

Hebron :

OR,

The Place of Fellowship.

A BIBLE READING

BY

ADA R. HABERSHON.



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PREFACE.

THE substance of these Bible Readings was given to some Christian workers in the Young Women's Christian Association, and I have been asked to allow them to be published. Many of the thoughts were gleaned from addresses which it was my privilege to hear from Dr. McKilliam, the late Mr. Mahony, and others, and in some places where this has been the case I have quoted from my notes. These addresses led me to search out the subject all through the Old Testament, and I pray that the thoughts which I now pass on to others may help some to enter into the place of Fellowship. They are but fragmentary, for each fresh incident is a subject in itself, but I desire rather to suggest to Christian workers thoughts for study than to work them out fully.

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Hebron :

OR,

The Place of Fellowship.

“GOD IS FAITHFUL, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of His Son Jesus Christ our Lord.” (1 Cor. i. 9.)

“If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: but if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another.” (1 John i. 6, 7.)

The subject before us is that of fellowship, or communion, as illustrated in the Old Testament by the ancient city of Hebron. We know that in Eastern lands names of people and places had meanings attached to them, and it is very interesting

to trace some of these in Scripture. The meaning of the name Hebron is said to be fellowship, and as we look at the events that took place in connection with it, and the people that dwelt there, we find illustrations of many truths concerning the place of fellowship unto which we are called.

Some may say that this is an imaginative way of studying Scripture, but it is a method that is sanctioned by the Word itself. For instance, in Heb. vii., the writer, in speaking of Melchisedec, says, "First being by interpretation King of Righteousness, and after that also King of Salem, which is, King of Peace;" thus drawing attention to the meaning of the name. Again, in John ix. 7, Jesus said to the blind man, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam," and the evangelist adds ("which is by interpretation, Sent"). In both these passages the name is first given, and then its interpretation. We have, therefore, the Bible warrant for this plan of illustrating spiritual truths.

We may learn a lesson from the situation of Hebron. In Gen. xiii. 18, we read that Hebron was in the plain of Mamre, which is said to mean fruitfulness, and in Josh. xx. 7, that it was "in the mountain of Judah," or praise. If we know anything of what true fellowship means, we are sure to be fruitful, "He that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit," and we shall certainly be full of praise, for His joy will remain in us and our joy will be full. (John xv. 5, 11.)

Hebron's
Position.

The city of Hebron was very ancient, for "Hebron was built seven years before Zoan, in Egypt." (Num. xiii. 22.) Egypt is generally taken to represent the world, and this place of fellowship existed long before the world was. He whose life on earth was one of unbroken communion with the Father had dwelt in fellowship with Him from all eternity, as He says in His prayer, "The glory which I had with Thee before the world was," and "Thou lovedst Me before the foundation of the world." (John xvii. 5, 24.)

Its
Antiquity.

The Place
of
Separation.

The first mention of Hebron is in Gen. xiii. 18, when Lot had separated from Abraham. Then Abraham "removed his tent, and came and dwelt in the plain of Mamre, which is in Hebron." Separation is the first step, separation from all that would hinder us from taking up our abode in the place of fellowship. "Can two walk together, except they be agreed?" (Amos. iii. 3.) If we are trying to walk with the world, whose friendship is enmity with God, we cannot enjoy the fellowship to which we are called. God calls us to come out and be separate and then He will receive us. The secret of the failure in Lot's life seems to be contained in those two words in verse 11, "Lot chose." He chose for himself, but Abraham allowed God to choose for him. We cannot enjoy communion if we want to choose our own path or our own work.

The Place
of Worship.

Abraham had now taken up his abode in Hebron, and his first act is to build there "an altar unto the Lord." Separation leads to fellowship, and fellowship to wor-

ship. The heart that has come to dwell in this place will not be long ere it rises in worship to the Lord, for the two things are so linked together that they must accompany one another, and "the Father seeketh such to worship Him."

Abraham is not long left undisturbed in Hebron. In the next chapter (Gen. xiv. 13), they come to Abraham, who is still in the plain of Mamre, to tell him about Lot's troubles. They who dwell in fellowship with God are always sought by those in difficulty and distress. Abraham at once responds to the call, and starting from Hebron is able to conquer the four kings and deliver Lot. The place of fellowship is the starting point for victory, for if we go out to meet the enemy from "the secret of His presence" we are sure to be more than conquerors through Him that loved us.

The
Starting
Point
for Victory.

