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George Whitefield Clark  
Clark's Peoples Commentary

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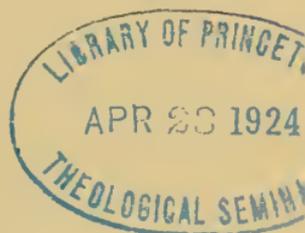
# THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

A POPULAR COMMENTARY UPON A CRITICAL  
BASIS, ESPECIALLY DESIGNED FOR PASTORS  
AND SUNDAY SCHOOLS ♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦

BY

GEO. W. CLARK, D. D.

Author of "A New Harmony of the Gospels." etc.



A NEW AND REVISED EDITION

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## PREFACE.

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THE importance of the study of Luke's Gospel is seen in the fact that it is eminently historic, universal, and individual. In many particulars it is the most complete in details of any of the Gospels. And even where it runs parallel with the other narratives, the writer betrays his own individuality; so that a commentary on the other Gospels, however exhaustive, cannot suffice for one on Luke. An attempt is therefore made in this volume to give notes on this Gospel complete in themselves and independent of notes on Matthew and Mark. At the same time, the chronology and harmony of the Gospels are kept in view, and thus, too, the independence of Luke is the more clearly seen while catching glimpses of the four sides of the sacred narrative.

The aim has been to give a popular commentary on a critical basis adapted to Sunday-schools, teachers and scholars, Bible classes and families, and many pastors and preachers. Difficult passages have received attention, and no point on which a commonly intelligent Sunday-school teacher might wish light has been intentionally passed over. The latest results of exegetical and textual criticism and of recent discovery have been sought and incorporated in the notes.

The execution of this plan for aiding students of the English Scriptures in studying the life of Christ as presented by Luke has necessitated similarity of comment where thought and expression are similar to those in the other Gospels, yet variety has been sought and an independence maintained. This is believed to be a less evil than the troublesome practice of referring to other volumes for what would be after all but an imperfect exposition of the sacred text.

Attention is called to the suggestions at the end of each chapter, which are confirmed by references from other portions of Scripture. Almost every verse is thus remarked upon, the whole forming by itself a brief practical and doc-

trinal commentary on the Gospel. This is designed to aid the teachers in enforcing Sunday-school lessons, and pastors in expository preaching and week-day evening lectures.

The division of chapters into verses, first introduced into the English Bible by the German version (A. D. 1560), often interferes with the connection of thought and impedes a quick and intelligent view of many passages. The paragraph form is therefore adopted, and to aid the eye and facilitate study subjects have been placed at the head of principal paragraphs or divisions.

Many teachers and advanced scholars prefer to explain Scripture by Scripture. Carefully-selected references have therefore been placed in the margin of the text. These, in connection with those given in the notes and remarks, are believed to constitute this the most complete reference-Luke published.

In preparing this work the author has called to his aid all the helps within his reach, the earlier and later critical and popular commentaries, harmonies of the Gospels, books of travels, histories of the Church and of doctrines, treatises on the life of Christ, and grammatical authorities on the New Testament. His thanks are specially due to Professor George R. Bliss, D. D., Professor H. Harvey, D. D., Rev. J. F. Brown, D. D., Rev. H. F. Smith, D. D., and Rev. Geo. W. Anderson, D. D., for assistance gratefully acknowledged, without which the work could have scarcely been completed, from the temporary failure of the author's health. The Introduction was kindly furnished by Professor T. J. Conant, D. D.

The favorable reception given to his previous works has encouraged the author to persevere in this, and also to complete the series by similar notes on John.

SOMERVILLE, N. J., June, 1876.

#### REVISED EDITION.

This volume has been revised, and such changes have been made, as seem required by exegetical learning and textual criticism. An Index has also been added.

HIGHTSTOWN, N. J., March, 1896.

# INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

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## THE THIRD GOSPEL.

FOR general observations on all the four Gospels, the reader is referred to the author's Introduction to his commentary on the Gospel by Matthew, pp. v.-viii., and his harmony of the Gospels, pp. 224-5. On the order of the four Gospels and on the place of Luke's Gospel in the series, see the introductory remarks to the author's commentary on the Gospel by Mark, p. v.

## WRITER OF THE GOSPEL.

It is the uniform testimony of antiquity that the third Gospel was written by Luke, the companion of Paul's travels and his fellow-laborer in the ministry. This testimony dates from a period less remote than the limit of human life from the age of those who were conversant with the apostles. Irenæus (born early in the second quarter of the second century) was the pupil of Polycarp, who learned the teachings of our Lord from the apostle John and others, his hearers and eye-witnesses of his miracles. He ascribes this Gospel to Luke, the companion of Paul (*Adv. Hæres.* iii. 1). It is certified also by Tertullian (born A. D. 160), who distinguishes John and Matthew as apostles and Luke and Mark as apostolic (*Adv. Marcion*, iv. 2). The Muratorian canon (about A. D. 170), in the part still extant, names Luke, the physician and associate of Paul, as the writer of the third Gospel. To these may be added later witnesses, Origen (born A. D. 185), Eusebius (born about A. D. 270), Jerome (born A. D. 331). No counter-testimony or expression of doubt has come down to us, and all attempts of the modern destructive school of criticism to discredit this testimony from internal and other grounds have signally failed.

## OUR KNOWLEDGE OF THE WRITER.

What is certainly known of the personal history of the writer of the third Gospel is found in the Acts of the Apostles and in Paul's Epistles. He first appears in history as a companion of Paul, whom he joined at Troas (Acts 16 : 10, 11), on his second missionary tour, recorded in Acts 15 : 36-18 : 22. From that city he accompanied Paul in his voyage to Philippi (vs. 11, 12), and there remained with him (vs. 12, 13, and 15-17) till he departed thence, but did not proceed with him on his journey. In these passages the writer (whom we here assume to be Luke) speaks in the first person, as being himself one of the

company. But in ch. 17 : 1, where he resumes the narrative of Paul's journey, he again speaks in the third person, as not being in the party, as he had previously done in ch. 16 : 4 and 6-8 before his connection with it. The change of person in the narrative can be accounted for on no other reasonable supposition.

He again appears in history as the companion of Paul's voyage from Philippi (Acts 20 : 6) on his return to Asia, and of his travels from place to place (ch. 20 : 13-15; 21 : 1-18), spending a week among the disciples at Tyre, and a longer time ("many days") with those at Cæsarea as guests of Philip the evangelist, and thence to Jerusalem, accompanied by disciples of Cæsarea, to which place Paul was sent back after a few days (seven at most), and remained there a prisoner two years. After the two years Luke was again the companion of Paul in his voyage to Rome, Acts 27 : 1, etc.; 28 : 2, 11-16.

In these narratives Luke says nothing of himself except as the companion of Paul's missionary journeys and of his voyage to Rome, a prisoner awaiting trial. But as the chosen companion of the apostle's travels in the preaching of the gospel, and his "fellow-laborer" in it during his imprisonment at Rome (Phil. 24), Luke has left us an unobtrusive testimony to his own zealous devotion to the work of evangelization. It may fairly be inferred that during the intervals, in which he disappears from the record of Paul's labors, he was actively engaged as a preacher or a writer in work pertaining to the immediate or the prospective spread of gospel truth.

From these historical data, and allusions in Paul's Epistles—"Luke the beloved physician" (Col. 4 : 14), "only Luke is with me" (2 Tim. 4 : 11), and Phil. 24, where Lucas (properly Luke) is named among his "fellow-laborers"—a partial outline of his life has been traced conjecturally, but with every appearance of probability. From Col. 4 : 14, compared with v. 11, it has been inferred that he was not "of the circumcision." That he was a Gentile and a freedman has been inferred from his name Lucas, an abbreviation of Lucanus, characteristic of a servile condition, and from his profession, mostly confined to that social state among the Romans. But the former is of little weight, and the latter does not accord with his probable nationality if, as is most likely, he was a citizen of Syria (of Antioch, according to Eusebius) or of Asia Minor, where that profession was held in high repute. As physicians of those times were distinguished for their scientific attainments, his profession accounts for the evidences of high mental culture everywhere observable in his writings. Of his conversion we have no record. It is supposed that before he joined Paul on his second missionary tour at Troas (Acts 16 : 10), he was already a convert to the Christian faith and a laborer in its propagation. This is naturally inferred from the absence of any intimation that he was then first taught the knowledge of Christ, and from the significant expression, "had called us to preach the gospel unto them," since he there takes his place among the apostle's followers and fellow-laborers without explanation,

as a matter of course, and identifies himself with them and their work. As he journeyed with the apostle to Philippi and was with him there (vs. 12, 13, and 15-17), but did not accompany him when departing thence (17 : 1), and joined him again at Philippi (20 : 6) when returning into Asia, it is supposed that the intervening seven years may have been spent in unrecorded missionary labors (for Luke narrates those of Paul and not his own) in Philippi and the neighboring region, or in gathering materials for the two great labors of his life, the Gospel and the Acts of the Apostles. The latest authentic information is from the apostle's own hand, "only Luke is with me" (2 Tim. 4 : 11); and this our last impression of him is of one faithful among the faithless, when to be faithful to the truth and its defender was to face with him the martyr's doom.

After this authentic and satisfactory record of a life so full of activity in the cause of Christian truth, it is needless, as it would be useless, to attempt to trace it further in the scanty and confused statements of tradition. But it may properly be added, that if the statement in the subscription to 2 Corinthians is correct ("was written from Philippi of Macedonia by Titus and Lucas"), then the words of the Epistle (8 : 18, 19) add an important testimony to the zeal and activity of Luke in the work of evangelization. The statement is not improbable in itself; but this part of the subscription is found only in late manuscripts, and is of no authority except as a very ancient tradition.

#### TIME AND PLACE OF WRITING THE THIRD GOSPEL.

That the Gospel was written before the Acts of the Apostles is evident from Acts 1 : 1 compared with ch. 1 : 3 of the Gospel. The narrative in the Acts must have been completed at the end of the second year of Paul's imprisonment at Rome (Acts 28 : 30, 31), about A. D. 63. That it could not have been earlier is plain from the closing statement of Paul's manner of life during the "two whole years" of his imprisonment; nor could it have been much later, as the writer had nothing further to record. A considerable time must have intervened between the publication of the Gospel and the writing of the Acts, as has been clearly shown by Alford, *Prolegomena to Luke's Gospel*, section iv. No more definite intimation is given of the time and place of writing. But we have seen that on Paul's last journey to Jerusalem, "many days" were spent by him and his companions among the disciples at Cæsarea as guests of Philip the evangelist, and that some of the disciples accompanied him to Jerusalem, whence in a few days he was sent back a prisoner to their home in Cæsarea. It is probable that Luke returned thither with them and continued in communication with Paul, whom he there joined at the close of his imprisonment on his voyage to Rome. How the intervening time (A. D. 58-60) was spent is not shown. But the time and place were most favorable to his purpose of "accurately tracing all things from the very first;" and these facts of history show that Luke enjoyed ample opportunities, where alone they

were accessible, for the composition of his Gospel in advance of the Acts. According to this view, the Gospel was written about A. D. 58-60, and probably at Cæsarea.

#### SOURCES OF THE THIRD GOSPEL.

These are summarily stated by the writer himself in the introductory verses, 1-4. Briefly expressed their meaning is, that his narrative was the result of personal inquiry and investigation, and was drawn from all available sources. They were not only the declarations of those "who from the beginning"—namely, of our Lord's official ministry—"were eye-witnesses and ministers of the word," to whom former narrators were indebted. He justifies himself for now doing what many had already done imperfectly, on the ground of "having accurately traced" (as properly translated) "all things from the very first" (prior to our Lord's official ministry), and of his purpose "to write them in order"—that is, consecutively—in the order of occurrence or of mutual relation.

By "eye-witnesses and ministers of the word" are meant those who saw and heard the things which they attest (1 John 1 : 1-3), and as ministers of the word had been counted worthy to speak as divinely-authorized witnesses for the truth. That Luke obtained their testimony directly from themselves, and not from previous narratives, is necessarily the meaning of his language. If he had taken aught at second-hand, the result of other men's inquiries, he could not claim for himself that he had "accurately traced all things from the very first." But he availed himself of still other sources of information. Hence we have, for example, in the opening chapters of Luke's Gospel, an account of transactions not personally observed by those "who from the beginning" (of our Lord's official ministry) "were eye-witnesses," etc. That these additional sources of information were trustworthy, and that they were used with strict fidelity to the truth, has been shown in every way by which historical credibility can be tested; and we are no more justified in doubting the historical truth of the occurrences narrated in the first two chapters, than in questioning the credibility of any other part of the gospel history. That Luke had access to the apostles and accredited ministers of the word, and to the testimony of living witnesses accredited by them, cannot be doubted; and no facts of ancient history are better authenticated than those recorded by Luke.

#### FOR WHOM AND WITH WHAT OBJECT THE GOSPEL WAS WRITTEN.

This must be learned from its contents. The dedication to Theophilus, a Gentile convert (Smith's *Bible Dictionary*, p. 1697), shows a desire to be understood by those least familiar with what was peculiar to the Holy Land, and to meet their wants. Its most prominent and significant characteristic is its universality. It was written for no particular class of readers to the exclusion of any other, and with no single and exclusive aim.

Hence it differs from that of Matthew, written specially for Jews (*Notes on Matthew*, p. x.), and from that of Mark, designed particularly for Gentiles (*Notes on Mark*, p. xiv.), and also from that of John, specially intended for Christian readers, to establish them in the fundamental truths of the gospel, and to set forth Jesus as the Christ, the eternal Son of God, in all his offices and relations to the believer.

On the contrary, Luke's Gospel was written for all, without distinction of race or reference to national affinities or doctrinal tendencies, exhibiting in the facts of gospel history the induction of a new dispensation of religion to "be preached among all nations," ch. 24 : 47. It is significant to us, whatever may have been the writer's conscious purpose, that he was led to trace back the lineage of its founder to the father of the race, and to record his enrolment as a citizen of the world, as well as his reception of the national badge of Israel. The idea of universality is interwoven with many incidents peculiar to his narrative. In the angelic proclamation of "peace on earth, good-will to men," is foreshadowed the gospel of universal humanity, and no less in the prophetic welcome to the infant Saviour as "a light to lighten the Gentiles."

#### RELATION TO THE FIRST TWO GOSPELS.

That Luke wrote the third Gospel independently of the first and second is made evident by a careful comparison of the three. A large portion of the matter it contains is peculiar to it. The contents of the first two chapters belong to it exclusively; and these lay the foundation for all the subsequent history, in the circumstances of the parentage and birth of its two principal personages, and especially of the GOD-MAN, the central figure of all. Without these two chapters, his manifestation in the flesh is wrapped in impenetrable obscurity; and such declarations as "the Word became flesh," "born of a woman," "born of the seed of David," are an unsolved mystery, as is also the partial and undefined statement in Matt. 1: 18, 20. In Luke's account the mystery is fully disclosed of his miraculous conception and birth of a virgin in fulfilment of prophecy; and his subsequent growth, through infancy, childhood, and youth, in subjection to parental authority, prepares the mind of the reader for occasional references to domestic and social relations otherwise unmeaning,

Not less significant are the omissions of remarkable incidents which a copyist would not have failed to appropriate. Such are Matthew's account of the visit of the magi and their adoration of the infant Jesus, of the flight into Egypt and the slaughter of the infants in Bethlehem—occurrences far too interesting and important to be passed over by one who used his narrative. On the other hand, Luke alone records the Saviour's first public announcement of his official character and mission, foretold in prophecy, and his consequent rejection by his unbelieving fellow-townsmen, explaining his withdrawal to another permanent place of residence and the fulfilment of the prophecy

quoted by Matthew, 4: 14-16. Such remarkable differences, occurring continually through the whole progress of the narrative from beginning to end, show that there was no dependence of one upon the other. If Luke borrowed anything, he would have borrowed more, and he would not have passed by things more essential to his purpose than many which he has recorded.

On the other hand, the coincidences of matter and verbal expression in the so-called synoptic Gospels (*Harmony of the Gospels*, p. 232), especially in the reports of the Saviour's discourses, are readily accounted for. The incidents in the life of Christ, and his discourses, were treasured in the memories of his attendants and hearers, and the rehearsal of these in their public ministrations was the chief element in the preaching of the gospel by apostles and evangelists. These oral narratives, identical in substance and similar in form, have been permanently embodied, with marked and significant variations in selection and verbal expression, in the accounts of the four evangelists. Their substantial agreement in the main facts recorded shows that they were competent and well-informed witnesses. Their noteworthy diversities in verbal expression, and in the minute details of the same transaction or discourse, show that they were also independent witnesses, and that the substantial agreement in so much incidental diversity can be accounted for only on the admission of the essential truth of their statements. The English reader should be apprised that our common English version was made from very late copies of the Greek text, in which the four Gospels have been assimilated, by adding in one what was wanting in another; and also that in our translation different words and phrases of the Greek are sometimes rendered by the same words and phrases in English, so far effacing the evidence of their value as independent witnesses. But enough appears in our version of the Gospels to convince the intelligent and candid reader that there was no collusion and no dependence of one writer upon another.

#### LANGUAGE AND STYLE, AND OTHER PERSONAL TRAITS.

That Luke wrote his Gospel in Greek, his native tongue, has never been questioned. His diction is such as might be expected in a man of culture writing in his own dialect, and aiming to reproduce in their native form and coloring narratives and discourses learned in a foreign idiom, already made familiar by long and intimate association with those to whom it was vernacular. Of his native tongue a pure specimen is found in the four introductory verses of his Gospel, where his style was unaffected by any external influence. But when he records what he learned from others who were of Hebrew origin and culture, and especially the discourses of our Lord delivered by him and by them repeated in their own idiom, he naturally falls into the Hebraistic forms of expression, of which less appears in the Acts. But though Hebraisms for this reason are frequent, his native idiom is predominant, and Greek compounds and classical phraseology foreign to the other Gospels abound in

his. His style is further distinguished from that of Matthew and Mark by the use of Hebraisms not found in either, and by the occurrence of words and phrases familiar to readers of classic Greek in place of others employed by them. From a comparison of the number of words peculiar to the several evangelists, it is estimated that those in Luke's Gospel exceed all that are found in the other three. He differs from Matthew and Mark in the more elaborate structure of his sentences, and in general in a more finished style of composition.

Of Luke's accuracy in dates and in circumstantial details, unnoticed by the other evangelists, many examples have been quoted. In ch. 2 : 1-3 the time of the Saviour's birth is identified with that of known facts of history. In ch. 3 : 12, the time of John's first appearance as a preacher is very circumstantially shown. Travellers have remarked in ch. 8 : 23 the accuracy of the expression, "there came down" (through the mountain gorges) "a storm of wind on the lake." This descriptive feature of the storm, peculiar to the locality, is unnoticed in the more general account of Matthew and Mark. Such incidental and unconscious coincidence of narrative with a local or related fact is characteristic of Luke. An instance of the former has been cited from ch. 19 : 41 : ' And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it' (more exactly, and as he drew near, seeing the city, he wept over it). The narrative is strikingly in accordance with the topography of the place, as observed by modern travellers. In Luke's account, the exulting shouts of the multitude began when they came to the descent of the Mount of Olives, where the Holy City is first seen in the distance. But after being hidden by intervening inequalities of ground, it again comes in sight in a nearer view, and Jesus, "seeing the city, wept over it." Of the latter an instance of peculiar delicacy has been cited from ch. 21 : 1, "and he looked up and saw" (properly, and looking up, he saw) "the rich men casting their gifts into the treasury." The phrase "looking up" is an unconscious coincidence with a related fact, for nothing in the connection explains or accounts for it. But from Mark 12 : 41 we learn that Jesus was then sitting over against the treasury, and the incidental "looking up" to see what was passing is the minute observation of an eye-witness, or of one who pictured the scene from the words of an eye-witness. Of his use of medical terms an instance is found in ch. 4 : 38, where he employs the phrase "great fever" in its technical use among ancient physicians.

#### GENUINENESS AND INTEGRITY OF THE GOSPEL.

According to all trustworthy testimony, we have the Gospel of Luke as it came from his hand. Irenæus, in his summary of the many things peculiar to this Gospel (*Adv. Hæres.*, iii. 14, 3), shows that the book has come down to us as it was known to him in the first half of the second century. The attempts of modern criticism to throw doubt on the genuineness and authenti-

city of some portions, especially of the first two chapters, are based partly on the assumed origin of Marcion's Gospel, notoriously a mutilation of Luke's, and partly on the arbitrary denial of the possibility of our Lord's miraculous conception. The arguments based on the former ground, a false hypothesis, have failed to satisfy the judgment of the learned, and have been triumphantly refuted. Of the latter ground it is sufficient to say, that "those who would make the miraculous traits in the history of the infant Jesus a criterion of spuriousness, may well consider to what measureless caprice such a canon of criticism leads."—Herzog's *Real Encyclopædie*, art. Lukas.

#### ARRANGEMENT AND DIVISIONS.

The narrative falls naturally into four great divisions:

I. The period preceding our Lord's public ministry, i.-iv. 13.

II. Our Lord's public ministry chiefly in Galilee, iv. 14-ix. 50.

III. His public ministry from his leaving Galilee to his final journey to Jerusalem, ix. 51-xix. 28.

IV. From his entry into Jerusalem to his ascension, xix. 29-xxiv.

The chief minor divisions are:

1. Preface, i. 1-4.

2. Nativity, ministry, and imprisonment of John the Baptist; our Lord's nativity, genealogy, baptism, and temptation, i. 5-iv. 13.

3. Beginning of his ministry in Galilee; rejected at Nazareth; makes his abode in Capernaum; teaching and miracles of healing; calling of Peter, James, and John, and of Matthew; the twelve apostles chosen; sermon on the plain; the centurion's faith; raising of the widow's son; parable of the sower; stilling of the tempest; legion of demons cast out; raising of Jairus' daughter; five thousand fed; transfiguration; rivalry among the disciples; he goes to the feast of tabernacles, iv. 14-ix.

4. Various discourses, parables, miracles, etc., mostly peculiar to Luke's Gospel; the seventy disciples sent out; parable of the good Samaritan; at the house of Martha and Mary; the Lord's Prayer; healing on the Sabbath; parable of the rich man, of the prodigal son, of the unjust steward, of the unjust judge, of the rich man and Lazarus; prayer of the Pharisee and publican; foretells his death and resurrection; healing of ten lepers, of the blind beggar; is the guest of Zacchæus; goes up to Jerusalem, x.-xix. 28.

5. The last passover week; public entry into Jerusalem; traders driven from the temple; parable of the vineyard; of giving tribute to Cæsar; the poor widow's offering; fate of Jerusalem foretold; Judas bribed to betray him; observance of the passover; institution of the Lord's Supper; agony in the garden; seized and brought before the high priest; accused before Pilate and before Herod; condemned, and crucified, and laid in a tomb; his resurrection; walk to Emmaus last interview with his disciples; ascension to heaven, xix. 29-xxiv.

# SYNOPTICAL VIEW OF THE FOUR GOSPELS.

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THE chronology of the Gospels is in many respects undetermined. The duration of Christ's ministry is much disputed. It continued at least two and one half years; for John in his Gospel mentions three Passovers, John 2: 13; 6: 4; 13: 1. If the feast (or "a feast of the Jews") mentioned in John 5: 1 be also regarded as a Passover, then his public ministry continued about three years and a half. But if the feast was that of Purim (Esther 9: 26), as many suppose, occurring a month before the Passover of John 6: 4, then must we assign the shorter term to his public ministry. Although certainty may not be attained, yet the amount of labor that Jesus performed, and the time required for his three preaching tours throughout Galilee, before the Passover mentioned in John 6: 4, incline us to regard the feast of John 5: 1 as also a Passover. In accordance with this view the following table is arranged, and the probable chronological order and harmony given; but where either is quite doubtful, or beset with special difficulty, the references are printed in **heavy type**. The reasons for the arrangement are given by the author in his HARMONY OF THE GOSPELS.

## I. EVENTS CONNECTED WITH THE BIRTH AND CHILDHOOD OF JESUS.

A period of about thirteen and a half years, from B.C. 6 to A.D. 8.

SECT.	SUBJECT.	MATT.	MARK.	LUKE.	JOHN.
1.	Luke's Preface			1: 1-4	
2.	John's Introduction				1: 1-14
3.	The Genealogies	1: 1-17		3: 23-38	
4.	Annunciation of John's Birth			1: 5-25	
5.	Annunciation of the Birth of Jesus			1: 26-38	
6.	Mary visits Elizabeth			1: 39-56	
7.	The Birth of John the Baptist			1: 57-80	
8.	An Angel appears to Joseph	1: 18-23			
9.	Birth of Jesus	1: 24, 25		2: 1-7	
10.	The Visit of the Shepherds			2: 8-20	
11.	The Circumcision	1: 25		2: 21	
12.	Presentation in the Temple			2: 22-38	
13.	Temporary Return to Nazareth			2: 39	
14.	Again at Bethlehem; Visit of the Magi	2: 1-12			
15.	Flight into Egypt	2: 13-15			
16.	Herod's Massacre of the Children	2: 16-18			
17.	Return and Residence at Nazareth	2: 19-23		2: 40	
18.	Childhood of Jesus			2: 41-52	

## II. ANNOUNCEMENT AND INTRODUCTION OF CHRIST'S PUBLIC MINISTRY.

About one year, from the spring of A.D. 26 to that of A.D. 27.

19.	The Ministry of John the Baptist	3: 1-12	1: 1-8	3: 1-18	
20.	The Baptism of Jesus	3: 13-17	1: 9-11	3: 21-23	
21.	The Temptation	4: 1-11	1: 12, 13	4: 1-13	
22.	Testimony of John to Jesus				1: 15-34

SECT.	SUBJECT.	MATT.	MARK.	LUKE.	JOHN
28.	Jesus gains Disciples; returns to Galilee.....	.....	.....	.....	1: 85-51
24.	The Marriage at Cana.....	.....	.....	.....	2: 1-11
25.	Visits Capernaum.....	.....	.....	.....	2: 12

### III. FROM THE FIRST PASSOVER OF CHRIST'S PUBLIC MINISTRY UNTIL THE SECOND.

One year, from April, A.D. 27, to April, A.D. 28.

26.	At the Passover; and the Traders expelled.....	.....	.....	.....	2: 13-25
27.	Visit of Nicodemus.....	.....	.....	.....	3: 1-21
28.	Jesus remains in Judea.....	.....	.....	.....	8: 22-24
29.	Further Testimony of John the Baptist.....	.....	.....	.....	3: 25-36
30.	John Imprisoned.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
31.	Jesus departs for Galilee.....	.....	.....	3: 19, 20	.....
32.	Discourses with the Woman of Sychar.....	4: 12	1: 14	4: 14	4: 1-4
33.	Teaches publicly in Galilee.....	.....	.....	.....	4: 5-42
34.	Heals a Nobleman's Son.....	4: 17	1: 14, 15	4: 14, 15	4: 43-46
35.	Rejected at Nazareth.....	4: 13	.....	4: 16-30	4: 46-54
36.	Makes Capernaum his Residence.....	4: 13-16	.....	4: 31	.....
37.	Four called as Constant Attendants.....	4: 18-22	1: 16-20	5: 1-11	.....
38.	A Demoniac healed in the Synagogue.....	.....	1: 21-28	4: 31-37	.....
39.	Heals Peter's Wife's Mother.....	8: 14-17	1: 29-34	4: 38-41	.....
40.	First Preaching Tour throughout Galilee.....	4: 23-25	1: 35-39	4: 42-44	.....
41.	The Miraculous Draught of Fishes.....	.....	.....	5: 1-11	.....
42.	Sermon on the Mount.....	5: 1-7; 29	.....	.....	.....
43.	A Leper healed.....	8: 1-4	1: 40-45	5: 12-16	.....
44.	Heals a Paralytic.....	9: 2-8	2: 1-12	5: 17-26	.....
45.	The Call of Matthew.....	9: 9	2: 13, 14	5: 27, 28	.....

### IV. FROM THE SECOND PASSOVER UNTIL THE THIRD.

From April, A.D. 28, to April, A.D. 29.

46.	At the Passover; Heals the Impotent Man.....	.....	.....	.....	5: 1-47
47.	Plucking the Ears of Grain.....	12: 1-8	2: 23-28	6: 1-5	.....
48.	Healing the Withered Hand.....	12: 9-14	3: 1-6	6: 6-11	.....
49.	Withdraws to the Sea of Galilee.....	12: 15-21	3: 7-12	.....	.....
50.	The Twelve Apostles chosen.....	.....	3: 13-19	6: 12-16	.....
51.	The Sermon in the Plain.....	.....	.....	6: 17-49	.....
52.	Healing of the Centurion's Servant.....	8: 5-13	.....	7: 1-10	.....
53.	Raises a Widow's Son at Nain.....	.....	.....	7: 11-17	.....
54.	John's Message to Jesus.....	11: 2-19	.....	7: 18-35	.....
55.	Upbraiding the Cities of Galilee.....	11: 20-30	.....	.....	.....
56.	Anointed by a Penitent Woman.....	.....	.....	7: 36-50	.....
57.	Second Circuit of Galilee.....	.....	.....	8: 1-3	.....
58.	A Blind and Dumb Demoniac healed.....	12: 22-37	3: 19-30	.....	.....
59.	A Sign demanded of Jesus.....	12: 38-45	.....	.....	.....
60.	Christ's Mother and Brethren.....	12: 46-50	3: 31-35	8: 19-21	.....
61.	Parable of the Sower.....	13: 1-23	4: 1-25	8: 4-18	.....
62.	Other Parables spoken to the Multitude.....	13: 24-35	4: 26-34	.....	.....
63.	Wheat and Tares explained; and other Parables to the Disciples.....	13: 36-53	.....	.....	.....
64.	The Tempest stilled.....	8: 18, 23-27	4: 35-41	8: 22-25	.....
65.	The Two Demoniacs of Gadara.....	8: 28-9: 1	5: 1-21	8: 26-40	.....
66.	Matthew's Feast.....	9: 10-13	2: 15-17	5: 29-32	.....
67.	Discourse on Fasting.....	9: 14-17	2: 18-22	5: 33-39	.....
68.	Jairus's Daughter; the Bloody Issue.....	9: 18-26	5: 22-43	8: 41-56	.....
69.	Healing of the Blind and Dumb.....	9: 27-34	.....	.....	.....
70.	Second Rejection at Nazareth.....	13: 54-58	6: 1-6	.....	.....
71.	Third Circuit of Galilee.....	9: 35-38	6: 6	.....	.....
72.	The Twelve endowed and sent forth.....	10: 1-42	6: 7-11	9: 1-5	.....
73.	They go forth; Third Tour continued.....	11: 1	6: 12, 13	9: 6	.....
74.	Herod's Opinion of Jesus; John's Beheading.....	14: 1-12	6: 14-29	9: 7-9	.....

SUBJECT.	SUBJECT.	MATT.	MARK.	LUKE.	JOHN.
75.	Return of the Twelve.....		6: 30, 31	9: 10	.....
76.	Feeding the Five Thousand.....	14: 13-21	6: 32-44	9: 10-17	6: 1-14
77.	Jesus walks on the Sea.....	14: 22-36	6: 45-56	.....	6: 15-21
78.	Discourse at Capernaum.....	.....	.....	.....	6: 22-71

## V. FROM THE THIRD PASSOVER UNTIL THE ENSUING FEAST OF TABERNACLES.

Six months, from April to October, A.D. 29.

79.	Jesus continues in Galilee.....				7: 1
80.	Traditions of the Elders.....	15: 1-20	7: 1-23	.....	.....
81.	The Canaanitish Woman.....	15: 21-28	7: 24-30	.....	.....
82.	Deaf and Dumb Man, etc., healed.....	15: 29-31	7: 31-37	.....	.....
83.	Feeds the Four Thousand.....	15: 32-39	8: 1-9	.....	.....
84.	A Sign again demanded.....	15: 39-16: 4	8: 10-12	.....	.....
85.	The Leaven of the Pharisees.....	16: 4-12	8: 13-21	.....	.....
86.	Blind Man healed.....	.....	8: 22-26	.....	.....
87.	Visit to the region of Caesarea Philippi.....	16: 13-20	8: 27-30	9: 18-21	.....
88.	Jesus foretells his Death.....	16: 21-28	8: 31-9: 1	9: 22-27	.....
89.	The Transfiguration.....	17: 1-13	9: 2-13	9: 28-36	.....
90.	Healing the Dumb Demoniac.....	17: 14-21	9: 14-29	9: 37-43	.....
91.	Jesus again foretells his Death.....	17: 22, 23	9: 30-32	9: 43-45	.....
92.	The Sacred Tribute.....	17: 24-27	9: 33	.....	.....
93.	Contention among the Disciples.....	18: 1-14	9: 33-50	9: 46-50	.....
94.	Dealing with an Offended Brother, etc.....	18: 15-20	.....	.....	.....
95.	On Forgiveness.....	18: 21-35	.....	.....	.....
96.	Still continues in Galilee.....	.....	.....	9: 51-56	7: 2-9
97.	Goes to the Feast of Tabernacles.....	.....	.....	.....	7: 10
98.	Concerning following Jesus.....	8: 19-22	.....	9: 57-62	.....

## VI. FROM THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES TILL CHRIST'S ARRIVAL AT BETHANY, SIX DAYS BEFORE THE FOURTH PASSOVER.

Six months, less six days.

