
GENESIS 28:1 Isaac called Jacob, blessed him, and commanded him, "You shall not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan.

Isaac directs Jacob to take a wife from the family of Laban, Gen 28:1, Gen 28:2; blesses and sends him away, Gen 28:3, Gen 28:4. Jacob begins his journey, Gen 28:5. Esau, perceiving that the daughters of Canaan were not pleasing to his parents, and that Jacob obeyed them in going to get a wife of his own kindred, Gen 28:6-8, went and took to wife Mahalath, the daughter of Ishmael his father's brother, Gen 28:9. Jacob, in his journey towards Haran, came to a certain place, (Luz, Gen 28:19), where he lodged all night, Gen 28:10, Gen 28:11. He sees in a dream a ladder reaching from earth to heaven, on which he beholds the angels of God ascending and descending, Gen 28:12. God appears above this ladder, and renews those promises which he had made to Abraham and to Isaac, Gen 28:13, Gen 28:14; promises Jacob personal protection and a safe return to his own country, Gen 28:15. Jacob awakes, and makes reflections upon his dream, Gen 28:16, Gen 28:17. Sets up one of the stones he had for his pillow, and pours oil on it, and calls the place Beth-el, Gen 28:18, Gen 28:19. Makes a vow that if God will preserve him in his journey, and bring him back in safety, the stone should be God's house, and that he would give him the tenths of all that he should have, Gen 28:20-22.

Verse 1

And Isaac called Jacob - See note on Gen 27:46.

And blessed him - Now voluntarily and cheerfully confirmed to him the blessing, which he had before obtained through subtlety. It was necessary that he should have this confirmation previously to his departure; else, considering the way in which he had obtained both the birthright and the blessing, he might be doubtful, according to his own words, whether he might not have got a curse instead of a blessing. As the blessing now pronounced on Jacob was obtained without any deception on his part, it is likely that it produced a salutary effect upon his mind, might have led him to confession of his sin, and prepared his heart for those discoveries of God's goodness with which he was favored at Luz.

GENESIS 28:2 Arise, go to Paddan Aram, to the house of Bethuel your mother's father. Take a wife from there from the daughters of Laban, your mother's brother.

Verse 2

Go to Padan-aram - This mission, in its spirit and design, is nearly the same as that in Genesis 24 (note). There have been several ingenious conjectures concerning the retinue which Jacob had, or might have had, for his journey; and by some he has been supposed to have been well attended. Of this nothing is mentioned here, and the reverse seems to be intimated elsewhere. It appears, from Gen 28:11, that he lodged in the open air, with a stone for his pillow; and from Gen 32:10, that he went on foot with his staff in his hand; nor is there even the most indirect mention of any attendants, nor is it probable there were any. He no doubt took provisions with him sufficient to carry him to the nearest encampment or village on the way, where he would naturally recruit his bread and water to carry him to the next stage, and so on. The oil that he poured on the pillar might

be a little of that which he had brought for his own use, and can be no rational argument of his having a stock of provisions, servants, camels, etc., for which it has been gravely brought. He had God alone with him.

GENESIS 28:3 May God Almighty bless you, and make you fruitful, and multiply you, that you may be a company of peoples,

Verse 3

That thou mayest be a multitude of people - לִקְהָל עַמִּים likhal ammim. There is something very remarkable in the original words: they signify literally for an assembly, congregation, or church of peoples; referring no doubt to the Jewish Church in the wilderness, but more particularly to the Christian Church, composed of every kindred, and nation, and people, and tongue. This is one essential part of the blessing of Abraham. See Gen 28:4.

GENESIS 28:4 and give you the blessing of Abraham, to you, and to your seed with you, that you may inherit the land where you travel, which God gave to Abraham.”

Verse 4

Give thee the blessing of Abraham - May he confirm the inheritance with all its attendant blessings to thee, to the exclusion of Esau; as he did to me, to the exclusion of Ishmael. But, according to St. Paul, much more than this is certainly intended here, for it appears, from Gal 3:6-14, that the blessing of Abraham, which is to come upon the Gentiles through Jesus Christ, comprises the whole doctrine of justification by faith, and its attendant privileges, viz., redemption from the curse of the law, remission of sins, and the promise of the Holy Spirit, including the constitution and establishment of the Christian Church.

GENESIS 28:5 Isaac sent Jacob away. He went to Paddan Aram to Laban, son of Bethuel the Syrian, Rebekah's brother, Jacob's and Esau's mother.