His journey had taken him to the far north of the country, but he did not remain there after his victory. He made his way back to Hebron. When, after starting

The
Returning
Conqueror.

from the place of fellowship, we have conquered our enemies, are we not sometimes so full of our victory that we do not immediately come back to Hebron? We need like Abraham to return thither at once. As he was returning he was met by Melchisedec and refreshed and strengthened by the bread and wine that he brought him. Thus blessed by Him, was it any wonder that he refused the riches that the King of Sodom pressed upon him, and would not take "from a thread, even to a shoe latchet," lest he should say I have made Abraham rich. Abraham had learnt in Hebron that God was enough. In chap. xv. God answers him: "I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward." All this comes from residing in the place of fellowship.

"One with
another."

In chapter xviii. we have a still more wonderful picture: the Lord having fellowship with Abraham. "Fellowship one with another." (1 John i. 7.) "The Lord appeared unto Abraham in the plains of Mamre." He rests, is refreshed, and par-

takes of the food which Abraham puts before Him. He has come down for this very purpose, that He may commune with Abraham, "for therefore are ye come to your servant." We think very little of an earthly friendship that is all on one side; it certainly cannot last long if it exists at all. But how wonderful it seems that God should care to receive anything from us! He is a God that receives as well as a God that gives. We see this so beautifully brought out in Luke, in the three complaints which are brought against the Lord by His enemies. First they call Him "a Friend of publicans and sinners" (chap. vii. 34), and then in chap. xv. 2 they say: "This Man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them." Surely this is marvellous condescension. But there is still more; for in Luke xix. 7 "they all murmured, saying, that He was gone to be guest with a man that is a sinner." Not content with being a Friend of sinners, and receiving them, He wishes to accept of their hospitality. It reminds us of

the promise in Revelation iii. 20, where He says "I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me."

What can we offer to Him? and how can we spread the table for such a guest? Only with what He has first given to us, for He Himself must provide it. He fills our hands from His own hand, that we may have wherewith to offer to Him. "Of Thine own have we given Thee," or, as it is in the margin, "of Thine hand." (1 Chron. xxix. 5, 14.) Dr. Pentecost once used a beautiful illustration of this. He said that God's love to us and ours to Him reminded him of what is seen at the falls of Niagara. Tons and tons of water come thundering over the precipice into the depths beneath, a measureless volume of water that has been rolling on year after year. As it touches the river below there rises a beautiful sheet of spray that reflects the sunlight and breaks it up into rainbow tints. God's love to us is like that river. The great, ceaseless, inexhaustible, and eternal love of God comes rolling onward

in measureless volume, and, breaking upon Calvary, descends to our lowest depths. Just a little thin spray rebounds to Him again, and what goes up is only what first came down, and so is it in our fellowship with Him.

In this same chapter (Gen. xviii.) we find that Hebron is not only the place of refreshment to the Lord, but of promise received from Him. In verses 10, 14, He repeats to Abraham the promise of a son. God has given to us "exceeding great and precious promises," yet we make but little use of our wealth. For every need there is a special promise, and they are all ours in Christ, but how few do we claim! Is it not because we so little dwell in the place of fellowship? "If ye abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you."

The Place of Promise.

In this wonderful interview with Abraham, God goes on to reveal His purposes to him. He cannot keep any secret from him. The Lord said, "Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do?" (Verse

The Revealed Purpose.

17.) "Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but He revealeth His secret unto His servants the prophets." (Amos iii. 7.)

"The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him," and if we are really in fellowship with Him we shall be deeply interested in all that interests Him. As we read in the Word of His coming again, of His purposes for His chosen people Israel, and through them for the whole world, how can we help being moved to sympathy? We often hear professing Christians say that they do not care to study prophecy. "What difference does it make to them?" they ask, "it is so difficult," or "there are so many differences of opinion," &c., and so they leave the subject altogether, forgetting that there is a distinct blessing promised in Rev. i. 3: "Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy." When God said "Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do?" it would have been strange indeed if he had replied, "I do not care to hear about it; I am safe in Hebron, and what is going to happen in

Sodom makes no difference to me." But, dwelling in the place of fellowship, it would be impossible for him to be thus indifferent to the purposes of Him who called him friend. "Abraham was called the Friend of God" (James ii. 23, 2 Chron. xx. 7, and Isa. xli. 8), and we, too, are called His friends. He says in John xv. 15, "Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his Lord doeth: but I have called you friends," and when speaking of the Holy Spirit He said, "He will shew you things to come." (John xvi. 13.) "We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, in your hearts [as some say it should be read], as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise." (2 Peter i. 19.)