99.	Jesus at the Feast; teaches publicly.....	.....	.....	.....	7: 11-8: 1
100.	The Woman taken in Adultery.....	.....	.....	.....	8: 2-11
101.	Further Public Teaching.....	.....	.....	.....	8: 12-59
102.	Seventy instructed and sent forth.....	.....	.....	10: 1-16	.....
103.	Return of the Seventy.....	.....	.....	10: 17-24	.....
104.	Reply to a Lawyer; Good Samaritan.....	.....	.....	10: 25-37	.....
105.	Jesus at the House of Martha and Mary.....	.....	.....	10: 38-42	.....
106.	How to pray.....	.....	.....	11: 1-13	.....
107.	Heals a Dumb Demoniac.....	.....	.....	11: 14-36	.....
108.	Jesus Dines with a Pharisee.....	.....	.....	11: 37-54	.....
109.	On Hypocrisy, Worldliness, etc.....	.....	.....	12: 1-59	.....
110.	Slaughter of Certain Galileans.....	.....	.....	13: 1-9	.....
111.	A Blind Man healed on the Sabbath.....	.....	.....	.....	9: 1-41
112.	The Good Shepherd.....	.....	.....	.....	10: 1-21
113.	Jesus at the Feast of Dedication.....	.....	.....	.....	10: 22-89
114.	Retires beyond Jordan.....	.....	.....	.....	10: 40-42
115.	Heals an Infirm Woman on the Sabbath.....	.....	.....	13: 10-21	.....
116.	Journeying and Teaching; warned against Herod.....	.....	.....	13: 22-35	.....
117.	Jesus hears of Lazarus' Sickness.....	.....	.....	.....	11: 1-6
118.	Dines with a Chief Pharisee.....	.....	.....	14: 1-24	.....
119.	Requirements of Discipleship.....	.....	.....	14: 25-35	.....
120.	Lost Sheep, Lost Silver, Prodigal Son.....	.....	.....	15: 1-32	.....
121.	Parable of the Unjust Judge.....	.....	.....	16: 1-13	.....
122.	The Rich Man and Lazarus.....	.....	.....	16: 14-31	.....
123.	Teaches Forbearance, Faith, etc.....	.....	.....	17: 1-10	.....
124.	Goes to Bethany and Raises Lazarus.....	.....	.....	.....	11: 7-46
125.	Retires to Ephraim.....	.....	.....	.....	11: 47-54
126.	Passes through Samaria and Galilee.....	.....	.....	17: 11-19	.....
127.	On the Coming of the Kingdom of God.....	.....	.....	17: 20-37	.....
128.	The Importunate Widow, etc.....	.....	.....	18: 1-14	.....
129.	Finally leaves Galilee; on Divorce.....	19: 1-12	10: 1-12	.....	.....
130.	Blesses Little Children.....	19: 13-15	10: 13-16	18: 15-17	.....
131.	The Rich Young Ruler.....	19: 16-30	10: 17-31	18: 18-30	.....

SYNOPTICAL VIEW OF THE GOSPELS.

SECT.	SUBJECT.	MATT.	MARK.	LUKE.	JOHN.
132.	Laborers in the Vineyard.....	20 : 1-16	.....	.....	.....
133.	Third Time foretells his Death.....	20 : 17-19	10 : 32-34	18 : 31-34	.....
134.	The Ambitious Request of James and John.....	20 : 20-28	10 : 35-45	.....	.....
135.	Healing Two Blind Men near Jericho..	20 : 29-34	10 : 46-52	18 : 35-43	.....
136.	Zaccheus ; the Ten Pounds.....	.....	.....	19 : 1-27	.....
137.	Jesus sought at Jerusalem.....	.....	.....	.....	11 : 55-57
138.	Arrives at Bethany Six Days before the Passover.....	.....	.....	19 : 28	12 : 1, 9-11

VII. THE LAST PASSOVER WEEK.

Seven days, April 2nd to April 8th, A.D. 30.

139.	<i>First Day of the Week.</i> Public Entry into Jerusalem.....	21 : 1-11	11 : 1-11	19 : 29-44	12 : 12-19
140.	Certain Greeks desire to see Jesus.....	21 : 17	11 : 11	.....	12 : 20-26
141.	<i>Second Day of the Week.</i> The Barren Fig-tree.....	21 : 18, 19	11 : 12-14	.....	.....
142.	The Temple Cleansed.....	21 : 12-16	11 : 15-19	} 19:45-48: 87, 38	.....
143.	<i>Third Day of the Week.</i> Withered Fig-tree.....	21 : 20-22	11 : 20-26		.....
144.	In the Temple ; the Two Sons.....	21 : 23-32	11 : 27-33	20 : 1-8	.....
145.	The Wicked Husbandmen.....	21 : 33-46	12 : 1-12	20 : 9-19	.....
146.	Marriage of the King's Son.....	22 : 1-14	.....	.....	.....
147.	Tribute to Cæsar.....	22 : 15-22	12 : 13-17	20 : 20-26	.....
148.	Concerning the Resurrection.....	22 : 23-33	12 : 18-27	20 : 27-40	.....
149.	The Great Commandment.....	22 : 34-40	12 : 28-34	.....	.....
150.	Christ the Son of David.....	22 : 41-46	12 : 35-37	20 : 41-44	.....
151.	Last Discourse to the Jews.....	23 : 1-39	12 : 38-40	20 : 45-47	.....
152.	The Widow's Mite.....	.....	12 : 41-44	21 : 1-4	.....
153.	Reflections on the Unbelief of the Jews.....	.....	.....	.....	12 : 37-50
154.	Discourse on the Mount of Olives.....	24 : 1-51	13 : 1-37	21 : 5-36	.....
155.	The Ten Virgins ; the Talents.....	25 : 1-30	.....	.....	.....
156.	Graphic Scene of the Judgment.....	25 : 31-46	.....	.....	.....
157.	<i>Fourth Day of the Week.</i> The Rulers conspire.....	26 : 1-5	14 : 1, 2	22 : 1, 2	.....
158.	The Supper and Anointing at Bethany.....	26 : 6-16	14 : 3-11	22 : 3-6	12 : 2-8
159.	<i>Fifth Day of the Week.</i> Preparation for the Passover.....	26 : 17-19	14 : 12-16	22 : 7-13	.....
160.	<i>Sixth Day of the Week.</i> The Passover ; Contention of the Twelve.....	26 : 20	14 : 17	} 22:14-18, 24-30	.....
161.	Washing the Disciples' Feet.....	.....	.....		.....
162.	The Traitor pointed out ; Judas withdraws.....	26 : 21-25	14 : 18-21	22 : 21-23	13 : 21-30
163.	Jesus foretells the Fall of Peter.....	.....	.....	22 : 31-38	13 : 31-38
164.	Institutes the Lord's Supper (1 Cor. 11 : 23-26).....	26 : 26-29	14 : 22-25	22 : 19, 20	.....
165.	Valedictory Discourse.....	.....	.....	.....	14 : 1-31
166.	“ “ Continued.....	.....	.....	.....	15 : 1-27
167.	“ “ Concluded.....	.....	.....	.....	16 : 1-33
168.	Christ's Intercessory Prayer.....	.....	.....	.....	17 : 1-26
169.	Again foretells the Fall of Peter.....	26 : 30-35	14 : 26-31	22 : 89	18 : 1
170.	The Agony in Gethsemane.....	26 : 36-46	14 : 32-42	22 : 40-46	18 : 1
171.	Betrayal and Apprehension.....	26 : 47-56	14 : 43-52	22 : 47-53	18 : 2-11
172.	Jesus before Annas.....	.....	.....	.....	} 18:12-14, 19-23
173.	Peter thrice denies Christ.....	26 : 58, 69-75	14 : 54, 66-72	22 : 54-62	
174.	Jesus before Caiaphas.....	26 : 57, 59-68	14 : 53, 55-65	22 : 54, 63-65	18 : 24
175.	The final Formal Examination.....	27 : 1	15 : 1	22 : 66-71	18 : 1
176.	Jesus led to Pilate.....	27 : 2	15 : 1	23 : 1	18 : 28
177.	Remorse and Suicide of Judas (Acts 1 : 18, 19).....	27 : 3-10	.....	.....	.....
178.	Jesus before Pilate.....	27 : 11-14	15 : 2-5	23 : 2-5	18 : 28-38
179.	Jesus before Herod.....	.....	.....	23 : 6-12	.....
180.	Again before Pilate ; Barabbas.....	27 : 15-26	15 : 6-15	23 : 13-25	18 : 39, 40

SECT.	SUBJECT.	MATT.	MARK.	LUKE.	JOHN.
181.	Scourged and delivered to be crucified.	27 : 26-30	15 : 16-19	23 : 25	19 : 1-16
182.	Led away to be crucified .....	27 : 31-34	15 : 20-23	23 : 28-33	19 : 16, 17
183.	The Crucifixion .....	27 : 35-44	15 : 24-32	23 : 33-43	19 : 18-27
184.	Phenomena attending his Death.....	27 : 45-56	15 : 33-41	23 : 44-49	19 : 28-30
185.	The Burial.....	27 : 57-61	15 : 42-47	23 : 50-56	19 : 31-42
186.	<i>The Seventh Day of the Week.</i> Sepulchre sealed and guarded .....	27 : 62-66	.....	.....	.....

VIII. FROM CHRIST'S RESURRECTION TILL HIS ASCENSION.

Forty days, April to May, A.D. 30.

187.	<i>The First Day of the Week.</i> The Resurrection .....	28 : 2-4	.....	.....	.....
188.	Women visit the Sepulchre.....	28 : 1	16 : 1-4	24 : 1, 2	20 : 1, 2
189.	Vision of Angels.....	28 : 5-8	16 : 5-8	24 : 3-8	.....
190.	Peter and John at the Sepulchre.....	.....	.....	24 : 12	20 : 3-10
191.	Jesus appears to Mary Magdalene.....	.....	16 : 9	.....	20 : 11-17
192.	Meets the Other Women .....	28 : 9, 10	.....	.....	.....
193.	Report of the Women .....	.....	16 : 10, 11	24 : 9-11	20 : 18
194.	Report of the Watch .....	28 : 11-15	.....	.....	.....
195.	Appears to Two Disciples and to Peter (1 Cor. 15 : 5) .....	.....	16 : 12, 13	24 : 13-35	.....
196.	<i>Evening at the Close of the First Day of the Week.</i> Appears to Ten Apostles (1 Cor. 15 : 5) .....	.....	16 : 14	24 : 36-49	20 : 19-25
197.	<i>Evening at the Close of the First Day of the Next Week.</i> Appears to Eleven Apostles .....	.....	.....	.....	20 : 26-29
198.	Appears to Seven Apostles.....	28 : 16	.....	.....	21 : 1-23
199.	Appears to above Five Hundred (1 Cor. 15 : 6) .....	28 : 16-20	16 : 15-18	.....	.....
200.	He is seen of James; then of all the Apostles, 1 Cor. 15 : 7; Acts 1 : 3-8.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
201.	The Ascension (Acts 1 : 9-12).....	.....	16 : 19, 20	24 : 50-53	.....
202.	John's Conclusion of his Gospel.....	.....	.....	.....	{ 20 : 30, 31; 21 : 24, 25

NOTE TO THE REVISED EDITION.

1. The Gospel of Luke is a Gospel of method, ch. 1 : 3.
2. A Gospel for the race, ch. 2 : 14, 32; 3 : 6, 38; 4 : 25-27, etc.
3. The Gospel of the God-man, the Redeemer of fallen men, ch. 2 : 52; 23 : 43.
4. A Gospel of contrasts, ch. 2 : 34; 16 : 19-31; 18 : 9-14, etc.
5. A Gospel of womanhood, ch. 1 : 6, 28, 45; 2 : 36; 8 : 2, 3; 10 : 38-42; 23 : 55, 56, etc.
6. The Gospel of poetry. In this we have the salute of Elizabeth, the ecstatic song of Mary, the prophetic hymn of Zacharias, the angelic anthem at the birth of Jesus, the poetic prayer of Simeon. But not alone in outward form; everywhere the spirit of poetry appears. The book is full of dramatic life and elevated thought. It has been pronounced by some the most beautiful book ever written.

A FEW WORKS REFERRED TO IN THESE NOTES,  
AND ACCESSIBLE TO GENERAL READERS.

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- ALFORD, DR. HENRY. Critical Commentary.  
BENGEL, DR. J. A. Gnomon of New Testament. A New Translation by Professor C. P. Lewis and M. R. Vincent.  
CAMPBELL, DR. GEORGE. The Four Gospels.  
COLEMAN, DR. L. Ancient Christianity Exemplified.  
CONANT, DR. T. J. The Meaning and Use of *Baptizein*, Philologically and Historically Investigated.  
ELLICOTT, DR. C. J. Historical Lectures on the Life of Christ.  
FARRAR, DR. F. W. Life of Christ.  
FISH, DR. H. C. Bible Lands Illustrated.  
GILL, DR. JOHN. Commentaries.  
HACKETT, DR. H. B. Illustrations of Scripture.  
HANNA, DR. WILLIAM. Life of Christ.  
HOVEY, DR. A. Miracles; Scriptural Law of Divorce; God with us.  
KITTO, DR. J. Cyclopædia of Biblical Literature. Third Edition. Edited by Dr. W. L. Alexander.  
LANGE, DR. J. P. Commentary on the Gospel according to Luke. Translated from the German.  
LYNCH, LIEUT. WM. F. United States Expedition to the Jordan and the Dead Sea.  
MEYER, DR. H. A. W. Critical and Exegetical Commentary. Translated from the German.  
NEVIN, DR. A. Popular Commentary on Luke.  
NEWMAN, DR. J. P. From Dan to Beersheba.  
OLSHAUSEN, DR. H. Commentary, Dr. A. C. Kendrick's Revision.  
OWEN, DR. J. J. Commentary on Luke.  
ROBINSON, DR. E. Biblical Researches in Palestine, etc.  
SMITH, DR. W. Dictionary of the Bible. American Edition; revised and edited by Professor H. B. Hackett, D. D.  
STANLEY, DEAN. Sinai and Palestine.  
STIER, DR. R. Words of the Lord Jesus. Revised American Edition.  
THOMSON, DR. W. M. The Land and The Book.  
TRENCH, DR. R. C. Notes on Parables; on Miracles.  
VAN DOREN, REV. W. H. Suggestive Commentary on Luke.  
WESTCOTT, B. F., M. A. Introduction to the Study of the Gospels.  
WILSON, CAPT. C. W. Recovery of Jerusalem.  
WORDSWORTH, DR. C. The New Testament, with Notes.

# THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO LUKE

## CHAPTER I.

### *Preface.*

#### 1 FORASMUCH as many have taken in hand to set

THE TITLE is not claimed as a part of the inspired text. In the two oldest Greek manuscripts it is simply, *According to, or by Luke*. But many ancient manuscripts have, *The Gospel according to Luke*—that is, as written and delivered by him. The four Gospels present only one divine record, but from four points of view. That of Luke is about to be given. The word *saint*, so often applied to Luke and other writers in the New Testament, is an addition of late date, and inconsistent with the style and simplicity of God's word. *Gospel* means *good news*, and is applied to the four inspired narratives of the life and teachings of Christ. They contain the good news of a Saviour and his salvation. This word, which is found several times in Matthew and Mark, does not occur in Luke. But the verb "to preach the gospel," or *publish the good news*, is frequently found, ch. 1:19; 2:10; 3:18; 4:18; 7:22, etc. In regard to *Luke*, see INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

#### CHAPTER I.

After stating his reasons for writing (vers. 1-4), Luke relates the angel's announcement to Zacharias of the birth of John the Baptist (5-25), and to Mary of the birth of Jesus (26-38); Mary's visit to Elisabeth, and Mary's song (39-56); the birth of John, and Zacharias' prophetic hymn (57-80).

1-4. LUKE'S PREFACE TO HIS GOSPEL, DEDICATED TO THEOPHILUS. Luke alone begins with a preface, which partakes also of the nature of a dedication. In point of style it is the

most elegant and classical passage to be found in the New Testament, and shows its author to have been a man of some culture. It throws light upon the sources, arrangement, and design, of his Gospel. The beginning of John's Gospel, which is sometimes called a preface, partakes of the nature of a doctrinal introduction.

1. This verse and the next state a prominent reason which induced Luke to write his Gospel. **Many.** Honest believers who had written down the oral narrations of eye-witnesses of the acts and sayings of Jesus. There would be naturally many such at a time when the facts of the Gospel history were chiefly communicated by oral instruction. Luke could not have referred to the authors of the apocryphal Gospels, for they were of a later age, and their narratives were not such as were "most surely believed," nor were they "delivered" by "eye-witnesses and ministers of the word," ver. 2. Matthew could not be included, for he was an eye-witness; nor John, for he was not only an eye-witness, but wrote later than Luke. Neither is it probable that Mark was included among the *many*, for he seems to have drawn his materials from Peter, and probably wrote under his direction. Besides, there are strong reasons for believing that Luke had never seen Mark's Gospel. It appears, therefore, that these narratives to which reference is here made have not come down to us, being superseded by the inspired records of the four evangelists.

**Have taken in hand;** *undertaken, attempted.* The word thus translated, not of itself, but in connection

- forth in order a declaration of those things which are  
 2 most surely believed among us, <sup>a</sup>even as they delivered them unto us, which <sup>b</sup>from the beginning  
 3 were eye-witnesses, <sup>c</sup>and ministers of the word; <sup>d</sup>it seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write

<sup>a</sup> John 15. 27; Heb. 2. 3; 1 Pet. 5. 1; 2 Pet. 1. 16; 1 John 1. 1-3.  
<sup>b</sup> Mk. 1. 1; Ac. 4. 20; 10. 39.  
<sup>c</sup> Ac. 26. 16.  
<sup>d</sup> Ac. 15. 19, 25, 28.

with ver. 3, implies the incompleteness of preceding attempts. **To set forth in order.** *To draw up, to arrange, to compose.* The verb implies an arrangement of facts, gathered, as the connection shows, from those who had been with Jesus. **A declaration.** Rather, *a narration, a history.* That these narrations were disjointed and fragmentary seems to be a fair inference from the fact that Luke contrasts them with his own full and orderly narrative. His was more worthy to be styled a history. The term which he applied to them shows what he really designed his own narrative to be. **Those things which are most surely believed.** Some would translate, *the things fulfilled or accomplished.* While this is allowable, yet no sufficient reason appears for departing from the usual rendering—literally, *the things fully assured, fully established, fully believed.* Thus the Syriac Peshito version: "Those events of which we have full assurance." This view is confirmed by the use of the kindred noun, meaning *full assurance, firm conviction*, Col. 2:2; 1 Thess. 1:5; Heb. 6:11; 10:22. The things referred to were facts in the life of Christ, and it is implied that they were supported by unimpeachable testimony and such other evidences as were productive of undoubted belief. We need not extend the reference to the things related in the Acts of the Apostles, which is an independent narration, Acts 1:1. The miracles and wonderful events of the Gospel history demanded the fullest evidence, and this the early Christians had. Their intelligent and assured belief should beget our confidence. Luke's affirmation would tend to confirm the faith of Theophilus and prepare him to receive his narrative with unwavering confidence. **Among us.** Among Christians.

2. **Even as they.** Simply, *As they*, referring specially, though not ex-

clusively, to the apostles. See below. This verse shows the ground of the confidence in the things fully believed by Luke and his brethren. **Delivered them.** Transmitted orally in their teaching, and possibly sometimes in brief written accounts. The reference is to the original sources, in distinction from the narrations of the "many" of the preceding verse, which were of secondary importance. These original sources were, without doubt, mostly oral. The apostles were preachers rather than writers, especially at first; yet they very likely wrote some things for their own and others' use. **Which.** *Who*, referring not to us, but to they.

**From the beginning; of the things,** ver. 1. Some would limit this to the official beginning of Christ's ministry. This is not necessary, for "the things surely believed among them" would naturally include something concerning John the Baptist and the birth of Jesus. **Eye-witnesses.** The apostles were chosen as eye-witnesses, Acts 1:22. The seventy were eye-witnesses of many things, ch. 10:1, 17. The five hundred saw Jesus after he had risen, 1 Cor. 15:6. The women from Galilee who ministered unto him also saw and heard many things, ch. 8:1-3; 23:55. Mary the mother of Jesus was a witness of his birth, and of some things regarding John the Baptist and his parents. **Ministers;** apostles and teachers. These were eye-witnesses and more. **Of the word;** of God, of the gospel. Luke frequently uses *word* in ch. 5:1; Acts 13:26; 15:7; 17:11; 20:32; also the phrases "ministers of the word," "ministry" or "service of the word," in Acts 6:4. There can be no reference here to the eternal Word, or Logos, for that use of the term is confined to John.

3. This verse and the next state the conclusion at which Luke arrived in view of the many narrations concerning Jesus. We have also in this verse

4 unto thee<sup>o</sup> in order, 'most excellent Theophilus, 'that thou mightest know the certainty of those things, wherein thou hast been instructed.

\*Ac. 11. 4.

†Ac. 1. 1.

‡John 20. 31; 2

Pct. 1. 15, 16.

his qualification for writing his Gospel, and his method. **It seemed good to me also**, etc. Luke thus in a certain sense places himself with the "many" (ver. 1), but it is implied that in contrast to them his qualifications and methods were superior to theirs.

**Having had perfect understanding**, etc. Rather, *Having accurately traced down all things from the very first*. The original implies research, diligence, and exactness in tracing down all things, so as to be fully acquainted with the subject. It denotes a mental process in tracing along the whole train of events in question, with a thorough examination and testing of the sources of information. **All things**, which were fully believed among them, ver. 1. All those things which appeared to Luke to be essential in preparing his narrative.

**From the very first**. From the dawn of the Christian dispensation; from the angelic announcement of the birth of John the Baptist, as his Gospel itself shows. The expression seems to take us even farther back than "from the beginning" of ver. 2. Luke designed to bring out to view the very germs of the new dispensation. The same word is used by Saul in Acts 26 : 5 to denote the beginning of his life among the Jews. From the statement here made, we may infer that Luke, under the direction of the Spirit, incorporated into his narrative the oral or written accounts of others. The record in this first chapter may have been derived from the mother of Jesus. Inspiration did not make it unnecessary for him to use all available sources of information. It however guided him into the truth and preserved him from error. A comparison of this preface, written in pure Greek, with the narrative that follows, abounding in Hebrewisms, points to more ancient oral and written accounts. Some have even thought that they had found concluding sentences which originally stood at the endings of the shorter narratives,

as ch. 1 : 8 ; 2 : 20, 40, 52 ; 4 : 13, 44, etc.

What Luke had just stated shows his qualifications for writing—why, humanly speaking, he ought to write, and did write. In a single word he now indicates his method : **To write unto thee in order**, *in succession, consecutively*. The language seems to imply a narration of events in their natural chronological order ; and thus the word is used in Acts 11 : 4. Indeed, there appears to be some reference to time wherever this word is found in the New Testament (Luke 8 : 1 ; Acts 3 : 24), except in Acts 18 : 23, where it refers to locality, the *successive order* of the churches as they were locally situated. The fact that Luke's writing in order was a *result* of his careful research points to the same conclusion. The existence of a formal preface leads us to expect a somewhat regular narrative, and the plan and contents of the work point unmistakably to a history having at least a general reference to the chronological order of events.

**Most excellent, or most noble**. A title of honor, like our word *honorable*, used in addressing persons of rank or authority. Compare its use in Acts 23 : 26 ; 24 : 3 ; 26 : 25. This title shows that Theophilus (the meaning of the name is *friend of God*) was a real person, not a fictitious one—a personification of Christian love, as some have supposed. In the less formal and the more familiar opening of the Acts (1 : 1) the title is omitted. He was apparently a person of high rank, and probably a Christian. We may well suppose his character, as well as his rank, to be worthy of the title by which Luke addressed him. From the fact that Luke evidently wrote his Gospel for Gentile readers, and supplies them with such information respecting places and customs as they would need (ch. 1 : 26 ; 4 : 31 ; 8 : 26 ; 23 : 51 ; 24 : 12, etc.), we may conclude that Theophilus was of that class, being neither a Jew nor an inhabitant of Palestine. Nothing more

*Gabriel announces the birth of John the Baptist.*

5 THERE was <sup>h</sup> in the days of Herod, the king of Judæa, a certain priest named Zacharias, <sup>1</sup>of the course of Abia, and his wife was of the daughters of

<sup>h</sup> Matt. 2. 1.

<sup>1</sup> Chr. 24. 10, 19;  
and Ne. 12. 4, 17.

is certainly known of him. Various suppositions have been held regarding his residence at Antioch or Alexandria, in Macedonia or Italy. The last is the more probable, but the ordinary arguments for it are not entirely conclusive.

4. Luke here states a particular object in writing his Gospel—that Theophilus might have more thorough knowledge of the historic facts and principles which form the basis of Christianity. It is implied that this Gospel has a similar design for all who may read it. Compare a like design in John 20:31. **That thou mightest know.** Emphatic, *That thou mightest know fully*, have full knowledge of. It is implied that this thorough knowledge could not be obtained from the many narrations referred to in verse 1. **The certainty.** The certain truth. "Where nothing spurious is added nothing essential is wanting, and all is attested by adequate proofs."—BEN-GEL. **Of those things.** Concerning those words, or accounts of Christ and the gospel. "The living words and doctrines of Christ are meant, which rest upon the great facts of the gospel history, and derive from them their 'certainty.'"—P. SCHAFF.

**Instructed**, by word of mouth. The verb thus translated has primary reference to oral instruction, and from it is derived our words *catechize*, *catechist*, *catechism*. Some see in this expression the earliest historical trace of Christian catechetical instruction, and suppose that Theophilus had been instructed as a catechumen. This, however, must not be too confidently asserted, for the Greek word is the usual one for attending religious instruction. Compare Acts 18:25; Rom. 2:18; 1 Cor. 14:19; Gal. 6:6. Oral communication was the principal means of instruction when written books were both few and expensive. This was especially the case among Christian teachers before the life of Jesus assumed

the inspired and authorized form of our Gospels.

5-25. THE BIRTH OF JOHN ANNOUNCED BY GABRIEL TO ZECHARIAH. Found only in Luke. The style is now altered, becomes more simple and Hebraistic, showing the characteristics of oral and perhaps of written accounts in the colloquial language of the early disciples. The individuality of Luke and the peculiarities of his style, however, are observed here and throughout his Gospel, showing that he did not slavishly copy written documents, but related what he had carefully searched out, selected, and arranged. From this section it appears that Luke carries his "from the very first" (ver. 3) as far back as the announcement of John's birth.

5. **In the days of Herod.** The time of events is often indicated by the life of some prominent man. Compare ch. 4:25, 27; Matt. 2:1. This was Herod the Great, the son of Antipater, an Idumean or Edomite, who was born at Ascalon, Judea, 71 B. C. Various accounts are given of his ancestry, some holding that he was of the stock of the principal Jews who came out of Babylon into Judea, and others that he was a half Jew and of a proselyte family. He was declared **king of Judea** by a decree of the Roman senate about 41 B. C., and for thirty-seven years reigned under the supremacy of Rome. On account of his distinguished exploits in war, his marked ability in governing and defending the country, and his works of public improvements, he is called Herod the Great. He strove to ingratiate himself into the favor of the Jews by acts of munificence and generosity, and thus he rebuilt the temple at Jerusalem, adorning it with splendor, while at the same time he courted the favor of Rome by concessions to heathenism and building an amphitheatre without the walls of Jerusalem, in which the Roman combats with wild beasts and

- 6 Aaron, and her name *was* Elisabeth. And they were both <sup>1</sup>righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord <sup>1</sup>blameless.
- 7 And they had no child, because that Elisabeth was barren, and they both were *now* well stricken in years.

<sup>1</sup> Ge. 7. 1; 17. 1;  
<sup>1</sup> Ki. 9. 4; 2 Ki.  
 20. 3, 4; Job 1. 1;  
 Ac. 23. 1; 24. 16;  
 Phil. 3. 6.  
<sup>1</sup> Phil. 2. 15; 2 Pet.  
 3. 14.

gladiators were exhibited. He, notwithstanding, failed to gain the affection of his subjects, who were prejudiced against him as a foreigner, and hated him for his concessions to heathen customs and for his numerous cruelties. Josephus represents him as "a man of great barbarity and a slave to his passions." The murder of the infants at Bethlehem was but one of his many acts of like nature. His reign, however, was very successful. For thirty years Judea was undisturbed by war. The world, too, was at peace, under Augustus, the Roman emperor. It was a fitting time for the coming of the Prince of peace. The last forty days of Herod's life were spent at Jericho and the baths of Callirhoe. The visit of the wise men must have therefore been before this, for they found him at Jerusalem.

**Judea.** Here in its wide sense of Palestine, a country about one hundred and eighty miles long and sixty-five miles broad. After the Babylonish captivity, as most of the exiles who returned were of the kingdom of Judah, the name of Judea was given to the whole land west of the Jordan. Compare the language in ch. 23 : 5. Herod's kingdom also extended over a strip of country lying east of the Jordan and Dead Sea. The country on the west of the Jordan was divided into three parts, Galilee on the north, Judea (in the limited and more proper sense of the word) on the south, and Samaria between the two. On the east of the Jordan was Perea. "The physical geography of Palestine is more distinctly marked than that of any other country in the world. Along the shore of the Mediterranean runs the low country and maritime plain, broken only by the bold spur of Mount Carmel; parallel to this is a long range of hills, for the most part rounded and featureless in their character; these, on the eastern side, plunge into the

deep declivity of the Jordan valley; and beyond the Jordan valley runs the straight, unbroken purple line of the mountains of Moab and Gilead. The character of the country from north to south may be represented by four parallel bands—the sea-board, the hill country, the Jordan valley, and the trans-Jordanic range."—DR. FARRAR. (*Life of Christ*, vol. i., p. 52.) Compare on ch. 3 : 1.

**A certain priest**, an ordinary priest, not a high priest, since he belonged to one of the ordinary courses of priests doing service in the temple. Priests were of the tribe of Levi and of the family of Aaron. See on ver. 10. **Zacharias**, the Hebrew name Zachariah, meaning *whom Jehovah remembers*. So **Elisabeth**, the same as Elisheba, Aaron's wife (Ex. 6 : 23), means *God's oath*. Their names were significant when considered in relation to Christ and his times. A priest might marry into any of the tribes (2 Chron. 22 : 11), but Zachariah and his wife were of the house of **Aaron**, which would, among the Jews, make their offspring the more illustrious. Josephus (*Life* 1) remarks that to be of priestly rank was an indication of the splendor of a family.

**Of the course, or of the class.** David divided the descendants of Eleazar and Ithamar, the sons of Aaron, into twenty-four classes for the daily temple service, 1 Chron. 24 : 4-18. Each course served a week, or eight days, from Sabbath to Sabbath; thus two courses or the Sabbath officiated. (*Josephus' Antiq.*, vii. 14, 7.) The course of **Abia**, rather *Abijah*, was the eighth in the order of the twenty-four classes, 1 Chron. 24 : 10. Only four of these classes returned from the Babylonish captivity, but from these were constituted the full number of classes, with their original names, Ezra 2 : 36-39; Neh. 7 : 39-42; 12 : 1. The Jewish rabbinical writings give the following account: "The Rab-

8 And it came to pass, that while he executed the priest's office before God <sup>m</sup> in the order of his course, <sup>m</sup> 1 Chr. 24. 19; 2 Chr. 8. 14; 31. 2  
 9 according to the custom of the priest's office, his lot

bins teach that four courses came up from the captivity, Jedaiah, Harim, Pashur, and Immer; the prophets that were among them stood up and divided them, and appointed four and twenty lots, and put them into a box. Jedaiah came and took his lot and the lot of his companions, six; Harim came and took his lot and the lot of his companions, six; and so did Pashur and Immer."—JOHN GILL. Thus, though none of the line of Abijah returned from the captivity, yet his order and name were retained. The heads of these twenty-four courses were chief priests and members of the Sanhedrim.

CHRONOLOGICAL. Many attempts have been made to ascertain the exact time of this service of Zachariah in the temple. These, however, cannot be depended on, for it is impossible to fix definitely upon the starting-point. Neither is it certain that the several classes continued, without exception, to perform their services each in its exact order. Meyer suggests that the reckoning must be made backward from the destruction of the temple which took place on the tenth of Ab—that is, July 15th, A. D. 70—when the first course, that of Jehoiarib, was in waiting. Thus reckoning on the supposition that the several classes had during all that time performed their service regularly and in succession, we arrive at the latter part of March, B. C. 6 of the common era, as the time of Zachariah's service. But too much reliance must not be put upon such calculations.

6. The personal character of John's parents. **Righteous**, upright, not, like the Pharisees, merely outwardly before men, but **before God**, Gen. 17 : 1. They were sincerely and eminently pious. The reference is specially to righteousness in observing the law, as the explanatory clause, **walking**, etc., shows. **Both** were united, not only in affection, but also in eminent piety. They "were habitually fulfilling the command in Mal. 4 : 4, and were therefore prepared to receive the fulfillment of the promise in Mal. 3 : 1."

**Commandments and ordi-**

**nances.** Moral requirements and ceremonial rites and ordinances. They observed not a part, but **all**, the commandments, etc. **Blameless**, not sinless, for they were not, as ver. 20 shows; but exemplary observers of God's commands and ordinances. They were of irreproachable character, not wilfully indulging in known sin, and had consciences void of offence, Acts 24 : 16.

7. **They had no child.** Regarded among the Jews as an affliction and reproach, Gen. 30 : 23; 1 Sam. 1 : 10, 11. Children are a blessing from God, Ps. 127 : 3, 5. The desire to be represented in our posterity is natural to all. **Well stricken in years.** Rather, *far advanced in years.* Compare a similar expression in Gen. 18 : 11. Some suppose that they were near fifty years of age, beyond which the Levites did not perform the actual duties of their calling, Num. 8 : 25. But it does not appear that priests were thus limited in their duties by age. Zachariah was probably older than that, and Elisabeth near his age (see on ver. 17); and from the Oriental custom of marrying early, we may suppose that they had been long married, and had long given up the hope of building up their family.

8. Luke now proceeds to relate the events connected with John's birth. **Executed the priest's office**, performed the duties of his office in the temple service at Jerusalem. **Before God**, in the temple, where were the symbols of his presence. **In the order of his course.** Each course taking its turn in rotation, and his course was the eighth, ver. 5.