Verse 5

Bethuel the Syrian - Literally the Aramean, so called, not because he was of the race of Aram the son of Shem, but because he dwelt in that country which had been formerly possessed by the descendants of Aram.

GENESIS 28:6 Now Esau saw that Isaac had blessed Jacob and sent him away to Paddan Aram, to take him a wife from there, and that as he blessed him he gave him a command, saying, “You shall not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan,”

GENESIS 28:7 and that Jacob obeyed his father and his mother, and was gone to Paddan Aram.

GENESIS 28:8 Esau saw that the daughters of Canaan didn't please Isaac, his father.

GENESIS 28:9 Esau went to Ishmael, and took, besides the wives that he had, Mahalath the daughter of Ishmael, Abraham's son, the sister of Nebaioth, to be his wife.

Verse 9

Then went Esau unto Ishmael - Those who are apt to take every thing by the wrong handle, and who think it was utterly impossible for Esau to do any right action, have classed his taking a daughter of Ishmael among his crimes; whereas there is nothing more plain than that he did this with a sincere desire to obey and please his parents. Having heard the pious advice which Isaac gave to Jacob, he therefore went and took a wife from the family of his grandfather Abraham, as Jacob was desired to do out of the family of his maternal uncle Laban. Mahalath, whom he took to wife, stood in the same degree of relationship to Isaac his father as Rachel did to his mother Rebekah. Esau married his father's niece; Jacob married his mother's niece. It was therefore most obviously to please his parents that Esau took this additional wife. It is supposed that Ishmael must have been dead thirteen or fourteen years before this time, and that going to Ishmael signifies only going to the family of Ishmael. If we follow the common computation, and allow that Isaac was now about one hundred and thirty-six or one hundred and thirty-seven years of age, and Jacob seventy-seven, and as Ishmael died in the one hundred and thirty-seventh year of his age, which according to the common computation was the one hundred and twenty-third of Isaac, then Ishmael must have been dead about fourteen years. But if we allow the ingenious reasoning of Mr. Skinner and Dr. Kennicott, that Jacob was at this time only fifty-seven years of age, and Isaac consequently only one hundred and seventeen, it will appear that Ishmael did not die till six years after this period; and hence with propriety it might be said, Esau went unto Ishmael, and took Mahalath the daughter of Ishmael to be his wife. See note on Gen 26:34, etc.

GENESIS 28:10 Jacob went out from Beersheba, and went toward Haran.

GENESIS 28:11 He came to a certain place, and stayed there all night, because the sun had set. He took one of the stones of the place, and put it under his head, and lay down in that place to sleep.

Verse 11

A certain place, and tarried there - From Gen 28:19, we find this certain place was Luz, or some part of its vicinity. Jacob had probably intended to reach Luz; but the sun being set, and night coming on, he either could not reach the city, or he might suspect the inhabitants, and rather prefer the open field, as he must have heard of the character and conduct of the men of Sodom and Gomorrah. Or the gates might be shut by the time he reached it, which would prevent his admission; for it frequently happens, to the present day, that travelers not reaching a city in the eastern countries previously to the shutting of the gates, are obliged to lodge under the walls all night, as when once shut they refuse to open them till the next day. This was probably Jacob's case.

He took of the stones - He took one of the stones that were in that place: from Gen 28:18 we find it was one stone only which he had for his pillow. Luz was about forty-eight miles distant from Beersheba; too great a journey for one day, through what we may conceive very unready roads.

GENESIS 28:12 He dreamed. Behold, a stairway set upon the earth, and its top reached to heaven. Behold, the angels of God ascending and descending on it.

Verse 12

He dreamed, and behold a ladder - A multitude of fanciful things have been spoken of Jacob's vision of the ladder, and its signification. It might have several designs, as God chooses to accomplish the greatest number of ends by the fewest and simplest means possible. 1. It is very likely that its primary design was to point out the providence of God, by which he watches over and regulates all terrestrial things; for nothing is left to merely natural causes; a heavenly agency pervades, actuates, and directs all. In his present circumstances it was highly necessary that Jacob should have a clear and distinct view of this subject, that he might be the better prepared to meet all occurrences with the conviction that all was working together for his good. 2. It might be intended also to point out the intercourse between heaven and earth, and the connection of both worlds by the means of angelic ministry. That this is fact we learn from many histories in the Old Testament; and it is a doctrine that is unequivocally taught in the New: Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation? 3. It was probably a type of Christ, in whom both worlds meet, and in whom the Divine and human nature are conjoined. The Ladder was set up on the Earth, and the Top of it reached to Heaven; for God was manifested in the Flesh, and in him dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. Nothing could be a more expressive emblem of the incarnation and its effects; Jesus Christ is the grand connecting medium between heaven and earth, and between God and man. By him God comes down to man; through him man ascends to God. It appears that our Lord applies the vision in this way himself, first, In that remarkable speech to Nathanael, Hereafter ye shall see the heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of man, Joh 1:51. Secondly, in his speech to Thomas, Joh 14:6 : I am the Way, and the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but by me.

