

**HOLLOWNESS, NARROWNESS AND
FEAR: WARNINGS FROM THE JEWISH
CHURCH, THREE LECTURES DELIVERED
AT CUDDSDEN THEOLOGICAL
COLLEGE, IN EMBER-WEEK, SEPT. 1869**

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Hollowness, narrowness and fear: warnings from the Jewish Church, three lectures delivered at cuddesden theological college, in ember-week, sept. 1869 by J. Hannah

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Hollowness, Harbowness, and Fear:

WARNINGS FROM THE
JEWISH CHURCH.

THREE LECTURES DELIVERED AT CUDDSDEN
THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE,

IN EMBER-WEEK, SEPT. 1869,

BY

J. HANNAH, D.C.L.

WARDEN OF TRINITY COLLEGE, GLENALMOND.

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TO THE
PRINCIPAL, VICE-PRINCIPAL,
AND OTHER OFFICERS AND MEMBERS OF
CUDDESDEN THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE,
THESE LECTURES
DELIVERED IN THEIR CHAPEL,
AND PUBLISHED AT THEIR REQUEST,
ARE RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED,
WITH THE AUTHOR'S CORDIAL THANKS FOR THE
KINDNESS AND CONSIDERATION WITH WHICH THEY
WERE RECEIVED.

LECTURE I.

Phylotiness.

ST. MATTHEW xxiii. 1—3.

“ Then spake Jesus to the multitude, and to His disciples, saying, The Scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not.”

IT is impossible to read the solemn warnings of this chapter conscientiously without a strong feeling of misgiving and fear. Picture to yourselves that Christ addressed its burning words of condemnation to the rightful representatives of that ancient Church which God had Himself established in the Jewish nation, for the purpose of receiving His oracles, and guarding His revelation, and passing on the torch of Divine truth from age to age. No claims could possibly be higher, no prestige could be greater, no authority could be more commanding, than that of the Scribes and Pharisees who really sat in Moses' seat, and whose precepts were to be observed even when their practice was emphatically condemned. Their spiritual downfall supplies the leading proof of a principle to which many of the darkest pages of history bear their witness; the certainty that God will Himself destroy the very sys-

tems which He has established, if ever a time arrives when their spirit has departed; and yet that those forms may retain their outward dignity and authority up to the moment of their fall. We cannot doubt that if the Jews had been faithful to their trust, they would have rejoiced to resign it to the Messiah when He came, and would have been honoured as the foremost members of the Church, for which their national history had been moulded to prepare the way. This is not only obvious in itself, but is acknowledged throughout the Apostolic history. "Unto you first" was the burthen of every early sermon which was preached to the Jews. "It was necessary that the Word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles^a." It was the purpose of God that Judaism should be transmuted into Christianity; but it was solely due to Jewish unbelief and sin that this transfer was accompanied by the ruin which crushed their Church and nation. This is the unfailing witness which all history confirms. God's work is always done, but unfaithful instruments are broken and discarded. The Spirit still lives on, and clothes itself with fresh organizations, when the systems which man's faithlessness had vitiated are shattered and destroyed. We are compelled to draw the same lesson from the disappearance of so many of those great Churches to which the light of the Gospel was originally trusted. The faith spreads and prospers;

^a Acts iii. 26; xiii. 46.

the gates of hell are ever baffled as of old. And yet ecclesiastical history supplies a close parallel to the secular history of decaying empires, as it unfolds the long pageant of departing Churches, each following after the other to the silence of decay and death.

In the eight woes which Christ pronounced against the leaders of the Jews, we may expect to find a revelation of the reasons which brought about the first and greatest of these downfalls; a disclosure of the sins which had eaten out the heart of a system outwardly so impressive and imposing, and had left it standing like a building long exposed to the encroachments of the waters, when the waves have at last sapped its foundations and made it ready for its fall. And these lessons must clearly have a direct and weighty significance for the members of any established system, however divine in its origin and venerable in its authority. No Church of these latter days can possess a loftier title, a more divine sanction, a more commanding history, than that which had distinguished the Church and nation of the Jews. No such system ever fell more completely. In the case of no such fall have we been favoured with an inspired commentary of equal value and authority with that in which Christ disclosed the reasons which had brought about the downfall of the Jews.

What, then, is the central error around which the woes which Christ pronounced upon the Scribes and Pharisees revolved; and what is the exact danger to which they were exposed in common with ourselves?