20—24, HEBREWS. 737   
   
 AUTHORIZED VERSION REVISED.   
 AUTHORIZED VERSION.   
 assembly and church of\horn ™w ich are written in heaven, » 131   
 the firstborn, which are and to God \*the Judge of all, made p fi si 0   
 God the in heaven, all, and|to the spirits of just men of asi 8   
 ts of just men nerfect, 24and to ‘the mediator   
 to the spi   
 made perfect, and to   
 the festal host (so the word imports) of forstborn (50 we have tfirstfrnits from   
 angels, and the assembly of the first- ‘among men,” Rev. xiv. ), to identify these   
 born which are written in heaven (who with the ¢housandsseen by St.John, wemust   
 are these? Why are they put with the give the parallel, these persons written   
 angels? Why does the Writer place God the in heaven being not yet citizens of heaven   
 Tudge of all between the assembly of the have taken up their fall citizenship   
 firsthorn and the spirits of just mon made citizenship is assured, they being   
 perfect ? These, says Delitasch, are three yet here beloy Add to whieh, that they   
 closely questions, and among the are distingnished from the spirits of ju   
 very hardest in our Epistle. ‘The answers men made perfect, by the term assembly or   
 to them are very various, Many nnder- ehureh [ecclesia]: and that it would he   
 stand the assembly of the firstborn of diflienlt or rather impossible, on this hy-   
 the firstfruits of the Christian church pothesis, to give any account of the sense   
 (Rey. xiv. 4): so De Wette, “those who orarrangement ofthe two following clauses.   
 are fallen asleep in the faith Christ, and Just as inadmissible is it, or more so,   
 possibly also glorified by martyrdom, who to understand by the firstborn the patri-   
 have entered earlier than others, as it archs and saints of the Old Test., and then   
 the firstborn, into blissful union with God hy spirits of just men made perfect, not   
 and Christ,” As Delitzsch observes, if we. the Old Test. but the New Test. saints.   
 hold them to be martyrs, the following So that, to say nothing of other varieties of   
 words, and to God the Judge of all, might interpretation not worth mentioning, there   
 have a certain propriety from Rev. vi. 9 f,, is no way left but to see, in the words, ¢he   
 where the souls of the martyrs under the assembly of the firstborn written in heaven,   
 altar ery, “How long ....dost thou not vne CHURCH BELOW. And this view, far   
 judge and avenge our blood, §e.?” But from being a last refuge, is justified by   
 this view seems altogether to fail when we every consideration. For 1) thus ecclesia   
 attempt to explain by it the words, written is explained, which every where, when used   
 in heaven. Those of whom our Lord says, of men and not of angels, Ps, Ixx   
 Luke x, 20, “ Rejoice, because your names designates the assembly of saints cart!   
 are written in heaven,” are yet living on 2) the adjunct written in heaven is   
 earth, According to St. Luke’s manne accounted for, indicating as it does the   
 speaking, the firstborn are hereby desig- heavenly charter of the chureh below, the   
 nated as enrolled (in Luke ii. 1, 3, 5, he invisible side of their sonship and citizen-   
 s the word here rendered written” for ship (see 1 John iii. 2), which in this   
 enrolling in the census) in the heavenly description of heaven we are mainly con-   
 roll: and Scripture usage seems to demand cerned: 3) we get an explanation of the   
 that we consider one thus described, as choice of the term firstborn to describe   
 not yet in possession of everlasting life in Christian believers. The Writer having   
 the fullest sense, as destined to life given the warning example of Esau, who   
 Acts xiii. 48]. ‘This would forbid us from for a morsel of meat sold his birthright,   
 thinking of the 141,000 whom St. John has prepared the way for such a designa-   
 sw with the Lamb on the heavenly Zion, tion, while at the same time, as Knapp   
 who bore on their foreheads the name of rightly remarks, the long sentence begin-   
 the Lamb and of the Father. For this seal- ning at ver. 18 aims at this “ that Chiris-   
 ing was among the insignia of their eternal tians may be defended against unbelief, and   
 glorification: whereas the being enrolled may learn to know their rights of inherit-   
 in the hook of life is the token to us, while ce.” There is no distinction between   
 here below, of our heavenly citizenship, and orn and Iater-born Christians, but all   
 seems to lose all its as soon as Christians as such are called firstborn   
 we have entered the heavenly city and need because of their heritorship of heavenly   
 no assurance of our citizenship either for inheritance. We may ‘also remark th   
 ourselves or for others. So that though we thus the analogy with the firsthorn of I   
 are tempted, both by the fact of their being is completely fullilled, ‘They were dedics   
 classed with the angels, and by their being