GENESIS 28:13 Behold, the LORD stood above it, and said, "I am the LORD, the God of Abraham your father, and the God of Isaac. The land whereon you lie, to you will I give it, and to your seed.

Verse 13

I am the Lord God of Abraham - Here God confirms to him the blessing of Abraham, for which Isaac had prayed, Gen 28:3, Gen 28:4.

GENESIS 28:14 Your seed will be as the dust of the earth, and you will spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south. In you and in your seed will all the families of the earth be blessed.

Verse 14

Thy seed shall be as the dust - The people that shall descend from thee shall be extremely numerous, and in thee and thy seed - the Lord Jesus descending from thee, according to the flesh, shall all the families of the earth - not only all of thy race, but all the other families or tribes of mankind which have not proceeded from any branch of the Abrahamic family, be blessed; for Jesus Christ by the grace of God tasted death For Every Man, Heb 2:9.

GENESIS 28:15 Behold, I am with you, and will keep you, wherever you go, and will bring you again into this land. For I will not leave you, until I have done that which I have spoken of to you."

Verse 15

And, behold, I am with thee - For I fill the heavens and the earth. "My Word shall be thy help." - Targum. And will keep thee in all places, εν τη ὁδῳ παση, in all this way - Septuagint. I shall direct, help, and support thee in a peculiar manner, in thy present journey, be with thee while thou sojournest with thy uncle, and will bring thee again into this land; so that in all thy concerns thou mayest consider thyself under my especial providence, for I will not leave thee. Thy descendants also shall be my peculiar people, whom I shall continue to preserve as such until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of - until the Messiah shall be born of thy race, and all the families of the earth - the Gentiles, be blessed through thee; the Gospel being preached to them, and they, with the believing Jews, made One Fold under One Shepherd, and one Bishop or Overseer of souls. And this circumstantial promise has been literally and punctually fulfilled.

GENESIS 28:16 Jacob awakened out of his sleep, and he said, "Surely the LORD is in this place, and I didn't know it."

Verse 16

The Lord is in this place; and I knew it not - That is, God has made this place his peculiar residence; it is a place in which he meets with and reveals himself to his followers. Jacob might have supposed that this place had been consecrated to God. And it has already been supposed that, his mind having been brought into a humble frame, he was prepared to hold communion with his Maker.

GENESIS 28:17 He was afraid, and said, "How dreadful is this place! This is none other than God's house, and this is the gate of heaven."

Verse 17

How dreadful is this place! - The appearance of the ladder, the angels, and the Divine glory at the top of the ladder, must have left deep, solemn, and even awful impressions on the mind of Jacob; and hence the exclamation in the text, How dreadful is this place! This is none other but the house of God - The Chaldee gives this place a curious turn: "This is not a common place, but a place in which God delights; and opposite to this place is the gate of heaven." Onkelos seems to suppose that

the gate or entrance into heaven was actually above this spot, and that when the angels of God descended to earth, they came through that opening into this place, and returned by the same way. And it really appears that Jacob himself had a similar notion.

GENESIS 28:18 Jacob rose up early in the morning, and took the stone that he had put under his head, and set it up for a pillar, and poured oil on its top.

Verse 18

And Jacob - took the stone - and set it up for a pillar - He placed the stone in an erect posture, that it might stand as a monument of the extraordinary vision which he had in this place; and he poured oil upon it, thereby consecrating it to God, so that it might be considered an altar on which libations might be poured, and sacrifices offered unto God. See Gen 35:14.

The Brahmins anoint their stone images with oil before bathing; and some anoint them with sweet-scented oil. This is a practice which arises more from the customs of the Hindoos than from their idolatry. Anointing persons as an act of homage has been transferred to their idols.