9. **According to the custom of the priest's office.** Not an original law of God, but a usage which had been adopted for the sake of order and to avoid disputes. The Jewish rabbins relate that it originated from a dispute. This clause belongs to what follows, thus: *It fell to him by lot, according to the custom of the priest's office.* It was determined by lot who should perform each part of sacred service, and especially who should burn incense, which was regarded as the most honorable

was <sup>a</sup> to burn incense when he went into the temple <sup>a</sup>Ex. 30. 7, 8; 1  
10 of the Lord. <sup>o</sup>And the whole multitude of the people <sup>o</sup>Sam. 2. 28; 1  
were praying without at the time of incense. <sup>o</sup>Chr. 23. 13.  
<sup>o</sup>Le. 16. 17; Rev.  
8. 3, 4.

service of a priest and as having a peculiar blessing attached to it. The lot was obtained in somewhat the following manner. The chief priest assembles his class, and takes off a mitre from the head of one of them. They fix upon a certain number, say eighty or a hundred. He then asks them to extend their fingers, which they do, one finger or more, as each one pleases. He then begins to count, commencing with him whose mitre he had taken off, and going around the circle of priests, allowing to each the number of extended fingers. Thus one finger counts one; two fingers, two, etc. The priest who thus completes the number agreed upon goes forth by lot to the service. The lot for burning incense was cast among those priests who had never performed that service, if any such remained. And so great was the number of priests that there is a tradition that no one performed the service twice. It is therefore possible that the lot had never fallen on Zachariah before. It was thus a great privilege to be chosen for this important service.

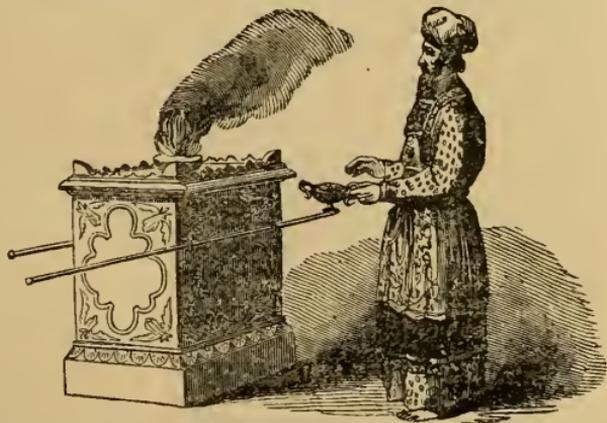
**To burn incense.** Incense was compounded of a vegetable resin called frankincense and sweet spices. See Ex. 30 : 34. Josephus mentions thirteen sweet-smelling spices.

*Jewish War*, v. 5, 5.) The times of offering incense were in the morning before the sacrifice, when the lamps were trimmed in the holy place and the watchman announced the break of day and "between the evenings," when the lamps were lighted, after the evening sacrifice, and before the drink offerings were offered, Ex. 30 : 7, 8. Whether it was at the morning or evening offering that Zacharias saw the vision cannot be certainly determined. The incense was burned upon the small golden altar (ver. 11) in

the holy place, near the veil which hid the holy of holies, so that the smoke of it penetrated the dark inner sanctuary where of old God had dwelt. The cloud of fragrant incense which daily rose, morning and evening, was a symbol of the intercessions of him who "ever liveth to make intercession for us." See Rev. 8 : 3, 4. It points also to morning and evening as most becoming times for offering our prayers in the name of Jesus, Ps. 55 : 17; 141 : 2; Rev. 5 : 8.

**Into the temple.** Into the holy place, Ex. 30 : 6, 7; Heb. 9 : 1-6. The word *temple* in this chapter and in ch. 23 : 45 is the translation of the Greek word which denotes the temple proper. In ch. 2 : 37 and other places in this Gospel, the word translated *temple* denotes *sacred*, a sacred, consecrated place, and is applied to the whole sacred enclosure of courts and buildings, including the temple in its strict and popular sense.

The temple proper consisted of two parts, the holy of holies, containing the ark, the lid of which was the mercy-seat, and the holy place, a veil separating it from the holy of holies, where were the golden candlestick, the table of shewbread, and the altar of incense. Before



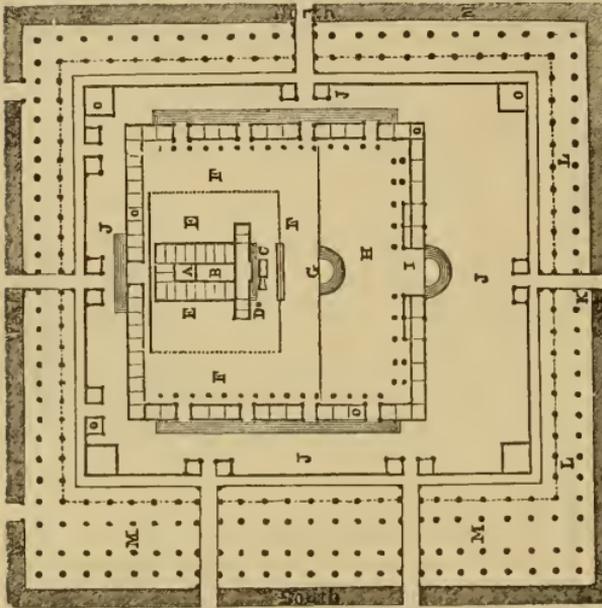
PRIEST AT ALTAR.

the door of the temple stood the great brazen altar of burnt offerings, and

## 11 And there appeared unto him an angel of the Lord

around the temple was a court, or enclosure, into which none but priests might enter. Descending twelve steps was another court, enclosing the former, called the court of Israel, into which

terraces above the outer, and the temple proper was situated on the highest point, toward the north-western corner of the square, and could be seen from the city above the surrounding enclosures.



PLAN OF TEMPLE IN TIME OF CHRIST.

A. Holy of Holies. B. Holy Place. C. Altar of Burnt Offerings. D. Brazen Laver. E. Court of the Priests. F. Court of Israel. G. Gate Nicanor. H. Court of the Women. I. Gate Beautiful. J. Court of the Gentiles. K. Eastern, or Shushan Gate. L. Solomon's Porch. M. Royal Porch. N. Outer Wall. O. Apartments for various uses.

none but male Jews might enter, and in front the court of women. Around these, and lower still, was the large outer court, enclosing the whole, paved with variegated stone, and called by some the Court of the Gentiles, where Jews and Gentiles might resort, and where were exposed for sale animals and things necessary for the sacrifices and worship of the temple. On the south side of this outer court was a synagogue, where religious services were performed. Here the Jewish doctors might be questioned, and their decisions were heard (ch. 2 : 46); here Jesus taught, and his disciples daily attended with one accord, Acts 2 : 46. Thus each inner enclosure rose as in

Araunah, 2 Sam. 24 : 16-25; 2 Chron. 3 : 1. On three sides of this hill walls of huge stones were built up from the bottom, and filled in with cells or earth, so as to form a large area on which to erect the temple. These walls remain to this day, and in some places, toward the south, are still sixty feet in height. The first temple was built by Solomon, commenced B. C. 1011, and finished B. C. 1004, and was burned down B. C. 588. The second temple was commenced under Zerubbabel B. C. 534, and completed under Ezra B. C. 516. The temple of Herod, which might indeed be styled the third temple, since it was the rebuilding and enlarging of the second,

Of the general appearance of the building *Smith's Bible Dictionary* says: "It may safely be asserted that the triple temple of Jerusalem—the lower court, standing on its magnificent terraces, the inner court, raised on its platform in the centre of this, and the temple itself, rising out of this group and crowning the whole—must have formed, when combined with the beauty of its situation, one of the most splendid architectural combinations of the ancient world."

The temple stood on a rocky eminence, the hill Moriah, on the eastern part of the city, north-east of Zion, from which it was separated by a valley. Here it seems that Abraham was about to offer up Isaac (Gen. 22 : 1, 2), and David interceded for his people at the threshing-floor of

standing on the right side of <sup>p</sup>the altar of incense. <sup>p</sup>Ex. 30. 1-6.

was commenced about fifteen years before the birth of Jésus—about B. C. 20 of our common era—and in a year and a half the temple proper was finished by priests and Levites. The outbuildings and courts required eight years. But some building operations continued long after in progress, and to these the Jews had reference when they said, "Forty-and-six years was this temple in building," John 2 : 20. According to Josephus, the whole sacred enclosure was a stadium square, or a half mile in circumference.

The front of the temple was on the eastern side, where was its principal entrance, facing the Mount of Olives. It was built of white marble and stones of stupendous size, some of them twenty-five cubits long, eight cubits high, and twelve cubits thick.

10. **The whole multitude.** Perhaps the Sabbath, when the ordinary temple service was more numerously attended than on other days. Thus many were to witness this miracle. **Were praying without,** in the courts of the temple, particularly those of the Israelites and of the women. They stood (ch. 18 : 11) waiting in silent prayer while the incense was offered. Compare Rev. 8 : 1-4. Hence prayer is likened to incense, Ps. 142 : 2. While we pray without, Christ offers the incense within the veil, Heb. 6 : 19; Rev. 5 : 8. The fire was taken from the large altar of burnt-offering, and a signal indicated the precise time when the incense was cast upon the altar. **At the time of incense.** *At the hour,* etc. See on ver. 9, second paragraph. The multitude gathered for prayer rather indicates the offering of the evening incense. Compare Acts 3 : 1. It was a time of rare solemnity to Zachariah, and of earnest supplication for himself and his people.

**CHRONOLOGICAL.** "It is so plain that this was only an office of *daily ministration*, and that Zachariah was one of the *ordinary priests*, that one cannot but be surprised that any should ever conclude from this circumstance of the story that Zachariah was *sagan*, or assistant to the high priest, and was now performing his grand office on the

day of the atonement, and so on this foundation should calculate the birth of *John the Baptist and Christ*, and all the other feasts which depend on them; yet this is done in the calendars, both of the *Roman and Greek Church*."—DODDRIDGE. Zachariah is simply styled "a certain priest," ver. 5.

11. **There appeared unto him.** It was an actual appearance, not a vision. It was no result of nervous excitement, as some would have us believe, for he must have related the facts himself. The narrative gives no evidence of an excited state. It was probably near the close of the burning of incense, for the people waited for Zachariah and wondered why he tarried so long, ver. 21.

**An angel,** Gabriel, ver. 19. *Angel* means *messenger*, Luke 9 : 52. It is applied to prophets (Isa. 42 : 19), to priests (Mal. 2 : 7), and even to inanimate objects, Ps. 104 : 4. But generally in the Bible the word is applied to a race of intelligent beings of a higher order than man, who surround the Deity and are messengers or agents in administering the affairs of the world, and are sent forth to minister to those who shall be heirs of salvation, Dan. 10 : 20, 21; Acts 7 : 30; Heb. 1 : 14. The existence of angels accords with reason as well as with revelation. As we behold in creation a descending order of beings below man, so it is natural to suppose that there is an ascending order above man toward the infinite God. Josephus (*Antiq.* xiii. 10, 3) relates that John Hyrcanus had a vision in the temple at the time of burning incense. But divine revelation had closed four hundred years before with Malachi, and angelic appearances had long been withheld. But now, as the Lord of angels was about to come, it was natural that they should openly do him service, ver. 26; 2 : 9, 13; 22 : 43; Matt. 1 : 20; 4 : 11, etc.

**On the right side,** which was regarded as favorable by the Greeks and other ancient nations. Compare 1 Kings 2 : 19; Mark 16 : 5; Matt. 25 : 33. The angel stood on the north side, between the altar and the table of show-bread. On the south or left side stood the

- 12 And when Zacharias saw *him*, <sup>a</sup>he was troubled, and <sup>a</sup>ver. 29; ch. 2. 9;  
 13 fear fell upon him. But the angel said unto him, <sup>a</sup>Judg. 6. 22; 13.  
 Fear not, Zacharias: for thy prayer is heard; and <sup>a</sup>22; Dan. 10. 8;  
 thy wife Elisabeth shall bear thee a son, and <sup>a</sup>thou <sup>a</sup>Ac. 10. 4; Rev.  
 14 shalt call his name John. And thou shalt have joy <sup>a</sup>1. 17.  
 and gladness; and <sup>a</sup>many shall rejoice at his birth. <sup>a</sup>vers. 60, 63.  
 15 For <sup>a</sup>he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and <sup>a</sup>ver. 58.  
<sup>a</sup>ch. 7. 28; Mt. 11.  
<sup>a</sup>7-11; John 5. 35.

golden candlestick. **The altar of incense.** It was made of Shittim or acacia wood, about eighteen inches square and about three feet high, and overlaid with pure gold. It stood in the holy place, near the veil, which separated it from the holy of holies. See Ex. 37 : 25-28; 30 : 1-10; 40 : 5.

12. **He was troubled,** agitated, disturbed, discomposed. **Fear fell upon him.** Such has been the general effect of celestial appearances. Thus it was with Moses at the bush, Ex. 3 : 6; Gideon, Jud. 6 : 22; Manoah, Judg. 13 : 22; Daniel, Dan. 8 : 16, 17; 10 : 7, 8; John, Rev. 1 : 17. The presence of the glory of holiness, revealing a sense of personal sinfulness and suggesting the majesty and awful purity of God, the infrequency and suddenness of such manifestation, all united to produce awe, ch. 5 : 8; Isa. 6 : 5; 1 John 4 : 18.

13. **Fear not.** Common form of angelic address, ch. 2 : 10; Dan. 10 : 12, 19; Matt. 28 : 5. This is the first address from heaven immediately connected with the new dispensation. Contrast it with the last prophetic revelation, four hundred years before, "Lest I come and smite the earth with a curse," Mal. 4 : 6.

**Thy prayer is heard.** Rather, *was heard.* His prayer for a son was heard at the time when it was offered, but the answer was deferred to such time as God in his wisdom and mercy saw to be best. Compare Dan. 9 : 23. Had God answered it before, Zachariah would not have been the father of Christ's forerunner, for the time had not come. He doubtless had long before ceased to pray for this blessing in cheerful submission to the divine will; for he would not continue to pray for that which he regarded impossible on account of the great age of himself and wife, vers. 7, 18-20. Some suppose that it limits the prayer too much to confine

it to offspring; but this was among the Jews an object of intense desire. To die childless and to have their name perish was most gloomy indeed. See on ver. 7. Doubtless, Zachariah had prayed for righteous offspring. And as the Messiah was expected and earnestly prayed for, it is possible that, having a clear understanding of the prophetic word, and under the guidance of the Spirit, he had prayed that he himself might be the father of him who should prepare the way of the Lord, Isa. 40 : 3; Mal. 3 : 1.

**Johu.** This name in Hebrew means *one whom God has graciously given*—an appropriate name for the child given in answer to prayer, and who was to be the forerunner of Christ. A gracious gift not only to his parents, but also to the Jewish people and to the world.

14. Hence, John would be a source of joy both to his parents and to many others. **Gladness, exultation, transport,** a stronger and more expressive term than **joy.** This joy would be shared by **many pious at his birth.** The reasons for this joy are given in the three following verses. "The papists abuse this passage to authorize a procession of dancing and leaping in an annual celebration of John's birthday."—JACOBUS.

15. **For** introduces the reason for the general rejoicing at John's birth. **Great in the sight of the Lord.** Truly and spiritually great. Without worldly title, wealth, office, and power, he would be great as Christ's forerunner in piety, in labors, and in the tokens of God's favor and blessings. A burning and shining light, John 5 : 35. A prophet, and more than a prophet, ch. 7 : 26-28. It is silently implied that John's greatness would not consist in worldly honor. Man looks only upon the outward appearance, but God upon the heart, 1 Sam. 16 : 7. "That which is highly esteemed among men is an abomination

\*shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be \*filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his 16 mother's womb. \*And many of the children of Israel 17 shall he turn to the Lord their God. \*And he shall go before him <sup>b</sup>in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.

\* ch. 7. 33; Num. 6. 2-4; Judg. 13. 4  
 \* Ac. 2. 4; 11. 24.  
 \* Jer. 1. 5; Gal. 1. 15.  
 \* ver. 76; Mal. 4. 5, 6; Mt. 3. 5, 6; 21. 32.  
 \* John 1. 7, 23-30; 3. 28.  
 \* Mt. 11. 14; Mk. 9. 12, 13.

before God," ch. 16 : 15. **Shall drink neither wine.** Like Samson (Judg. 13 : 2-5), he was to be a Nazarite from his birth—that is, "one separated to the service of God." Samuel also is regarded as a Nazarite for life, 1 Sam. 1 : 11. Priests were forbidden wine and strong drink when they attended on the service of God, Lev. 10 : 9. The prohibitions upon Nazarites were more stringent, Num. 6 : 1-21. They were to abstain from wine, grapes, and every production of the vine, and from all intoxicating drinks, which were a "symbol of all that stupefies and benumbs the powers of a divine life, or disposes the heart to carnal pleasures or excitement." Their hair was to be unshorn—a token of complete subjection to God (as the long hair of woman is a token of her subjection to man, 1 Cor. 11 : 3-10). They were to avoid all defilement from the touch of the dead, even of their own relatives—a symbol of entire withdrawal from all fellowship with sin and its consequences. Some took a Nazarite vow for a limited time; others for life. Thus, John was to be a true priest and Nazarite. This brings to view the type of his piety. **Strong drink.** Any intoxicating drink made from grain, fruit honey, dates, or the like.

**He shall be filled.** The positive side of his piety and endowments, gifts and graces. He should be extraordinarily endowed with the **Holy Spirit**, the third person of the Godhead. **From his mother's womb.** From his birth. There is no necessity, with some eminent commentators, to infer from vers. 41-44 that John was a subject of divine grace *before* his birth. The language here limits it *from*, etc., and plainly implies that John was regenerated from his birth. Thus in this verse we have the *character* of John described.

16. This verse foretells John's *work*.

**Many of the children (or sons) of Israel.** Not all, but great numbers. ch. 3 : 3-7; Matt. 3 : 5, 6; Mark 1 : 5, **Shall he turn.** From formalism and sin to the Lord, Jehovah, who was in a peculiar sense **their God**, Lev. 20 : 26; Rom. 9 : 4, 5. John was a preacher of repentance, ch. 3 : 3, 8. His work was to be confined to Israel. "Not that other nations were to be excluded from the favor of God, but because what was wrought among the central people of mankind was for the benefit of all. There a hearth had first to be prepared for the holy fire, and for that reason the influence of God's messengers was concentrated on that spot."—**OLSHAUSEN.** The Jewish people had been cured of idolatry by the Babylonish captivity, but they had at length sunk into formalism, a zealous observance of rites and ceremonies, instead of cultivating real piety and holiness of heart and life. John was to be a great reformer, like Elijah (next verse; Mal. 4 : 5, 6), fighting against the corruptions of the Jewish religion, shaking and arousing the nation to thought, awaking many to see their sins and their need, inducing many to turn to the Lord, and thus preparing the people for a penitent and believing reception of Christ.

17. This verse not only brings before us more fully what John should do, but also his peculiar mission or *office* and his *relations* to Christ. **Before him,** "the Lord their God" (ver. 16), referring to Jesus Christ, who was Immanuel, God with us (Matt. 1 : 21), in whom "dwelt the fulness of the Godhead bodily," Col. 2 : 9. This going before him denotes preparation, ch. 3 : 4. He was to be Christ's forerunner, the preparer of his way. **In the spirit and power of Elias.** *Elias* is the Greek mode of writing the Hebrew name *Elijah*. The reference is plainly to Mal. 4 : 5, and shows how that prophecy

18 And Zacharias said unto the angel, °Whereby shall °Gen. 17. 17.  
I know this? for I am an old man, and my wife well  
19 stricken in years. And the angel answering said

is to be understood. John was not Elijah raised from the dead, but like him in spirit and power. He was Elijah's antitype. He showed the same zealous and bold spirit, and the same spiritual and prophetic power, though not miraculous power, for "John did no miracle," John 10 : 41. Both John and Elijah were bold reformers and preachers of repentance. Both reproved sin in high places, and both were persecuted, Elijah by Ahab and Jezebel, John by Herod and Herodias. Both lived much in the wilderness, and both wore a dress of camel's hair and a leathern girdle. See 1 Kings 18 : 17-40 ; 19 : 10 ; 21 : 17-26 ; 2 Kings 1 : 8.

**To turn the hearts of the fathers to the children**, to reconcile fathers to their children, to restore natural and parental affection. Paul, describing the character of the heathen, says, among other things, "without natural affection." In its best sense this may be said to a certain degree of all the irreligious. Family dissensions were the natural result of the Jewish custom of frequent divorces. Moral corruptions had chilled in the heart of many parental affection. Reconciliations, mutual affection, parental love, faithfulness, and religious training uniformly accompany true religion, and are here specified among the fruits of that reformation which should result from the preaching of John.

**The disobedient to**, etc. The preceding clause corresponds very closely to the prediction of Malachi ; but this is quite different from the corresponding phrase, "the hearts of the children to their fathers," Mal. 4 : 6. "But by regarding *disobedient* as put for *children*, and *just* for *fathers*, a substitution both natural and admissible, the correspondence between the quotation and the original will be quite fully preserved. Folly and disobedience are natural to children (Prov. 22 : 15), while age has ever been regarded as the depository of wisdom."—DR. J. J. OWEN. In the midst of Jewish formalism and moral corruptions the disobedience of children had naturally increased, not only

toward parents, but also toward God. Besides, *fathers* should always be among *the just*, but that was not the case of many in that age. The angel therefore gives more clearly the meaning of the prediction than if he had quoted the exact language. Thus, John was to reform fathers from parental unfaithfulness and children to filial affection and to the obligations and duties of true religion. And in thus doing he would **make ready a people prepared for the Lord**—that is, for the Messiah—to receive him when he came. Compare Isa. 43 : 21, to which there may be an allusion ; also Luke 3 : 7-18 · 16 : 16 ; John 1 : 29-36.

A frivolous objection has been raised against this passage from the fact that the angel quotes Scripture. But why not just as well as Satan in Christ's temptation? ch. 4 : 10. It is surely more natural and rather to be expected. If the Holy Spirit has spoken through inspired men, why may not God have commissioned an angel to quote something which had been thus spoken? No good reason can be assigned why he should not.

18. Zachariah manifests a doubting spirit. **Whereby shall I know this?** By what sign? etc. A similar request had been made by Abraham (Gen. 15 : 6-8), but in strong faith, Rom. 4 : 19 ; Heb. 11 : 12. So also by Gideon (Judg. 6 : 17) and by Hezekiah, 2 Kings 20 : 8. Mary's question (verse 34) was not in unbelief, but in faith seeking explanation. The request of Zachariah was proper, but the spirit in which he asked it was wrong. Hence, while it was granted, it was in such a way as to be both a sign and a punishment. **An old man**. Sixty years of age was regarded as an old man among the Jews. Some supposed him much older. **Well stricken, far advanced**. See on verse 7.

19. The angel gives his name, rank, and authority. **Gabriel**, a Hebrew name, meaning *man of God*—an appropriate title of the angel who had so much to do with announcing the incarnation of the Son of God, verse 26 ; Dan. 9 : 21-27. His services seem to

unto him, I am <sup>d</sup>Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God; and am sent to speak unto thee, and to show  
 20 thee these glad tidings. And, behold, <sup>e</sup>thou shalt be dumb, and not able to speak, until the day that these things shall be performed, because thou believest not my words, <sup>f</sup>which shall be fulfilled in their season.  
 21 And the people waited for Zacharias, and marvelled

<sup>d</sup>Dan. 8. 16; 9. 21  
 Mt. 18. 10; Heb  
 1. 14,  
<sup>e</sup>Ex. 4. 11; Eze. 3.  
 26.

<sup>f</sup>Is. 55: 11; 2 Tim.  
 2. 13, Tit. 1. 2.

have been Messianic, and for administering comfort and sympathy. The mention of his name would tend to strengthen the faith of Zachariah, who was doubtless familiar with his appearance to Daniel, whose work seems to be the defence and leading of God's people against the power of Satan, Dan. 12 : 1; Rev. 12 : 7.

Gabriel is never styled an archangel in the Bible, Michael alone bearing that title. Thus, God has revealed to us the name of only one angel and of one archangel. Why he has only given us these, and why their names do not occur before the book of Daniel, can only be surmised. Their names certainly indicate an advance in the revelation of the angelic world. They tend to sharpen our conception of angels, and to impress us the more deeply with their actual existence. The special relations of these two with the Jewish people, the incarnation, and the Christian church may also be a reason for revealing their names, Dan. 10 : 21; 12 : 1; Jude 9; Rev. 12 : 7-12.

**That stand in the presence of God**, one of his chief ministers or attendants. Seven angels are mentioned as standing before God in Rev. 8 : 2. God is the universal sovereign, the King over all. Standing was the posture of a servant or attendant. The presence of a king was a place of great honor, Esth. 1 : 10-14. The great eminence of the angel shows the importance of his message. **Am sent**. He came not of himself, but was commissioned of God with a special message to Zachariah. Compare verse 26; Heb. 1 : 14; see also note on "angel" in verse 11. "This is the meaning of the words apostle and missionary, *sent*. The ministerial office derives its authority from the divine commission. The ministers of Christ are as truly sent to preach the gospel as was this angel with this message."—JACOBUS. **To show thee these glad tidings**, of the birth of

Christ's forerunner. Gospel means glad tidings; and the verb in the original is the one used in the New Testament of preaching the gospel. See note on the title of this book at the beginning of this chapter. This first and introductory message of the gospel dispensation, what might be styled its first glimmer of light, was indeed glad tidings, Mark 1 : 1.

20. **Behold**, a word frequently used to introduce something wonderful and unexpected. In this case it introduces a very unexpected sign as well as punishment. **Be dumb**. More literally, *Thou shalt be silent*, referring specially to the condition in which he should be, of being silent. This is made the more emphatic and further explained by the additional clause, **and not able to speak**. He seems to have been deaf as well as dumb, vers. 22, 62. **Until the day**, etc. It was to be temporary. **These things** were not fully performed until the naming of the child on the day of his circumcision, vers. 59-64. **Because** introduces the reason of giving such a sign and inflicting such a punishment. **Thou believest not my words**. Rather, *Didst not believe*, etc., referring to his unbelief connected with asking a sign, ver. 18. **Shall be fulfilled in their season** each event in its order and time. It is not only implied above that the punishment should be temporary, but here a promise is given. Judgment and mercy are mingled together. He was not entirely wanting in his faith, nor entirely given up to his unbelief. By this afflictive sign his faith was strengthened and put to further test; it taught him further humility, increased dependence on God, and greater reverence and confidence in his word. Compare the lameness of Jacob (Gen. 32 : 25, 31) and the blindness of Saul of Tarsus, Acts 9 : 8, 9.

21. **And the people**, who stood without (ver. 10), **waited**, *were waiting*

- 22 that he tarried so long in the temple. And when he came out, he could not speak unto them: and they perceived that he had seen a vision in the temple: for he beckoned unto them, and remained speechless. <sup>Num. 12. 6-8; Ac. 10. 3.</sup>
- 23 And it came to pass, that, as soon as <sup>b</sup>the days of his ministration were accomplished, he departed to his own house. <sup>2 Kl. 11. 5; 1 Chr. 9. 25.</sup>
- 24 And after those days his wife Elisabeth conceived, and hid herself five months, saying, Thus hath the Lord dealt with me in the days wherein he looked on me, to <sup>4</sup>take away my reproach among men. <sup>1 Ge. 30. 23; 54. 1, 4</sup>

for Zachariah to come forth from the holy place, that he might pronounce his blessing upon them (Num. 6 : 23-27; Lev. 9 : 22, 23), after which the trumpets sounded and the Levites shouted their psalms of praise. Compare Rev. 8 : 5. **And marvelled, and were wondering greatly,** ready to ask the reason why he tarried so long, etc. The priest did not tarry long in the holy place lest the people should fear that, having offered unworthily, some divine judgment might have fallen upon him, and through him as their representative upon them. Gabriel very probably appeared near the close of the service. The interview was probably of short duration, but Zachariah may have remained for a little time in amazement, musing on what had occurred, in mental prayer, confession, and thanksgiving. **Temple,** the same word as in ver. 9.

22. **He could not speak unto them,** either in pronouncing the benediction or in answering their inquiries. **They perceived that he had seen a vision.** His whole appearance and excited manner upon coming forth from the holy place, in connection with his speechlessness, would suggest that he had seen some supernatural appearance or received some divine communication. This was confirmed by his gestures. **For he beckoned unto them.** Rather, *and he was beckoning*; he continued making signs by nodding the head and by motions of his eyes and hands. **Speechless.** The word thus translated was used of those who were deaf (ch. 7 : 22) as well as dumb, ch. 11 : 14. That Zachariah was both deaf and dumb is confirmed by ver. 62. "When the voice of the preacher is announced (Isa. 40) the priesthood of

the Old Testament becomes silent."—CHEMNITZ.

23. **Days of his ministration were accomplished.** The week of his service *was completed.* See on ver. 5. Deafness and dumbness disqualified Levites, for a part of their work was to sing, but they did not disqualify a priest, since he could perform various duties, such as cleansing the altar, trimming the lamps, tending to many things connected with the altar and sacrifices, etc. "The priest was not permitted to leave the precincts of the temple till the week's term was finished."—JACOBUS. **Departed to his own house,** in a city of Judah in the hill country, probably not far from Hebron, ver. 39.

24. **After those days.** An indefinite note of time, yet probably soon after the days of his ministration in the temple.  **Hid herself.** Literally, *hid herself wholly, or carefully,* showing that she withdrew into complete retirement. Several reasons would lead her to this seclusion, chief among which would be to avoid all legal defilement to herself and son (Judg. 13 : 4), and to devote herself to meditation and prayer, ver. 25. **Five months,** not necessarily limiting the time of her seclusion, but used in reference to the sixth month (ver. 26), when Gabriel appeared to Mary, after which he came to her.

25. **Thus hath the Lord dealt with me,** by his miraculous interposition. Some would translate, *Because the Lord hath thus done for me,* giving the reason for her retirement. The usual translation is preferable, which also suggests a reason for devoting herself to thanksgiving, meditation, and prayer. **He looked on me,** with favor. **To take away my reproach.** It was a reproach among the Jews to

*The birth of Jesus foretold.*

26 AND in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth,

be childless, Gen. 15 : 2 ; 30 : 23 ; 1 Sam. 1 : 11 ; Isa. 4 : 1 ; 54 : 1, 4. See on ver. 7. It was also a peculiar calamity to a branch of Aaron's family, and might be looked upon as a judgment, 1 Sam. 2 : 31, 36. God had promised to increase the families of the righteous, Lev. 26 : 9 ; Deut. 7 : 13.

26-38. THE BIRTH OF JESUS ANNOUNCED TO MARY. Found only in Luke, and sheds light upon Matthew's account of Christ's birth and residence.

26. **In the sixth month.** Spoken in reference to the five months in ver. 24. After Elisabeth had hid herself five months, in the sixth month, etc., ver. 36. This specification of time is important in showing that John was six months older than Jesus. **Angel.** See on ver. 11. **Gabriel.** See on ver. 19. **Sent from God.** See on ver. 19.

**Galilee.** Galilee was a Hebrew name, meaning a *ring* or *circle*, and was probably first given to a small "circuit" among the mountains of Naphtali (Josh. 20 : 7), where were situated the twenty towns given by Solomon to Hiram, king of Tyre, 1 Kings 9 : 11. The name may contain an allusion to one or more of the circular plains of those mountains. It came afterward to be applied to the whole northern province of the land of Israel between Phœnicia and Samaria, the Jordan and the Mediterranean. It was divided into two parts, upper or northern, lower or southern. The northern portion was designated "Galilee of the Gentiles," because it bordered on territories inhabited by Gentiles, and especially because it was itself inhabited by a mixed population. According to the testimony of Strabo and others, it was inhabited by Egyptians, Arabians, and Phœnicians. It was near to Tyre and Sidon. According to Josephus, who knew the country well, Galilee contained two hundred and four cities and villages, the smallest of which numbered above fifteen thousand inhabitants, which would raise the population to upward of three millions, or about fifteen hundred to the square mile. "After the careful review now closed, we

feel justified in saying that Galilee at the time of Christ was one of the finest and most fertile portions of the earth. . . . Abounding in springs, rivers, and lakes ; . . . possessing a rare and delightful climate, and scenery of great variety and beauty ; its surface never dull or monotonous, but infinitely varied by plains and valleys, gentle slopes and terraced hills, deep ravines and bold peaks, naturally fortified eminences and giant mountains ; its soil naturally fertile, but forced by skilful husbandry to the highest state of productiveness, until this province was noted for the perfection and abundance of its fruits,—Galilee thus possessed features of richness and beauty rarely if ever combined in so small a country. . . . Its agriculture and fisheries, wine and oil trade, and other industries were in the most flourishing condition. . . . Its synagogues and other public buildings were built often in splendid style and at great expense. . . . We find the Galileans to have been a moral, intelligent, industrious, and enterprising people, possessed of vigorous minds and healthy bodies, . . . familiar with their own law and history, and not wanting in the finest poetical spirit ; with the disposition and ability to appreciate in the main the teachings of Christ ; a people among whom were found the most devoted men, 'Israelites indeed ;' both country and people, one may say with truth, fitly chosen of God as the training-place of those men—Master and disciples—who were to move the world ; the proper soil in which first to plant the seeds of that truth which was destined, ere long, to be spoken by eloquent lips in the pulpits of Cæsarea, Antioch, Constantinople, and Rome."—*Bibliotheca Sacra*, April, 1874, pp. 263, 264. South of Galilee lay Samaria, and south of Samaria, Judea.

**Nazareth**, according to some, means a *branch*—a fit name of the place where the Branch (Isa. 11 : 1 ; Zech. 3 : 8 ; 6 : 12) should live and grow up. I have, however, been led to think that it signifies the *one guarding* or *guarded*, from the hill on whose sides it was built (ch.

27 To a virgin <sup>1</sup>espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name <sup>2</sup>was Mary. <sup>1</sup> ch. 2: 4, 5; Mt. 1: 18.

