

Among the worthies whom he mentions Noah is not the least entitled to our veneration & respect. He is the second father of mankind, & we owe it to him, that the seasons continue their appointed rounds, & that while the earth remaineth, seed time & harvest, a cold & heat, a summer & winter & day & night shall not cease, ~~from the earth in the general deluge.~~ ~~that our entire race was not swept from the earth in the general deluge.~~ It is, at the same time, a sublime commentary upon the dignity & excellence of faith that it was the means, under God of saving a world from ruin & a race from perdition. His name, given him by the spirit of prophecy, contained an intimation that he was to act some conspicuous part, in accomplishing the benevolent purposes of <sup>Heaven</sup> God in relation to our ~~race~~ earth. His father called him Noah, assigning as the reason, "this shall comfort us, concerning our work & toil of our hands, because of the ground which the Lord hath cursed." Whether the meaning be that during the lifetime of Noah, the sterility of the soil was to be abated, its thorns & briars rendered less prolific & itself <sup>made</sup> more responsive to the labours of the husbandman, or that a new dispensation of religion <sup>was to</sup> be introduced, revealing more clearly the duties & destiny of man, & enabling him, in the prospect of a bitter inheritance, to become superior to the ills of earth, are questions more easily asked than answered. There are reasons, however, for supposing that the deluge is the dividing line between two dispensations of our faith. The Antediluvian economy, was more distinctively legal - the world was treated as being more completely under the covenant of works, than at any subsequent period. The Gospel had been preached in the first promise - a mode of worship pointing to the atonement had been unquestionably instituted, but the unbelieving & unrepentant were treated as if not so much under a dispensation of grace, as a dispensation of distributive justice. Hence the deluge -

It is remarkable that the very reason which the Almighty is represented as assigning for bringing this catastrophe upon the world is precisely the reason why he determined to destroy it in this way no more. There must have been some change in the general relations of man to God, or the reason which impelled to destruction before the flood could not have impelled to mercy afterwards. It was the wickedness of man. That wickedness is an argument for punishment under a dispensation of unmitigated law. It is an argument for patience & long suffering under a dispensation of grace & repentance. It seems to be intimated <sup>too</sup> that the economy introduced after the ~~fall~~ <sup>blood</sup> was more distinctively gracious, inasmuch as the declaration of God to bear with ~~God~~ <sup>man,</sup> notwithstanding his wickedness, was consequent upon a sacrifice which he had accepted. The odour of this offering, ~~in~~ which borrowed all its fragrance from that richer offering it prefigured, moved the Almighty to patience & compassion. Though man, still as before the flood, carried a heart pregnant with evil. The new world was sanctified by blood. The first act performed in it had brought it under the <sup>operation</sup> ~~law~~ of grace. The old world had been framed under the law. Under the law its inhabitants had perished. & now that men were to begin their career as fallen beings, they were to be distinctly & improperly taught their relation to the great mediator. Here then were the comfort & rest implied in Noah's name, that, under him an economy of religion was to be permanently established, in virtue of which God might endure with much long suffering the sins & wickedness of men, & all who are penitent find in the stones of heaven a rich consolation for all the calamities of earth. The old.

7

world was viewed in the face of Adam more than <sup>in that</sup> of Christ, the new, more in  
the face of Christ than <sup>in</sup> that of Adam - The old world slunk with the first trans-  
gression - the new was perfumed with the great sacrifice - the cry of the old world,  
was for justice & for blood - the cry of the new was for mercy & for peace. Nothing  
could more completely have demonstrated the incompetency of that covenant, under  
which our race was originally placed, to secure the favour of God, than the cata-  
strophe from which Noah was delivered by faith. It was a commentary upon what  
might be expected from <sup>a government of / mightily enforced</sup> the law, in a fallen world. To dispel the legal tendencies  
of the heart, to show its inevitable fruits apart from the influence of grace & to  
impress deeply & strongly upon mankind <sup>not only, for future happiness, but even for temporal welfare</sup> the necessity of meditation & atonement,  
were among the lessons which this awful event is calculated to teach. It shows  
\* that even a reprieve in this life cannot be granted without the intervention of a mighty intercessor.  
that to the guilty a God of justice is a God of terror. But although the dispensa-  
tion of religion after the deluge became more clearly & distinctively gracious,  
the circumstances connected with the deluge themselves evince that repentance  
& pardon were also preached to the Antediluvian race. Noah was justified  
by faith. He found grace in the eyes of the Lord. He & he alone, of all the  
thousands that ~~walked~~ <sup>trode</sup> upon the earth, & breathed the air of heaven, was a just  
man & perfect in his generation & accordingly walked with God. Peter tells us  
that he was a preacher of righteousnes. & as the only righteousnes which can  
be affirmed of fallen man is that righteousnes of God which is revealed to  
faith & that repentance of heart which is wrought by grace, he must have  
been a preacher of the Gospel. The burden of his message to his wicked

contemporaries must have been the relinquishment of their sins & supplication for pardon through the promised blood of the seed of the woman. He, in all likelihood, enforced his exhortations by denouncing the judgments of God.