There is a foolish tradition that the stone set up by Jacob was afterwards brought to Jerusalem, from which, after a long lapse of time, it was brought to Spain, from Spain to Ireland, from Ireland to Scotland, and on it the kings of Scotland sat to be crowned; and concerning which the following leonine verses were made: -

Ni fallat fatum, - Scoti quocunque locatum
 Invenient lapidem, - regnare tenentur ibidem.
 Or fate is blind - or Scots shall find
 Where'er this stone - the royal throne.
 Camden's Perthshire.

Edward I. had it brought to Westminster; and there this stone, called Jacob's pillar, and Jacob's pillow, is now placed under the chair on which the king sits when crowned! It would be as ridiculous to attempt to disprove the truth of this tradition, as to prove that the stone under the old chair in Westminster was the identical stone which served the patriarch for a bolster.

And poured oil upon the top of it - Stones, images, and altars, dedicated to Divine worship, were always anointed with oil. This appears to have been considered as a consecration of them to the object of the worship, and a means of inducing the god or goddess to take up their residence there, and answer the petitions of their votaries. Anointing stones, images, etc., is used in idolatrous countries to the present day, and the whole idol is generally smeared over with oil. Sometimes, besides the anointing, a crown or garland was placed on the stone or altar to honor the divinity, who was supposed, in consequence of the anointing, to have set up his residence in that place. It appears to have been on this ground that the seats of polished stone, on which the kings sat in the front of their palaces to administer justice, were anointed, merely to invite the deity to reside there, that true judgment might be given, and a righteous sentence always be pronounced. Of this we have an instance in Homer, *Odyss. lib. v., ver. 406-410*: - *Ἐκ δ' ἐλθων, κατ' ἀρ' ἔζειτ' ἐπι ξεστοισι λιθοσιν, Οἱ οἱ ἔσαν προπαροιθε θυραων ὑψηλων, Δευκοι, ἀποστιλβοντες ἀλειφατος· οἷς ἐπι μὲν πρὶν Νηλεὺς ἰζεσκεν, θεοφιν μῆστωρ ἀταλαντος.*

The old man early rose, walk'd forth, and sate

On polish'd stone before his palace gate;
 With unguent smooth the lucid marble shone,
 Where ancient Neleus sate, a rustic throne.
 Pope.

This gives a part of the sense of the passage; but the last line, on which much stress should be laid, is very inadequately rendered by the English poet. It should be translated, -

Where Neleus sat, equal in counsel to the gods; because inspired by their wisdom, and which inspiration he and his successor took pains to secure by consecrating with the anointing oil the seat of judgment on which they were accustomed to sit. Some of the ancient commentators on Homer mistook the meaning of this place by not understanding the nature of the custom; and these Cowper unfortunately follows, translating "resplendent as with oil;" which as destroys the whole sense, and obliterates the allusion. This sort of anointing was a common custom in all antiquity, and was probably derived from this circumstance. Arnobius tells us that it was customary with himself while a heathen, "when he saw a smooth polished stone that had been smeared with oils, to kiss and adore it, as if possessing a Divine virtue."

Si quando conspexeram lubricatum lapidem, et ex olivi unguine sordidatum (ordinatum) tanquam inesset vis prasens, adulabar, affabar.

And Theodoret, in his eighty-fourth question on Genesis, asserts that many pious women in his time were accustomed to anoint the coffins of the martyrs, etc. And in Catholic countries when a church is consecrated they anoint the door-posts, pillars, altars, etc. So under the law there was a holy anointing oil to sanctify the tabernacle, laver, and all other things used in God's service, Exo 40:9, etc.

GENESIS 28:19 He called the name of that place Bethel, but the name of the city was Luz at the first.

Verse 19

He called the name of that place Beth-el - That is, the house of God; for in consequence of his having anointed the stone, and thus consecrated it to God, he considered it as becoming henceforth his peculiar residence; see on the preceding verse. This word should be always pronounced as two distinct syllables, each strongly accented, Beth-El.