4 : 29), which, rising to the height of four hundred or five hundred feet, overlooked a vast region, land and sea, and thus guarded it. New Testament writers always speak of it as a *city* and never as a village, and hence it was a place of some size and importance. It was finely located in Lower Galilee, about seventy miles north of Jerusalem, and nearly halfway from the Jordan to the Mediterranean. According to Josephus (referred to above on *Galilee*), its population reached fifteen, perhaps twenty, thousand. It is not named, however, in the Old Testament, nor by Josephus. But Josephus names but few of the cities of Galilee. It seems not to have been held in very good repute, more, perhaps, on account of the rude and refractory temper of its inhabitants than for any gross immorality, ch. 4 : 16, 29; John 1 : 46. Modern Nazareth belongs to the better class of Eastern villages, and has a population of nearly three thousand. Its location makes it very secluded, being situated on the edge of a beautiful little valley, which is itself enclosed by an amphitheatre of hills that rise around it into fourteen distinct peaks. From one of these can be obtained one of the finest views in Palestine. It is altogether probable, as Olshausen suggests, that Mary or Joseph had property here; Nazareth is called "their own city," ch. 2 : 39.

27. **Espoused, betrothed.** Jewish parents were wont to arrange in regard to the marriage of their children, sometimes according to the previous choice of the son, and with some regard to the consent of the daughter, Gen. 24 : 4, 39, 58; Judg. 14 : 2, 3. A dowry was given by the suitor to the parents and brethren of the bride. The interval between betrothal and the celebration of marriage was generally ten or twelve months, Deut. 20 : 7; Judg. 14 : 8. During this time the bride remained at her father's house, but was considered the wife of the bridegroom, Matt. 1 : 19, 20. It was divinely arranged that Mary should be betrothed to Joseph that she might be saved from reproach, that Jesus might be in the royal line, and that his real

Father might be unknown till he should reveal him.

**Joseph** resided at Nazareth, as also did Mary (ch. 2 : 4), and followed the occupation of a carpenter, to which Jesus was also trained, Mark 6 : 3. But little is said of him in the gospels, the last reference being that of his return from the passover when Jesus was twelve years of age. What was his age when he married and when he died are alike unknown. That he died before the crucifixion is quite certain from what is related in John 19 : 27, and from the absence of his name in those passages in the gospels where allusion is made to Mary and the brethren of Jesus.

**Of the house of David.** This is here said of Joseph. That Mary was also a descendent of David is implied by vers. 32-35, and confirmed by the genealogy in ch. 3 : 23-28, and by such passages as Acts 2 : 30; Rom. 1 : 3; Heb. 7 : 14; Ps. 132 : 11. It was only through Mary that Jesus could be of the seed of David according to the flesh.

**Mary.** In Hebrew, Miriam, Ex. 15 : 20. Matthew in his account gives prominence to Joseph, but Luke to Mary. Little is said of her after the birth of Jesus. Matthew records the flight into Egypt, and Luke relates how his parents took Jesus to the passover when he was twelve years of age.

No intimation is given of her sinlessness from birth, which was first suggested by J. Duns Scotus about the beginning of the fourteenth century, and since December 8, 1854, has been a doctrine of the Romish church. The Scriptures teach positively that all the race have fallen in Adam, with the exception of Christ, and that they can be saved only through him, Acts 4 : 12; Rom. 3 : 10, 23; Gal. 3 : 22; 1 John 1 : 8. The entire silence of the New Testament after the first chapter of the Acts in regard to her, and the language of Jesus recorded in ch. 12 : 46-50, Luke 2 : 49, 50, and John 2 : 4, are alike against this doctrine and that of making her an object of worship. In ver. 47, Mary confesses her own need of a Saviour. She appears at the cross

- 28 And the angel came in unto her, and said, <sup>1</sup>Hail! <sup>1</sup>Dan. 9. 23; 10. 19  
*thou that art* <sup>m</sup>highly favored, <sup>a</sup>the Lord *is* with thee: <sup>m</sup>vers. 30, 48.
- 29 \*blessed art thou among women! And when she saw <sup>1</sup>Judg. 6. 12; Jer  
*him,* <sup>p</sup>she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her <sup>1</sup>1. 19; Ac. 18. 10  
<sup>p</sup>Judg. 5. 24.  
<sup>p</sup>ver. 12.

(John 19 : 25, 26), but is not mentioned in connection with the resurrection. Her name appears for the last time in the New Testament in Acts 1 : 14. How long she lived after this, and where she died, are unknown. Tradition is very conflicting on these points. One is, that she went to Ephesus with the apostle John, and died there in the year 63.

The origin of the unscriptural views regarding Mary as sinless and an object of worship may be found in the legends of the apocryphal gospels, and in part resulting from the Nestorian controversies of the fifth century. They find no support in the Fathers of the first five centuries. The general sentiment among Christians of the fourth century seems to be thus expressed by Epiphanius: "The whole thing is foolish and strange, and is a device and deceit of the devil. Let Mary be in honor. Let the Lord be worshipped. Let no one worship Mary." Tertullian in the second century speaks of her unbelief. So does Origen of the third and Basil of the fourth. Chrysostom of the fifth century speaks in yet severer terms. Such facts show that long after apostolic days Mary was regarded as having imperfections, infirmities, and committing actual sins, similar to others.

28. **The angel came in unto her,** into the room where she was. Very likely she was engaged in her private devotions. At what time of day is not told. It was not the vision of an angel in a dream, as to Joseph, but an actual visit to her when awake and alone. **Hail.** A common term of salutation, meaning, *joy to thee.* **Thou that art,** etc. The original is concise, *thou highly favored.* The angel bestows more honor in this salutation than in that to Zachariah, vers. 13. Never before had angel paid so great honor to mortal. Yet she was highly favored, not, as the Romanist would have it, as an original source of blessing, nor with reference to external beauty, but as God's choice, upon whom the free grace of God had been bestowed. The same word occurs besides here only

once in the New Testament, namely, Eph. 1 : 6, where it is used of believers generally, "Wherein he hath made us *accepted* in the beloved," or rather "which he *freely bestowed* on us in the beloved." Compare similar language used of David, Acts 7 : 46; of Noah, Gen. 6 : 8; of Joseph, Gen. 39 : 4; and of Daniel, Dan. 9 : 23. "Idolatrous Rome changes a salutation into idolatry."—W. H. VAN DORAN. **The Lord is with thee,** showing how she was thus highly favored; so the angel to Gideon, Judg. 6 : 12. Some would translate, "The Lord be with thee," making it conform to the common Jewish salutation, Ruth 2 : 4. The usual translation is, upon the whole, to be preferred. **Blessed art thou among women,** according to Hebrew usage, means, *most blessed of women,* referring to the special blessing with which she was highly favored, namely, to be the mother of the Messiah, which was the highest ambition of a Hebrew woman. So pronounced also by Elizabeth (vers. 42), and by another woman, ch. 11 : 27. Some of the oldest manuscripts omit this clause, and hence it is regarded by some of the highest critical authorities as inserted here from ver. 42. It is also omitted by the best recent versions. Since the thirteenth century it has been used in the worship of Mary, which worship may be traced to the fifth century.

29. **And when she saw him.** This should be omitted according to the best manuscripts and highest critical authorities. **She was troubled,** etc. According to the most approved reading, *And she was troubled at the saying.* She was disturbed, agitated; yet, unlike Zachariah, she utters no word. Indeed, she was doubtless amazed and perplexed, and knew not what to say; but not in unbelief. **Cast in her mind** Rather, *was considering,* pondering upon. The sudden appearance and the wonderful salutation do not destroy her presence of mind or her thoughtful serenity.

**What manner of salutation this**

- 30 mind what manner of salutation this should be. And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou  
 31 hast found favor with God. <sup>a</sup> And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and  
 32 <sup>b</sup> shalt call his name JESUS. <sup>c</sup> He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and <sup>d</sup> the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his

<sup>a</sup> Isa. 7. 14.  
<sup>b</sup> ch. 2. 21; Mt. 1. 21.  
<sup>c</sup> Phil. 2. 9-11.  
<sup>d</sup> ver. 35; Mk. 5. 7;  
 John 6. 69; Ro. 1. 4; Heb. 1. 2-6.  
<sup>e</sup> 2 Sam. 7. 13; Ps. 132. 11; Is. 9. 6. 7; Jer. 23. 5; Rev. 3. 7.

should (*might*) be. It was not customary among the Jews for a man to use any salutation to a woman. The salutation also was so extraordinary. She did not conceive herself worthy of such applause, nor dream of such high blessedness as to be the mother of the Messiah. She could not see how it should be applied to herself. She reflected therefore on the salutation, so wonderful and strange, what might be its purport, and what message would follow.

30. Perceiving her amazement, perplexity, and thoughtful anxiety, the angel said to her, **Fear not.** He also called her by name, as one well known to him. And so are God's children to angels. The reason is given, **For thou hast found favor,** etc. More correctly, *For thou didst find favor with God,* probably referring to some past season of earnest supplication and consecration. Perhaps she had made the time of her betrothal a season of special prayer—that God would bless the fruit of the union which in due time would be consummated. Possibly she had prayed that she might become the mother of the Messiah, without forming any definite expectation that it would be so. However that may be, she had *found favor, or grace,* with God. The expression refers, not to any inward goodness or holiness of her own, but to the undeserved favor, or grace, of God, which he bestows upon those who earnestly seek him through faith in the Redeemer. Special reference is had here to the great blessing announced in the following verses. Dr. Owen remarks that in the expression **with God** the preposition has the force of *laid up with,* that Mary had obtained a favor long reserved with God, and was about to enjoy it.

31. **Behold** introduces something wonderful and extraordinary, ver. 20. This address, says Bengel, contains the

sum of the gospel, repeated in verses 50-55, 68-75; 2 : 10, 11, etc. **Thou shalt,** etc., a prediction of Christ's miraculous birth. The prophecy of Isa. 7 : 14 was about to be accomplished. Compare note on Matt. 1 : 22, 23. **A son,** points to his humanity. **Shalt call,** not merely a prediction, but partakes of the nature of a command, showing what she should do by divine appointment. **Jesus** was the personal name of our Lord, being the Greek form of Joshua, or rather of Jeshua, as the name was written after the Babylonish captivity, and means *Saviour,* or more strictly, *Jehovah his help or salvation.* Joshua is referred to under the name of Jesus twice in the New Testament, Acts 7 : 45; Heb. 4 : 8. It is the name commonly applied to our Lord in the Gospels. We shall therefore generally use this name to designate him in these notes. The writers of the Epistles usually call him "the Lord," "the Lord Jesus," or "the Lord Jesus Christ," thus indicating him as their risen Lord, their anointed and spiritual King, and their divinely appointed Ruler and Saviour. This command was afterward repeated to Joseph, with the reason why he should be thus named, "For he shall save his people from their sins," Matt. 1 : 21.

32. **He shall be great.** John should be great, vers. 15-17; but Jesus should be infinitely greater, as the words of the angel immediately indicate. John was to be the forerunner and servant of him who was to be his King and the Son of the Highest. The greatness here spoken of is especially that of mediatorial kingship, Ps. 2 : 6. There seems to be a reference in this and the following verse to such passages as Isa. 9 : 7-9; Dan. 7 : 14.

**Shall be called.** The meaning of the original is, He shall actually be, and shall also be *recognized and acknowledged* as, **Son of the Highest, or**

- 33 father David. <sup>v</sup>And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end. <sup>v</sup>Dan. 2. 44; 7. 14, 27; Mic. 4. 7 John 12.34; Heb. 1. 8; Rev. 11. 15.
- 34 Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be,  
35 seeing I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her, <sup>v</sup>The Holy Spirit shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow <sup>v</sup>Mt. 1. 20.

*Mos: High.* In ver. 76 John is represented as prophet of the Highest; Jesus here as Son. The Most High recognized him as his Son at his baptism (ch. 3 : 22); and at his transfiguration (ch. 9 : 35); he is thus accepted by his followers (Matt. 16 : 16; John 3 : 36), and shall be universally acknowledged as such at last, Phil. 2 : 9-11. *Son of the Most High* is an appellation of Jesus as the Messiah, pointing to his divinity, and further explained in ver. 35. Compare this title, "Son of the Blessed," in Mark 14 : 61. It is not probable that Mary fully understood this language; for how then could she have brought up the child? Yet this is nothing against its deep meaning, for the truth was revealed gradually. By degrees his disciples came to understand his divinity.

**The throne.** The kingdom, dominion. The promise of dominion was made to Solomon, and, through him as a type, to Christ, 2 Sam. 7 : 12, 13; Ps. 72 : 17; 89 : 4. As applied to the former it was literal, to the latter spiritual. **His father David.** Christ was to descend from David, Isa. 11 : 1, 10; Jer. 33 : 15. Jesus was of "the seed of David according to the flesh," Rom. 1 : 3. Hence, Mary must have been descended from David, as she was his only human parent. This is also confirmed by ver. 34, where she expresses no trouble about family descent, but only about not being actually married.

33. **He shall reign.** Exercise spiritual dominion. **House of Jacob.** The Israelitish nation, which under the Messianic reign would embrace all of spiritual Israel, the partakers of Abraham's faith, whether Jews or Gentiles, Rom. 4 : 16; Gal. 3 : 7-9, 29. **For ever.** Perpetually. What is declared positively in this clause is declared negatively in the next, and of his kingdom there shall be no end. The perpetuity of this reign shows that it is spiritual in its nature. "A dominion

which extends beyond all time cannot, at the same time, be conceived as limited by political boundaries."—OLSHAUSEN. He shall reign in the hearts of his people and as their King, ch. 17 : 21; Dan. 2 : 44; 7 : 14; Rev. 7 : 10-12; 11 : 15. This is entirely consistent with 1 Cor. 15 : 24, where we are taught that Christ will deliver up his mediatorial kingdom when all the redeemed shall be gathered in, and all his enemies subdued. But his headship and sovereignty over his people shall continue for ever.

34. This inquiry, unlike that of Zachariah, was not prompted by unbelief. It was perfectly natural and reasonable. The language of the angel implied an immediate accomplishment. The connection implies that Mary asked with a believing heart, but wishing light on what was mysterious. She wished to know how the promise could be fulfilled, as she was yet unmarried. Her question shows that she, like other Jews, expected the Messiah to be born by natural generation, and afterward to be brought into peculiar association with God.

35. The angel solves her difficulty. Her question, asked in a believing and childlike spirit, was not displeasing to the angel. He saw that it was such as God could approve. **The Holy Spirit.** "As Christ was the Son of the Father, and begotten by him (John 1 : 14), this must be interpreted of the divine influence or energy exerted through the agency of the Holy Spirit. As the Holy Spirit did not create the world, but only moved upon the chaotic mass, bringing order out of confusion, so Christ was not begotten of the Holy Spirit, although the energy and influence of the Spirit was instrumentally employed in the conception of Mary. That this is the true sense of this mysterious passage appears evident from the next clause, the power of the Highest, where in the original the

thee: therefore also <sup>7</sup>that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called <sup>8</sup>the Son of God.

36 And, behold, thy cousin Elisabeth, she hath also conceived a son in her old age: and this is the sixth

<sup>7</sup> Job 14. 4; Is. 53. 9.  
<sup>8</sup> Ps. 2. 7; Mk. 1. 1;  
 John 1. 34; 20.  
 31; Ac. 8. 37; Ro.  
 1. 4.

omission of the article refers it to the divine power in general, and not specifically to that of the Holy Spirit."—Dr. J. J. OWEN. There seems to be an allusion to Gen. 1 : 2; the agency of the Holy Spirit was connected with the new creation in Christ as with the old. Nor should we lose sight of the Holy Spirit as a sanctifier who separated and sanctified Christ's human nature from the first moment of its conception, and preserved it from all taint of sin. Until the Saviour's birth we may conceive Mary to have been under the wonderful power of the Spirit. The expressions *Holy Spirit* and *power of the Highest* are parallel and explanatory of each other. The power of the Godhead came in connection with that of the Holy Spirit. So also are the connected expressions, *come upon thee* and *overshadow thee*.

**Shall overshadow thee** and rest upon thee. As a cloud casts its shadow and surrounds the mountain-top, so the energy of the divine Spirit should be exerted and rest upon Mary to produce a result unknown since the creation of man. The angel thus states a mysterious fact, and leaves it there. Nothing is said to satisfy an idle or vain curiosity.

**Therefore also that holy thing, holy offspring or Holy One**, as begotten, in his human nature, not of a human parent, but of God. Compare ch. 3 : 38. It was necessary that Christ should be born of a woman to be actually man (Gal. 4 : 4), and it was equally necessary that he should be holy that his life might not be forfeited to the law, but voluntarily surrendered as a ransom for us, and that he might reunite us to God. **Of thee** should be omitted, according to the highest critical authorities. **Shall be called**, shall not only be, but shall be recognized as, **the Son of God**. Compare on ver. 32. The angel gives a physical reason why Jesus should be thus called, recognized, and acknowledged—namely, having no human father; God, his Father, and that too of his humanity. This, however, is not the only reason. Notice here the force

of **also**, pointing toward divine Sonship, and hence, though obscurely, it may be, to the union of humanity and divinity. Luke, however, in his Gospel, specially presents the human side of Christ. The title *Son of God* had been given to the Messiah, and intimated his divinity, Ps. 2 : 7; 45 : 6, 7; Isa. 9 : 6; Jer. 23 : 5, 6; Mic. 5 : 2. In the New Testament it most commonly denotes, includes, or implies the eternal existence which Christ has with the Father, Matt. 16 : 16; Mark 1 : 1; John 1 : 34; Acts 9 : 20; Rom. 1 : 4, etc. The Jews appear to have applied this title to the Messiah in a subordinate sense; they ought to have understood their own Scriptures, but in their wilful blindness they did not, and they crucified Jesus for applying the title in its fulness to himself. Compare John 7 : 26, 27, 31; 10 : 30–36; 19 : 7; Luke 22 : 69–71. As in ver. 32, so here, we are not to suppose that Mary entered into its full meaning; she may now have caught a deeper view. The life, teachings, miracles, and, above all, the resurrection, of Jesus prove his Sonship, Rom. 1 : 4; Acts 13 : 33. In the triumphs of his kingdom it will be further publicly demonstrated and manifested, Phil. 2 : 11.

36. The angel in kindness announces to her the wonderful fact regarding Elisabeth, which thus far seems to have been known only in the family of Zachariah, ver. 24. It was graciously given to a believing heart, and would serve as a sign or token to confirm her faith. **Thy cousin**. Rather, *Thy kinswoman*. The original merely states that she was a relative. We have no means of knowing her exact relationship. Elisabeth was of the tribe of Levi and of the family of Aaron, ver. 5. Intermarriages with other tribes were common, and were prohibited only when it might remove inheritances, Num. 36 : 6, 7. Aaron himself married into the tribe of Judah, Ex. 6 : 23. Compare 2 Chr. 22 : 11. No argument can therefore be drawn from this against the belief that Mary was of the house of David. Her

- 37 month with her who was called barren. For <sup>a</sup>with <sup>b</sup>ch. 18. 27; Num. 11. 23; Jer. 32. 17; Ro. 4. 21.  
 God nothing shall be impossible.
- 38 And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me <sup>b</sup>according to thy word. And the <sup>b</sup>Ps. 119. 38.  
 angel departed from her.

*Mary's visit to Elisabeth, and her song of praise.*

- 39 And Mary arose in those days, and went into the

mother or grandmother may have been from the house of Aaron, or the mother of Elisabeth may have been from the house of David. This matters not, so long as Mary's father was a descendant of David. **The sixth month**, indicating the difference between the ages of John and Jesus. **Called barren**, implying a certain popular reproach. See on ver. 25.

37. The angel again reminds her of the promise and power of God, which were better grounds of assurance than any sign could be. **Nothing, no word at all**, very nearly equivalent to *nothing at all*. By a Hebraistic usage *word* is sometimes used in the sense of *thing*, so far as it may refer to a thing spoken of or expressed in words, ch. 1 : 65 ; 2 : 15. Here the special reference is to the promise. Hence, no word of promise. **Shall be impossible**. The future has special reference to the prediction which the angel had made. It however expresses a general truth, *shall be* and *is impossible*. There is a similarity of expression, and some see an allusion to Gen. 18 : 14 : "Is anything too hard for Jehovah?"

38. **Behold the handmaid, the maid-servant, of the Lord**, the language of humility, faith, and entire submission. She humbly recognizes herself as servant, but makes no protestations of unworthiness. Without further inquiry, and not yielding to doubt, she resigns herself wholly to God, assured of his protection and deliverance, though much danger and reproach were before her. See on Matt. 1 : 19. **Be it unto me**, etc. She accepts prayerfully, thankfully, and in expectation. Compare David's assent in 2 Sam. 7 : 25. Contrast Mary's faith with Eve's unbelief, also with the unbelief of Zachariah. He, an aged priest, with long experience, yet doubts; she, with youthful inexperience, yet believes a greater mystery. Her con-

ception may very properly be dated from this entire yielding up of herself to God and to the accomplishment of his purposes. The Holy Spirit had already come upon her. By her faith also the prediction was to be accomplished. Compare Heb. ch. 11. Alford says truly, "She was no unconscious vessel of the divine will, but (ver. 45) in humility and faith a fellow-worker with the purpose of the Father, and therefore her own unity with that purpose was required, and is here recorded."

39-56. **MARY'S VISIT TO ELISABETH**. Elisabeth's welcome and blessing. Mary's song. Some suppose that the events in Matt. 1 : 18-25 must have occurred before this visit. But this is altogether improbable. Mary's remaining with Elisabeth about three months (ver. 56), and the birth of John after her departure (ver. 57), show that Mary must have gone to Elisabeth soon after the visit of the angel. There was therefore not sufficient time previous to this for the occurrence of those events.

39. **In those days**. Luke had just given a definite note of time, vers. 26, 36. Mary probably went as soon as she could get ready. Her going **with haste** indicates this. See preceding paragraph. Her journey and eager haste reveal something of her heart—her implicit faith in the angel's message regarding Elisabeth and herself, her joy, and her longing desire to commune with Elisabeth and learn every particular concerning these wonderful events. Days of trial were before her. She could not, according to Eastern custom, communicate with Joseph except through others. In humble reliance she waits her vindication from God. But no human being could so enter into her case and give her sympathy and counsel as Elisabeth. She therefore hastens to her through a long and perilous journey.

40 hill country with haste, °into a city of Juda; and ° Jos. 21. 9-11.  
 41 entered into the house of Zacharias, and saluted Elisabeth. And it came to pass, that, when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb. And Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit:

**Into the hill-country** (of Judea, ver. 65), running through the centre of Judah from north to south, extending a few miles below Hebron, where it reaches its highest level. Compare Dr. Farrar on Palestine, quoted on ver. 5. Joshua enumerates thirty-eight cities as belonging to the mountains of Judah, Josh. 15 : 48-60. The ruins which now are seen on almost every hill-top show that at a later period there must have been many more than these. **A city of Juda.** Reland and Robinson suppose that *Juda* is a softened form for *Juta*—that is, Jutta in Joshua 21 : 16, a city of priests south of Hebron. A modern town named *Jutta* is found in that neighborhood. But this supposition lacks positive evidence. No trace of such a reading as *Juta* occurs in any ancient manuscript. Besides, Juda could hardly have been put for Jutta, for the names have little or no etymological relation to each other in the original Hebrew. Many others have supposed Hebron to have been the city, which was a city of the priests, Josh. 21 : 11. But there were other cities of the priests in the hill-country of Judah. Besides, Luke would most likely have named so important a place as Hebron. Luke's indefinite manner indicates either a less important place or more probably that he was not himself acquainted with its name. Luke tells us all we can know about it; its name and place must remain uncertain. The distance from Nazareth must have been from eighty to a hundred miles—a tiresome and even dangerous journey of four or five days. This journey was certainly not in company with Joseph, but very likely with his consent; and as it was considered improper for a single or betrothed female to travel alone, she doubtless went with friends. Some may have been going up to Jerusalem to the feast of dedication, which occurred in December, who could have sent her from thence in company of others. See chronological note, ver. 5. But all

difficulties connected with her journey gave way before her ardent and earnest longing to see Elisabeth. "Extraordinary circumstances justify extraordinary measures."—VAN OOSTERZEE.

**40. Saluted Elisabeth.** There were various forms of salutation among the ancient Hebrews, such as—"God be gracious to thee," Gen. 43 : 29; "Jehovah be with you," "Jehovah bless thee," Ruth 2 : 4; "Blessed be thou of Jehovah," Ruth 3 : 10. At a later period such salutations became common, as—"Peace be to thee," Dan. 10 : 19; Luke 24 : 36; "Peace be to this house," ch. 10 : 5. The salutation "hail," or "all hail," was common, ver. 28; Matt. 28 : 9. The salutation of Mary would be becoming the circumstances, with such reverence as youth should give to age and superior station, and with such language as would indicate her knowledge of God's blessing upon Elisabeth. The reply of Elisabeth really suggests this. Salutations were accompanied with gestures and movements of the body expressive of reverence and humiliation, varying according to the dignity of the person saluted, and sometimes with a kiss.

**41. When Elisabeth heard, etc.** Rather, *As Elisabeth heard the salutation.* This really precludes the idea that Mary rehearsed what the angel had said to her, as some have supposed. The salutation and the wonderful phenomena attending Elisabeth were almost simultaneous. The narrative implies that there had been no communication between them about recent events. Mary appears to have known nothing of Elisabeth beyond what the angel had informed her, and Elisabeth was ignorant of Mary's condition. Both were taught by the Spirit. **Filled with the Holy Spirit.** Not with his ordinary graces, but by his extraordinary influence and presence, revealing to her Mary's offspring as her "Lord," and inspiring her to utter prophetic truth.

- 42 and she spake out with a loud voice, and said, <sup>d</sup> Blessed <sup>4</sup> ver. 28; Judg. 5  
*art* thou among women, <sup>e</sup> and blessed *is* the fruit of <sup>24; Ps. 2. 12.</sup>  
 43 thy womb. And whence *is* this to me, that the mother <sup>• Ps. 45. 2; 72.17-19</sup>  
 44 of my Lord should come to me? For, lo, as soon as the  
 voice of thy salutation sounded in mine ears, the babe  
 45 leaped in my womb for joy. And blessed *is* she that  
 believed: for there shall be a performance of those  
 things which were told her from the Lord.  
 46 And Mary said, 'My soul doth magnify the Lord, <sup>' Ps. 35. 9.</sup>

42. **With a loud voice**, in sacred transport, so that she could be heard throughout the house. **Blessed art thou**, etc. Mary is welcomed by the same salutation as that addressed to her by the angel, ver. 28. Compare a similar blessing upon Joel, Judg. 5 : 24. The special reason why Mary was blessed was because her child was blessed. The pronouncing of this blessing implies no other superiority than that of age, Heb. 7 : 7. It was meet that the aged Elisabeth, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, should bless her young friend. So John afterward baptized Jesus.

43. Elisabeth humbly expresses her conscious inferiority to Mary. **Whence is this to me?** How has this happened to me? How comes it to pass that so unexpected an honor is conferred upon me? **Mother.** No longer spoken of as virgin. **Of my Lord.** Elisabeth would only have thus spoken with reference to his divinity, and under the enlightenment of the Spirit. She uses the title that David uses (Ps. 110 : 1), and which has become of common use among Christians. Compare the reference of the word "Lord" to Christ in ver. 17.

44. Elisabeth states the reason why she knew Mary to be the mother of the Messiah. She well knew that her own offspring would be the forerunner, and that the Messiah would soon follow after, ver. 17. The Spirit led her to understand the wonderful token given her.

45. Elisabeth's language passes into the third person, and in the spirit of prophecy she pronounces Mary happy and extols her faith. **Blessed.** A different word from that translated blessed in vers. 28, 42. This word means *happy*—happy in her present relations and in her destiny. She was already in this happy state and in the way to future blessedness. **Is she that believed.**

Her chief happiness, ch. 11 : 28. How unhappy was Zachariah, who did not immediately believe God's word, and who thus incurred the divine displeasure, and was constantly reminded of it by his deafness and dumbness! Elisabeth must have been deeply impressed with Mary's faith in contrast. The greatness of that faith seems to fill her soul with admiration. It was only by the Holy Spirit that she knew of that faith. Such language revealed to Mary that Elisabeth knew her circumstances, and that she need not tell her story. **For there shall be**, etc. If the original be thus rendered, then we have here the reason why Mary is thus pronounced happy. But "if Elisabeth meant to point out the superior felicity of Mary on account of her faith, she would never have specified a circumstance which happened equally to her who believed and to him (Zachariah) who did not believe, for to both there was a performance of those things which had been told them from the Lord."—DR. GEORGE CAMPBELL. With the larger number of the learned, I prefer to translate, *Happy is she that believed that there shall be a performance, or fulfilment, etc.* The fulfilment of the word of the Lord by the angel (vers. 31-35) had already commenced. Mary was already happy both in her unshaken faith, and also in the beginning of its realization. This inspired language of Elisabeth, and especially this recognition of the inner experience of Mary's soul, not only confirmed Mary's faith, but also produced such an exaltation of feeling that under the guidance of the Holy Spirit she broke forth into a hymn of praise.

46. In holy ecstasy Mary utters a song of joy, some expressions of which are borrowed from Hannah's song in 1 Sam. 2 : 1-10. Compare the humble expressions of David in 2 Sam. 7 : 18-

- 47 And my spirit hath rejoiced <sup>g</sup>in God my Saviour. <sup>g</sup> Is. 12. 2; Hab. 3. 18.  
 48 For <sup>h</sup>he hath regarded the low estate of his hand-  
 maiden. <sup>h</sup> 1 Sam. 1. 11; Is. 57. 15; Mic. 4. 6, 7.  
 For, behold, from henceforth <sup>l</sup>all generations shall  
 call me blessed. <sup>l</sup> Mal. 3. 12.  
 49 For <sup>k</sup>he that is mighty <sup>l</sup>hath done to me great things;  
 and <sup>m</sup>his name is his name. <sup>k</sup> Ps. 24. 8; Is. 63. 1  
<sup>l</sup> Ps. 71. 19; 126. 3.

<sup>m</sup> Ex. 15. 11; 1 Sam. 2. 2; Ps. 111. 9.

21. Mary was doubtless familiar with many of the lyrics of the Old Testament. Having her soul imbued with their spirit, her thoughts clothe themselves in their words. Filled with the Spirit, her expressions are not mere quotations, but the inspired utterances of joyful gratitude and of prophetic faith. Her hymn was not of the old but of the new dispensation; some expressions from the former were made radiant with the glorious light of the latter. It appears to have the rhythmical structure and parallelism of Hebrew poetry. It has been variously divided into three or four stanzas. I suggest—first stanza, containing three parallels or verses, vers. 46-50; second stanza, with three verses, vers. 51-53; third stanza of a single verse, vers. 54, 55.

**My soul.** I, myself; her inner being. **Doth magnify.** Praise, extol. Compare Ps. 31 : 7; 69 : 30. The Latin translation of this word has given the name *Magnificat* to this song of Mary. **The Lord.** God, Jehovah.

47. **My spirit,** corresponds to "my soul" in the preceding verse, both words meaning *my whole inner being*. Some find here, as well as in 1 Thess. 9 : 23, a recognition of a threefold nature, body, soul, and spirit; soul referring to the lower animal nature, the sentiments, passions, and vital bodily powers; the spirit to the higher moral and rational powers of man. I am not disposed to press this distinction very closely here. Mary uses the popular and emotional language of Hebrew poetry, without particular reference to philosophical distinctions. The words seem to largely overlap each other in their meaning, and together denote the whole internal man. **Hath rejoiced.** A strong expression; *My spirit exulted*, leaped for joy, referring to recent past experience, of which she is now partaker. **In God my Saviour.** Mary

confesses herself a sinner, her need of a Saviour, proclaiming her personal interest and rejoicing in him. In the Bible, God is never called the Saviour of angels or of holy beings. She exults in God as her Saviour not merely from a state of earthly obscurity, but as bringing to her spiritual salvation through the promised Messiah. How opposed is this to the late papal dogma of immaculate conception!

48. **For, or Because.** This verse and the next give the reason of Mary's praising God. **Hath regarded, or looked upon, the low estate,** the humble condition. The reference is to her humble station. The family of David was at this time in an obscure condition, and she and Joseph living in despised Nazareth, John 1 : 46; Isa. 11 : 1; Amos 9 : 11. The application of the words, however, does not necessarily stop with her external station. Speaking, as she did, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and catching views of the spiritual blessings and exaltation of the Messiah, her words imply a lowliness of heart and a conscious unworthiness of so great happiness as God had bestowed upon her. She says nothing of her own deservings, but ascribes all to the unmerited mercy of God, ver. 49.

**For, behold.** The interjection calls attention to a most striking reason for the preceding declaration. **All generations, Jews and Gentiles,** to the end of time. Similar was the promise to Abraham: "All the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him," Gen. 18 : 18. **Blessed. Happy,** as in ver. 45. Romanists quote this text in support of their worship of Mary, but without reason. Nothing is here said or implied of worship. There is no allusion to the title "Blessed Virgin" given her by Romanists. There is no more reason to worship her than to worship Abraham.

49. **For, or Because,** introduces

- 50 And <sup>a</sup>his mercy *is* on them that fear him from generation to generation. <sup>a</sup>Ge. 17. 7; Ex. 20. 6; Ps. 103. 17, 18.
- 51 <sup>o</sup>He hath showed strength with his arm; <sup>o</sup>Ex. 15. 6; Ps. 98. 1; Is. 51. 9.
- <sup>p</sup>He hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts. <sup>p</sup>Dan. 4. 37; 1 Pet. 5. 5.
- 52 <sup>q</sup>He hath put down the mighty from *their* seats, and exalted them of low degree. <sup>q</sup>Job 5. 11; Ps. 107. 40, 41.
- 53 <sup>r</sup>He hath filled the hungry with good things; <sup>r</sup>1 Sam. 2. 5; Ps. 107. 9; John 6. 35.

another reason for her exultation in vers. 46, 47. **He that is mighty, the mighty One**, Isa. 1:24; 30:29. **Hath done**, etc. Rather, *Did great or wonderful things for me*. The word translated great includes here the additional idea of wonderful, Acts 2:11; Ps. 71:19. With awe Mary speaks of the mighty God whose presence and sovereign power had been manifested to her, and who had wrought a miracle equal to that of the first creation. **And holy is his name**. She loses sight of herself and bursts forth into a general ascription of praise. God is her only object of worship. *Name* represents God's being, as he has revealed himself to men—holy in his nature, in his perfections, in his designs, manifestations, and works, and especially in that great and wonderful work by which she would become the mother of the Messiah.