That he was a solitary example of piety, <sup>human.</sup> in the midst, perhaps, of millions of human beings, affords no slight presumption that the antediluvian economy, though sufficient to render impenitence unexcusable, was not so clear a emphatic in regard to the placability of God, as in the subsequent ages. At no other period in the history of the world do we find piety so nearly extinct & at no other period does human wickedness appear to have attained such gigantic proportions.

There was that daring ~~recklessness~~ <sup>with</sup> which springs from a heart conscious of guilt & hopeless of pardon. They <sup>sicants of those days</sup> impress us as men whom the law goaded to desperation - who in the fury of ~~desperation~~ <sup>despair</sup> had cast off restraint & gnashed their teeth against the heavens. The violated covenant, under which the world had been constituted, cast its dark shadows upon them. The curse of the Almighty hung over them & they were too deeply rooted & grounded in the legal principles of the original institute, to listen to the voice of hope which was echoed from the first promise. God left them <sup>to themselves - that they might be standing monuments</sup> of the effects, ~~in~~ <sup>of</sup> a dispensation of justice untempered with mercy.

<sup>a memorial & a proof</sup> ~~in~~ all ages it might be signally manifest that the law could not sanctify. It may be fancy, but I have been impressed with the conviction, that the successive dispensations of religion, from the fall to the birth of the Redeemer, were adjusted in analogy to the successive stages of Christian

experience from the first convictions of the Spirit to the joy of faith in our great high priest. That dark & tumultuous condition of the soul, when the law is applied with power, the commandment comes & sin revives, in which our passions seem to acquire additional intensity & our enmity against God <sup>is</sup> stirred up from its deepest depths, corresponds to the period before the flood. That <sup>calmer</sup> ~~next~~ condition of the soul in which a feeble faith is obscured with much legality, in which we entertain the hopes without enjoying the liberty of the Gospel corresponds to the subsequent dispensation; & that state of triumph in the doctrines of <sup>grace</sup> ~~God~~ when we not only understand but rejoice in a free salvation corresponds to the economy proclaimed by the Apostles.

But without stopping to investigate farther the prophetick import of the name given to this patriarch, let us proceed to contemplate Noah in the light in which he is presented in the text, as a conspicuous example of faith.

The Divine communication which constituted the matter of his faith is ~~that~~ declaration of the purpose of God to destroy the world by a deluge, recorded by Moses, accompanied with a command to construct an ark for the safety of himself & his family. "And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and behold I will destroy them with the earth. Make thee an ark of Gopher wood; rooms shalt thou make in the ark, & shalt pitch it within & without with pitch. — And behold I, even I do bring a flood of waters upon the earth to destroy all flesh, wherein is the breath of life, from

under heaven; & every thing that is in the earth shall die. But with thee will I establish my covenant; & thou shalt come into the ark, thou & thy sons & thy wife & thy sons' wives with thee." The time of the catastrophe was also fixed at one hundred & twenty years from the date of the revelation - "And the Lord said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh; yet his days shall be an hundred & twenty years." This was the substance of the oracular announcement to which the Apostle refers by the term translated - "being warned of God". The deluge & his own salvation in the ark were the things not ~~seen~~ as yet to which his faith gave a present subsistence & which produced through it the appropriate fruits of fear & obedience.

The strength of Noah's faith appears in this, that he claved to a Divine revelation when all natural probabilities were against it. In what form the communication was made to him, & how he knew that it proceeded from God are questions which the Bible has left unresolved. It is enough for us to know that God did speak, & that the patriarch was able to distinguish His voice. But he was not only satisfied at the time, but having been satisfied on sufficient grounds, no difficulties were subsequently allowed to perplex his faith. God hath spoken was a sufficient answer to all objections however plausible or ingenious. During the whole period of one hundred & twenty years he seems never for a moment to have staggered at the threatening of ~~God~~, through unbelief.