Was called Luz at the first - The Hebrew has לֵוַי לְאֵלֶיךָ Ulam Luz, which the Roman edition of the Septuagint translates Ουλαμλουζ Oulamouz; the Alexandrian MS., Ουλαμμους Oulammaus; the Aldine, Ουλαμμους Oulammaus; Symmachus, Λαμμους Lammaous; and some others, Ουλαμ Oulam. The Hebrew לְאֵלֶיךָ ulam is sometimes a particle signifying as, just as; hence it may signify that the place was called Beth-El, as it was formerly called Luz. As Luz signifies an almond, almond or hazel tree, this place probably had its name from a number of such trees growing in that region. Many of the ancients confounded this city with Jerusalem, to which they attribute the eight following names, which are all expressed in this verse: -

Solyma, Luza, Bethel, Hierosolyma, Jebus, Aelia,
 Urbs sacra, Hierusalem dicitur atque Salem.
 Solyma, Luz, Beth-El, Hierosolyma, Jebus, Aelia,
 The holy city is call'd, as also Jerusalem and Salem.

From Beth-El came the Baetylia, Bethyllia, Βαιτυλια, or animated stones, so celebrated in antiquity, and to which Divine honors were paid. The tradition of Jacob anointing this stone, and calling the place Beth-El, gave rise to all the superstitious accounts of the Baetylia or consecrated stones, which we find in Sanchoniathon and others. These became abused to idolatrous purposes, and hence God strongly prohibits them, Lev 26:1; and it is very likely that stones of this kind were the most ancient objects of idolatrous worship; these were afterwards formed into beautiful human figures, male and female, when the art of sculpture became tolerably perfected, and hence the origin of idolatry as far as it refers to the worshipping of images, for these, being consecrated by anointing, etc., were supposed immediately to become instinct with the power and energy of some divinity. Hence, then, the Baetylia or living stones of the ancient Phoenicians, etc. As oil is an emblem of the gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit, so those who receive this anointing are considered as being alive unto God, and are expressly called by St. Peter living stones, 1Pet 2:4, 1Pet 2:5. May not the apostle have reference to those living stones or Baetyllia of antiquity, and thus correct the notion by showing that these rather represented the true worshippers of God, who were consecrated to his service and made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and that these alone could be properly called the living stone, out of which the true spiritual temple is composed?

GENESIS 28:20 Jacob vowed a vow, saying, "If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and clothing to put on,

Verse 20

Vowed a vow - A vow is a solemn, holy promise, by which a man bound himself to do certain things in a particular way, time, etc., and for power to accomplish which he depended on God; hence all vows were made with prayer.

If God will be with me, etc. - Jacob seems to make this vow rather for his posterity than for himself, as we may learn from Gen 28:13-15; for he particularly refers to the promises which God had made to him, which concerned the multiplication of his offspring, and their establishment in that land. If, then, God shall fulfill these promises, he binds his posterity to build God a house, and to devote for the maintenance of his worship the tenth of all their earthly goods. This mode of interpretation removes that appearance of self-interest which almost any other view of the subject presents. Jacob had certainly, long ere this, taken Jehovah for his God; and so thoroughly had he been instructed in the knowledge of Jehovah, that we may rest satisfied no reverses of fortune could have induced him to apostatize: but as his taking refuge with Laban was probably typical of the sojourning of his descendants in Egypt, his persecution, so as to be obliged to depart from Laban, the bad treatment of his posterity by the Egyptians, his rescue from death, preservation on his journey, re-establishment in his own country, etc., were all typical of the exodus of his descendants, their travels in the desert, and establishment in the promised land, where they built a house to God, and where, for the support and maintenance of the pure worship of God, they gave to the priests and Levites the tenth of all their worldly produce. If all this be understood as referring to Jacob only, the Scripture gives us no information how he performed his vow.

GENESIS 28:21 so that I come again to my father's house in peace, and the LORD will be my God,

GENESIS 28:22 then this stone, which I have set up for a pillar, will be God's house. Of all that you will give me I will surely give the tenth to you."

Verse 22

This stone shall be God's house - That is, (as far as this matter refers to Jacob alone), should I be preserved to return in safety, I shall worship God in this place. And this purpose he fulfilled, for there he built an altar, anointed it with oil, and poured a drink-offering thereon.

For a practical use of Jacob's vision, see note on Gen 28:12.