50. Connected with his holiness is his mercy, his kindness, pity, compassion to the needy. The proper order of the words is, *And his mercy is from generation to generation*—that is, for all time. **On them**. Rather, *to them that fear him*, the godly, the righteous. Mary rejoices not only in God's mercy to herself, but to others of all nations and all time. Notice the causes of Mary's rejoicing in this and in the last verse—God's great and wonderful work, his holiness, and his mercy, all connected with the coming and blessing of the Messiah.

51. In this and the following verses Mary further recognizes God's sovereign power and grace. **He hath showed strength**. This should not be translated, "He is wont to show strength," but, *He wrought strength, or might, mighty deeds*. Mary not only glances at the wonders which God had wrought of old, but prophetically catches a view of the triumphs of Christ's kingdom,

and in the spirit of prophecy celebrates them as already accomplished. This best explains the use of the indefinite past tense in this and the three following verses. Compare Isa. 59:16. **He hath scattered**. *He scattered*. He discomfits the haughty, defeating their plans and bringing to naught the devices of their hearts. Thus he did to Pharaoh, Sennacherib, Haman, Julian, and thousands since their day. **Imagination**, thoughts, devices. Compare Isa. 44:25.

52. **He hath put down**, etc. Rather, *He cast down princes from thrones*. Thus it was with Nebuchadnezzar and Belshazzar, Dan. 4:25; 5:30; the Herod dynasty; the Roman power. In prophetic vision she sees all anti-Messianic powers overthrown, and with such certainty that she speaks of it as already accomplished.

**And exalted them**, etc., those of obscure and humble condition. The social position of two classes seems to be specially referred to in this verse; but we must not entirely discard the implied idea of haughtiness in the one and humility in the other. Judgment and mercy go together. He that casts down the great and haughty raises up the obscure and humble. The cases of Saul and David were good illustrations in the past, 2 Sam. 7:8; Ps. 78:70. In the coming of the Messiah Israel's oppressors are to be humbled, and evil throughout the earth is to be ultimately overthrown, Ezek. 21:27; Dan. 2:44.

53. The same general idea as in the preceding verse, but different imagery. **The hungry . . . the rich**. Outward condition here implies the character often connected with it. Compare 1 Cor. 1:26-28; Luke 6:21; 16:24; Rev. 3:17. The first clause of this verse is similar to Ps. 107:9. God in the exercise of his sovereign power and grace is no respecter of persons. The

- And \*the rich he hath sent empty away. \*ch. 6. 24; 18.11-14.  
 54 He hath holpen his servant Israel, 'in remembrance 'Is. 63. 7-16; Jer. 31. 3, 20; Mic. 7. 20.  
 of his mercy, "Ge. 12. 3; Ps. 105. 6-10; 132. 11-17; Ro. 11. 28; Gal. 3. 16.  
 55 °(As he spake to our fathers,) to Abraham, and to his seed for ever.  
 56 And Mary abode with her about three months, and returned to her own house.

*Birth of John the Baptist; and his father's prophetic hymn.*

- 57 NOW Elisabeth's full time came that she should  
 58 be delivered; and she brought forth a son. And her neighbors and her cousins heard how the Lord had showed great mercy upon her; and \*they rejoiced \*ver. 14.  
 with her.  
 59 And it came to pass, that †on the eighth day they †came to circumcise the child; and they called him †Ge. 17. 12; Le 12. 3.

phrase, **sent empty away**, denotes peremptory dismissal, empty-handed. The parable of the Pharisee and publican affords a good illustration, ch. 18 : 9-14.

54. **Hath holpen.** Rather, *He helped.* Mary as a prophetess sees the Messiah already come and the promise fulfilled. **His servant Israel, Israel, his servant** or *child*, representing spiritual Israel, whether Jews or Gentiles, Gal. 3 : 7. Israel was in a low condition, both temporally and spiritually. **In remembrance**, etc. Literally, *To remember mercy*; that he might remember mercy, which he had promised, to Abraham and his seed for ever. This presents the reason of these great deliverances and blessings which Mary had been celebrating, namely, God's gracious designs of mercy, which he had promised to the fathers.

55. **As he spake to our fathers.** A parenthetical clause, referring to the patriarchs and to David, from whom the Messiah was to descend, Matt. 1 : 1; Gen. 22 : 16-18; Ps. 110 : 1. Compare verses 70-73. **To Abraham and his seed for ever**—that is, to all generations. Compare the similar language in Ps. 98 : 3 and Mic. 7 : 20. The blessings were designed for Abraham and his spiritual descendants for ever. Some would join *for ever* with *to remember mercy*, making prominent the faithfulness, the unchanging and everlasting mercy, of God. But it is more natural to join it with *seed*, as above, intimating that the blessing of the Messiah was to

be extended to the whole world and through all time. The faithfulness of God is, of course, distinctly implied.

56. **Returned to her own house.** At Nazareth, ver. 26; ch. 2 : 39. Soon after this the events related in Matt. 1 : 18-24 probably occurred. Luke now leaves Mary until her journey with Joseph to Bethlehem, ch. 2 : 1.

57-80. BIRTH OF JOHN THE BAPTIST. THE PROPHETIC SONG OF ZACHARIAH. John's private history before his ministry.

57. The birth of John occurred soon after Mary's departure, probably in the spring of A. D. 5. Compare chronological note on ver. 5. The ancient church at Alexandria celebrated John's birthday on April 23d.

58. **Cousins.** *Relatives, kindred*, as in ver. 36, on which see note. **Had showed great mercy upon her.** Very expressive in the original, literally, *Had magnified his mercy toward her.* **Rejoiced with her**, at her good fortune and on the happy occasion. Thus early began to be fulfilled the prediction of the angel, ver. 14. Compare the joy at the birth of Obed, Ruth 4 : 14-17.

59. **The eighth day**, from his birth, that being the day, according to the patriarchal and Mosaic law, for circumcision, Gen. 17 : 12; Lev. 12 : 3. If it came on the Sabbath, the rite was not postponed, John 7 : 22, 23. **They came.** Relatives and friends. According to the Jewish traditional law, ten persons were required to be present

60 Zacharias, after the name of his father. And his  
 mother answered and said, \*Not so; but he shall be \* ver. 13.  
 61 called John. And they said unto her, There is none  
 62 of thy kindred that is called by this name. And  
 they made signs to his father, how he would have him  
 63 called. And he asked for a writing-table, and wrote,  
 saying, \*His name is John. And they marvelled all. \* ver. 13.

as witnesses of circumcision. **To circumcise.** Circumcision was enjoined upon Abraham as a token or covenant sign, and was to be performed upon all his male descendants and upon every male that was admitted within the pale of the nation, Gen. 17 : 9-14. It was an essential condition of Jewish nationality. Paul speaks of it also as "a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he (Abraham) had while in uncircumcision," Rom. 4 : 11. It was thus an attestation of Abraham's justification by faith. It was typical, not of baptism, but of regeneration. "Circumcision is of the heart," Rom. 2 : 29. "They that are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham," Gal. 3 : 7. "We are the circumcision which worship God in the spirit and rejoice in Christ Jesus," Phil. 3 : 3.

**And they called him.** Literally, *And they were calling him.* They were on the point of naming him, and really had designated Zachariah as his name. It was customary to formally give the child his name at circumcision, because Abram's name was changed at the institution of the rite (Gen. 17 : 5, 15), and the circumcision and naming of Isaac are mentioned together. It was not usual to call a child after the name of his father without a particular reason for it. Names common in the family were, however, generally preferred, ver. 61. Why the relatives should call the child Zachariah can only be surmised. The following reasons suggest themselves: 1. The meaning of the name, *whom Jehovah remembers* (ver. 5), was appropriate for one so signally born. 2. The name may have seemed fitting to a child of their old age, and only child. 3. The name was famous in Israel for a prophet and priest. They wished to continue it in the family. 4. The sad condition of Zachariah, deaf and dumb, appealed to their sympathies, and they would show

their love and respect for him by naming his son after him.

60. **Not so, Nay.** A positive negative. Elisabeth had doubtless been informed by Zachariah what his name should be, ver. 13. Although it is possible, yet we need not suppose that she had received it by a direct revelation from God. **John.** See on ver. 13.

61. The custom of naming children after some connection of the family is urged as a valid objection against the name John. It was fitting, however, that the harbinger of the new dispensation should have a name not found among his natural connections. So Jesus is not found among our Lord's ancestors.

62. In surprise they appeal to Zachariah. This does not prove that he had never informed his wife what the name of the child should be, but it merely shows that the incredulity of their friends could be overcome only by the positive confirmation of Zachariah himself. **They made signs,** with the head or hands, or both. This shows that Zachariah was deaf as well as dumb. **How he would have,** etc. *How he may perhaps wish him called.* They assume that he had a wish in the case. It is fair to suppose that Elisabeth had stated the fact. The original also implies that the question was so put as to demand a definite reply; more literally, *They made signs as to this, namely, What he, etc.*

63. **He asked, by signs. A writing-table,** a writing tablet, which was probably made of light board, covered with wax. The instrument of writing was called a *style*, often of iron (Jer. 17 : 1), sharp at one end for writing, and broad and smooth at the other for effacing the letters when necessary, and smoothing the wax. **He wrote, saying.** A Hebrew manner of saying, He wrote these words. **His name is John,** he is already named. **Mar-**

- 64 <sup>b</sup>And his mouth was opened immediately, and his  
 65 tongue *loosed*, and he spake, and praised God. And  
 fear came on all that dwelt round about them: and  
 all these sayings were noised abroad throughout all  
 66 <sup>c</sup>the hill country of Judæa. And all they that heard  
*them* <sup>d</sup>laid *them* up in their hearts, saying, What  
 manner of child shall this be! And <sup>e</sup>the hand of  
 the Lord was with him.
- 67 And his father Zacharias <sup>f</sup>was filled with the Holy  
 Spirit, and prophesied, saying,  
 68 <sup>g</sup>Blessed *be* the Lord God of Israel,

<sup>b</sup> ver. 20; Ps. 51  
16; Eze. 29. 21.

<sup>c</sup> ver. 39.  
<sup>d</sup> ch. 2. 19, 51.

<sup>e</sup> Ge. 39. 2; Ps. 89  
21; Ac. 11. 21.

<sup>f</sup> Joel 2. 28.  
<sup>g</sup> 1 Ki. 1. 48; Ps  
41. 13; 72. 18;  
106. 48.

elled, not so much at the new name introduced into the family as at the agreement of Zachariah with Elisabeth. This gives additional evidence that Zachariah was deaf, for there would not have been such cause of astonishment if he had heard their previous conversation.

64. **His mouth was opened immediately.** What the angel had promised was now fully accomplished, vers. 13, 20. Zachariah's unbelief in regard to the child had included in its reference what the angel had foretold of him. The naming of the child was an evidence of Zachariah's restored faith. In apprehending the full meaning of the name John, *one whom God has graciously given*, he accepted in full confidence all that had been foretold. And now the first use of his recovered speech was not in complaint, nor in conversation with his wife or friends, but in *praising*—rather  *blessing—God*. See on ver. 68. He blessed God, not merely for himself, but for the child, and for what God was about to do for his people by the Messiah and his forerunner. This is evident from the whole history and from the fifteen verses that follow.

65. **Fear**, religious awe on account of the evident display of divine power. "Fear has always been the first effect produced on man by the consciousness that heavenly beings are entering into nearer and unusual intercourse with him."—VAN OOSTERZEE. See ver. 12; ch. 2 : 9; 5 : 26; 7 : 16; 8 : 37, etc.

**All that dwelt**, all in the immediate neighborhood of the city of John's birth, ver. 39. **All these sayings were noised abroad.** Rather, *All these things were talked of everywhere, told abroad.* The circumstances regard-

ing John's birth became the great topic of conversation in all the hill-country of Judea, but seem not to have reached Jerusalem.

66. **Laid them up**, remembered them and carefully thought upon them as full of meaning. **What manner of child, etc.** *What, then*, in view of these wondrous events, *will this child be? The hand of the Lord, etc.*, the guidance, protection, and blessing of God, including the gracious influences of the Spirit. Luke here gives a glimpse of John's early history, intimating both the continued fulfilment of the angel's words (ver. 15), and also the realization of the expectations awakened among the people at his birth. He showed an unusual maturity and spirituality of character.

67. Filled with the Holy Spirit, Zachariah, in a strain of sacred rapture, **prophesied.** He spake as the prophets did of old, 1 Pet. 1 : 21. A prophet is one who is used by God as a medium of communicating his will, even though he may not predict any future events, Gen. 20 : 7; John 4 : 19. God has generally chosen holy men as prophets (ver. 70), yet sometimes he has inspired even wicked men, Num. 23 : 5; 24 : 17. The spirit of prophecy had ceased with Malachi, but now, after nearly four hundred years, it is again given.

68. The song of Zachariah is a hymn of thanksgiving and a prediction of John's relation to Christ. It is Messianic in its character. Christ is its theme, and it is John's glory to be his forerunner, ver. 76. Its structure is in the form of Hebrew poetry, and abounds in Hebrew idioms. Zachariah probably committed it to writing, and copies of it were very likely preserved in his family and among his friends. Luke

- For <sup>b</sup>he hath visited and redeemed his people; <sup>a</sup> ch. 7. 16; Ex. 4  
31; Ps. 111. 9.  
 69 <sup>c</sup>And hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in <sup>1</sup> Sam. 2. 1; Ps.  
18. 2; 132. 17;  
Eze. 29. 21.  
 the house of his servant David,  
 70 (<sup>d</sup>As he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets,  
 Which have been since the world began,) <sup>2</sup> Sam. 23. 2; Jer.  
23. 5, 6; Dan. 9.  
24; Ac. 3. 21-24; 2 Pet. 1. 21.

may have had one of these. See on ver. 2. The song consists of two parts: 1. Blessing God for the true spiritual salvation in fulfilment of his promises, vers. 68-75. 2. Presenting John as the prophet and herald of the Messiah, the preparer of his way, vers. 76-79.

**Blessed.** It seems natural to connect this immediately with ver. 64, and to suppose that when he first used his restored speech in blessing God he uttered this song under the inspiration and guidance of the Spirit. *To bless* God is not only to acknowledge and proclaim his infinite and eternal blessedness, but to render to him ascriptions of praise and thanksgiving. He blesses Jehovah, **God of Israel**, rather the *God of Israel*, being explanatory. See on ver. 16. The language here used was a form of blessing of long standing, Ps. 41 : 13; 72 : 18; 106 : 48. **Hath visited and redeemed.** Literally, *he visited and wrought redemption for his people*. In the spirit of prophecy Zachariah beholds an accomplished salvation through the Messiah, whose forerunner was now born; and so certain and so present before him is this salvation that he celebrates it as if already completed. The *redemption* here spoken of was the design of this visitation, and refers specially to the spiritual deliverance effected by Christ. The great idea in redemption under Jewish law was the payment of a price, or ransom. Thus a man was redeemed from death (Ex. 21 : 30) or from slavery, Lev. 25 : 51. Thus, Christ "gave his life a ransom for many," Matt. 20 : 28. See Gal. 3 : 13; 1 Pet. 1 : 18, 19. It is probable that Zachariah, like the Jews of his day, expected also a temporal deliverer, but we must conclude that, being filled with the Holy Spirit, he saw the Messiah as a spiritual Redeemer. Doubtless, however, he fell short of discerning the full meaning of his own prophetic words, like the old prophets in some cases, 1 Pet. 1 : 10, 11. The time had

not yet come for these full revelations to the human heart.

**69. And hath raised up an horn.** Literally, *And raised up*, etc. As in the preceding verse, Zachariah foresees the completion of the work now begun in the birth of the Messiah's forerunner.

The *horn* is a formidable weapon of beasts that are otherwise weak and defenceless, and is therefore a symbol of strength and defence. Ps. 132 : 17; Jer. 48 : 25; Mic. 4 : 13. It has no reference to "horns of the altar," which served as an asylum merely, 1 Kings 1 : 50; 2 : 28. A **horn of salvation** is a strong defender, a mighty deliverer, and here means a mighty Saviour, Acts 5 : 31. Compare the similar language of David, 2 Sam. 22 : 3. As the following verses show, he was to be mighty in saving his people and punishing his enemies. Zachariah also points to **the house**, the family, of **David**, from whence this mighty Deliverer should come, Ps. 132 : 17; Matt. 1 : 1; Acts 15 : 16. This shows that he was speaking of the Messiah, for John was not of David's line.

**70. As he spake**, etc. This verse is parenthetical. Notice that Mary ends her song (ver. 55), while Zachariah almost begins his, by alluding to the burden of ancient prophecy. While it is not strictly true to say, with Bengel, that Zachariah begins where Mary left off, yet his song goes beyond hers in the revelation of truth. Notice also that God *spoke* through his holy prophets: "Men spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit," 2 Pet. 1 : 21. See on ver. 67. The burden of prophecy had been the future Messiah. "The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy," Rev. 19 : 10. **Which have been since the world began.** It is better to translate simply, *Of old*. The reference is generally to the ancient prophets, and most naturally to all who uttered predictions regarding Christ. The first promise of a Redeemer was made by God himself in the garden, Gen. 3 :

- 71 <sup>1</sup>That we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us; <sup>1</sup>Deu. 33. 29; Is. 14 1-3; Jer. 23. 6.
- 72 <sup>2</sup>To perform the mercy *promised* to our fathers, And to remember his holy covenant; <sup>2</sup>Le. 26. 42; Ps 105. 8, 9; 105. 45, Eze. 16. 60.
- 73 <sup>3</sup>The oath which he sware to our father Abraham, <sup>3</sup>Ge. 22. 16, 17;
- 74 <sup>4</sup>That he would grant unto us, That we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies <sup>4</sup>Zeph. 3. 16; R. 6 18, 22; Heb. 9. 14.
- Might <sup>5</sup>serve him without fear, <sup>5</sup>Jer. 32. 39, 40; Eph. 4. 24; Tit 2. 11-14; 1 Pet. 1. 15; 2 Pet. 1. 4.
- 75 <sup>6</sup>In holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life.

15. This as Owen remarks, was "the fountain-head of the stream of prophecy, which flowed down the ages in an ever widening and deepening channel."

71. **That we should be saved,** etc. Literally, *Salvation from our enemies*. The thought in ver. 69 is now taken up after the parenthesis. *Salvation* is explanatory of and the result of "the horn of salvation" being raised up. This was a spiritual deliverance from spiritual enemies, since serving God "in holiness and righteousness all our days" (ver. 75) was to be the result of this salvation. Zachariah doubtless connected this with deliverance from the political oppression of Herod and the Romans, expecting national exaltation with the highest religious prosperity, like that in the days of David and Solomon. Yet notwithstanding his Jewish notions and the lower views of his times, it seems to us that he must, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, have been chiefly viewing a salvation from the galling bondage of individual and national sins.

72. The salvation mentioned in the preceding verse is further unfolded, and the purpose of God in raising up this mighty Saviour. **To perform the mercy,** etc. Rather, *To exercise or show mercy to our fathers*. The word **promised** in our common version is unnecessary. The blessed effects of this salvation extended to the fathers and all the righteous of the past. Their salvation was all of grace, John 8 : 56; Rom. 3 : 25; Heb. 9 : 15. **To remember his holy covenant,** his promises and agreement respecting the Messiah and his salvation. He remembered these for the sake of performing them. It was a *holy* covenant because originated in holiness and productive of

holiness in the saved, and especially because it was in itself holy, freed from all injustice and unrighteousness and from every imperfection, Rom. 3 : 26.

73. **The oath,** dependent on "to remember" and explanatory of "covenant." God remembers his oath for the purpose of performing it or granting its fulfilment. The oath which he swore to Abraham is found in Gen. 22 : 16, 18. Its highest reference was to Christ (Gal. 3 : 16), and all of it is fulfilled in Christ, Heb. 6 : 13-20.

74. **That he would grant unto us.** Literally, *To grant to us*—that is, in exercising mercy, remembering his holy covenant, and performing his oath to grant to us such a deliverance that we, without fear, may serve him in holiness, etc. The order of the words in the original is worthy of notice: *To grant to us, that without fear, being delivered from the hands of our enemies, we should serve him in holiness,* etc. It was of the greatest importance in the mind of Zachariah that they should serve God *without fear*, and hence he makes it prominent. Doubtless some reference is made to the fear of political enemies, since they had often interfered with God's service. "How many times had the Macedonians, and especially Antiochus Epiphanes and the Romans, hindered the Jews in the exercise of their worship!"—DE WETTE. It is a great blessing to be permitted, as in our own country, to serve God according to the dictates of our own conscience. But Zachariah, filled with the Spirit, looked beyond mere temporal deliverances; he saw a salvation from spiritual foes, an entering into a state, not of "bondage again to fear," but of spiritual Sonship (Rom. 8 : 15) and of spiritual liberty (Gal. 5 : 1), in which there would be

- 76 And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest; ¶ Is. 40. 3; Mal. 3. 1; 4. 5; Mt. 11. 10.  
 For thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways, ¶ ch. 3. 3; John 1. 15-17.  
 77 To give knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of their sins; ¶ Mk. 1. 4; Ac. 2. 38; 3. 19; 10. 43; Eph. 1. 7.

the privilege of serving God with a love that casts out fear, 1 John 4 : 18.

**75. In holiness and righteousness.** These words show the quality and extent of the service, *holiness* referring more especially to man's relations and duties to God, and *righteousness* to his relations and duties to his fellow-men. They comprehend all duty. The two words, however, overlap each other in their meaning, and are used to give fulness of expression. They are used in Eph. 4 : 24, just as here, of the new man created after God. The language shows that Zachariah spoke of the Messiah as a spiritual Saviour, and that the deliverance in the preceding verse was from sin. **Before him**, before God, which can be attained only by grace. Compare the phrase "righteous before God" in ver. 6. **All the days of our life.** According to the oldest manuscripts, *All our days*. In this service they should continue to the end of life, "kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation," 1 Pet. 1 : 5. It is God's power and faithfulness, not ours, that secure our perseverance.

76. Here commences the second part of Zachariah's song. After giving vent to his gratitude for the coming and blessing of the Messiah he now first mentions his son, whom he addresses in language of great beauty, yet he speaks of him only as the prophet and forerunner of him whose glorious mission and salvation he was celebrating. **And thou.** According to the most ancient manuscripts, *And thou also*. Thou also art to have a high and important office and work. **Shalt be called.** The meaning, as in ver. 32, is not only *shalt be*, but *shalt be recognized* as, **the Prophet of the Highest**, the messenger of God, Mal. ch. 3. That he was so recognized, see ch. 20 : 6. John was a prophet not only as a preacher of truth, but also as the foreteller of Christ's coming and of the vengeance that should befall the Jewish nation for

their impenitence and unbelief. Notice the pre-eminence of Jesus, who is styled "Son of the Highest" in ver. 32; John 1 : 8. The reason is given why he should be thus called, **For thou shalt go before the face**, etc. Like one going before an Oriental monarch, so John should immediately precede and prepare the way for the Son of the Highest. Christ first, John secondary. There seems to be a reference to the prophecy in Isa. 40 : 3 and Mal. 3 : 1. The divine nature of the Messiah is brought to view by the application of the name **Lord** to him—a word used in translating Jehovah in the Old Testament. **To prepare his way**, by awakening a sense of sin and leading the people to long, not for a temporal prince, but for a spiritual Saviour.

**77. To give knowledge of salvation.** This expresses the object of John's going before the Lord to prepare his ways, and may be translated, *In order to give knowledge*, etc. John awakened in the people a perception of their need of a spiritual emancipation and of the necessity of repentance and reformation of life, and pointed to Jesus as the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world, ch. 3 : 3; John 1 : 29. He thus taught and heralded the salvation which Christ was to bring, and put the people in preparation for it. There should be no comma after **people**. **By the remission.** Rather, *In the remission*, forgiveness, of sins. This is to be taken with what precedes, especially with *knowledge*. John was to give a knowledge of a salvation consisting in a forgiveness of sins. This was a grand excellence of the gospel (Eph. 1 : 7; Col. 1 : 14), and was beyond the reach of the old dispensation, Heb. 10 : 1-4, 11-18; Rom. 3 : 25, 26. Before Christ came there seems to have been no clear understanding of the method by which God could grant the full forgiveness of sins, and hence the knowledge of this was the great need of the Jews and of the world.

- 78 'Through the tender mercy of our God,  
Whereby the \*dayspring from on high hath visited us,
- 79 \*To give light to them that sit in darkness and in the  
shadow of death,  
To guide our feet into the way of peace.
- 80 And 'the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit,  
and \*was in the deserts till the day of \*his showing  
unto Israel.
- 'Is. 63. 7; Ep. 2. 4  
 5.  
 'Is. 9. 2; Mal. 4. 2.  
 'ch. 2. 32; Is. 49.  
 6, 9; Mt. 4. 16;  
 John 1. 9; 8. 12;  
 Ac. 26. 18; Eph.  
 5. 8.  
 'ch. 2. 40.  
 'Mt. 3. 1; 11. 7.  
 \*John 1. 31.

78. **Through the tender mercy.** Rather, *mercies*. The original is of strong import, meaning tender or yearning compassion, which is exercised toward the miserable. The knowledge and the remission of sins, as well as the salvation, are through God's tender mercies. All are of grace. **Whereby**—that is, by the mercy of our God and as its result. **Dayspring.** Literally, *The rising*, as of the sun, *the dawn* of a heavenly day. There is a reference to prophetic terms: "But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings," Mal. 4. 2. Compare Isa. 9 : 2; 49 : 6; 60 : 1-3. Both from this verse and the next it is evident that the reference is to the Messiah. **From on high**, from heaven or from God. Compare ch. 24 : 49; Eph. 4 : 8. Coming, not like the heavenly bodies, from beneath the horizon, but as it were from the very zenith. The reference, however, is rather to the place whence than to the manner of its coming. **Hath visited us.** Literally, *Visited us*. With prophetic vision, he sees the dawn already commenced and the Messiah already coming. Compare ver. 68.

79. The design of Christ's coming is given. **To give light to them**, to enlighten or illumine them **that sit in darkness**, of sin and ignorance, and **in the shadow of death**, the dark and terrible *death-shade*, that dismal darkness which reigns in the region of the dead, here the moral darkness of spiritual death, Matt. 4 : 16. Similar language is found in Isa. 9 : 1, 2; 60 : 1, 2. **To guide our feet.** The result of this enlightenment. **In the way.** *Into the way of peace*, that course of life which is attended with peace of conscience and leads to eternal peace. The gospel shows us the only way of peace with God. Thus Christ's coming is like the day-dawn that comes

to the benighted traveller in the darkness of the most dismal night, and enables him to pursue his journey in paths of peace and safety. How grandly closes this hymn "with a boundless prospect into the still partly hidden future"!

80. Luke now gives us a glimpse of John's private life, his development of both body and mind, his preparation for his peculiar work. The conclusion is similar to that in ch. 2 : 40; compare ch. 2 : 52. It may mark the end of one of those documents which Luke used under the direction of the Spirit, ver. 3. **And the child grew and waxed strong in spirit.** His physical growth and mental and spiritual attainments. Thus was he gradually fitted for the arduous work of preaching repentance to a wicked nation. **And was in the deserts**, in the thinly-inhabited districts of Southern Palestine. The word *desert*, or *wilderness*, in the New Testament, denotes merely an unenclosed, untilled, and thinly-inhabited district. It was applied to mountainous regions, to districts fitted only for pasture, and to tracts of country remote from towns and sparsely settled. Thus, away from the vices of the city, amid the wild scenes of nature, and in the seclusion of wilderness districts, John lived as a Nazarite (ver. 15), devoted to self-discipline and communion with God. He was in the wilderness when called to his work, ch. 3 : 2. There is no evidence that he came in contact with the Essenes, who dwelt in the neighborhood of the Dead Sea. **Till the day of his showing unto Israel**, the time of his public manifestation, the entrance upon his public ministry at about thirty years of age, ch. 3 : 2. His parents probably died when he was young; he was not taught in the Jewish schools; he did not appear in the service of the temple at an

age when he could have done so (compare Num. 8 : 24 ; 1 Chron. 23 : 27) ; but remained in retirement under the teachings of the Spirit till called to his appointed work.

#### REMARKS OR SUGGESTIONS.

1. Christianity is based on facts. These facts are handed down, not by oral tradition, but by inspired written documents. Thus oral tradition was deemed insufficient. Christianity is the only really historical religion, vers. 1, 2 ; John 3 : 11 ; 20 : 30, 31 ; 1 Cor. 15 : 8 ; 2 Tim. 3 : 16 ; 1 John 1 : 1-3.

2. There are certain truths which are believed by all true Christians. But each should seek to be guided into all truth, ver. 1 ; John 3 : 15 ; 6 : 40, 47 ; 16 : 13 ; 1 John 4 : 1-3.

3. Inspiration did not preclude the careful use of all available sources of information. Neither do the blessings of the Spirit render unnecessary research and all the means at our command in the study of God's word, vers. 2, 3 ; John 5 : 39 ; Acts 17 : 11 ; 1 Tim. 4 : 13.

4. If we would lead others into an assured faith, we must have an assured faith ourselves. The Scriptures are intended for this purpose, vers. 1, 4 ; Prov. 4 : 4, 5 ; Isa. 33 : 6 ; Acts 26 : 26-29 ; Rom. 10 : 17 ; 2 Tim. 3 : 16, 17.

5. Knowledge and faith mutually help each other. Faith leads to fuller knowledge, and true Christian knowledge increases and confirms faith, vers. 1, 4 ; Prov. 2 : 4, 5 ; Eph. 4 : 13 ; 2 Tim. 3 : 15 ; Heb. 11 : 1.

6. Pious parents are among the greatest blessings, ver. 5 ; 2 Tim. 1 : 5 ; 1 Kings 11 : 12, 13.

7. Religion consists not only in faith but also in practice, and pertains to both the heart and life, to both public and private duties, vers. 6, 7 ; Acts 24 : 16 ; 2 Cor. 5 : 21 ; Phil. 2 : 15, 16 ; James 2 : 14-18.

8. Many blessings are only deferred, not denied. They are thus the more prized, and received with greater thankfulness, vers. 7 ; Mark 7 : 27-30 ; Heb. 11 : 13, 14.

9. The way of blessing is in the path of duty, vers. 8, 9 ; Prov. 3 : 12 ; John 12 : 26.

10. Through the intercession of Christ in the heavenly temple our prayers ascend as the incense of the morning and evening sacrifice, vers. 8-10 ; Rom. 8 : 34 ; Heb. 7 : 24, 25 ; Rev. 5 : 8.

11. The ministry of angels. They may often be present now with God's worshipping people, vers. 11, 26 ; 2 : 9-13 ; Gal. 3 : 19 ; Heb. 1 : 14.

12. If the righteous Zachariah was troubled at the sight of an angel bringing glad tidings, how will the wicked tremble when the Lord of angels comes to judgment ! Sin is productive of fear, but perfect love casts out fear, ver. 12 ; Isa. 6 : 5 ; 2 Thess. 1 : 6-10 ; 1 John 4 : 18 ; Rev. 6 : 16.

13. God fulfils his purposes through the prayers of his people. Yet he often delays the answer for their good and his own glory, ver. 13 ; Ezek. 36 : 37 ; Dan. 9 : 1-4 ; Mark 15 : 22-28 ; Acts 10 : 4 ; Eph. 3 : 20.

14. Pious children are a joy both to parents and to God's people, ver. 14 ; Ps. 118 : 15.

15. True greatness is greatness in the sight of the Lord. It will be our highest honor if we can have some connection with Christ's work of saving the world, ver. 15 ; 1 Sam. 16 : 7 ; Luke 7 : 28 ; Rom. 12 : 3 ; 1 Tim. 1 : 12.

16. Very young children may be converted, ver. 15 ; Jer. 1 : 5 ; Ps. 8 : 2.

17. Those who would lead others to Christ should be filled with the Spirit, vers. 15, 16 ; Eph. 5 : 18 ; Rom. 12 : 6-8.

18. A work similar to that of John must be repeated by every one who would find Christ. A conviction of sin must precede a trust in Christ as our Sin-bearer, vers. 16, 17 ; Matt. 3 : 2 ; Mark 1 : 15 ; Luke 24 : 47 ; Gal. 3 : 24.

19. Was Zachariah's unbelief unreasonable when an angel spake ? How much more unreasonable our unbelief when the Son of God utters words of eternal life ! vers. 18, 19 ; John 16 : 9 ; 1 John 5 : 9-11.

20. Beware, lest through unbelief you may be left for a time to spiritual dumbness in your praises, joys, and hopes, ver. 20 ; Num. 20 : 12 ; Mark 16 : 14 ; John 20 : 24, 25 ; Heb. 3 : 12.

21. If God so chastened one of his holiest servants on account of a single act of unbelief, what shall be the pun-

ishment of those who by an evil heart and a life of unbelief reject Christ entirely and for ever! ver. 20; John 3 : 36; Rom. 1 : 18; 2 Thess. 2 : 12.

22. Under chastisement we should continue so far as we may be able in the performance of duty, vers. 21-23; Hab. 3 : 17, 18; Heb. 12 : 11-13.

23. Chastisement is not a sign that God has forsaken his people, but rather that he would remember them in mercy, vers. 22-25; Ruth 1 : 20, 21; 4 : 14, 15; Heb. 12 : 9-11.

24. When God greatly blesses us, we should avoid all ostentation, and with thankfulness acknowledge and improve his mercies, vers. 24, 25; Ps. 85 : 8; Acts 20 : 19; 26 : 19, 20.

25. How precious is God's *look* of mercy! ver. 25; Ps. 25 : 18; 80 : 14; Luke 22 : 61.

26. Gabriel was the first announcer of the glad tidings at Jerusalem and at Nazareth. What an honor should we esteem it to be to announce a Saviour to our fellow-men! vers. 13-17, 26; 1 Tim. 1 : 12; 1 Pet. 1 : 12.