We are apt to ~~believe~~ <sup>imagine</sup> that it is an easy & a simple proof to believe God in defiance of all opposition. But experience shows that the last

ground of credibility upon which men, in fact, are willing to rely is the testimony of the most High. Not that they are prepared directly to question His veracity - but when the message is not intrinsically likely, they can find a thousand pretexts for asserting that it is not from Him. They will measure the probability of its being divine by the probability of its being true upon other grounds. Rationalism is a radical disease of humanity. But it is obvious that where the matter of a Divine communication is not in conflict with the laws of intrinsic probability, there can be no trial of the strength or reality of faith. It cannot be made to appear whether we believe God, or the events themselves. Accordingly the examples of faith which the Scriptures commend to our imitation are those in which nothing could determine the agent but the testimony of God - where His word was taken while all second causes & all intrinsic grounds of probability seemed to rise up against it - where obstacles so mighty were interposed that nothing could justify belief but <sup>an direct</sup> ~~an~~ appeal to omnipotence. Such was the case before us.

The deluge was an extremely unlikely event - & that it should take place at the precise period specified by the sacred historian was a fact which no sagacity could predict one hundred & twenty years beforehand. It was a thing which could be known only from a Divine revelation. This was the only evidence which could authenticate it. Even now, when the discoveries of modern science have put the question of its possibility completely to rest, there are no known principles which will account for it, without supposing an extraordinary interposition of God. No longer than the time of Voltaire it was triumphantly proclaimed that

that "the physical impossibility of an universal deluge by any natural means can be proved by the most rigorous demonstration". And though we now laugh at the data upon which this witty scoffer proceeded to construct his rigorous demonstration, the attempt may be taken as an illustration of the violent improbabilities which pressed upon this subject in the days of Noah. Experience could then appeal to nothing like it in the past history of the race & science could detect the operation of no causes that were fitted to accomplish it. Neither sun nor moon nor stars spoke of it - the course of nature was moving on unchartered - the shadows of the past & present were projected on the future, & nothing could arrest the instinctive belief of the uniformity of providence but a voice from the skies. Noah's faith was consequently a faith in God against the calculations of natural probability.

The command to build an ark imposed a duty fraught with difficulties. It was an unparalleled work. Nothing like it had ever <sup>been</sup> seen before & perhaps shall never be seen again. The scriptures represent it as an enormous vessel, equal in burden to twenty ships of the line, or forty two thousand, four hundred & thirty five tons, & capable of carrying twenty thousand men, with stores & provisions for six months & eighteen hundred pieces of cannon. To construct such a vessel was indeed a formidable undertaking. & nothing could vindicate the attempt from the charge of madness & folly but the evidence of a Divine command. But in addition to the difficulty of building the ark, there seemed to be insuperable obstacles to the execution of that part of the Divine mandate which related to the preservation of animal life. How were all the beasts, cattle & creeping things

to be introduced <sup>to their places of shelter,</sup> into the ark, how ~~was~~ kept in order after they were? These were questions which could not fail to suggest themselves - which neither sense nor reason could answer & which <sup>but</sup> could silence only by an appeal to the power of God.

There never was a finer <sup>occasion</sup> opportunity for the exultation of infidelity & rationalism on the one hand, & the noblest triumphs of a Divine faith on the other than that which was presented here. The extreme unlikelihood of the deluge - the monstrous <sup>moderate</sup> dimensions of the ark & the apparent absurdity of housing together in its spacious <sup>chambers</sup> ~~chambers~~ every variety of beast & cattle & creeping thing, were precisely the topics upon which ridicule, sarcasm & contempt would delight to play off their batteries. We can imagine the mixture of incredulity & wonder with which the first announcement of the Divine warning was received by the contemporaries of the patriarch - of incredulity at the monstrous <sup>nature of the</sup> proportions ~~which~~ themselves - & of wonder, that any man in his senses could be found to believe them. What! the whole earth to be deluged by a flood? Where shall the waters come from? How shall they be turned loose upon the earth? Who can believe that God would repent of the work of His own hands & suddenly & violently destroy that which He had made in wisdom & in love? ~~How~~ should the beast perish - the innocent be involved in the fate of the guilty? Then how is such an enormous ship to be built? how preserved amid the upheaving of the elements & the commotion & tumult of such a waste of waters? Who shall make the lion & the lamb lie down together, restrain the ferocity of the tiger & impart security amid the deadly venom of a host of reptiles? We may well imagine that Noah was the song of the drunkards & the jest of