If there is much that we cannot understand, yet we can, like David when he sat before the Lord, look up into His face in confidence and fellowship and say, "Do as Thou hast said." We often read the Bible selfishly, expecting only to find something

for ourselves, not entering into God's mind concerning it, or seeing what glory He will have when it is accomplished. His purposes will be fulfilled for the glory of His name, and if in fellowship with Him, we shall be able to pray from our heart "Hallowed be Thy name," and to look forward intelligently to the time when He will sanctify His great name among the heathen. When speaking to Israel of their return to the land, and the blessing that should come upon them and all the world through them, He says, "I do not this for your sakes, O house of Israel, but for Mine holy Name's sake." (Ezek. xxxvi. 22, 23.)

The Place
of Inter-
cession.

Having learnt God's purpose concerning Sodom and Gomorrah, Abraham remembers Lot, and prays for the city of Sodom (verses 23-32), that it may be spared from the coming judgment. Thus Hebron becomes the place of intercession. When we are in communion with God we can intercede for others, and our prayers will be heard, as W. Romaine writes in one of his letters, "When you have the King's ear, ask a

favour for me." Our fellowship will surely be increased as we pray for others, for the work of intercession is that in which our Lord Himself is engaged: "He ever liveth to make intercession for them."

Thus we see in this chapter that Hebron is the place of rest and refreshment to the Lord, the place of promise, the place of revealed purpose, and the place of intercession.

In Gen. xxxv. 27, we learn that not only Abraham but Isaac also sojourned in Hebron, and after long dwelling in Padan-aram, Jacob came back there. "And Jacob came unto Isaac his father, unto Mamre, unto the city of Arbah, which is Hebron, where Abraham and Isaac sojourned." It is a great privilege when the children can look back and remember that the place of fellowship was the abode of parents and grandparents before them.

The next mention of Hebron is in the life of Joseph, when Jacob is sending him out to seek his brethren. "I will send thee unto them." "So he sent him out of the

Three
Generations

"The
Father
sent the
Son."

vale of Hebron." (Chap. xxxvii. 13, 14.) This reminds us of the One who came out from the place of fellowship with the Father, the glory which He had with Him before the world was, who, "though He was rich, yet for your sakes became poor, that ye, through His poverty might be rich." Joseph was ready at once to do his father's bidding, "Here am I," he replied; and when the Father "sent His only begotten Son into the world" (1 John iv. 9), His answer was, "Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God." He, too, was ready. Joseph said, "I seek my brethren" (verse 16), and he "went after his brethren" (verse 17). The good Shepherd, of whom he was a type, goeth after the lost sheep "until He find it." (Luke xv. 4.) He came "to seek and to save that which was lost." Jacob told Joseph to bring him word again, and when the Lord could say "I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do," He said, "Now come I to Thee." (John xvii. 13.) Three times over He says those words, "I come." First, when He left the glory, "Lo,

I come." Here when He is returning to His Father, and thirdly, in Rev. xxii. 20, when He speaks of His coming again, "Surely I come quickly."

When the children of Israel had reached the borders of Canaan, and had sent the spies to search out the land, "they came unto Hebron" (Num. xiii. 22), and there near the brook of Eshcol, they cut down that wonderful cluster of grapes proving what a fruitful place it was. Near Hebron the vines flourished. Thus it is with the branches of the true Vine, for it is only as we abide in our place of fellowship, in Christ Himself, that we are able to bring forth the "fruit," "more fruit," and "much fruit," spoken of in John xv., whereby the Father is glorified. The spies returned and "shewed them the fruit of the land" (Num. xiii. 26), saying, "this is the fruit of it" (verse 27), but unbelief and murmuring prevented the people from at once taking possession of Hebron, and they had to wander for forty years in the wilderness.

*Grapes of
Eshcol.*

In Joshua x. 36-37, Hebron is taken by *Joshua's
Conquests.*

Joshua. Our Joshua or Jesus leads us into the place of fellowship. He enters in, shows us the way thither and takes possession of it for us. "Within the veil; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus." (Heb. vi. 19, 20.) "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which He hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, His flesh; . . . let us draw near." (Heb. x. 19, 20, 22.)

Caleb's
Inheritance.