27. God in his sovereignty chooses whom he will for the enjoyment of peculiar honors and blessings. He passes by the palaces of kings and the houses of the worldly wise, and selects the weak of the world to confound the mighty, vers. 27, 28; Matt. 11 : 25, 26; 1 Cor. 1 : 27, 28; 2 Tim. 2 : 18.

28. The blessings and honors upon Mary were all of grace, the unmerited favors of God. She cannot, therefore, be an original source of grace to others, vers. 28, 30, 47; John 1 : 17; Acts 4 : 12.

29. Faith supports the troubled heart and leads to thoughtful inquiry, ver. 29; Dan. 7 : 15, 16; Acts 10 : 4.

30. Those who have found favor with God need not fear the inhabitants of the heavenly world, ver. 30; Mark 16 : 6; Heb. 1 : 14.

31. It was proper that Jesus should be called the Son of God, both because God was the immediate author of his human body and soul, and because in him were united the divine and human, so that "the Word" who "was in the beginning with God," and "was God," "was made flesh and dwelt among us," vers. 31, 32, 35; John 1 : 1, 14; 1 Tim. 3 : 16.

32. Christ is a King, and his king-

dom has no end. While the kingdoms of earth are rising and falling, his kingdom, despite all opposition, advances to final victory, ver. 33; Dan. 2 : 44; 7 : 14; Rev. 11 : 15.

33. Christ's kingdom consists of spiritual Israel, ver. 33; ch. 17 : 21; John 18 : 36; Rom. 2 : 29; 14 : 17; Gal. 3 : 9.

34. It is proper to join with faith a solicitude as to how the will of God may be done, ver. 34; Ps. 25 : 4, 14.

35. Jesus was the second Adam, and to engraft his new humanity upon the old and degenerate stock required power as great as that displayed in the first creation, ver. 35; 1 Cor. 15 : 45-47.

36. Jesus is the only "holy thing" born into the world since the fall. As none other has been so begotten as he, so no others have been free from that taint of a corrupt nature common to our race, ver. 35; Ps. 51 : 5; Rom. 3 : 10-12.

37. God aids our faith by giving us all needed evidence of his truth, vers. 36, 37; ch. 16 : 31.

38. God's omnipotence affords a complete answer to modern skepticism regarding miracles, ver. 37; Matt. 19 : 26; 22 : 29.

39. We honor God by believing his promises and thankfully accepting his gifts with humble submission, rather than by pleading our unworthiness, ver. 38; Rom. 4 : 20, 21.

40. When we have received God's blessing, we love to tell it to others. Especially do those who have recently found Christ. They should also seek the advice and encouragement of older Christians, vers. 39, 40; Ps. 66 : 16; Mark 5 : 19.

41. The communion of saints is a blessed privilege to be sought after and cultivated, vers. 39, 40; Mal. 3 : 16; Phil. 1 : 3-5.

42. When the Holy Spirit fills the heart, the tongue is aroused to utterance, vers. 41, 42, 67; Acts 2 : 4, 17, 18; 10 : 46.

43. Christ is the great theme of saints of all ages, vers. 42, 43, 69, 70; 1 Pet. 1 : 10, 11; Rev. 19 : 10.

44. How great the blessings of prompt and signal faith! Not one of God's promises shall fail, vers. 44, 45; Josh. 21 : 45; 23 : 14; 1 Kings 8 : 56; Luke 7 : 9; John 20 : 29.

45. Praise to God is the natural and

spontaneous result of faith. With our clearer knowledge of Christ we have greater reason to praise God than Mary had, ver. 46; Phil. 1 : 25; Heb. 13 : 15; 2 Cor. 4 : 13.

46. The believer can find his greatest joy in Christ. Mary's chief joy, above that of a mother, was in her spiritual relationship to her Saviour, ver. 47; ch. 8 : 21; Heb. 3 : 18; Phil. 3 : 1; 4 : 4.

47. It is a cause of thanksgiving and great joy to be made a blessing to others, ver. 48; 1 Tim. 1 : 12.

48. Blessings should make us humble. Thus will they prove blessings indeed, ver. 48; Gen. 32 : 10; Isa. 57 : 15; James 4 : 6, 10; 1 Pet. 3 : 5, 6.

49. We owe our salvation to God's holiness as well as to his power and mercy, vers. 49, 50; Ps. 22 : 3-5; 89 : 35-37.

50. Believers are the objects of God's special mercy in all ages, ver. 50; 1 Tim. 4 : 10.

51. Pride is opposed to God and must be renounced or punished, ver. 51; Dan. 4 : 37; 1 Tim. 3 : 6; James 4 : 6; 1 John 2 : 16.

52. The exaltation of the wicked will only make their downfall the greater, ver. 52; ch. 18 : 14; Prov. 16 : 18.

53. It is not the self-satisfied but the spiritually hungry that shall be filled, ver. 53; Isa. 41 : 17; 57 : 15; Matt. 5 : 6; John 4 : 14; Rev. 3 : 17, 18.

54. God's blessings upon his people are in accordance with his purposes of mercy, ver. 54; Eph. 1 : 9; 3 : 11.

55. God's promises are of certain fulfillment; so are his threatened judgments, ver. 55; 2 Cor. 1 : 20-22; 2 Pet. 3 : 9.

56. We should rejoice in the good that God bestows upon others, ver. 58; Ps. 107 : 42; Prov. 24 : 17; Rom. 12 : 15.

57. "The birth of John a sign of God's faithfulness and truth," ver. 57, 58, 76-79.

58. The only circumcision which is ever of any spiritual profit is that of the heart, ver. 59; Rom. 2 : 29; Col. 2 : 11. Compare Deut. 10 : 16; Jer. 4 : 4; 9 : 26.

59. In Christ's kingdom we are not to consult the customs of the world, but God's word and will, vers. 59-63; John 18 : 36; Gal. 1 : 10; 2 : 11; 1 John 2 : 15-17.

60. Believing obedience is the perfection of faith, ver. 63; Heb. 11 : 33; James 2 : 22.

61. Blessings are found in the way of obedience, vers. 63, 64; Acts 5 : 32; Heb. 5 : 9; 1 Pet. 1 : 22.

62. Through faith the heart, the mouth, and the hands are opened, vers. 63, 64; Rom. 10 : 10.

63. The wonderful works of God should arouse the heart to thoughtfulness, anxiety, and reverence, ver. 65; Dan. 5 : 6; Ps. 71 : 16, 17; Acts 5 : 11; 11 : 19.

64. Circumstances in infancy and childhood often indicate the future of children, ver. 66; Ex. 2 : 2, 6; 1 Sam. 2 : 26.

65. We are spiritually dumb until the Spirit opens our mouths, ver. 67; Isa. 35 : 5, 6; Ezek. 24 : 27; 29 : 21.

66. Redemption should ever call forth the highest praise from God's people, ver. 68; Ps. 31 : 5; 71 : 23; 130 : 7; Rev. 5 : 9.

67. The Holy Scriptures present a unity in regard to Christ and all truth, ver. 70; ch. 24 : 27.

68. Salvation and free forgiveness are made known only in Jesus Christ, vers. 71-73; Ps. 130 : 4; Acts 5 : 31.

69. God never forgets his promises, vers. 72, 73; 1 Kings 8 : 56; Isa. 49 : 15.

70. The service of Christ is one of freedom, and not of bondage, ver. 74; Rom. 8 : 15; Heb. 12 : 18-24.

71. Salvation includes perseverance, and perseverance rests upon God's gracious purpose and promise, and is inseparably connected with the earnest effort of the soul in the way of righteousness, ver. 75; Rom. 8 : 28; Phil. 1 : 6; 1 Pet. 1 : 5; 1 John 2 : 19.

72. Our relation to Christ fixes our condition in the spiritual world, ver. 76; ch. 2 : 34.

73. There is no salvation without forgiveness of sins, and no forgiveness without experimental knowledge of Christ, ver. 77; John 17 : 3; Acts 13 : 38; Eph. 1 : 7.

74. Jesus is the Sun of righteousness to the darkened and the manifestation of divine truth to the guilty, vers. 78, 79; Zech. 9 : 12; Mal. 4 : 2; 1 Cor. 1 : 20, 21; 2 Pet. 1 : 19; Rev. 22 : 16.

75. True peace is found only in Jesus, ver. 79; Isa. 48 : 22; Rom. 5 : 1; Eph. 2 : 14.

*The birth of Jesus at Bethlehem.*

II. And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Cæsar Augustus, that <sup>b</sup>all the world <sup>Ac. 11. 28; 17. 6,</sup> should be taxed. (<sup>c</sup>And this taxing was first made <sup>19. 27.</sup> <sup>Ac. 5. 37.</sup>

76. Growth in spirit the best and most important of all growth, ver. 80; *Prov.* 3 : 17; *Rom.* 6 : 23; *1 Tim.* 4 : 8.

77. An inward preparation is needed for outward activity. Retirement, self-examination, prayer, and the study of God's word are indispensable, ver. 80; *ch.* 6 : 12, 13; *Gen.* 32 : 24-30; *Ps.* 1 : 2; 63 : 6; *Col.* 4 : 2.

CHAPTER II.

The last chapter closes with a brief reference to the growth and private life of John. Luke now returns to a period a little after John's birth, and relates the birth of Jesus at Bethlehem with attending circumstances (vers. 1-20)—his circumcision (21); his presentation in the temple, where he is welcomed by Simeon and the aged Anna with grateful praises and prophetic utterances (22-38); the return of Joseph and Mary with Jesus to Nazareth, where, under the favor of God, he spends his childhood (39, 40); his visit to the temple at the passover when twelve years of age (41-50); his return to Nazareth, where in subjection to his parents he spends the remaining years of his private life (51, 52).

1-7. THE BIRTH OF JESUS AT BETHLEHEM. *Matt.* 1 : 25. Matthew's account (1 : 18-24) of the angelic appearance to Joseph in a dream comes in between this and the preceding chapter. In this paragraph Luke shows how Jesus came to be born at Bethlehem, though Mary resided at Nazareth. In the accomplishment of the divine purposes "the king's heart is in the hand of the Lord," *Prov.* 21 : 1.

1. In those days. While the events related in the preceding chapter were occurring. Shortly after John's birth, there went out a decree. An edict was issued or promulgated. Cæsar Augustus. The first Roman emperor, nephew of Julius Cæsar, born B. C. 63, died A. D. 14, at the age of seventy-six, after a long and prosperous

reign of forty-four years. The title Augustus—the venerable, the majestic—was conferred upon him by the Senate, and was applied to his successors, *Acts* 25 : 21, 25. The title Cæsar was assumed by him, and also applied to Roman emperors after him. In the New Testament we find it applied to Tiberius (*ch.* 3 : 1), to Claudius (*Acts* 17 : 7), to Nero, *Acts* 25 : 8; 26 : 32. All the world, or all the inhabited earth. The Roman empire, which at that time embraced nearly all the civilized and known world, and which was very commonly spoken of as "all the world." The phrase seems to have been used sometimes in a restricted sense, meaning the land of Judea and adjacent countries. This may be the sense in *Acts* 11 : 28. But there is no necessity here of restricting the meaning.

Should be taxed. Literally, *Should be inscribed, enrolled, registered.* The names and number of inhabitants, with their families and estates, should be registered for the purpose of either taxation or of recruiting the army. From Tacitus (*Ann.* i. 11) we learn that Augustus prepared a statistical register of the whole empire, which took many years to complete. Such a document in his own handwriting was read to the Senate after his death, in which were the revenue and expenditure of the empire and the military force of the citizens and allies. Herod the Great was an ally, but dependent on Augustus. "Augustus did, in fact, contemplate the introduction of a uniform system of taxation throughout the whole Roman empire."—OLSHAUSEN. The time was most favorable for a general census, and most fitting for the birth of the Prince of peace, when the whole world was at peace, except some troubles in Dacia, and the emperor was in the full enjoyment of his power.

2. And this taxing. Rather, *This registering or census.* Was first. The most natural and obvious rendering is, *Was the first made, etc., from which it*

3 when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.) And all  
4 went to be taxed, every one into his own city. And

may be inferred that there was another census under Cyrenius, which was indeed the case about ten years later, the one mentioned in Acts 5 : 37.

**When Cyrenius was governor of Syria,** at Antioch. *Cyrenius* is the Greek form of the Latin name *Quirinus*. His full name was *Publius Sulpicius Quirinus*. He died at Rome, A. D. 21. *Syria* was then a Roman province, whose boundaries are somewhat uncertain. Its general boundaries were the Euphrates on the east, the Mediterranean on the west, Palestine on the south, Cilicia and Mount Amanus on the north. After the banishment of Archelaus, A. D. 6, Judea was added to the province of Syria (*Joseph. Antiq.*, xviii. 1, 1), the governor of the former being responsible to that of the latter.

According to *Josephus (Antiq.*, xvii. 13, 5; xviii. 1, 1), *Cyrenius* became governor of Syria, A. D. 6, when he took a census in Judea, which excited the opposition related by Luke in Acts 5 : 37. It appears, therefore, that Luke here refers to a census about ten years earlier, which was commenced during the last days of Herod the Great, before Palestine became a Roman province. And *J. Von Gumpach*, in his "Gospel Narrative Vindicated," shows that several statements of ancient authors point to such an enrolment at this very time. How, then, could Luke say that this registering was made when *Cyrenius* was governor of Syria? This difficulty has been solved in various ways, among which the following are the best: (1) *Cyrenius* may have been at the head of an imperial commission of the census for Syria, and in this wider sense he might popularly be styled governor. A very serious objection to this is the special and localizing term, "of Syria." It is doubtful whether the Greek phrase, "governor of Syria," can bear such a meaning. If, however, he became governor before completing the census, the objection falls to the ground. (2) By supposing that *Cyrenius* was twice governor of Syria. The researches of *A. W. Zumpt* have rendered it highly probable that this was the case, and that his first governorship extended from about B. C. 4 to B. C. 1. The ob-

jection to this is that the first governorship of *Cyrenius* began just after Herod's death, and thus a little late for the census here mentioned. To this it may be replied that Herod commenced the census, but dying it was completed by *Cyrenius*, and that thus it became known by his name. (3) It seems to me, however, that the two theories just mentioned may be combined. *Cyrenius* may have been specially commissioned by the emperor to take charge of the census of Syria, and while attending to it became for a time the actual governor. Herod also may have begun a census upon the order of Augustus. His kingdom, though not a Roman province, was dependent on Rome and practically amenable to its edicts. Thus we find this census marked with both Roman and Jewish characteristics, the former in the registering of women and children, the latter in obliging each one to be registered in the place whence the family sprang, rather than that of actual residence. But Herod dying, the census was completed while *Cyrenius* was the first time governor of Syria, and under his direction or co-operation. The first census under *Cyrenius* was that of a Roman ally, though dependent; the second was that of a Roman province, and hence more humiliating, and probably with more special reference to the taxation of property. It is a fact worthy of notice that *Jesus* was born just when the power and authority of Rome began thus to be acknowledged by every inhabitant of the land. It was a precursor of departing power. *Shiloh*, the Prince of peace, comes, and the sceptre, with the banishment of Archelaus, departs from Judah, Gen. 49 : 10. See author's *Harmony of the Gospels*, note on § 9.

3. **All the people of Palestine. Into his own city.** The city of his ancestors. The census was thus taken partly after the Jewish method. Each Jew went to the headquarters of his family to be enrolled, where the ancestral records were kept. See preceding verse. Accordingly, *Joseph* went to Bethlehem (ver. 4), since he was of the family of *David* and Bethlehem was *David's* ancestral home. *Luke's* reason for

<sup>a</sup> Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of <sup>o</sup> the city of Nazareth, into Judæa, unto <sup>t</sup> the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; <sup>ε</sup> because he was of the  
 5 house and lineage of David: to be taxed with Mary <sup>b</sup> his espoused wife, being great with child.  
 6 And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered.

<sup>a</sup> ch. 1. 26, 27.  
<sup>o</sup> 1 Sam. 20. 6; Mic 5. 2.  
<sup>t</sup> 1 Sam. 16. 1, 4. John 7. 42.  
<sup>ε</sup> ch. 1. 27; Mt. 1. 16.  
<sup>b</sup> ch. 1. 27; Mt. 1. 18.

mentioning this census appears to have been to show how it was that Jesus was born at Bethlehem. Cæsar prompted, but God's purpose directed, the census. "To locate an infant's birth, sixty millions of persons are enrolled."

4. **Joseph . . . Galilee . . . Nazareth.** See on ch. 1: 26, 27. **Went up.** The usual expression in speaking of going from Galilee to the more elevated region of Jerusalem and Judea. With this physical elevation may be associated the idea of greater political, social, and spiritual privileges and standing.

**Bethlehem** signifies "house of bread"—fitting name where "the Bread of life" was born—so called perhaps on account of its fertility. It was a small town about six miles south of Jerusalem, and about seventy-six south of Nazareth. The earliest notice of it is in Gen. 35: 16-20, when Jacob was bereaved of his beloved Rachel. It is called the **city of David** because it was his birthplace (1 Sam. 16: 1) and the seat of his ancestral home. It was the scene of the touching story of Ruth. It lies to the east of the main road from Jerusalem to Hebron, and is situated on an eminence. "The hill has a deep valley on the north and another on the south. The west end shelves down gradually into the valley, but the east end is bolder, and overlooks a plain of some extent. The slopes of the ridge are in many parts covered with terraced gardens shaded by rows of olives with figs and vines, the terraces sweeping around the contour of the hill with great regularity. On the top of the hill lies the village in a sort of an irregular triangle."—*Hackett Smith's Dictionary*. Modern travellers speak of the fertility of the surrounding region, and estimate the population of the present town at about three or four thousand.

**Because** introduces the reason for their going to Bethlehem. **The house and lineage, family, of David.**

*House* refers more properly to the *household*, but *family* to a division of the tribe, which might include several households. The two words give an emphatic expression to Joseph's connection with and descent from David. The custom of being enrolled at the headquarters of the family was one of the things in that chain of circumstances which resulted in the fulfilment of prophecy at Bethlehem.

5. **To be taxed, registered, ver. 1. With Mary.** This may mean either that Joseph went up to be registered, accompanied by Mary, or that Mary went up to be registered as well as Joseph. The Roman poll-tax under the emperors was levied upon both males and females; the former after the age of fourteen, the latter after the age of twelve. Doubtless, according to Roman custom, it was not always necessary for women to be personally present in order to be enrolled, and Mary had a good excuse for remaining at home. Yet at a time when so many were leaving their homes, and the country was so unsettled, it was natural that Joseph should keep his wife under his own protection, especially as she was not in a condition to be left behind. Mary too may have been actuated by a strong love for the city of her ancestors, and with the belief that the prophecy of Micah (5: 2) was about to be fulfilled, Matt. 2: 6. Some suppose that Mary went up to be enrolled as an heiress (Num. 36: 7), but this is uncertain. **Espoused, betrothed.** **Wife** is omitted in the oldest manuscripts. The Jews regarded betrothed persons as husband and wife, Matt. 1: 19, 20. The expression here is consistent with Matt. 1: 24, but implies that they had not yet entered upon the full relations of husband and wife.

6. **While they were there,** waiting either for the proper officer to register them or till their own turn came. It is probable that they had not waited

7 And 'she brought forth her first-born son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn. <sup>Is. 7. 14; Mt. 1. 25; Gal. 4. 4.</sup>

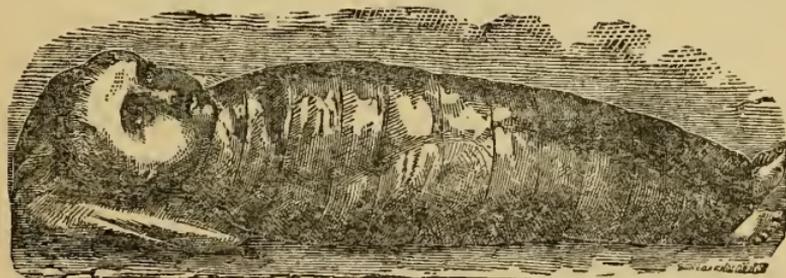
long, as they were occupying a temporary lodging-place.

7. **Her first-born son.** The question whether Mary had other children is in itself a matter of little moment, except as the Papists have argued and decreed her perpetual virginity. That she afterward had other children seems to me highly probable, ch. 8 : 20; Matt. 13 : 55; Mark 6 : 3. This passage, indeed, affords a presumption that she had, or at least shows that there was nothing repugnant in the idea. **Swaddling clothes,** or *swathing bands.* Cloths and bands which were wrapped around infants at their birth. The language indicates that Mary did this herself.

Dr. H. C. Fish when in Bethlehem said, "I saw again here how habits cling to places; for the babe of one of the women whom I met on the street was actually swaddled up like a

mummy, as here pictured. The design is to secure a straight form, besides being a matter of convenience in transportation (much as our Indians wrap their 'papposes' and lash them to their backs). The habit is common in Bethlehem and elsewhere—perhaps less so, however, than that of confining the babes just as closely in a kind of *cradle*, in which I have often seen them carried into the fields, to lie there, unable to move, while the mother is at her work. Sometimes the swaddling bands cover feet and head, leaving only a breathing-place."—*Bible Lands Illustrated*, p. 365.

**A manger,** or *crib*, a hollow place for food, a feeding-trough in a stable, Isa. 1 : 3. "The mangers are built of small stones and mortar, in the shape of a box, or rather of a kneading-trough; and when cleaned up and whitewashed, as they often are in sum-



SWADDLED BABE IN BETHLEHEM.

mer, they do very well to lay little babes in. Indeed, our own children have slept in them in our rude summer retreats on the mountains."—DR. THOMSON, *The Land and the Book*, vol. ii., 98. It is implied that Joseph and Mary had for their lodging-place a stable or outhouse where animals were housed and fed. The reason is given, **Because there was no room,** etc. So many had come from different parts of the land to be registered. Besides, all the room at the inn was probably secured by those of more property and worldly influence. Moreover, Joseph

had found it necessary to travel slowly on Mary's account. Others could easily pass them. Bengel quaintly remarks, "Even now there is seldom place for Christ in inns." Dr. Farrar (*Life of Christ*, p. 4) found himself late one night at the khan (or *inn*) Hulda, where he was compelled to find accommodations in the court-yard, amid the litter, the closeness, the unpleasant smell of the crowded animals, the unwelcome intrusion of dogs, and the necessary society of the lowest hangers-on. **The inn,** implying that there was but one in the small city of Beth-

*Angelic Announcement to the Shepherds.*

8 And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock

lehem, was very unlike a modern hotel. It was probably but little more than a large enclosure where the traveller might sleep, stable his beasts, and deposit his goods, furnishing, however, his own bed and food. Such inns, called khans, are common in the East. "The building is commonly of stone, built round an open square, with sheds or stalls for cattle, and over these, often, are chambers for travellers. At these caravansaries we saw whole caravans of horses, mules, camels, and men from different quarters take up their lodgings for the night."—M. W. JACOBUS, *Notes on Luke*. Sometimes there are separate stalls for cattle in the rear, under a shed running all along behind the walls. Some suppose that it was in one of these rear stables that Joseph and Mary were compelled to lodge. "Undoubtedly the true conception of the history is that the holy family, excluded from the part of the caravanserai allotted to travellers, repaired to that part where the animals were; and the birth taking place there, the new-born child was laid in one of the feeding-troughs within reach."—DR. HACKETT on "Crib," *Smith's Bible Dictionary*, Am. Ed.

But others, regarding the stables as a part of the inn, suppose the town so crowded that Joseph and Mary found no shelter except in some peasant's stable, which may have been so rude and poor that none of the strangers thought it good enough to occupy. But this supposition, though possible, is not necessary. It was perfectly natural, after finding no lodging-place within the inn, to have found it in one of the stables or outhouses. We must also divest ourselves to a certain extent of our feelings respecting stables. These were often arranged under the same roof with the house, and servants often lodged in the same with the cattle. "To this day, both in Bethlehem and other Syrian cities, kitchen, parlor, and stable are frequently under the same roof, and often without a partition between them. In going from Jerusalem to Nablous I stopped with a Christian at Beeroth, near Bethel. His dwelling

was a one-story house. Within was a raised platform not two feet high, on which was arranged the furniture of his home; at the foot of the platform was a space four feet wide and extending the whole depth of the building, which was the stable, and in one corner stood his ass. And in a neighboring house a woman was kneading dough on the platform, and a little girl was holding an infant, and two feet from them stood the ass, with his elongated head thrust into a stone manger excavated in the solid rock."—DR. J. P. NEWMAN, *From Dan to Beersheba*, pp. 221, 222.

A very early tradition affirms that Jesus was born in a cave in or near Bethlehem. Such natural grottoes are sometimes used as stables in Palestine. In the year A. D. 327 the mother of Constantine built the present chapel over the cave which was then regarded as the probable birthplace. In a cave beside it the learned and eloquent Jerome spent thirty of his declining years (died A. D. 420) in study, fasting, and prayer. There is nothing, however, in Scripture to make it certain that Jesus was born in a cave, and it must not be forgotten that ecclesiastical tradition has always been prone to fix the site of remarkable events in caves and grottoes.

8-20. AN ANGEL ANNOUNCES THE BIRTH TO CERTAIN SHEPHERDS, WHO THEREUPON VISIT THE INFANT SAVIOUR. The shepherds unite with the heavenly hosts in celebrating the wondrous event.

8. In the same country, district, or neighborhood. Region near Bethlehem. There David had tended sheep. **Shepherds.** Men of a hardy and humble calling, but of true piety, as we may infer from their after conduct, with spiritual longings for the coming of the Messiah. The calling and office of shepherd has been highly honored. Christ styles himself "the good Shepherd" (John 10: 11); and is called "the great Shepherd of the sheep," Heb. 13: 20.

**Abiding in the field.** *Remaining or living in the open fields or open air.*

9 by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon

They were living, after the custom of shepherds, under the open sky. This does not necessarily exclude the idea of tents in connection with their encampment. But in that climate, during the months usually allotted to the pasturing of flocks in the open field, exposure by night, with proper precautions, was neither dangerous nor unpleasant. The word in the original does not decide whether it was a plain or a hillside. A plain about a mile east of the town is the traditional scene of this event; but being very rich, it was probably cultivated, and not left to lie in pasturage. This has been regarded as the site of Migdal Eder, or "tower of the flock," a watch-tower not far from Bethlehem, built for the use of herdsmen in watching and guarding their flocks, Gen. 35 : 21. The prophet Micah mentions this name and Bethlehem with Messianic expectation, Mic. 4 : 8 ; 5 : 2. Its site, however, is unknown. The shepherds do not appear to have been in this tower at this time. But it was a central place to which they could resort in times of danger and on special occasions. They were probably on one of the neighboring hills, where shepherds and flocks are seen at the present day. **Keeping watch over their flocks**, etc. Literally, *Keeping watches of the night over their flocks*; taking their turns at the several night-watches. The night was now divided into four watches, Matt. 14 : 25. The sheep were kept under the open sky by night as well as by day, it being thought conducive to the excellence of the wool. The watchers guarded the flocks against robbers and wild beasts, and prevented any of the sheep or lambs from straying away. **By night**. The natural inference is that Jesus was born in the night.

**CHRONOLOGICAL.** The exact day and year of the Saviour's birth cannot be ascertained with certainty. Dionysius the Small, a Scythian by birth, and an abbot at Rome in the year A. D. 526, fixed the birth of Christ to the 754th year of Rome. This is the era from which we commonly reckon. But it has long been admitted that Dionysius made an error of at least four years.

For Jesus was born before the death of Herod the Great (Matt. 2 : 1, 19), which took place about the 1st of April, in the year of Rome 750. This is definitely fixed by an eclipse of the moon which is mentioned as occurring a little before his death. This eclipse, by astronomical calculation, took place on the night of the 12th and 13th of March, in the year of Rome 750, or four years before our common era. But Jesus was born somewhat earlier. For the coming and visit of the wise men, the stratagem of Herod, the murder of the infants, and the flight and exile in Egypt must have occupied several months, Matt. 2 : 16. This would seem to indicate that the common era is too late by about five years.

But greater uncertainty hangs over the day of Christ's birth. Luke's account does not favor the 25th of December, which is not the time in Palestine when shepherds live with their sheep night and day in the open fields. The seasons, however, vary greatly in different years; and recent statements of travellers concerning the climate in Palestine show that in favorable seasons shepherds may be out with their flocks more or less at certain times between the middle of December and the middle of February. While, therefore, I could not regard the 8th verse of this chapter as decisive against the view that Christ was born in the winter, yet I think it rather favors the view that his birth occurred either in the spring or autumn. But more important is the fact that the census (vers. 3, 4), which made it necessary for men and women to repair to the homestead of the family, thus occasioning long and innumerable journeys, would hardly be carried on in mid-winter. The 25th of December, moreover, was not celebrated as Christmas until the fourth century. "It originated in Rome, and was probably a Christian transformation or regeneration of a series of kindred heathen festivals, the Saturnalia, Sigillaria, Juvenalia, and Brumalia, which were celebrated in the month of December in commemoration of the golden age of universal freedom and equality, and in honor of the unconquered sun, and

them, and <sup>k</sup>the glory of the Lord shone round about  
 10 them; <sup>l</sup>and they were sore afraid. And the angel  
 said unto them, Fear not; Behold, I bring you  
<sup>m</sup>good tidings of great joy, <sup>n</sup>which shall be to all  
 11 people. <sup>o</sup>For unto you is born this day in the city  
 of David <sup>p</sup>a Saviour, <sup>q</sup>which is Christ the Lord.  
 12 And this *shall be* a sign unto you; Ye shall find the  
 babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a man-  
 10; Dan. 9. 24, 25; Mt. 16. 16; Ac. 2. 36; 10. 36; 1 Cor. 15. 47; Phil. 2. 11.

<sup>k</sup> Ex. 16. 10; 24. 16  
<sup>l</sup> Ki. 8. 11.  
<sup>l</sup> ch. 1. 12.  
<sup>m</sup> Is. 52. 7; 61. 1.  
<sup>n</sup> vers. 31, 32; ch  
 24. 47; Ge. 12. 3  
 Is. 49. 6; Mt. 28  
 19; Ro. 15. 9, 12.  
<sup>o</sup> Is. 9. 6.  
<sup>p</sup> Mt. 1. 21; 2 Tim  
 1. 9, 10.  
<sup>q</sup> ch. 1. 43; Ge. 49

which were great holidays for slaves and children."—DR. P. SCHAFF. But earlier in the third century there was no agreement in regard to the day, some putting it on the 20th of May and others on the 20th of April. Oriental Christians in the third and fourth centuries kept the 6th of January as the day of our Saviour's birth and baptism. It seems to me more probable, in view of all the circumstances, that his birth took place in the autumn. It is, however, an historical fact that early Christians did not commemorate the birth of Christ. Their great day was the resurrection day, the Lord's Day. If God had designed that Christ's birthday should be celebrated, he would have revealed it. See author's *Harmony of the Gospels*, pp. 242-245, § 9. Also compare author's *Notes on Matthew*, ch. 2.

9. **Lo, Behold**, introduces something unexpected and wonderful. **The angel**, *An angel*. Who it was is neither said nor implied. **Came upon them**, stood by them, appeared in a visible form standing above them. The idea is that of a sudden and unexpected appearance, ch. 24 : 4; Acts 23 : 11. **The glory of the Lord**. That surpassing lustre and brightness which in former ages had been the token or symbol of God's presence, Ex. 24 : 16; Num. 14 : 10; Matt. 17 : 5. They were overshadowed and surrounded with the divine effulgence. **They were sore afraid**. Literally, *They feared a great fear*, they were greatly terrified. There was a glory attending the angel beyond anything that Zachariah or Mary had seen, ch. 1 : 11, 28. The supernatural and the holy naturally produce awe in mortal and sinful man, ch. 5 : 8; Matt. 17 : 6; Ex. 20 : 19; 33 : 20; Judg. 13 : 22.

10. **Fear not**. Be not affrighted. For he was a messenger, not of bad, but

of good tidings. There was no need of slavish fear now that the Messiah had come. **I bring you good tidings**. The same verb as in ch. 1 : 19, and very often translated elsewhere "preach the gospel." An angel is the first to announce to the world that the Saviour had actually come. **Of great joy**, which shall be a matter and occasion of great joy. **To all people**. Rather, *To the whole people*—namely, of Israel, to whom the message was to be first proclaimed, though not exclusively intended for them. According to the spirit of this announcement, the shepherds afterward make known the message to others. While the message is limited here, the blessings of it are general in ver. 14.

11. **Unto you**. To you and to all to whom the coming of Christ shall be an occasion of great joy. The birth of the Saviour satisfies a felt want in each individual soul. **City of David**. Bethlehem, David's native city and Christ's promised birthplace, Mic. 5 : 2; Matt. 2 : 5, 6. **A Saviour**. See on ch. 1 : 47. He was called Jesus, which means Saviour, Matt. 1 : 21. He saves men from the power and penalty of sin. **Christ**, the official name of Jesus, means *anointed*, and corresponds with the Hebrew *Messiah*. From such passages as Ps. 2 : 2; Dan. 9 : 24, 25, it became common among the Jews to apply it to the expected deliverer, John 1 : 41; 4 : 25. He was the anointed Prophet, Priest, and King of spiritual Israel, of the kingdom of God. **Lord**. The Jews thought the name Jehovah too sacred to pronounce, and substituted for it in their oral reading a term which the Greek translators of the Old Testament rendered by this word *Lord*. Whenever, therefore, a Jew met this word *Lord* in the Greek translation of the Scriptures, he at once recognized it as

- 13 ger. 'And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,
- 14 'Glory to God in the highest, and on earth 'peace, 'good will toward men.
- 'ch. 1. 79; Is. 9. 6, 7; Ro. 5. 1; 2 Cor. 5. 18-20; Eph. 2. 14-18; Col. 1. 20.  
'John 3. 16; Eph. 2. 4, 7; 2 Thes. 2. 16; 1 John 4: 9, 10.
- 'Ge. 28. 12; 32. 1, 2; 1 Ki. 22. 19; Dan. 7. 10; Heb. 1. 14; Rev. 5. 11.  
'Is. 44. 23; John 17. 4; Eph. 1. 6; 3. 10, 21; Rev. 5. 13

equivalent to Jehovah. Its application here, without reserve or explanation, indicates Christ as Jehovah, Isa. 9: 6. In verse 9 Jehovah is spoken of twice as Lord. Compare Acts 2: 36; 10: 36; Ep'1. 1: 22; Col. 3: 24; Rev. 19: 16.