the scorner & that many a lance of profane liberty was broken upon him for a folly which he knew to be wisdom. It was a moral heroism truly sublime to withstand unshaken the storm of ridicule, sophistry, banter & contempt with which he was, on all sides, assailed, & to poise himself firmly upon the word of God when nature gave no promise that she could execute His threat. He did not dare at the suggestions of a contracted & short-sighted reason to limit the resources of Him who created all things by a word, & who, if need be, could produce, in an instant, the waters of ten thousand oceans, to execute His purposes. He that thundered in the heavens & to whom innumerable worlds are but as the small dust of balance <sup>could be</sup> ~~was~~ at no lack for means to <sup>accomplish so insignificant a purpose as to</sup> bury the earth beneath a flood. At His voice the beasts of the field would instantly repair to their appointed chambers & His hand could sustain the ark amid the commotion & fury of the elements. God was almighty - that argument answered all objections to faith - He had spoken, & that was enough.

The truth & reality of the patriarch's faith were evinced by its effects upon his heart & conduct, which the Apostle sums up in the expressions, "moved with fear & prepared an ark." His faith gave a substantial existence in his mind to the objects it embraced & they exerted an influence upon him analogous to that which the actual presence of the realities was fitted to produce. He felt, in some degree, as he would have felt, ~~as he apprehended~~ <sup>if he had seen</sup> the torrents descending, ~~feel what he saw~~ the windows of heaven opened, & the fountains of the great deep broken up. He was moved with fear. This was the fruit which cor-

responded to that part of the Divine communication which related to the <sup>fact of the</sup> deluge. It was not the fear of consternation & amazement, but of profound reverence for the justice, holiness & majesty of God. It was the fear of a heart which loves ~~God~~ ~~himself~~, while it trembles at His judgments. Noah could have had no special solicitude for his own safety. he was assured by the infallible oracle that he should not perish in the general ruin. His fear consequently was not an anxious apprehension of evil, but that awful impression of the justice & holiness of God which His judgments are suited to create. The fear expressed by the Psalmist when he said - "Thou puttest away all the wicked of the earth like drops: therefore I love thy testimonies. My flesh trembleth for fear of thee, & I am afraid of thy judgments." There is a fear which crouches before God, like a slave beneath the lash of his master, & which when driven to despair vents itself in malice, blasphemy & rage - but the fear of which the Apostle here speaks implies a cordial acquiescence in the propriety & righteousness of the Divine proceedings. It looks upon God as an object of the deepest reverence in the vengeance which He takes upon the workers of iniquity. It endorses His character when "He puts away the wicked of the earth like drops." The deluge to Noah, instead of being contemplated with incredulity & ridicule, or regarded merely as an extraordinary physical phenomenon, was a solemn judicial visitation; in which <sup>he saw</sup> ~~it was~~ the purpose of the Divine Ruler to maintain the authority of His Law & to express His abhorrence of the crimes of men. Though a physical event & produced by ~~the~~ intervention of physical means it sprang from moral causes & was directed to moral

ends. ~~It is~~ In the moral government of God <sup>we must look for</sup> that we find the solution of the mysteries of Providence. Hence while the antediluvians could see nothing in the deluge but violent departures from the uniformity of nature, huge improbabilities, gross absurdities & even practical impossibilities, Noah perceived in the astounding wickedness of the earth, the atheism, infidelity, licentiousness & violence which every where prevailed, ample cause for the signal interference of a holy & just God.

An extraordinary rebellion demanded extraordinary measures to suppress it - & hence what was physically improbable was <sup>almost</sup> morally ~~certain~~ certain. It is in consequence of this <sup>heavenly</sup> subordination of the physical to the moral that the secret of the fad is with them that fear Him -

Noah not only felt in reference to the coming judgment as it was right & proper that a good man should feel, but he acted in the circumstances as it was right & proper that a good man should act. He prepared the Ark - he made the provisions which infinite mercy had directed for his own safety & that of his household.