There are several mentions of Hebron in the book of Joshua. The next is in chap. xiv. 6-15, where the city is given to Caleb. When the other spies gave an evil report of the land, he and Joshua brought back word that the land was "an exceeding good land," and said: "Let us go up at once and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it," and thus they "wholly followed the Lord." In Num. xxxii. 11, 12, in the margin of our Bibles, we have another rendering for the words "wholly followed," viz.: "fulfilled after Me." "The Lord promised a certain thing; Caleb and Joshua

fulfilled Jehovah's intention by receiving the promise and acting upon it, stemming the tide of everything that would say 'no' to God's Word.* Because he thus "wholly followed" the Lord, Hebron—which he had before visited—was promised to Caleb, and in this chapter he claims it on the ground of promise. The place of fellowship is promised to us also as the result of obedience: "If a man love Me, he will keep My words: and My Father will love him, and We will come unto him and make our abode with him." (John xiv. 23.) "If we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another." (1 John i. 7.) Caleb was now eighty-five years old, but the Lord God who had preserved him alive in the wilderness had also given him strength, and he says in the eleventh verse: "As yet I am as strong this day as I was in the day that Moses sent me: as my strength was then, even so is my strength now, for war, both to go out, and to come

* Dr. McKilliam.

in." We need strength from God for the one as well as for the other. "To go out comes first, implying a life spent in the presence of the Lord, and being sent forth by Him ; but to come in needs just the same strength as to go out against the enemy." We saw in the life of Abraham that after the victory he returned to the place of fellowship. In the following chapter (Joshua xv. 13, 14) we find Caleb's first act was to expel the sons of Anak, for he could not have enjoyed his inheritance till they were conquered. We cannot dwell in the place of fellowship if unconquered sin be allowed to reign. The sons of the giant must be expelled : "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in heavenly places." (Eph. vi. 12, marg.) They would try to keep us from taking possession of our inheritance ; but the same strength that was given to Caleb may be ours, and we too may be "strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might."

We next have Hebron mentioned as one of the cities of refuge, and a dwelling place of the Levites. (Chap. xxi. 11-13.) "Hebron with her suburbs, to be a city of refuge for the slayer." We know that the Cities of Refuge are a beautiful type of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself; but "when our hearts are in fellowship with God they too become cities of refuge, and are open for all the sorrowing and suffering ones around us." While "the fields of the city, and the villages thereof" were given to Caleb, "Hebron, in the hill country of Judah," was given to the sons of Aaron. The Levites had no possession in the land, except the cities where they were to dwell, which were given by the various tribes. "Wherefore Levi hath no part nor inheritance with his brethren." (Deut. x. 9.) "Here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come." Meanwhile our dwelling place as the priestly family of God, is in the place of fellowship.

There is a beautiful incident in the life of Samson in connection with Hebron.

*A City of
Refuge.*

*Trophies of
Victory.*

(Judges xvi. 2, 3.) He came to Gaza. "And it was told the Gazites, saying, Samson is come hither. And they compassed him in, and laid wait for him all night . . . saying, In the morning, when it is day, we shall kill him. And Samson lay till midnight, and arose at midnight, and took the doors of the gate of the city, and the two posts, and went away with them, bar and all, and put them upon his shoulders, and carried them up to the top of an hill that is before Hebron." "Midnight represents a time of crisis. (Ex. xii., Matt xxv., &c.) Samson comes to Gaza (which is desert, Acts viii. 26), he looks at the gate, and looks at the bars, and leaves the city gateless. We know a day when the midday suddenly became midnight, and at that crisis our Champion stood forth. The prince of this earth came and bolted and barred the gates, and thought he had Him for ever, then at that darkest hour He came forth in His own might, tearing up the bolts and bars, yea, the very door posts, and carrying them

with Him made a show of them openly. Samson carried them up the hill looking over the rich valley where the grapes of Eshcol grew, and placed the trophies of his victory on the mountains above Hebron, the city of refuge. Our Champion has led captivity captive, 'and having spoiled principalities and powers, He made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it' (Col. ii. 15), and He shows us the trophies Himself in His broken body and shed blood. Once He was shut up and cried with Jonah, 'the earth with her bars was about me for ever' (ii. 6), but to-day He calls us in fellowship with Him to rejoice over the gates upon the mountains before the city of refuge."*

There are many mentions of Hebron in connection with the life of David. Like Samson, he, too, shares the spoils of his victory with the inhabitants of the city in 1 Sam. xxx. 26-31, when he says to them, "Behold a present for you of the spoil of

Sharing the
Spoil.