We have in this verse three names of Jesus: *Saviour*, indicating his saving work; *Christ*, referring to his divine appointment and anointing; *Lord*, pointing to his supreme dignity as Sovereign of the universe, the Jehovah of the Old Testament.

12. **This shall be a sign.** Rather, *The sign.* As in the case of Mary (ch. 1: 36), a sign is promised where none was asked. God anticipated their necessity; they were to be witnesses and proclaimers of the wonderful event; his lowly condition was also a trial of their faith. **Ye shall find the babe.** Rather, *A babe.* There would be but one babe so poorly provided for in Bethlehem. The angel did not tell them everything, but left something for faith to supply. They believed, went, and *found*, ver. 16. **Wrapped in swaddling clothes, etc., Swathing bands, etc.** See on ver. 7. This was a most fitting token of him who was to be the Man of sorrows, the Friend of the poor, and without even a place to lay his head. His lowly condition was adapted to dispel any fears which these humble shepherds might have in approaching a new-born king, counteract worldly views of his kingdom, and excite their sympathy for one so great in nature and yet so humble in earthly estate.

13. **Suddenly**, just as the angel had finished speaking. **There was with the angel.** This heavenly host, or celestial army, having been caused to fly swiftly, were at once with him, by his side and about him. This is a more natural interpretation than to suppose that they had been present, but till now unseen by mortal eyes. A host of angels is represented in the Old Testament as forming the body-guard of Deity, 1

Kings 22: 19; Ps. 103: 21; Dan. 7: 10. The glory of the Lord (ver. 9) was the first token to the shepherds of the divine presence; now, the angelic host. This was an *array*, not for war, but for praise and peace. **Praising God.** At the incarnation of his Son. Compare Heb. 1: 6. Angels shouted for joy at creation (Job 38: 7), ministered at the giving of the law (Deut. 33: 2; Acts 7: 53; Gal. 3: 19), and now, with more reason than ever, exult at the advent of the Saviour. They transfer "the employments of their higher existence to this poor earth, which so rarely echoes with the pure praise of God."—OLSHAUSEN.

14. This verse is to be regarded not only as a doxology, an expression of praise and honor to God, but also as a proclamation and confirmation of glorious tidings to the shepherds, and through them to men. **Glory to God.** Praise, honor be to God, which is his due. Words of joyful acclamation, of gratitude, admiration, and hearty good will. The angels celebrate the incarnation of the Messiah as an accomplished fact; and with Alford we may very properly include the two senses of the expression, *There is* and *let there be glory*. The one sense really implies the other. **In the highest.** In the highest heavens, in the immediate presence of God, where praise ascends in most exalted strains. That which the shepherds heard was but a small part of the great volume of ascending praise. There were no creatures so exalted that the birth of Christ did not afford them a subject of joy. That God the Son should take the nature of our fallen race, redeem it, and glorify it, was a new revelation of God's mercy and a wonder to the heavenly hosts, 1 Pet. 1: 12; 1 Tim. 3: 16. Fallen angels had been left to their doom, Jude 6, but the race which they would have destroyed is made the subject of a glorious salvation. Earth is to be redeemed and heaven is to have an accession of an

15 And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath  
 16 made known unto us. And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in  
 17 a manger. And when they had seen *it*, they made

innumerable multitude of the highest created intelligences.

**Peace on earth.** Peace of conscience, peace of the soul with God, and a spirit of peace toward man. The prevalence and practice of the gospel will bring peace to our world. **Good will.** Good will on God's part, the favor and benevolence of God toward men, or more exactly, *among men*. God's favor in the gift and blessings of a Saviour is thus brought down to earth and among men for their participation and enjoyment. This clause explains and amplifies the preceding one, showing the divine and heavenly nature of the peace on earth. The good will is not limited here to any one nation, but is extended to and among men generally.

According to several of the oldest manuscripts the Greek, *good will*, is in a different case from the above, which makes the last portion of the verse read, *And on earth peace among men of his good will*—that is, among the chosen people of God, in whom he is well pleased, Eph. 1 : 5, 9. This reading is also favored by the Latin Vulgate and supported by the Latin Fathers generally, and preferred by the Revised and Improved versions, though putting the other reading in the margin. Yet the reading of our Common version is favored by the Syriac versions and many documents, and supported generally by the Greek Fathers. Between such conflicting testimony it is difficult to decide. Both readings present pure and unmixed truth; but our common reading gives the more simple and natural meaning of the word translated *good will*, and is more in harmony with the first part of the doxology, which is very comprehensive and universal.

15. **As the angels**, etc. Immediately the shepherds resolve, **Let us now go**, or *Let us go at once, even unto Bethlehem, as far as to Bethlehem*,

the place designated by the angel, ver. 11. The expression indicates that they were a little distance from the city, and may imply that it was not their home, ver. 20. **And see this thing**, literally *word*—that is, this thing spoken of; see on ch. 1 : 37. **Which is come to pass**, etc. The words of the shepherds are not those of doubt, but of belief and obedience. They would at once see the sign (ver. 12), and in the path of duty have their faith confirmed. They long to behold the wondrous One whose advent had just been foretold.

16. **They came with haste**, before the night was over, leaving their flocks to the care of Providence (ver. 8), showing how strong and hearty their faith. **And found.** As had been foretold, ver. 12. How they found the Messianic family is not told us. We need not suppose, with some, that the stable belonged to these shepherds, nor, with others, that the angel gave them minute directions regarding it. The shepherds doubtless knew that there were many strangers in Bethlehem; they at once seek the inn, and under a general divine guidance they find the child. Very possibly they found it necessary to search somewhat. God doubtless required of them, as of us, the exercise of reason and mental effort. Searching would make the joy in finding the greater. **Mary and Joseph.** Mary is mentioned first as chief in honor. She and her husband had doubtless been sorely tried by the humiliating circumstances of that night; but how cheering to them was this unexpected visit of these shepherds, and the news that the heavenly hosts were rejoicing over the birth of a Saviour! **A manger.** Rather, *The manger*, the one spoken of in vers. 7, 12.

17. **When they had seen it.** Having viewed the wonders of this whole scene, satisfied with the sign, and that the babe was indeed the infant Saviour

known abroad the saying which was told them con-  
 18 cerning this child. And all they that heard *it* wondered  
 at those things which were told them by the shepherds.  
 19 \*But Mary kept all these things, and pondered *them*  
 20 in her heart. And the shepherds returned, glorifying  
 and praising God for all the things that they had  
 heard and seen, as it was told unto them.

\* ver. 51; ch. 1. 66;  
 Dan. 7. 28.

*Circumcision of Jesus; his presentation in the temple;  
 prophecies of Simeon and Anna.*

† ch. 1. 59; Gen. 17.  
 12; Le. 12. 3.  
 John 7. 22; Ro.  
 15. 8.

21 † AND when eight days were accomplished for the

Faith is again called into exercise, and rewarded, for the angel had spoken a little indefinitely, "a babe," ver. 12. The shepherds not only told Mary and Joseph, but they made known abroad, gave a full account of the angelic message to persons in the vicinity both before and after their departure. The shepherds were doubtless of little influence, and probably only a small number heard them; and only those who were waiting for the Consolation of Israel would be deeply impressed. It was not intended that report of the birth of Jesus should then be spread abroad, like that of John, in "all the hill-country of Judea," ch. 1 : 65. Enough saw and heard to be witnesses of the fact, the place, and the time.

18. The effect of this glorious intelligence upon those that heard, upon Mary, and upon the shepherds themselves is given in this and the two following verses. All that heard it wondered. They were amazed, astonished at hearing so strange an account, for they had not looked for the Messiah to come in so humble a manner.

19. But Mary kept all these things, which the shepherds had spoken of, in her memory. She laid them up in her mind, *pondering*, comparing this thing with that in her heart. "Memory, mind, and heart were combined in the service of faith." The silent pondering of Mary contrasts strongly with the wonder of those mentioned in the preceding verse. While they may have forgotten it either wholly or partially, it continued a fruitful theme in her thoughts and a continual helper of her faith. Joseph is not now mentioned, but he doubtless participated in her feelings and hopes.

20. Returned, to their flocks and their calling. The wonderful revela-

tion did not withdraw them from their common duties, but rather caused a joyful attention to them. **Glorifying and praising God.** This was the effect upon the shepherds. Like the angelic hosts, they give glory to God, assured that they had seen the fulfillment of the angel's prediction and that the child was indeed the Messiah. It is natural to suppose that Joseph and Mary related to them some things regarding the babe, and that this also confirmed the faith of the shepherds. Indeed, this is implied in the phrase, **heard and seen; heard** from Joseph and Mary of the events related in ch. 1 : 20-38; Matt. 1 : 18-25; *seen* the babe lying in a manger. **As it was told**, by the angel. This can be made also to include what they had learned from Mary and her husband. This account of our Lord's birth bears upon every line the evidence of simple, honest truth in striking contrast to the fanciful legends of the spurious and apocryphal gospels. Uninspired men would have written differently, but God's word comes in the majesty of simple truth; his light shineth quietly, like stars in the darkness.

21. THE CIRCUMCISION OF JESUS. Matthew (1 : 25) mentions the naming, but not the circumcision, of Jesus. It is worthy of note that Luke relates the circumcision of Jesus far more briefly than that of John, ch. 1 : 59-80. The attending circumstances will in part account for this. John was at the home of his well-known and honored parents. Zachariah was dumb, and his restored speech came at the moment that he designated and decided what the name of the child should be, in obedience to the angel. But Jesus and the parents were among strangers. Mary had already spoken her song of praise, ch. 1 :

circumcising of the child, his name was called **JESUS**, which was so named of the angel before he was conceived in the womb. \* ch. 1. 31; Mt. 1  
21, 25.

- 22 And when **the days of her purification** according to the law of Moses were accomplished, they brought him to Jerusalem, to present *him* to the \* Le. 12. 2-6.

46-56. There was no need of anything but the simple act of circumcision. Luke therefore states the fact, but gives it no special prominence. So was it wisely ordered, since there would be a liability among Christ's followers to make too much of this ancient rite.

**When eight days were accomplished**, when the child was eight days old. The eighth day was the time for circumcision, Gen. 17 : 12. See on ch. 1 : 59. While it is implied that Jesus was circumcised, his naming is the principal thing here recorded. But why was he circumcised? Because he was of the Jewish nation and a descendant of Abraham, Gen. 17 : 13, 14; Lev. 12 : 3. "In all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren," Heb. 2 : 17; "Yet without sin," Heb. 4 : 15. He was "made" or *born* "under the law" (Gal. 4 : 4), and "in the likeness of sinful flesh" (Rom. 8 : 3); he became willingly a debtor to the law and gave it a perfect obedience, Gal. 5 : 3. He must "fulfil all righteousness," Matt. 3 : 15. But circumcision also symbolized the cutting off and putting away of sin, Col. 2 : 11. His submission to it pointed to his putting away the sin of the race. As the one who was "made sin for us" (2 Cor. 5 : 21), he began even now to suffer on account of the nature he had taken.

22-38. **JESUS IS PRESENTED IN THE TEMPLE.** SIMEON AND ANNA RECOGNIZE AND PROPHECY OF HIM. The purification and the offering. The presentation and the prophetic testimony.

22. **The days of her purification.** According to the oldest manuscripts and the highest critical authorities, this should read, *The days of their purification*—that is, of Mary and the child. It seems to me far-fetched and unnatural to refer *their* to Joseph and Mary, as a few interpreters do. Joseph, as reputed father, had no need of the purification. Although the conception was miraculous, yet the birth was natural; and though Jesus was without impurity,

yet he was made sin for his people. Thus they both came under the law of purification. But aside from this, as Jews they came under the letter of the law. Their purification was legal, not moral. It behooved Jesus to be made like unto his brethren (Heb. 2 : 17) and subject to the law that he might be fully qualified to redeem those under the law. **According to the law**, etc. See Lev. 12 : 1-8. **Accomplished, fulfilled, or completed**, were fully past. The days of purification for a son would be forty days from his birth; for a daughter eighty days; immediately upon the completion of which the mother was to bring her offering of purification, Lev. 12 : 6. So also runs the Jewish canon: "She brings her offering on the morrow, which is the forty-first day for a male, and the eighty-first for a female."

The twofold reason for going to Jerusalem is now stated—to present Jesus, a first-born child, and to offer the required sacrifice of purification. **To present him to the Lord**, as a first-born son, and to redeem him from the special service of the temple. See on next verse.

**Jerusalem**, the capital and most noted city of Palestine; mentioned much more frequently by Luke than by the other evangelists. Jerusalem signifies dwelling or foundation of peace. It was once called Salem, and was the abode of Melchizedek (Gen. 14 : 18; Ps. 76 : 2), but afterward Jebus, Judg. 19 : 10. The latter name was probably applied specially to the hill Zion, which when reduced by David was also called the city of David, 2 Sam. 5 : 6, 9. After it came into the possession of the Israelites, the sacred writers apply Jerusalem to the whole city as its common name. It was built on four hills: Zion, on the south, which was the highest, and contained the citadel and palace; Moriah, on the east, on which stood the temple; and Aera and Bezetha, north of Zion and covered with the largest portion of the

23 Lord; (as it is written in the law of the Lord,<sup>b</sup> Every  
 24 male that openeth the womb shall be called holy to  
 the Lord); and to offer a sacrifice according to that  
 which is said in the law of the Lord, A pair of tur-  
 tle-doves, or two young pigeons.

<sup>b</sup> Ex. 13. 2; Num  
 3. 13.

city. Jerusalem is near the middle of Palestine, about thirty-five miles from the Mediterranean, and about twenty-five miles from the Jordan and the Dead Sea. Its elevation is 2610 feet above the former sea, and 3927 feet above the latter. It has been taken and pillaged many times, so that ancient Jerusalem is really a buried city, the surface of the ground at present being from fifty to a hundred feet above what it was in the time of David or of Christ. The valleys have been filled by the destruction of buildings and bridges, and by other rubbish, mostly during the last eighteen centuries, since the destruction of the city by the Romans, A. D. 70, though doubtless in part by the sieges and sacks of the six centuries before the Christian era. The modern city is called by the Arabs *El Khuds*, "the holy," and contains about fifteen thousand inhabitants, mostly poor and degraded.

23. **In the law of the Lord.** The passage here quoted is Ex. 13 : 2. **Called holy to the Lord,** esteemed specially devoted to the divine service. This claim to the service of every first-born son arose from the sparing of the first-born of the Israelites when the destroying angel slew the first-born of the Egyptians, Ex. 13 : 11-15. The tribe of Levi was soon after chosen for this special service (Num. 3 : 12, 13), and the members of the other tribes were to redeem their first-born by presenting them to the Lord, thus recognizing his claim, and paying five shekels as a ransom, Num. 18 : 15, 16. This could be done as early as a month old; but in the case of Jesus it was deferred till the day of purification, thus saving at least one journey of six miles from Bethlehem to Jerusalem. Compare on ver. 39. Some very strangely quote this passage in favor of infant baptism—a passage which refers only to the first-born under the old dispensation. Such support shows the weakness of the cause and the want of scriptural proof.

24. This verse is connected with ver. 22, the intervening one being parenthetic

and explanatory of the last clause of ver. 22. **To offer a sacrifice.** The priest met the mother at the eastern gate of the temple, received her offerings and sacrificed them upon the altar, and returned and sprinkled a little blood on her and pronounced her clean. The sacrifice consisted regularly of a lamb for a burnt offering and a dove or pigeon for a sin offering, Lev. 12 : 6. But if the mother was not able to bring a lamb, then she was permitted to bring two doves or pigeons, one for a burnt offering and the other for a sin offering, Lev. 12 : 8, the passage here quoted. Mary felt herself a sinner; she also in the temple publicly acknowledged her poverty. Thus in his birth Jesus became poor, 2 Cor. 8 : 9. The offering, however, does not necessarily indicate such poverty as to prevent the supposition that she may have possessed some small plot of ground at Bethlehem or at Nazareth. Their absence from home may have deepened their poverty. **Turtle-doves.** Their name appears to have



TURTLE-DOVE.

been derived from their plaintive cooing. "Their low sad plaint may be heard all day long at certain seasons in the olive-groves, and in solitary and shady places among the mountains. . . . So subdued, so very sorrowful among the trees, where the air sighs softly, and the little rills roll their melting mur-

- 25 And, behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon; and the same man was <sup>o</sup>just and devout, <sup>d</sup>waiting for the consolation of Israel: and
- 26 the Holy Spirit was upon him. And <sup>e</sup>it was revealed unto him by the Holy Spirit, that he should not <sup>f</sup>see
- 27 death, before he had seen <sup>g</sup>the Lord's Christ. And he came <sup>h</sup>by the Spirit into the temple: and when

<sup>o</sup>ch. 1. 6.  
<sup>d</sup>ver. 33; **Is.** 25. 9  
 40. 1; **Mk.** .5. 43  
<sup>e</sup>Ps. 25. 14.  
<sup>f</sup>Ps. 89. 48; **Mt.** 16.  
 28; **John** 3. 51,  
 52; **Heb.** 11. 5.  
<sup>g</sup>Ps. 2. 2.  
<sup>h</sup>**Mt.** 4. 1; **Ac.** 8.  
 29; 10. 19.

lours down the flowery aisles."—DR. THOMSON, *The Land and the Book*, vol. 1., p. 416. They are wild and timid, and never have been fully domesticated. David in his plaintive lament likens himself to a turtle-dove, Ps. 74 : 19. Compare Isa. 59 : 11; Jer. 48 : 28; Ezek. 7 : 16. Its first mention in Scripture is in Gen. 15 : 9, where Abram is commanded to offer it in sacrifice. They were very abundant in Palestine, and their young could be easily found and captured by those who did not possess pigeons. **Young pigeons.** Pigeons have been domesticated in Palestine from very early times, and to this day are very abundant in all the towns and villages.

25. Luke now passes on to relate the recognition of Jesus as the promised Messiah by the representatives of the law, and their prophetic words regarding him. **Simeon** is supposed by some to be the great rabbi of that name, who became president of the Sanhedrim about A. D. 13, and was the father of Gamaliel, the teacher of Paul, Acts 23 : 3. There is wanting proof of this. Besides, Luke would most probably have made some mention of this, instead of speaking of him indefinitely, a **man**. It is true that he speaks of Gamaliel as "a Pharisee" in Acts 5 : 34, yet not without implying his membership and authority in the Sanhedrim, and stating that he was "a teacher of the law, honored by all the people." Simeon seems to have resided at Jerusalem, and to have occupied a more private sphere. It is common to speak of him as very aged; he may have been, but the narrative does not necessarily make him so. The proof is not so explicit as in the case of Zachariah (ch. 1 : 18), and especially of Anna, ver. 36. See on vers. 28, 29.

**Just and devout.** *Righteous* in observing the law and in the discharge of duties, and *religious* or *pious* in his disposition toward God. **Waiting for,**

with earnest longing and expectation. He was living a life of faith; he expected to see in life the object of his faith. **The consolation of Israel.** A phrase common among the Jews, descriptive of the Messiah, from whom consolation comes, based upon such passages as Isa. 40 : 1; 49 : 13; 52 : 9; 66 : 13; Lam. 1 : 16; Zach. 1 : 17. So also the phrase, "the days of consolation," was common, signifying the days of the Messiah. A common mode of oath was, "May I never see the consolation." This conception of the Messiah was that of one coming to comfort the people of God in their afflictions. *Israel* here means spiritual Israel. There was a general expectation among the Jews of the speedy coming of the Messiah. Most, however, looked for a temporal deliverer; a few only, like Simeon, waited for a spiritual Saviour. **The Holy Spirit was upon him.** The Holy Spirit of prophecy was upon him, as was also the case with Zachariah and Anna. Prophecy revived at the conception and birth of Christ.

26. **It was revealed unto him.** Probably not by a dream, as in the case of Joseph (Matt. 1 : 20), nor by an angel, as to Zachariah and Mary (ch. 1 : 11, 26), but more probably by an inward illumination and assurance of **the Holy Spirit**. The return of the spirit of prophecy, absent since the days of Malachi, was a sign of Christ's coming. **He should not see death**—that is, he should not die. This is similar to the phrase, "Shall not taste of death" (Matt. 16 : 28), shall not experience death. This does not necessarily imply that Simeon was an old man. **The Lord's Christ.** Better, *The Christ of the Lord*, the anointed One of the Lord, Ps. 2 : 2.

27. **He came by the Spirit.** The same Spirit which had revealed to him that he should see Christ leads him by a special impulse into the temple at **the**

- the parents brought in the child Jesus, <sup>1</sup>to do for him  
 28 after the custom of the law, then took he him up in  
 his arms, and blessed God, and said,  
 29 Lord, <sup>k</sup>now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace,  
<sup>1</sup>according to thy word:  
 30 For mine eyes <sup>m</sup>have seen thy salvation,  
 31 <sup>n</sup>Which thou hast prepared before the face of all  
 people;

<sup>1</sup> ver. 22.<sup>k</sup> Ge. 46. 30.<sup>1</sup> ver. 26.<sup>m</sup> ch. 3. 6; Ps. 106

4, 5; 119. 123; Ia

52. 10.

<sup>n</sup> Ps. 98. 2, 3.

proper time. It was probably not at the customary hour of worship. **Into the temple**, not the inner sanctuary, for none but priests could enter this, but the outer sacred enclosure; very possibly, the court of the women. Anna enters soon after, ver. 36. **To do for him after the custom of the law**, offer the sacrifice and pay the redemption money mentioned above.

28. **Then**. When the parents brought in the child Jesus. **Took he him up**. He, is emphatic, as distinguished from the parents. It is also implied that he did this of his own accord. Moved by the divine Spirit, he at once recognized Jesus, and in him the fulfilment of that well-known prophecy that the desire of all nations should come into his temple (Hag. 2 : 7), and *he took him into his arms*.

**Blessed God**. Gave glory to God in ascriptions of adoration and praise. He fervently pours out his grateful heart to God.

29. **Lord**, a different word from that usually translated Lord in the New Testament, but used several times of God (Acts 4 : 24; Rev. 6 : 10) and twice of Christ, 2 Pet. 2 : 1; Jude, ver. 4. When thus applied, it denotes supreme power and absolute authority. Simeon addresses God as his sovereign Lord, his **supreme Master**, calling himself his servant. **Now lettest thou**, etc. Better, *Now thou lettest thy servant depart*, or *Now thou dismisstest thy servant in peace*. This is not a prayer, but a prophetic declaration. Having enjoyed the fulfilment of God's promise in seeing the Messiah, he declares his readiness to be released from his earthly service whenever God may call him. Before this he knew that life was certain until he saw the Christ; now he knows that death may come at any time, and probably very soon. The sight of the Messiah formed the climax

of his hopes; death now will be but a dismissal from earthly service. Yet this language does not necessarily imply that Simeon was an aged man. In middle life, under such circumstances and emotions, he could have uttered these words. **In peace**. There may be an allusion to the custom of saying when parting, "Go in peace," ch. 7 : 50. Simeon can now die in *peace*—in that happy state of mind resulting from an assurance of God's favor and from having seen the Messiah, in whose salvation and glory he is a happy partaker. He had a deep view of Christ, as is evident from vers. 34, 35. **According to thy word**. According to God's gracious promise, ver. 26.

30. **For**. In this verse and the two following Simeon gives the reason for the declaration in the preceding verse. **Mine eyes have seen**. Literally, *My eyes saw*. An expressive phrase. Compare Job 19 : 27. "Even his hands held him, but Simeon adapts his words to those of the promise, ver. 26."—BENGEL. But he saw more than a child; he saw God's salvation, the Saviour of the world. **Thy salvation**. Coming from God, and Godlike. Christ is styled that which he accomplishes. This is one of the Old Testament designations of the Messiah, Isa. 52 : 10. Simeon's soul was so imbued with ancient prophecies that his expressions are formed from their words. Compare Isa. 49 : 6; 60 : 1-3; 61 : 11.

31. **Which thou hast prepared**. More exactly, *Which thou preparedst* in thy purposes, and in the types, shadow and prophecies of four thousand years, and at length in the birth of this child Jesus. **Before the face**, in the sight of all people. Rather, *Of all the peoples*, all the nations, Gentiles as well as Jews, Isa. 11 : 10. The Sun of righteousness (Mal. 4 : 2), like the natural sun, was to shine upon the whole earth.

- 32 **A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel.** ° Is. 9. 2; 42. 6; 60  
1-3; Mt. 4. 16  
Ac. 13. 47; 28. 28
- 33 **And Joseph and his mother marvelled at those** P Is. 45. 25; 60. 19.
- 34 **things which were spoken of him. And Simeon blessed them, and said unto Mary his mother, Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising again of** ° Is. 8. 14, 15; Mt.  
21. 44; Ro. 9. 32  
33; 1 Cor. 1. 23,  
24; 2 Cor. 2. 16  
1 Pet. 2. 7, 8.

32. Christ, who is *thy salvation* in ver. 30, is here a **light**, John 1 : 4; Isa. 42 : 6. **To lighten the Gentiles.** Better, *For a revelation to the Gentiles*, revealing the way of life to them that sit in darkness and the shadow of death. **The glory of thy people Israel.** It is the highest honor of Israel to have been related to the Messiah; his salvation, extending to the ends of the earth, is their highest glory. From such passages as this we may learn that those who were waiting for the Consolation of Israel had spiritual views of Christ, and expected that Gentiles would be partakers of his spiritual blessings. Such, indeed, was the teaching of prophecy, and the pious of those days appear to have so understood it. Men like Simeon, however, under the special influences of the Holy Spirit, doubtless saw clearer and deeper.

33. **And Joseph and his mother.** According to the highest critical authorities, *And his father and mother.* Joseph is spoken of as his father in a legal and popular sense. He was so legally as the husband of Mary and in the eyes of the people. Jesus, however, never speaks of him as his father, ver. 49. **Marvelled at those things,** etc. They *wondered*, not so much at the things said, as at the unexpected manner and time of their utterance. The words of Simeon and also of the shepherds are to them very significant in connection with the miraculous birth of Jesus, but more surprising was it to them that the spirit of prophecy was again revived, and that it was so suddenly manifested in different individuals.

34. **Blessed them.** Joseph, Mary, and the child. Bengel does not include Jesus, and refers to Heb. 7 : 7. But Simeon speaks as a prophet, and affectionately invokes the blessing of God upon them. "On the principle 'the less is blessed of the greater' (Heb. 7 : 7), Simeon here appears exalted above the Saviour, just as do John, who baptizes him, and the rabbins, whom Jesus

questions, ver. 46. In his human development the Saviour takes his place among men according to the ordinary stages of human development. As a child, therefore, he is *really* a child, and consequently in subordination (ver. 51) to those in the more advanced stages of life, yet in every period of his life, and in each stage of his gradual development, he unfolds himself sinlessly, and thus exhibited in each separate stage its pure ideal of excellence."—OLSHAUSEN.

**Said unto Mary his mother.** He directs his discourse particularly to her, because she was his only real parent and would naturally feel more interest in the child than any other human being, and also because he was about to speak of that which personally concerned her. **This child is set for, or appointed for.** Child is not in the original, but this refers emphatically to the child, as if he pointed to him still in his arms or just returned to the arms of his mother. "Simeon seems to be at a loss, as it were, what name to call this great and illustrious person by, and therefore it is left to be supplied."

—DR. GILL. **The fall and rising again,** etc. Rather, *The fall and rising of many in Israel.* He is appointed as the occasion of the fall of some by their rejecting him, and the means of the rising of others through faith in him. So it had been foretold of him, Isa. 8 : 14, 18; 28 : 16. Simeon seems to have understood these prophecies, and may have had them in mind. Compare Rom. 9 : 33; 1 Pet. 2 : 6-8. The figure is that of a stone by which some will fall and others rise. Jesus develops the idea of falling in Matt. 21 : 44. Mary may have thought that the Messiah would be welcomed by all Israel. Simeon intimates that Jesus will divide Israel and the world, and prepares her for trial and personal sorrow. We have here the first hint in the New Testament of the opposition which Christ would receive in the world. Simeon shows

- many in Israel; and for <sup>a</sup>a sign which shall be spoken  
 35 against; (yea, <sup>a</sup>a sword shall pierce through thy own  
 soul also,) <sup>a</sup>that the thoughts of many hearts may be  
 revealed.
- 36 And there was one Anna, <sup>a</sup>a prophetess, the  
 daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of <sup>γ</sup>Aser: she was

<sup>a</sup>Ps. 69. 9-12; Is. 8.  
 18; Mt. 11. 19;  
 Ac. 28. 22.  
<sup>γ</sup>Ps. 42. 10; John  
 19. 25.  
<sup>a</sup>John 7. 12, 40-43;  
 9. 16; 10. 19-21.  
<sup>a</sup>Ex. 15. 20.  
<sup>γ</sup>Ge. 30. 13.

remarkable breadth of view. Beyond the songs of Elisabeth, Mary, and Zachariah, he exhibits clear views of a suffering and triumphant Saviour, and announces the universality of Christ's mission for Gentiles as well as Jews (vers. 31, 32), according to the fully-developed teaching of the apostolic age.

**And for a sign, etc.** Here is an intimation of the opposition to Christ which reached its highest point at the crucifixion. The word translated *sign* is one of the names applied to a miracle, pointing to its design as an evidence, a divine token, ch. 23 : 8; John 4 : 48. Jesus in his life and death was a miraculous manifestation, bearing with himself the evidences of his own divine mission. He was indeed a sign to all, believers and unbelievers. But especially a sign by his life and doctrines, exciting the hostility of the wicked. **Spoken against**, refers not merely to words, but also to acts, and extends to the underlying hostile disposition.

35. **Yea.** Rather, *And*, joining this clause closely to the preceding. **A sword.** The word properly refers to a broad, long sword used especially by the Thracians, and carried from the right shoulder. **Shall pierce through thy own soul also.** The clause of which these words form a part are the only words of Simeon addressed directly to Mary. It has been variously interpreted. A very common explanation among earlier expounders, such as Tertullian, Origen, Basil, etc., refers it to a pang of unbelief which shot through her soul on seeing Jesus crucified. Epiphanius and Lightfoot suppose it to refer to her death by martyrdom. But we have no evidence that Mary died a martyr. Olshausen and Alford refer it to the pangs of sorrow for sin which Mary must also experience in the exercise of repentance and faith in Christ her Saviour. But the more common view among modern interpreters is to be preferred, which refers it to the

bitter agony of soul with which she should behold the sufferings of her divine Son, John 19 : 25. It was indeed a terrible trial both of her faith and of her maternal feelings. This is the most natural explanation. For Jesus as a sign spoken against, and Mary pierced through by a sword, are closely connected; and since the one finds the most striking fulfilment on the cross, so also does the other in connection with that event. The sword indeed began to touch her when the contradiction of sinners against Jesus began, but it was not till Jesus was really delivered into the hands of men and crucified that it entered deep and pierced through her soul. Connected with this course of Christ's suffering there must have been religious suffering in her case, a trial of faith, a deep sense of the evil of sin, a looking away to the Saviour for salvation. But to make this experience the principal thing referred to by Simeon seems unnatural. See DR. A. THOLUCK, *Light from the Cross*, pp. 93-109.

**That the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.** Literally, *In order that the thoughts out of, or from, many hearts may be revealed or made known.* According to some interpreters, this clause is simply dependent on what precedes; but I prefer the common punctuation, putting the preceding clause in a parenthesis and making this dependent on ver. 34. The end and object of this treatment of Christ is the revealing of the secret depths of the heart, the bringing out of the true characters and thoughts of men. What think ye of Christ? is the test question. He that is not for him is against him. The inmost disposition of the heart is shown by the way in which Christ is treated, John 15 : 23; 1 Cor. 16 : 22; 1 John 4 : 2, 3. From these words of Simeon it appears that he had a clearer view of Christ's sacrificial work than any of the disciples before the resurrection of Jesus.

of a great age, and had lived with an husband seven  
37 years from her virginity; and she *was* a widow of  
about fourscore and four years, which departed not  
from the temple, but served *God* with fastings and

36. **Anna**, meaning *grace* or *prayer*, the daughter of **Phanuel**, which means *face of God*, compare Gen. 32 : 30, 31. All that we know of these individuals is stated here. It is somewhat remarkable that the name of her father and not of her husband is given. The reason may be twofold. Her father may have been among those who waited for the Consolation of Israel; he is also spoken of as a person of considerable note, and probably much better known than her husband, who died young. **Aser**, *Asher*. Judah, Benjamin, and Levi are the only tribes mentioned as returning to Jerusalem (Ezra 1 : 5), but many of the other tribes returned from exile with their brethren and retained their genealogies. This is a proof, however, that the tribal relations were still held in affectionate remembrance among the people. **A prophetess**. She was one of those whom the Holy Spirit moved to utter God's truth and will. This was evidently not the only time when she spake under the movings of the Spirit.

**Of great age**. Far advanced in years. **And had lived with an husband seven years**, etc. Her tender fidelity to the memory of the husband of her youth is here brought to notice. The Jews held in high honor persons of this class, 1 Tim. 5 : 3, 5, 9. Thus Josephus highly commends Antonia for her persistent widowhood: "For though she were still a young woman, she continued in her widowhood, and refused all other matches, although Augustus had enjoined her to be married to somebody else, yet she did all along preserve her reputation free from reproach."—*Antiq.* xviii. 6. 6.