On the doctrine of tithes, or an adequate support for the ministers of the Gospel, I shall here register my opinion. Perhaps a word may be borne from one who never received any, and has none in prospect. Tithes in their origin appear to have been a sort of eucharistic offering made unto God, and probably were something similar to the minchah, which we learn from Genesis 4 was in use almost from the foundation of the world. When God established a regular, and we may add an expensive worship, it was necessary that proper provision should be made for the support of those who were obliged to devote their whole time to it, and consequently were deprived of the opportunity of providing for themselves in any secular way. It was soon found that a tenth part of the produce of the whole land was necessary for this purpose, as a whole tribe, that of Levi, was devoted to the public service of God; and when the land was divided, this tribe received no inheritance among their brethren. Hence, for their support, the law of tithes was enacted; and by these the priests and Levites were not only supported as the ministers of God, but as the teachers and intercessors of the people, performing a great variety of religious duties for them which otherwise they themselves were bound to perform. As this mode of supporting the ministers of God was instituted by himself, so we may rest assured it was rational and just. Nothing can be more reasonable than to devote a portion of the earthly good which we receive from the free mercy of God, to his own service; especially when by doing it we are essentially serving ourselves. If the ministers of God give up their whole time, talents, and strength, to watch over, labor for, and instruct the people in spiritual things, justice requires that they shall receive their support from the work. How worthless and wicked must that man be, who is continually receiving good from the Lord's hands without restoring any part for the support of true religion, and for charitable purposes! To such God says, Their table shall become a snare to them, and that he will curse their blessings. God expects returns of gratitude in this way from every man; he that has much should give plenteously, he that has little should do his diligence to give of that little.

It is not the business of these notes to dispute on the article of tithes; certainly it would be well could a proper substitute be found for them, and the clergy paid by some other method, as this appears in the present state of things to be very objectionable; and the mode of levying them is vexatious in the extreme, and serves to sow dissensions between the clergyman and his parishioners, by which many are not only alienated from the Church, but also from the power as well as the form of godliness. But still the laborer is worthy of his hire; and the maintenance of the public ministry of the word of God should not be left to the caprices of men. He who is only supported for his work, will be probably abandoned when he is no longer capable of public service. I have seen many aged and worn-out ministers reduced to great necessity, and almost literally obliged to beg their bread among those whose opulence and salvation were, under God, the fruits of their ministry! Such persons may think they do God service by disputing against "tithes, as legal institutions long since abrogated," while they permit their worn-out ministers to starve: - but how shall they appear

in that day when Jesus shall say, I was hungry, and ye gave me no meat; thirsty, and ye gave me no drink; naked, and ye clothed me not? It is true, that where a provision is established on a certain order of priesthood by the law, it may be sometimes claimed and consumed by the worthless and the profane; but this is no necessary consequence of such establishment, as there are laws which, if put in action, have sufficient energy to expel every wicked and slothful servant from the vineyard of Christ. This however is seldom done. At all events, this is no reason why those who have served God and their generation should not be comfortably supported during that service; and when incapable of it, be furnished at least with the necessaries of life. Though many ministers have reason to complain of this neglect, who have no claims on a legal ecclesiastical establishment, yet none have cause for louder complaint than the generality of those called curates, or unbeneficed ministers, in the Church of England: their employers clothe themselves with the wool, and feed themselves with the fat; they tend not the flock, and their substitutes that perform the labor and do the drudgery of the office, are permitted at least to half starve on an inadequate remuneration. Let a national worship be supported, but let the support be derived from a less objectionable source than tithes; for as the law now stands relative to them, no one purpose of moral instruction or piety can be promoted by the system. On their present plan tithes are oppressive and unjust; the clergyman has a right by law to the tenth of the produce of the soil, and to the tenth of all that is supported by it. He claims even the tenth egg, as well as the tenth apple; the tenth of all grain, of all hay, and even of all the produce of the kitchen garden; but he contributes nothing to the cultivation of the soil. A comparatively poor man rents a farm; it is entirely out of heart, for it has been exhausted; it yields very little, and the tenth is not much; at the expense of all he has, he dresses and manures this ungrateful soil; to repay him and keep up the cultivation would require three years' produce. It begins to yield well, and the clergyman takes the tenth which is now in quantity and quality more in value than a pound, where before it was not a shilling. But the whole crop would not repay the farmer's expenses. In proportion to the farmer's improvement is the clergyman's tithe, who has never contributed one shilling to aid in this extra produce! Here then not only the soil pays tithes, but the man's property brought upon the soil pays tithes: his skill and industry also are tithed; or if he have been obliged to borrow cash, he not only has to pay tithes on the produce of this borrowed money, but five per cent interest for the money itself. All this is oppressive and cruelly unjust. I say again, let there be a national religion, and a national clergy supported by the state; but let them be supported by a tax, not by tithes, or rather let them be paid out of the general taxation; or, if the tithe system must be continued, let the poor-rates be abolished, and the clergy, out of the tithes, support the poor in their respective parishes, as was the original custom.