* The late R. Mahony, Esq.

the enemies of the Lord." In the opening of the chapter, Ziklag had been taken by the Amalekites, and David was greatly distressed, for the people spoke of stoning him, but he "encouraged himself in the Lord his God." He inquired of the Lord saying, "Shall I pursue, shall I overtake?" and the answer came back, "Pursue, for thou shalt surely overtake, and without fail recover all." God's answers are always better than our prayers, and He gives what we hardly dare to ask. God promises what David asks and more beside. David recovers all, "this is David's spoil" (verse 20), and at the end of the chapter, there is a list of the various cities, amongst them Hebron, to which he sends presents of the spoil. Psalm lxxviii. 18 says, "Thou hast ascended on high, Thou hast led captivity captive: Thou hast received gifts for men." In Eph. iv. 8, it is quoted, "and gave gifts unto men," but it is said that the Hebrew word in the Psalm includes both, and implies receiving in order to give. Can we not have fellowship with Him over His

conquests as we hear of souls being saved at home and abroad, of the victories of the Cross in heathen lands? Does He not call His friends to share His spoils when he says, "Rejoice with Me; for I have found My sheep which was lost." In speaking here of Hebron a very beautiful expression is used. It says it was a place that "David himself and his men were wont to haunt," he was no stranger there. How much time was spent by the Greater than David in prayer and communion with His Father. He was always in fellowship with Him, but how often He spent whole nights alone with Him. When "every man went unto his own house, Jesus went unto the Mount of Olives" (John vii. 53, viii. 1), "as He was wont." (Luke xxii. 39.)

"Cold mountains and the midnight air,
Witnessed the fervour of His prayer."

Where David went, his followers also went. In 2 Sam. ii. 3 it says, "His men that were with him did David bring up, every man with his household, and they dwelt in the cities of Hebron." It is our

David's
Followers.

Lord's desire to bring everyone that is with Him into the place of fellowship. All His followers are called unto the fellowship of Jesus Christ our Lord. He became the Captain of their salvation that He might bring "many sons unto glory," but even now He wants to bring them with Him into Hebron. David's followers were accompanied by their households, the families were not left outside, but it was every man with his own household. So when the children of Israel came up out of Egypt, Moses said, "We will go with our young and with our old, with our sons and with our daughters, with our flocks and with our herds will we go: for we must hold a feast unto the Lord." (Ex. x. 9.) Pharaoh would have hindered them from taking their little ones with them, but none must be left behind. If we know anything of dwelling in the place of fellowship we shall want those we love to dwell there also, and shall try to lead them to come with us. When "Jesus findeth Philip," immediately "Philip findeth Nathanael" (John i. 43, 45),

and when Andrew "came and saw where Jesus dwelt and abode with Him that day," "he first findeth his own brother Simon," and "brought him to Jesus." (Verses 39, 41, 42.)

David also takes with him Abigail. (Verse 2.) She, who in the time of his wandering and reverses recognised David as the Lord's anointed, and was chosen by him to be his bride, now dwells with him in Hebron. Abigail.

But David is not always a fugitive and a wanderer. At last he is the acknowledged king, and it is in Hebron that he is anointed and reigns. In verse 11 we read, "David was king in Hebron, over the house of Judah, seven years and six months," and in the fifth chapter all the tribes come to him to anoint him king over all the people. Abner and his followers had held out for a long time, but in chap. iii. 20, he, too, comes to David to tender his submission. "So Abner came to David to Hebron, . . . and David made Abner, and the men that were with him a The King Anointed.

feast." There was feasting first, and complete subjection (verse 21), "that thou mayest reign over all that thy heart desireth," and then there was peace. "David sent Abner away; and he went in peace." (Verse 21.) For the first seven years David reigned only over Judah, but now the rest of the tribes own his sovereignty, and "crown him lord of all."

The command to us is to sanctify Jesus Christ as Lord in our hearts. In Isa. ix. 6, we read, "the government shall be upon His shoulder," and the seventh verse adds, "Of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end." This passage will only have its fulfilment when His Kingdom comes, and He who is now rejected reigns upon the earth, but there is surely a personal application for each one of us. When we give Christ the place of Lord in our hearts, the government is upon His shoulder, but His government increases as we place every event of our lives into His hands, that He may rule.

