Him, so as to know the outward facts. This knowledge is but hearsay, and the name of God is a mere word to us. How can we be saved or supported by One whom we never bring near to us, with whom we have nothing to do?

2. Nor does it mean to know a great deal of what the Bible tells us of God. To know about God is not to know God. We may take much interest in religious questions and not know God.

3. Nor is it even to be under the influence of religious thoughts and impressions. Even though the conscience is pricked for sin, and we have begun heartily to seek to please God, we are but on the way towards a knowledge of God.

What, then, is knowing God, according to the

Bible? It means knowing Him as we know a father or mother or friend whom we love and value above everyone else. It is when we enter into our friend's wishes and thoughts, when our heart goes with his heart, when we feel the same way and follow the same things and act by the same rules—it is then that we know our friend, it is then that we know God.

#### ILLUSTRATIONS.

THERE is, then, something which is eternal, if men only knew it rightly; something which decay cannot touch; something which goes through death as the sun goes through a cloud and comes out clear upon the other side. When we fasten our thoughts on this, how it changes the whole aspect of the lives and deaths of men! Here is a poor holy old man dying. How little difference death makes to him! How little change between the moment when he draws his last breath here and the moment when he breathes the new ether of the life beyond! Remember, he is to keep all that has to do with God and to lose all the rest. What is there for him to lose? His whole life has been lived with God. How much there is that he will keep! All his life is eternal. But another man, so much richer, lies dying in the next house at the same time. What an enormous change death is to him! All his life has been worldly. What is there that he can keep? How almost everything he must lose! How all that he has had seems to be mortal, grows colourless, and threatens to die as he comes into the atmosphere of death! When we see how generally death seems to exchange the lots of men, making the rich seem poor and the poor seem rich, it makes the river that we all must cross seem like that stream in Greece of which the ancients told this fable, that it kindled every unlighted torch which was dipped into it, and quenched every torch which was already lighted.—PHILLIPS BROOKS.

HE who knows God only in nature lives not. There is no 'correspondence' with an Unknown God, no 'continuous adjustment' to a fixed First Cause. There is no 'assimilation' of Natural Law: no growth in the Image of 'the All-embracing.' To correspond with the God of Science assuredly is not to live. 'This is Life Eternal, to know Thee, *the true God*, and Jesus Christ whom Thou has sent.'—HENRY DRUMMOND.

THERE can hardly be a Christian creed shorter, and at the same time more comprehensive, than this passage in the prayer for His disciples which our Lord uttered aloud in the supper-room at Jerusalem. 'And this is life eternal, that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent.' And there can hardly be one, when we come to examine its expressions, more opposed to the method and tendency of modern religious speculations. Where they are long, it is short. Where they are elaborate, it is simple. Where they ask how and why in a hundred details, it quietly puts the fact in all its broadness. Where

they aim at exclusion, it insists on comprehension. Where they pile up definitions and descriptions, it points only to the Father and the Son. Where they combat errors, it states truths. I do not wish to persuade myself that the longer symbols of later times, Athanasian Creed, or Westminster Confession, or Thirty-nine Articles, may not be necessary, true, and useful. As errors cropped up, it was right to expose them and define the contrary truths. But in these longer descriptions of faith, important as they are, we sometimes run the risk of fancying that it is an intellectual thing to be believed, rather than a life through them to be lived.—W. M. SINCLAIR.

I WAS led in my correspondence with the Principal of King's College to dwell, perhaps too much, on the words, 'This is life eternal, that they may know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent,' partly because they have been mightier words to me than almost any in the Bible, partly because the awfulness of the prayer in which they occur gives them a profound and infinite significance, and connects them with the whole mystery of our Lord's sacrifice and death.—F. D. MAURICE.

#### Knowledge and Love.

I know Thee!—from my infancy Thy light  
Hath been the air in which my spirit moved;  
I love Thee!—for the lifelong pure delight  
Of feeling that I am by Thee beloved.

And yet my heart how languid! and how slow  
Beat its dull pulses from its inmost core!  
How poor my knowledge! and my love how low!  
I want to know Thee, and to love Thee more.

How shall I stir the longings of my soul  
Into the passion of a holy love,  
Till its great wave of worship upward roll  
And break in praises at Thy feet above?

O could I only see Thee as Thou art  
Where angels wait, archangels veiled adore,  
Thy glory! it might pierce *my* veiled heart,  
Seeing Thee clearer, I might love Thee more.

Ah! vain conceit! That glory with its light  
Could do the work of sorrow with its shade,  
That Faith's high triumphs could be won by sight,  
Or man without the Cross be God-like made.

Deep in the shadow of the Cross there lies  
A glory hidden from our grosser view,  
Such revelation as self-sacrifice  
Gives to the heart that can to truth be true.

Our Lord without its passion could not win  
For us the broken heart and binding vow,  
Nor from our souls lift off the load of sin  
Save with His torn hands, and bleeding brow.

So must we follow—surely not unmeet  
With the great Master sorrowing on before,  
In duty's path rough hands and wounded feet  
Will make us know Thee, Lord, and love Thee more.

JOHN MONSELL.

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## The First Resurrection.

BY THE RIGHT REV. C. J. ELLICOTT, D.D., BISHOP OF GLOUCESTER.

'Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection.'—Rev. xx. 6.

THERE are probably few, even of those who from time to time meditate on the deeper disclosures which Holy Scripture makes to us of those whom our blessed Lord speaks of as 'sons of the resurrection,' who ever dwell upon the holy mystery which the text presents to us in those solemn and emphatic words.

The words, taken by themselves, seem plainly to place before us two deep truths, first, that however we may subsequently explain it, there *is* a first resurrection—a resurrection which will be succeeded by another resurrection, different it may be in nature and character, but indisputably later in point of time and manifestation.

The second truth is of no less importance, namely, that this first resurrection will be of such a