We can readily imagine that during the period in which the ark was preparing the mind of the patriarch was <sup>absorbed in solemn meditation & teared with ungodly emotions,</sup> alternately agitated with reverence for God, indignation at the wickedness of earth & profound pity at the approaching fate of its miserable inhabitants. We can imagine that a deeper earnestness was imparted to his preaching. that as the shadows of that awful future <sup>beckoned</sup> ~~rested~~ upon his own soul, he would occasionally rise to a solemn grandeur of eloquence that must have brought the profane & thoughtless to a pause. How could he look without the deepest compassion upon the doomed inhabitants around him! With what

sorrow of heart must he have contrasted the idle curiosity & profane mockery with which thousands were gazing upon a structure that they regarded as only a monument of his folly, with the terror, amazement & despair with which they were soon to gaze upon that same ark - "closed & inaccessible". It was no doubt a solemn century to the patriarch. His emotions must have been unutterable when he had adjoined the last timber, fulfilled the last feature of the Divine command & beheld his work, finished. That week which preceded the outbreak of the destroying element, must have been a week of intense & painful thought. The face of nature must have worn to him a sombre & dismal aspect. The hum of business was soon to be hushed - the voice of mirth exchanged for the wail of despair - crowded cities buried in ruins - the earth itself a wreck, & himself the tenant of a silent & desolate world. His work was done - & he was now prepared to stand the mournful high priest of a stupendous sacrifice - All that had the breath of life was to be offered at once.

But what were the emotions of the world during this last week of its history - this short period of inconceivable suspense & expectation!

Some, perhaps, bold in their <sup>impunity</sup> ~~infidelity~~ confidently boasted that events would speedily <sup>demonstrate the</sup> ~~expose the~~ <sup>of the miserable delusion,</sup> ~~patriarch~~ of insanity or fraud, by giving the lie to all his predictions.

We shall soon see, might be their language, whether we are all to perish. This <sup>madman's</sup> ~~delusion's~~ dream will be brought to the test. Some, perhaps, had their misgivings. <sup>They were afraid that there</sup> ~~There~~ might be something in it after all. Noah was a man of sense, & he would not have been at such immense cost a pains <sup>to rear</sup> ~~for~~ an ~~unfairy~~ structure unless he had had good reason to apprehend ap-

preaching danger. We are <sup>absolutely</sup> ~~assured~~ that all is not right. To such persons the  
 suspense must have been intolerable. Others, perhaps, had no thought upon  
 the subject. They were intent upon their favourite pursuit, promising themselves  
 that tomorrow should be as this day & much more abundant & cared nothing  
 either for Noah or his dreams. One thing is certain, no salutary effect was  
 produced upon a solitary mind. For upwards of a century the Divine warn-  
 ing had been given. space was allowed for reformation & repentance. Noah  
~~expended~~ preached righteousness in person, & the ark was a visible sermon -  
 every sound of the axe & hammer being a call to the guilty. The spirit of  
 God had long been stirring ~~in the~~ <sup>in the</sup> ~~men~~ - yet when all things were ready for  
 the execution of the Divine judgments <sup>not one had turned from his errors</sup> ~~there was but one~~ <sup>just man upon</sup>  
~~the earth.~~ <sup>They all, all</sup> ~~They all, all~~ without exception, refused the call of God. They were  
 stupid, & impenitent & knew not until the flood came & swept them all away.  
 No doubt there were not utterly hardened - who still had reflection enough  
 to be ill at ease in their position, but not principle enough to break off their sin  
 by righteousness, had seasons of disbelieving conflict. <sup>their</sup> ~~their~~ <sup>might be as they were predicted.</sup> ~~feelings were that it might~~  
 be. Such persons must have been intensely agitated at the first decisive omen  
 of the fulfilment of the oracle. They must have looked with eager interest upon  
 the strange spectacle of beasts going cheerfully & readily to their appointed places  
 in the ark. <sup>It would arouse attention like a portentous sign in the heavens, & they would ask in anxiety,</sup> What does this mean. Their feelings must have deepened into agony  
 when they saw that ark closed by an invisible hand. & its inmates shut  
 up from further communication with the earth & its inhabitants. ~~That was~~

time. What an hour was that between the closing of the ark & the first precursor of the coming storm. It was as if the pulse of general life stood still & nature made a pause. It must have prepared them to behold at length with an awful emotion the heavens blackening over them - the rains descending & the fountains of the great deep breaking up - prepared them for that scene of agony, consternation, amazement & terror, when the terrible truth was revealed to sense which faith had refused to grasp, that God had <sup>indeed resolved to sweep man</sup> ~~indeed resolved to sweep man~~ ~~from the~~ ~~face of~~ earth. I have no mind to dwell upon the horrors that ensued - the flood came - "onwards it rolled, rushing from south to north with an impetuosity, which nothing could oppose, & pouring so dense a body of water over the earth, as to sweep many feet above the summits of the highest mountains. Two late now did guilty man discover that he had sinned against God, able & willing not only to expiate, but to punish. Our imaginations can hardly conceive the horror of the devoted race, as the deluge rose higher & higher upon them; how they would flee first to the swelling grounds - then to the hills & lastly to the mountains; whilst their despair as the foaming torrent gained upon their new retreats, presents a picture to the mind, which the most secret in heart & feeling cannot endure to contemplate. All their cries & struggles availed not; & they perished with every terrestrial being that breathed the air of heaven."