It is in the place of fellowship that we give to the Lord Jesus Christ the right place, and there we learn too something of the meaning of union, and what it is to be "members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones." In chapter v. 1, when the tribes came to David they said, "Behold, we are thy bone and thy flesh." Then, too, they praise him for his leadership. "In time past, when Saul was king over us, thou wast he that leddest out and broughtest in Israel: and the Lord said to thee, Thou shalt feed My people Israel, and thou shalt be a captain over Israel." As we saw before, Hebron, "in the mountain of Judah," is a place of praise, and as we dwell in communion with Him, we cannot but praise Him for the way in which He has guided and fed us day by day.

There is another account of the anointing of David in 1 Chron. xii. 38, where the mighty men of David are described. What a contrast between the picture of those who came to the cave of Adullam in 1 Sam. xxii. 2, and the description here. The one

Union and
Praise.

David's
Mighty
Men.

says, "Every one that was in distress, and every one that was in debt, and every one that was discontented, gathered themselves unto him; and he became a captain over them." Here they are mentioned as "men of might, and men of war fit for the battle, that could handle shield and buckler, whose faces were like the faces of lions, and were as swift as the roes upon the mountains," but they had been with David. In v. 22-23 we read, "At that time, day by day, there came to David to help him, until it was a great host, like the host of God. And these are the numbers of the bands that were ready armed to the war, and came to David to Hebron, to turn the kingdom of Saul to him, according to the word of the Lord," and in verse 38, "All these men of war, that could keep rank, came with a perfect heart to Hebron, to make David king over all Israel: and all the rest also of Israel were of one heart to make David king." They had one great purpose, and that was to give God's king his proper place. At the end of the chapter we have an account of the

joy and feasting that follows, and this is the portion of those who enter into fellowship with Him.

We have one description of the city itself. In 2 Chron. xi. 11, 12 it is described as being well provisioned and made exceeding strong. "He fortified the strongholds and put captains in them, and store of victual, and of oil and wine, and in every several city he put shields and spears, and made them exceeding strong." There is no fear of starving in the place of fellowship, plentiful stores of victuals are there, as He said, "He that cometh to Me shall never hunger" (John vi. 35), and "Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst." (John iv. 14.) There is in Hebron an abundant supply of oil, and oil we know is generally taken as a type of the Holy Ghost. We are commanded to "be filled with the Spirit," and dwelling in the place of fellowship this becomes possible. Then, too, there is special mention made of the wine of gladness. The city might be attacked by an enemy,

Food and
Armour.

and it was therefore necessary that it should be well fortified, and that there should be a good supply of weapons, both offensive and defensive. We have to defend our dwelling place from the assaults of the enemy, but we are provided with the whole armour of God, and the place is exceeding strong, for abiding in Him we are always "more than conquerors."

Fellowship
with a
Usurper.

The glimpses of Hebron are not all happy ones. In 2 Sam. xv. we have a very sad picture. The usurper Absalom is admitted and David is rejected. Fellowship with one who usurps the place of the rightful king is sure to lead to sorrow and calamity.

Weeping at
a Grave.

There were graves, too, at Hebron. In 2 Sam. iii. 32 we read, "They buried Abner in Hebron: and the king lifted up his voice and wept at the grave of Abner, and all the people wept." It reminds us of the story in John xi., when at the grave of Lazarus "Jesus wept." If we are in fellowship with Him, we shall weep with them that weep as well as rejoice with them that do rejoice. Hebron was also the burial place of Abra-

ham, Sarah, Isaac, Rebekah, Jacob, and Leah, for there was the cave of Machpelah, Abraham's first possession in the land. (Gen. xxiii. 19, 20.)

There is no further mention of Hebron for some time. The children of Judah were carried captives to Babylon, but after the captivity some of them returned thither. In Nehemiah xi. 25, we read that "some of the children of Judah dwelt at Kirjath-arba," which we know from Josh. xiv. 15, is the same as Hebron. If any of us have gone into the land of captivity, the far country, may we very speedily be brought back to the place of fellowship.

Returning
after
Captivity.

There is one passage which gives us a beautiful description of the Hebronites. They were "men of valour . . . in all the business of the Lord, and in the service of the King." (1 Chron. xxvi. 30.) Probably this refers to the descendants of a man of the name of Hebron, but the meaning would be the same. We may be sure that if we dwell in this place of fellowship, we shall be able to serve Him. "Therefore be ye steadfast,

The
Hebronites'
Occupation.

unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord." May He teach us what it is to abide in Him, to dwell constantly in the place of fellowship during the little while that remains, that we may have but one occupation, "the business of the Lord, and the service of the King," till He come, and we are taken to be "for ever with the Lord."

