have been substituted for **in**) **of life, which  
is in the paradise of God** (the way to  
which tree was closed up after man’s sin,  
Gen. iii. 24. The promise, and its expression  
are in the closest connexion with our  
Lord’s discourse in John vi., as will be  
seen by comparing Gen. iii. 22. But we  
need not therefore say that Christ *is* the  
tree of life here, nor confuse the figure by  
introducing one which in its character is  
distinct from it. Still less is the tree to  
be interpreted as being the Holy Spirit.  
See, for the imagery, ch. xxii. 2, 14, 19.  
The words **of God**, as following *paradise*,  
come from Ezek. xxviii. 13, and set forth  
the holiness and glory of that paradise,  
as consisting in God's dwelling and  
delighting in it).

**8—11.]** THE EPISTLE TO THE CHURCH  
AT SMYRNA. **And to the angel of the  
church in Smyrna** (in accordance with the  
idea of the angel representing the bishop,  
many of the ancient Commentators have  
inferred that Polycarp must have been  
here addressed. Whether this were chronologically  
possible, must depend on the date  
which we assign to the writing of the Apocalypse.  
He was martyred in A.D. 168,  
86 years after his conversion) **write; These  
things saith the first and the last, which  
was** [became] **dead and revived** (see  
ch. i. 17, 18. The words here seem to  
point on to the promise in verses 10, 11):  
**I know thy tribulation, and thy poverty**(in outward wealth, arising probably from  
the *tribulation*, by the despoiling of the  
goods of the Christians); **nevertheless  
thou art rich** (spiritually; see 2 Cor. vi.  
10, ch. iii. 18, and James ii. 5): **and**(I know) **thy calumny from** (arising  
from) **those who profess themselves to  
be Jews, and they are not, but** [**are**]  
**Satan's synagogue** (these slanderers were  
in all probability actually Jews by birth,  
but not [see Rom. ii. 28; Matt. iii. 9;  
John viii. 33; 2 Cor. xi. 22; Phil. iii. 4 ff.]  
in spiritual reality; the same who every  
where, in St. Paul’s time and afterwards,  
were the most active enemies of the Christians.  
When Polycarp was martyred, we  
read that “all the multitude of Gentiles  
and Jews dwelling in Smyrna cried out,  
enraged with a loud voice:” and afterwards  
when faggots were collected for  
the pile, “the Jews most eagerly, as is  
their wont, giving help.” This view is  
strengthened by the context. Had they  
been, as some have supposed, Christians,  
called *Jews* in a mystical sense, they  
would hardly have been spoken of as the  
principal source of calumny against the  
Church, nor would the collective epithet  
of *Satan’s synagogue* be given to them.  
Abp. Trench brings out there, how *church*,  
the nobler word, was chosen by our Lord  
and His Apostles for the assembly of the  
called in Christ, while *synagogue*, which  
is only once found [James ii. 2] of a Christian  
assembly [and there, as Düsterdieck  
notes, not with *of God*, but *your*], was  
gradually abandoned entirely to the Jews,  
so that in this, the last book of the canon,  
such an expression as this can be used.  
See the opposite in Numb. xvi. 3, xx. 4,  
xxxi. 16,—*the Lord’s synagogue* [so in  
the Septuagint version]).

**10.]** **Fear  
not the things which thou art about to  
suffer** (in the ways mentioned below. The  
expression indicates manifold tribulation,  
as there): **behold for certain** (the expression  
in the original gives the tone of present  
certainty and actuality), **the devil** (it  
is understood from the context, that the  
devil would act through the hostility of