But Noah was safe. his ark had been constructed for the saving of his house. "He was committed wholly to a sovereign providence" - He could <sup>nevere</sup> ~~see~~ the ark rising from the ground & beginning to float without ag-

prehension or alarm. He could listen to the descending rains - feel the upthrusting  
 of the deep & witness the commotion of the elements with unruffled serenity,  
 because his mind was stayed on God. He had obeyed Him & that was  
 enough. "There was a concentration of the care of providence on the inhabitants  
 of the ark, since all the other inhabitants of the earth were surrendered to  
 destruction. There converged thither at that crisis the providential care which  
 was again to expand with the extension of the human & other races over the  
 now desolate earth." For a year & ten days the inmates of the ark were  
 confined to their narrow home. Then in obedience to the same voice which  
 had commanded him to build the <sup>ark</sup>, Noah came forth, the second  
 father of mankind, in a world, now changed. But a year before, he had  
 left it, full teeming with <sup>population -</sup> men, full of cities, towns & villages, <sup>abounding in</sup> works of in-  
 dustry & art. & ringing with the voice of revelry & mirth - <sup>by inhabitants</sup> eating & drinking, mar-  
 rying & giving in marriage. but <sup>the men were</sup> ~~now all was gone~~ - <sup>the utter were pushed,</sup> & a silence & desolation  
 reigned around. It was a time for solemn thought. for devout thanksgiv-  
 ing. for earnest prayer. It was fit that Noah's first act should have been  
 the consecration of an altar & the oblation of a sacrifice - & perhaps <sup>no offering</sup> ~~a sacrifice~~  
<sup>over ascended from an humble heart or was presented</sup> ~~was never shown~~ with a deeper & nobler reverence than <sup>the solemn</sup> ~~that~~ <sup>with</sup> which the  
<sup>shed upon Noah's altar.</sup> ~~blood of Abraham's sacrifice was offered to God.~~ He was safe. & the world  
 under him was to begin afresh its destined career. Moved with  
 fear, he prepared an ark to the saving of his house."

The apostle next adverts to other & more important

consequences of Noah's faith - "by the which he condemned the world, & became heir of the righteousness which is by faith."

He condemned the world, that is, the unrepentent & ungodly, in the devout & reverential awe with which he contemplated the judgment of heaven. He justified God: His being moved with fear, which is instanced as the first effect of his faith, was a confession that the wickedness of man deserved the punishment which was threatened. - that God was justified in His sayings & righteous in His doings. His faith apprehended the moral causes of the catastrophe & pronounced them to be adequate. His condemnation of the world was analogous to ~~that~~ <sup>the</sup> condemnation of the great whore in the apocalypse. when John heard "a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia, salvation & glory & honour & power unto the Lord our God; for true & righteous are his judgments; for he hath punished the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, & hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand. And again they said, Alleluia. And her smoke rose up for ever & ever." But, perhaps, the condemnation to which the apostle more particularly refers, was the proof which the conduct of the patriarch afforded, of the utter obduracy of the ancient world, & of the usefulness with which it ~~worked upon~~ <sup>ought distinction upon itself</sup> ~~desisted~~. It had the same opportunities of repentance with himself - the same spirit had shewn with it - the same warnings had been given to it - the same sermons had been preached to it - the same exhortations had been made to it. & yet it continued impenitent & unrepenting. Despite the clearest proofs of Divine retri-

lation, it reviled securely in its sins, laughed at the threatened calamities,  
 & mocked the messengers that bore the tidings from heaven. The conduct of  
 Noah was the publick declaration of his own conviction, that there was  
 cause for fear. That window demanded an obedient ear. That the proof  
 was sufficient of a Divine communication & that unbelief was completely  
 without excuse. His example was a reprobation of the conduct of the  
 world as unreasonable & absurd. He, in effect, told its inhabitants that  
 they were their own destroyers. And so they afterwards felt it to be the  
 case. When the flood came, they felt <sup>now their infatuation</sup> that they had been fools, & perhaps  
 their bitterest anguish amid the scene of horrors which surrounded them  
 arose from the reflection that all these evils might have been escaped  
 if they had only listened to the voice of reason & of God. They would refer  
 to neglected opportunities, stifled operations of the spirit, occasional remonstrances  
 of conscience - to the long-suffering & forbearance of Heaven while judgment was  
 lingering on its course, & vent the fulness of their rage upon their <sup>own</sup> blindness,  
 stupidity & guilt. Every mouth would be stopped & all the world would be left  
 without excuse. The ark floating by them, with its inhabitants safely housed  
 from the storm, would enflame to madness their self-reproaches, & each  
 doomed creature, <sup>as he sank to perdition</sup> ~~would~~ ~~perish~~ would perish with the heart-rending con-  
 fession on his ~~lips~~ lips that he died as a fool. There would be open-  
 tance & self-condemnation then, but it would be too late. The flood had  
 come & they must perish.

The last consequence of the patriarch's faith adverted to by the apostle is - that he became heir of the righteousness which is by faith. The meaning is that he was adopted into God's family & justified by faith in the obedience of Christ.

The confidence in God which he manifested in relation to the deluge was not specifically the faith through which he was justified; for antecedently to this period he had the testimony of his acceptance & adoption. He had found grace in the eyes of the Lord, & was expressly declared to be a just man & righteous, perfect in his generations & walking with God. But his conduct on this occasion evinced the reality of his faith in Christ. It showed the operation of the same principle by which a sinner is justified before God. True faith is always reliance upon the testimony of God. When the testimony relied on is that in relation to Christ as the Saviour & Redeemer of men, it produces that confidence in Him which is specifically justifying faith. When it concerns any other objects, it declares our state, but is not, in that connection, the instrument of acceptance. The principle of faith cannot exist at all without receiving with equal confidence every word of God. He who disbelieves any thing disbelieves all. We must take God's testimony absolutely or not at all. Where it exists, therefore, it will listen to all Divine testimonies, so that he who, in any way, becomes conscious of the fact that the word of God is paramount with him may safely conclude that he is in Christ & consequently an heir of the righteousness of faith. Let the authority of God be really & practically supreme in reference both to truth & duty, & the evidence is

conclusive that the birth of the Spirit has supervened. Strange as it may seem, it is not a melancholy fact, that in fallen man, there is no natural principle of faith in God. We may believe many things which God has revealed, but it will be found upon analysis, that we believe them in consequence of education, prejudice, early association, intrinsic probabilities or deductions of reason, & not nakedly & exclusively on the ground of the Divine testimony. Hence when that testimony comes into collision with these or any other natural sources of assent, we can readily find pretences for dismissing it. The authority of God shining in His word is a plea which the world will never admit - & it always requires a special operation of the Spirit to enable us to apprehend & walk by it. Hence any instance of real faith, of belief grounded exclusively upon the testimony of God - & so grounded that no appearances to the contrary shall shake it, is an infallible proof of the new birth - & consequently, as in the case before us, of adoption & acceptance.

<sup>series of events connected with the deluge</sup>  
 The dispensation of God ~~in reference to the old world~~, which we have been led to consider, is fraught with instruction to <sup>us</sup> those upon whom the clouds of the world are come. The deluge, the Apostle Peter informs us, is a figure of that still more dreadful doom which awaits the impenitent & ungodly ~~in all~~ <sup>to come,</sup> ages of the world, & the ~~conduct of Noah & his contemporaries~~ <sup>ark is a figure of the great salvation of the Gospel & the conduct of Noah's</sup> illustrates the principles upon which the ~~conduct of men~~ <sup>have in all ages been</sup> ~~thus~~ <sup>are</sup> constantly disposed to reject the counsel of God against themselves, while Noah is a pattern of the few - alas too few - who have been moved with fear & fled for refuge to the hope set before them in the mercy of God.

We have been warned of God of things not seen as yet. The ancient world was overflowed with water, "but the heavens & the earth which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment a perdition of ungodly men." God hath appointed a day in the which he will judge the world in righteousnes by that man whom he hath ordained. All the dead both small & great must stand before His bar. There is a day revealed in which the heavens & the earth shall pass away with a great noise, the elements shall melt with fervent heat & the world & all its works shall perish. We see no signs of this great catastrophe - nature moves on in her even course & since the fathers fell asleep all things continue as they were. Still that day must come, for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken. The general judgment & the general conflagration are as certain now as the deluge was when the ark was completed & its doors closed by the hand of the Almighty. It may be as near. But near or distant, it must come. We must all stand before the bar of God. We are further warned of the intolerable doom of the wretched in the world to come. Everlasting destruction is their destiny. The covering is removed from hell & our faith is permitted to penetrate that dolorous region where the blackness of darkness forever <sup>ours</sup> ~~remains~~. We are commanded, not to build ourselves an ark, - but to flee for salvation to one whom the ark prefigured & who is able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God through Him. These warnings & commands are recorded for our benefit, heard in our ears by a living ministry, forced upon our eyes by symbols & ordinances

& pressed upon our consciences by the Holy Ghost. Every man of us knows  
 that he must die, stand before God in judgment & <sup>be</sup> consigned to hell unless he re-  
 pent & believes in Jesus, or if he does not know it, it is because he has made  
 God a liar. These are our circumstances, in all respects analogous to those of  
 the ancient world, except that the advantage is with them. Who would com-  
 pare the deluge, furious & terrible as it was, to an endless hell - Who would  
 compare the descending torrents & the heaving deeps to that awful scene in  
 which the Son of man shall descend from heaven with a shout, with  
 the voice of the archangel & with the trump of God - when the sun shall become  
 black as sack cloth of hair, the moon be turned into blood & the stars of  
 heaven fall to the earth like the leaves of autumn - Who will compare  
 the consternation, horror & despair that seized the giants of the old world  
 as the tremendous tide pursued them to their last retreats, with the unthink-  
 ingly dismay that shall take possession of the sinner's soul, when that awful  
 shout is heard which shall startle the dull cold ear of death, that voice  
 of the archangel that shall peal through heaven, earth & hell & that  
 trump of God that shall sound the knell of time. My brethren are there  
 invisible things before us? shall we experience them? God has warned us  
 of things not seen as yet - He has drawn aside the veil of the future & per-  
 mitted you, in some measure, to behold ~~the~~ <sup>the</sup> ~~worlds~~ what shall be in the  
 latter days. / And what are we doing? Is it <sup>an</sup> time to be folding our arms  
 in ~~ease~~ <sup>peace</sup>, when the voice of God is heard, there is no peace to the wicked!

Are we distracted to be light & careless & frivolous when a ruin hangs over us compared with which ten thousand deluges are nothing? My brethren, what is the life of the soul? What is perdition? Have you ever seriously <sup>pondered its</sup> ~~thoughtful~~ ~~serious~~ import?

It: Have you ever weighed those words of terrific meaning - the wrath of God? Have you weighed them - & can you be at ease in your sins?

Merciful God, break the spell that blinds us! <sup>leave us not to ourselves</sup> ~~Awake us to our wretchedness~~ - or we shall be hopelessly, forever lost!

Think not that your guilt in despising the warning of God shall be weighed in the same balances with that of the ancient world. Their dispensation was darker than yours - they had but the light of the stars - you have that of the sun - They trod upon the earth before it was bedewed with a Saviour's blood or hallowed with a Saviour's tomb. You are exalted to Heaven - how insupportable the fall, if you should be cast down to hell. Suffer the word of exhortation. Wake up to a true sense of your condition - Ponder your eternal destiny & give no rest to your eyes nor slumber to your eyelids, until you are safely united to Him who can sustain, support & save you amid the depopulation of all things. Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world. Be not deceived - the subject is too unspeakably momentous to justify contentment with any thing short of an infallible assurance. Trust in no refuge of lies. Your Christian education, your general faith in Christianity, your occasional resolutions, your honourable sentiments

& your purposes of future amendment. your good wishes for the gospel - may  
 even your indirect contributions to its prosperity. these will not save you.  
 There were doomed hands that laboured on the ark - but Noah & his family  
 were all that were saved. <sup>in like manner</sup> ~~so now~~, millions will perish who have contributed  
 to the salvation of others. see to it, then, that you are rooted & grounded in  
 the faith of Jesus Christ - He is the Saviour, & beside Him, none can deliver  
 out of God's hand.

Noah's Tomb.  
 Chicago Jan. 26. 1851.  
 Church in Edinburgh,  
 Feb. 23 1851.  
 Gile St Church. 9 Nov 1851.  
 Holly Spring. Nov 1851.