37. **She was a widow of about fourscore and four years**, eighty-four years. According to some of the oldest manuscripts, this should be *till* instead of *of about*. Some suppose this to have been her age at that time, which I think is generally the first impression upon reading this passage. But others regard it as the period of her widowhood, which is emphasized

as religiously honorable to her. And this accords better with the most approved text, which may be rendered, *and she a widow as much as eighty-four years*. If she was married at thirteen, as was then common, and lived seven years married, she must now have been one hundred and four years old. In favor of this it may be said that after the reference to her virginity it is natural to regard the long period of her widowhood as opposed to the brief time of her married life. Again, would Luke have immediately stated her age, after having made the general statement, "she is of great age"? Besides, it may be added that a century is more accordant with such an emphasized old age as was hers.

#### **Departed not from the temple.**

This does not necessarily mean that she was always in the temple, nor that she occupied some private apartment in the building, but that she was constant and uniform in attending all the religious services of the temple, notwithstanding her great age. Living, not in the territory of her tribe, which was far off, in Galilee, but at Jerusalem, she made the temple her home, "continuing in supplication and prayer night and day," 1 Tim. 5 : 5; Ps. 84 : 4. **But served God**, etc. Rather, *Serving night and day with fastings and prayers*. God was the object of all her service, though she may have lent her services, when needed, to some who came to worship. *Night* is placed first, since the Jewish day began with the evening. The expression *night and day* is about equivalent to our expression *day and night*. The idea is popularly expressed by *continually*, Acts 26 : 7. Alford also call attention to the greater solemnity an emphasis of the religious exercises by *night*. Anna not only engaged in the ordinary prayers at nine o'clock and three and observed the ordinary fasts on Monday and Thursday, but was present at all the special services of the temple by day or night (Ps. 119 : 62; 134 : 1), living a life of active and devoted piety, and engaging also in much

38 prayerz <sup>a</sup>right and day. And she coming in that instant gave thanks likewise unto the Lord; and spake of him to all them that <sup>a</sup>looked for redemption in Jerusalem.

<sup>a</sup> Ac. 26. 7; 1 Tim 5. 5.

<sup>a</sup> ver. 25; ch. 24  
21; Mk. 15. 43  
Ro. 8. 23.

*Return to Nazareth; the childhood of Jesus.*

39 And when they had performed all things <sup>b</sup>according to the law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own city Nazareth.

<sup>b</sup> Gal. 4. 4, 5.

private fasting and prayer. While to women there was assigned no public service, yet we read of their assembling at the door of the tabernacle, Ex. 38; 8. Aben Ezra, a Jewish commentator, says, "They came daily to the tabernacle to pray and to hear the words of the law."

38. **And she coming in.** Rather, *And she coming up* to the place where Simeon and the others were. She had probably been in a different part of the temple. **That instant.** *At that very time*, when Simeon was speaking to Mary. **Gave thanks likewise.** She too gave thanks, and publicly returned grateful praise to the Lord, as Simeon had done. By *Lord* is meant Jehovah. The majority of the oldest manuscripts have *God* instead of *Lord*. It is supposed by many that it was the hour of prayer, because it is added, **And spake of him to all there**, etc. But it is not necessary to suppose that she spoke to all there immediately, and hence that they were coming in at the hour of prayer. More probably some of those devotedly pious Jews were, like herself, much in the temple, and she at once spoke to them, and afterward told others as they came in. She spoke of him as the Messiah and the Redeemer. She was the first to become the publisher of the good news—not, indeed, to all, but to those who were prepared to receive the announcement. **That looked for redemption in Jerusalem.** Notwithstanding the spiritual degeneracy of the times, there was a small circle of those who were looking for a spiritual deliverer, a Redeemer. On the word *redemption*, see on ch. 1: 68. Some of the oldest manuscripts and versions read, *redemption of Jerusalem*—that is, of his spiritual and chosen people. He was to save his people from their sins, Matt. 1: 21. The common reading, however, is to be preferred. In

Simeon and Anna we have the representatives of the old dispensation and types of Old Testament piety. In the subsequent changes this small company lose sight of Jesus.

The purification, with the incidents here related, must have taken place before the visit of the wise men (Matt. 2: 1-12), for—(1) Joseph appears to have been warned immediately upon the departure of the wise men, whereupon he at once went with the mother and the child into Egypt (Matt. 2: 13, 14); (2) such incidents as those connected with the purification and presentation could not have escaped the suspicious eye of Herod after his jealousy and wrath were aroused; (3) the purification after the return from Egypt is inconsistent with the natural meaning of ver. 22, that it occurred at the regular time, and with the statement of Matthew (2: 22) that Joseph feared to go into Judea when he heard that Archelaus reigned. Compare *Notes on Matthew*, ch. 2.

39, 40. THE RETURN TO NAZARETH. CHILDHOOD OF JESUS.

39. **And when they had performed all things . . . they returned into Galilee.** The most obvious meaning of this verse is that they returned to Nazareth immediately after the presentation. Joseph had come to Bethlehem with no expectation of remaining, and probably was not fully prepared to remain. He very likely felt, after the birth of Jesus at Bethlehem and the events attending it, that he ought to make the latter place his residence; and hence after the presentation he most probably returned to Nazareth to wind up his affairs there with a view to a settlement at Bethlehem. This was soon accomplished, and a little later, when Jesus was from three to six months old, the wise men found the child with Mary and Joseph in "the house" (Matt. 2: 11) at Bethlehem where they were

40 °And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and <sup>d</sup>the grace of God was upon him. •ver. 52; ch. 1. 86  
•Ps. 45. 2; Is. 11. 2

anticipating their future home. It is no more strange that Luke passes over in silence this brief residence in Bethlehem than that he leaves unnoticed the visit of the wise men, the massacre of the children, and the flight into Egypt. In brief narratives intervening events are often passed over in silence. Matthew, in writing specially for Jewish readers, had special reasons for relating these latter events, which presented Jesus as King of spiritual Israel and the Messiah foretold in the Old Testament, Matt. 2 : 2, 5, 11, 15, 18. But Luke had not these reasons in writing more generally for the race. After relating the return of the Messianic family to Nazareth, which became their permanent residence, he passes over their sojourns elsewhere, since they were so brief and temporary. Alford seems to incline to this view. It is also favored by Eusebius, Epiphanius, Patricius, Pilkington, Jarvis, and others.

The common view, however, is allowable which supposes this verse to refer to the return after the flight into Egypt, and to correspond with Matt. 2 : 23. Yet this hardly seems necessary when the other view accords so well with the natural meaning of the words and is itself quite free from serious objections.

**All things according to the law** refers to the rites pertaining to the purification and presentation.

40. This verse is similar to ch. 1 : 80, and like it seems to mark the end of one of those old family documents which Luke used under the direction of the Spirit. It describes the development of Jesus in body and soul during infancy and childhood. **The child grew, in body. And waxed strong in spirit.** According to the best critical authorities, this should read, *And became strong, being filled with wisdom*; the latter phrase implying a finished and permanent result. He became strong mentally and spiritually, and showed such a degree of wisdom in each period of age as rendered it complete and gave to it the lustre of perfection. Now he showed the perfection of childhood, as afterward he did of

youth and of manhood. We have here the human development of Jesus in all his powers. The following remark of Olshausen is worthy of thought: "He was completely a child, completely a youth, completely a man, and thus hallowed all the stages of human development, but nothing incongruous ever appeared in him, which would have been the case if utterances of a riper age had escaped him in childhood." **And the grace**—that is, *the favor*—of God was upon him, the tokens of the divine blessing, the manifestations of divine love were upon him, marking him as a distinguished favorite of Heaven.

The true idea of Christ's childhood is that he looked and acted like other children, yet without sin. Dr. Farrar (*Life of Christ*, vol. i., p. 61) thus discourses on the children of Nazareth: "The traveller who has followed any of those children, as I have done, to their simple homes, and seen the scanty furniture, the plain but sweet and wholesome food, the uneventful, happy, patriarchal life, may form a vivid conception of the manner in which Jesus lived. Nothing can be plainer than those houses. . . . The mats or carpets are laid loose along the walls; shoes and sandals are taken off at the threshold; from the centre hangs a lamp, which forms the only ornament of the room; in some recess in the wall is placed the wooden chest, painted with bright colors, which contains the books or other possessions of the family; on a ledge that runs round the wall, within easy reach, are neatly rolled up the gay-colored quilts which serve as beds, and on the same ledge are ranged the earthen vessels for daily use; near the door stand the large common water-jars of red clay with a few twigs and green leaves, often of aromatic shrubs, thrust into their orifices to keep the water cool. At meal-time a painted wooden stool is placed in the centre of the apartment, a large tray is put upon it, and in the middle of the tray stands the dish of rice and meat, or stewed fruits, from which all help themselves in commou

*Visit of Jesus to the temple at twelve years of age; his youth.*

- 41 Now his parents went to Jerusalem \*every year at  
 42 the feast of the passover. And when he was twelve  
 years old, they went up to Jerusalem after the custom
- \*Ex. 23. 14-17; 34  
 23; Deu. 16. 1-8,  
 16; 1 Sam. 1. 3,  
 21; 2 Chr. 30. 21.

Both before and after the meal the servant or the youngest member of the family pours water over the hands from a brazen ewer into a brazen bowl. So quiet, so simple, so humble, so uneventful was the outward life of the family of Nazareth."

41-52. VISIT OF JESUS TO THE TEMPLE AT THE PASSOVER when at twelve years of age.

41. We have here a glimpse of the piety and religious life of Joseph and Mary. **His parents went . . . every year at the Passover.** The Passover festival was celebrated eight days from the fifteenth of Nisan, the latter part of March or the first part of April (Ex. 12 : 1-11, 14-20), and was one of the three great festivals (Ex. 23 : 14-17) to be attended yearly at Jerusalem by all the males of the nation, except the sick, the aged, the blind, the deaf, and boys under twelve years of age. The other two great festivals were Pentecost in the summer, and the feast of Tabernacles in the autumn. But the Passover, being the greatest of these, was often the only one attended by those living at a distance from Jerusalem.

While the presence of females was not required, their attendance was not forbidden. They probably often accompanied their husbands (1 Sam. 7 : 7), and thereby showed their piety. The school of Hillel seems to have made it binding on women to go up once every year to the Passover; but this appears not to have been the prevalent opinion among the doctors of Israel. Joseph, and possibly Mary, may have often attended other feasts, of which nothing is here recorded. It is only stated here that they were constant in their attendance at the Passover. The power of Archelaus formed no hindrance to this, Matt. 2 : 22. Living under the dominion of Archelaus was quite different from coming up to stated feasts at Jerusalem. Besides, Joseph and his family were not his subjects, ch. 23 : 6, 7. They had also retired so quietly into

Galilee, and were so unostentatious, that Archelaus doubtless knew nothing of them. He reigned ten years, and was banished A. D. 6, two years before the visit of Jesus to the temple, presently to be noticed.

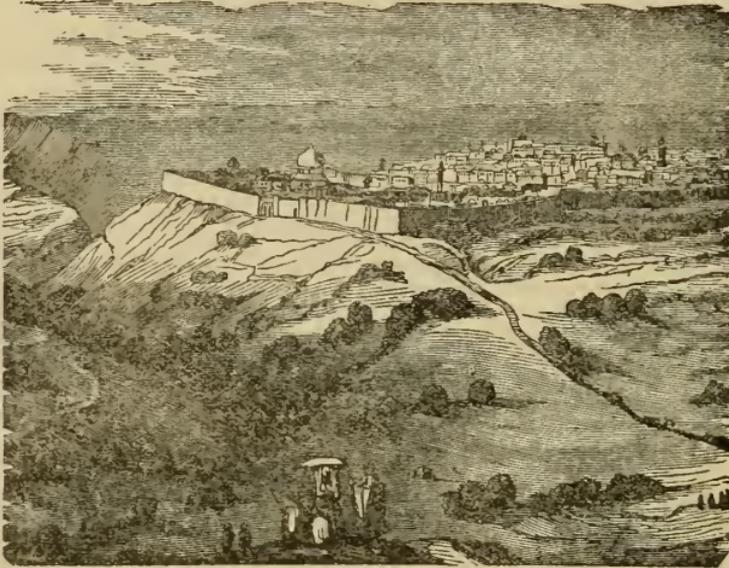
42. **When he was twelve years old,** etc. According to our common era, this was A. D. 8. The Passover occurred that year on Monday, April 9. See on ver. 8. This is evidently the first time that Jesus attended the Passover. But why did he begin to attend the feast at the age of twelve? It has been very commonly answered that Jewish boys at that age began to be instructed in the law, to be subject to the fasts, and to attend regularly the feasts, and were called "the sons of the law." But, on the one hand, Jewish parents began to instruct their children and accustom them to religious exercises much before this, and on the other, the age of puberty, when boys came under the yoke of the law, was not considered as actually attained till the completion of the thirteenth year. Ellicott suggests (*Life of Christ*, p. 93) that Jesus attended the Passover "as a partaker in some preparatory rite which ancient custom might have associated with that age of *commencing* puberty." This is possible from what is known of Jewish customs. But it seems to me that special stress should be laid upon the fact that Jesus had a mission to perform at Jerusalem, and that he himself desired to attend the festival, and that Joseph and Mary desired it also, on account of the manifest development of both his mental and spiritual life. Compare Ex. 12 : 25-27.

**They went to Jerusalem.** *Jerusalem* is omitted by the highest critical authorities, and is unnecessary, having been mentioned in the preceding verse. Three routes lay before them: the first and most direct, through Samaria; the second, by the sea-coast, past Carmel and Caesarea to Joppa, and so across the plain to Jerusalem; the

43 of the feast. And when they had fulfilled the days, as they returned, the child Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem; and Joseph and his mother knew not of it.

third, to Tiberias, and then on the eastern bank of the Jordan to the fords near Jericho, and thence up to Jerusalem. The latter was the more probable one. See on ver. 44. At this season of the

year (April) the country would be wearing its brightest, greenest, and loveliest aspect. After the custom of the feast, which requires the celebration at Jerusalem. Before the building of



JERUSALEM.

the temple the people went to the place where the tabernacle was, 1 Sam. 1 : 3 ; 3 : 15.

43. **Had fulfilled the days.** The day of Passover and the seven days of unleavened bread. The whole festival was sometimes called the feast of unleavened bread, ch. 22 : 7 ; Mark 14 : 12 ; Ex. 23 : 14, 15. Very probably on the afternoon of the eighth day Mary and Joseph started for their home in Galilee. **The child Jesus,** or *The boy Jesus.* Jesus is spoken of as the *babe* in ver. 12, as the *child* or *little child* in ver. 40, and as the *boy* here. **Tarried,** or *remained behind.* Jesus was not only charmed with the sacred entertainments of the temple and desirous of conversing with the learned doctors of the law, but he also had a mission there to perform in his Father's house. **And Joseph and his mother,** etc.

According to the best critical authorities, *And his parents knew it not.* The people returned from the feasts in large companies. Those living near each other travelled together for safety and society. Possibly Jesus and others of his age, who had first attended the passover, would be assigned a separate place in the festal caravan. At least the children of the companies would naturally associate together. Joseph and Mary seem not to have been guilty of carelessness. The obedience, as well as the wisdom and prudence, of Jesus would lead them to believe that he was somewhere in the company among their kindred and acquaintances. He had ever been so constant and faithful that his parents found little necessity to watch him. Hence, on many accounts, the fact here stated might easily happen. "But in any case, among such a sea of human

- 44 But they, supposing him to have been 'in the com-  
 45 pany, went a day's journey; and they sought him  
 among *their* kinsfolk and acquaintance. And when  
 they found him not, they turned back again to Jeru-  
 salem, seeking him.
- 46 And it came to pass, that after three days they

beings, how easy it would be to lose one young boy! The incident constantly occurs to this day in the annual expedition of the pilgrims to bathe in the fords of the Jordan."—DR. FARRAR, *Life of Christ*, vol. i., p. 73.

**44. Supposing him to have been.** Rather, *Supposing that he was*, etc. Joseph and Mary seem to have had no anxiety about Jesus till perhaps the caravan halted for the night and each family gathered to its evening meal.

**In the company**, of travellers, a *caravan* composed of those going to the same vicinity.

**Went a day's journey.** An ordinary day's journey was twenty or twenty-five miles. But it was customary on such an expedition as this to go the first day only six or eight miles, camping before it was dark by the wayside near a good supply of water. One object in halting early would be to see if the party was all complete.

Tradition has fixed their evening resting-place at Beeroth, among the hills of Benjamin, about ten miles north of Jerusalem. At the present day this is the customary resting-place of caravans going northward at the end of the first day's journey from Jerusalem. But the actual route which the parents of Jesus took cannot certainly be known. "As liable to less molestation from the Samaritans, especially when the object of going to Jerusalem was to keep the festivals (comp. chap. 9: 53), it may be presumed that the Galilean caravans would usually take the longer route through Perea; and hence in returning they would be most likely to make the first day's halt near the eastern foot of the Mount of Olives (about 2 miles). It is not customary in the East to travel more than one or two hours the first day; and in this instance they would encamp earlier still, because to go farther would have been to encounter the night-perils of the desert between Jerusalem and Jericho. . . . It is not surprising under such circumstances that Jesus was not missed

till the close of the first brief day."—DR. HACKETT, in Smith's *Dictionary of the Bible*, Am. Ed., p. 226.

**And they sought him.** They sought diligently after him. The idea is not that they went a day's journey seeking him, but that, halting for the night, they missed him and began a diligent search.

**Among their kinsfolk** (or *kindred*) **and acquaintance.** Here they would most naturally expect to find him. "It is not surprising that in the midst of such a crowd Joseph and his mother should suppose that Jesus was in the 'company with his kinsfolk and acquaintance,' nor is the time that elapsed before they became so alarmed at his absence as to turn back and search for him at all remarkable. I question whether there is ever a pilgrimage made from Jerusalem to Jordan at this day without the separation of parents and children equally prolonged; and in the case we are considering it was the absence of a youth who, his parents well knew, had never done in his whole life one unwise or improper act. They would not, therefore, be easily alarmed on his account."—DR. THOMSON, *Land and Book*, vol. ii., p. 452.

**45. And when they found him not, etc.** More exactly, *And finding him not, they returned to Jerusalem.* They were the more anxious because of his constant faithfulness. Possibly they thought some evil had befallen him. Were there any yet who would seek the child's life? A sleepless night awaited them, and in the early morning they turn back toward Jerusalem, **seeking him** along the way, perhaps among the companies returning homeward from Jerusalem. They search for him also in the city itself, wherever they think he might be found.

**46. After three days.** This may mean either the time from their setting out on their journey or the time of their searching—that is, from the discovery that Jesus was not with them

found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions. And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers. And when they saw him, they were amazed: and his mother said unto

ch. 5. 17.

ch. 4. 22, 23; Pa 119. 99; Mt. 7. 28; Mk. 1. 22; John 7. 15, 46.

The exact meaning of the original rather favors the latter view. Yet both views may really coincide in time. For the discovery of Jesus' absence may have been made before the close (sunset) of the first day. This is very probable, since they would halt early to see if all connected with their party were with them. The phrase, *After three days*, according to Jewish reckoning is equivalent to the third day, Mark 8 : 31 and Matt. 16 : 21. Compare author's *Notes on Mark*, p. 312, note 4. The first day was that of their setting out and their fruitless search for Jesus among their company; the second was spent in returning, searching along the way and in Jerusalem; the third, in continued searching until they found him in the temple.

**In the temple.** Not the temple proper, which is expressed by another word in the original, but the sacred enclosure, in which were many halls or rooms. See on ch. 1 : 8. It may have been in one of those halls or rooms where the rabbis, on Sabbath days and at the great festivals, sat and taught. Lightfoot thinks that there is nothing absurd in supposing that Jesus had gotten into the Sanhedrim itself. Such is the opinion of Dr. Gill, who supposes that he was in the room Gazith, one of the southern rooms where the Sanhedrim sat. **Sitting in the midst of the doctors**, or *sitting among the teachers*. The doctors, or teachers, in their instructions, occupied elevated seats, and their pupils sat at their feet upon the ground. Compare ch. 10 : 39; Acts 22 : 3. It was not a strange thing to find a youth of twelve or thirteen years occupying such a place. But the language in the original seems to imply that Jesus was sitting, not at the feet of these masters in Israel, but among them, having been raised to a position of dignity. Scholars were sometimes invited by the doctors to sit in the midst of them when their answers were worthy of special notice. **Both hearing them and asking them questions.** Jesus

did not assume to teach; that would have been unbecoming his years, and the time of his teaching had not yet come. He listens attentively to their instructions, and indirectly teaches by asking his mysterious questions. Among these questions were doubtless those pertaining to the spirituality of the law, the meaning of prophecy and a suffering Messiah. The instructions of the rabbis consisted largely in asking questions.

**47. And all . . . were astonished**, filled with wonder and admiration. **At his understanding**, of Scripture and the insight and penetration which he showed in the questions he asked; and **at the answers** which he returned to the questions of the doctors. There was a rivalry among the Jewish teachers to secure the most promising scholars; and very probably some of them had carefully cared for Jesus during those two days and nights. Had he remained longer, he might have attracted general attention. But the time had not yet come.

**48.** When his parents discovered where he was, and **saw him** among the teachers of Israel, they likewise **were amazed**, *struck with wonder*, at finding him in such a position, and so absorbed in the subjects of discourse as to utterly forget them. No wonder that Mary, "when she gazed upon that august assemblage, when she saw, as she perchance might have seen, the now aged Hillel the looser, and Shammai the binder, and the wise sons of Betirah, and Rabban Simeon, Hillel's son, and Jonathan the paraphrast, the greatest of his pupils,—when she saw these, and such as these, all hanging on the questions of the divine Child, no wonder that she forgot all in the strange and unlooked-for circumstances in which she found him whom she had so sorrowfully sought for."—*ELLICOTT, Life of Christ*, p. 96.

**And his mother**, she being his own and only human parent, addressed him, very likely in the hearing of all, in words of reproof or complaint. It was the first she had ever had occasion to

him, Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? behold, 49 thy father and I have sought thee, sorrowing. And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business? And <sup>k</sup>they understood not the saying which he spake unto them.

<sup>l</sup>Ps. 40 8; John 2  
16; 4 34; 6 38;  
9. 4.  
<sup>k</sup>ch. 9. 45; 18. 34.

utter; she overlooked his higher work. **Son, why hast thou, etc.?** Rather, *Son, why didst thou thus deal with us?* Words of mingled tenderness and reproach, implying neglect and indifference on his part. Such conduct in such an ever-faithful child seemed utterly unaccountable to her. **Thy father.** Thus she could only speak of Joseph. He was the reputed father and exercised all the care and duties of a father in bringing him up. It is very probable that Mary had never made known to Jesus the mysteries of his birth; possibly she had never related to him, except in a most general way, any of the events that followed, leaving him to discover his nature and mission by his own consciousness and by revelation from God. **Sought thee, sorrowing.** A strong expression. Sought thee, hour after hour and from place to place, in great anxiety, in deep distress. The loss of such a child and the thoughts of evil which might possibly have befallen him were enough to arouse the keenest anguish.

It should also be remembered that Judea was now reduced to a province, under Coponius, the first governor; that the system of taxation introduced by him had only two years before excited the insurrection of Judas; and that the political horizon was still disturbed. The hundreds of thousands who came to the passover contained warring elements; popular tumults were threatening; Roman soldiers were on the alert. Hence the greater danger in leaving the regular caravans.

49. Jesus replies, in conscious recititude and in the simplicity of his holy childhood, without intending censure, yet in words containing reproof, **How is it that ye sought me,** with so much anxiety? And did not know where to find me? His wonder is not that they sought him, but that they sought him in sorrow, and knew not where he was. **Wist ye not?** *Did ye not know* from my past history and from

my love for the temple and service of God and from my desires and conscious impellings to active duty? **That I must be.** This is the *must*, the *needs be*, so frequently expressed by our Saviour, implying what was appointed and necessary in his mission, ch. 9:22; 13:33; 19:5; 24:44; John 4:4, etc. **About my Father's business?** Literally, *In my Father's or at my Father's.* Some supply *business*, meaning, Did ye not know that I must be engaged in my Father's matters, attending to his service and to his word? But it is better, with others, to supply *house*, since the idea of place seems involved in the answer, and it was common in similar expressions to supply *house* or *temple*. *Did ye not know that I must be in my Father's house?* That was the most natural place for him to be. His expression of surprise includes a gentle reproof that they should not at once have thought of his being in the temple attending to the services and word of God; that they should not recognize his relation to God and something of his divine mission. The expression *my Father* has often been noticed in contrast to the words of Mary, *Thy Father*, ver. 48. He intimates in this answer that God was his Father. This is the first record we have of his consciousness of his own divine nature. Olshausen supposes that Jesus at this time first became conscious of the fact. Dr. Kendrick has well said: "If the *child's* consciousness precludes the element of divinity, why not equally man's consciousness? The distance of the two states from each other is lost in the infinite interval which separates both from deity. It may well be questioned whether, in fixing the moment when divine consciousness first developed itself in Jesus, Olshausen is not venturing beyond his depth. Who shall say that Jesus was ever destitute of it?"—OLSHAUSEN, *Am. Edition*, p. 251.

50. **They understood not the saying.** They did not fully under-

- 51 And he went down with them, and came to Nazareth, <sup>1</sup>and was subject unto them. But his mother <sup>2</sup>kept all these sayings in her heart. <sup>1</sup>Eph. 6. 1, 2; <sup>1</sup>Pat 2. 21.
- 52 And Jesus <sup>3</sup>increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man. <sup>2</sup>ver. 19; Dan. 7 28.  
<sup>3</sup>ver. 40; <sup>1</sup>Sam. 2 26.

stand what he meant. And they felt also that there was more in it than might at first appear. The fact here stated seems to imply that Jesus had not learned his divine origin from his parents, and it shows that they had not fully comprehended what had previously been foretold of him, ch. 1 : 35. And probably during the twelve years of growth, in which there was nothing miraculous, Mary gradually thought less of his supernatural nature, while her mind was occupied with the interesting traits of his character and the progress of his mental and spiritual development. "It was really necessary that they should not fully understand, in order that the parental instincts on the one hand, and the filial submission on the other, might remain natural."

51. **He went down**, into the country, **with them**, Jerusalem being not only geographically higher, but was also regarded as more elevated religiously. **Was subject unto them.** His consciousness of his Messiahship and divine Sonship did not interfere with obedience to his parents. The occurrences in the temple, however, show that his subjection was voluntary; it was a part of his voluntary humiliation, Phil. 2 : 7, 8. As he left heaven for earth, so now he leaves his Father's house for his humble earthly house at Nazareth. How different from many children, who despise their parents because of ignorance or poverty! Thus for eighteen years he retires into obscurity, till he came next to be baptized of John in the Jordan. Yet he was about his Father's business. Living a perfect childhood and youth, and acting his part as a man in the various relations of life, were parts of that "obedience of one man" by whom many were to be made righteous, Rom. 5 : 19. We are not, however, to suppose that his divine nature disclosed itself except in his sinless purity. If he had performed miracles, doubtless they would have been recorded. As we hear no more of Joseph, it is probable that he died before

Jesus entered upon his public ministry, but probably not before brothers and sisters were born into the family, Matt. 12 : 55. From Mark 6 : 3 it may be inferred that Jesus learned the carpenter's trade and worked with his father, and possibly supported his mother after his death.

**But (And) his mother**, from her peculiar relation to the child, and perhaps from her mental constitution, was more observing and reflecting than Joseph regarding him. **Kept these sayings and occurrences in her heart**, frequently pondering upon them, though she could not fully understand them. Thus for eighteen years she patiently waited.

52. We have a summary account of the mental, spiritual, and physical development of Jesus in his youth, as in ver. 40 we have of his childhood, **Jesus increased in wisdom and stature.** Both soul and body were developed, going on to perfect manhood. Some translate *age* instead of *stature* as comprehending the latter, but increasing in age does not necessarily include a corresponding increase in stature. Besides, increasing in age is too apparent and quite tautological. For how could Jesus have increased in soul and in body without increasing in age? but he might have increased in both wisdom and age without ever increasing in body. The meaning is that Jesus continued after this to advance in wisdom and stature, implying age and increasing maturity according to the usual order of growth. He grew mentally and physically like others, though his wisdom was beyond that exhibited by ordinary men.

It is evident that Jesus could read and write, from his reference to Hebrew letters (Matt. 5 : 18), his writing on the ground (John 8 : 6), and his reading in the synagogue, ch. 4 : 16. He not only displayed a ready acquaintance with Scripture by the oft-repeated question, "Have ye not read" (ch. 6 : 3; Matt. 19 : 4; 21 : 16, etc.), but also a deep and

extensive knowledge, from his numerous quotations and allusions to the law, prophets, and book of Psalms. And this involved a knowledge of the Hebrew original; yet the Aramaic was the common language of the people then, and the Hebrew had become comparatively a dead language. Without doubt, Joseph and Mary, according to their ability, had taught him to read perhaps some simpler portions of Scripture. And further we may presume that he received some instruction from leaders in the synagogue at Nazareth. But all this fails to explain his extensive and profound knowledge. He had not been taught in the schools, John 7 : 15. It was not rabbinical lore, the tradition of the elders, which he had made his study, but the book of God.

"Whatever the boy Jesus may have learned as a child or boy in the house of his mother or in the school of the synagogue, we know that his best teaching was derived from immediate insight into his Father's will. In the depths of his inmost consciousness did that voice of God which spake to the father of our race as he walked in the cool evening under the palms of Paradise, commune more plainly by far with him. He heard it in every sound of nature, in every occupation of life, in every interspace of solitary thought. His human life was an 'ephod on which was inscribed the one word God.' Written on his inmost spirit, written on his most trivial experiences, written in sunbeams, written in the light of stars, he read everywhere his Father's name."—DR. FARRAR, *Life of Christ*, vol. i., p. 92.

**And in favor with God and men.** "His physical, mental, and spiritual development was so natural and symmetrical that God and man regarded his advancing and maturing powers with increasing complacency."—*Annotated Paragraph Bible*. In his *human nature* he increased in every excellence; he so performed all his duties, and his obedience in every respect was so perfect, that the Father viewed him with increasing favor, ch. 3 : 22; John 8 : 29. And so marked was his life with piety, benevolence, and kindness as to gain the friendship and affection of all around him. But in his *divinity* God's love was essentially the same always.

## REMARKS.

1. Men act freely, yet in accordance with God's purposes. Both the righteous and wicked, without even knowing it, take such courses as fulfil the predictions of prophecy and accomplish the purposes of God. The emperor at Rome and Joseph at Nazareth unconsciously fulfil the word of the Lord, vers. 1-4; Isa. 10 : 5-7; Jer. 51 : 20-24.

2. God overrules evil for good. The long and tedious journey for Mary and the decree that abases Israel are the means for fixing the time and place for the advent of the King of spiritual Israel, vers. 1-5; Ps. 76 : 10; Rom. 8 : 28; 1 Cor. 1 : 19.

3. Christ was born in the fulness of time, at the centre of the world's history, political and religious, ver. 6; Gal. 4 : 4; Acts 13 : 23; Heb. 1 : 2.

4. "God manifests all his attributes in sending his Son: his *power* in making Mary become a mother through the operation of the Holy Spirit; his *wisdom* in the choice of the time, place, and circumstances; his *faithfulness* in the fulfilment of the word of prophecy (Mic. 6 : 1); his *holiness* in hiding the miracle from the eyes of an unbelieving world; and especially his *love* and *grace*, John 3 : 16."—DR. VAN OOSTERZEE. Vers. 1-7; John 1 : 14.

5. How did the Son of God humble himself for us! ver. 7; Phil. 2 : 6, 7; 1 Pet. 4 : 1, 2.

6. How many places and how many hearts now have no room for Jesus! ver. 7; ch. 9 : 52, 53; Job 21 : 14; Isa. 65 : 2.

7. We should not despise the condition of the poor, for therein was Christ born, ver. 7; Prov. 22 : 2; Mark 14 : 17; James 2 : 5.

8. God honors honest toil. Many, while attending faithfully to the daily duties of life, have been favored, like the shepherds, with the blessings and the glory of the Lord, vers. 8, 9; Ex. 3 : 1, 2; 1 Sam. 16 : 11-13.

9. They who attend to their duties to God and men need not fear angels nor any heavenly visitant, vers. 9, 10; Matt. 28 : 5; Rev. 22 : 20.

10. God reveals himself and his truth to the humble, ver. 10; ch. 14 : 11; Ps. 138 : 6; 1 Cor. 1 : 26-29; James 4 : 11.

11. Christ is born to you as a personal

Saviour, ver. 11; 1 Thess. 5 : 9; 1 John 2 : 1; Gal. 1 : 16.

12. Christ humbleth himself so that you might find him, ver. 12; 2 Cor. 8 : 9.

13. Christ's humiliation is ever joined with divine honor, vers. 12, 13, 27-31; ch. 22 : 43; 23 : 44-47.

14. Learn from the joy of heaven how to regard the advent of Christ, vers. 13, 14; Matt. 2 : 1, 2.

15. The inhabitants of heaven have a deep interest in our salvation. Man alone is indifferent, vers. 13, 14; ch. 15 : 7, 10.

16. Learn from the shepherds to seek the truth, to follow it, and to make it known to others, vers. 15-17; John 7 : 17; Acts 26 : 19; 2 Kings 7 : 9; Acts 4 : 29.

17. If the cradle of Jesus had such an effect on the shepherds, what effect should his death and resurrection have on us? ver. 17; 2 Cor. 5 : 14, 15.

18. How many hear of Christ only to wonder and perish! ver. 18; John 6 : 60; Acts 13 : 41; Rom. 9 : 32.

19. Happy are they who, like Mary, ponder upon divine things, and with special interest treasure them up in their hearts, ver. 19; Prov. 2 : 1-5; 3 : 21, 22.

20. The joy of Christian experience gives all the glory to God, and enters into all the duties and relations of life.

21. Christ submitted to the law, in order that he might deliver us from the law, vers. 20, 21; Gal. 4 : 4, 5; Rom. 10 : 4; Heb. 9 : 26.

22. JESUS, *the* name of earth and heaven, ver. 21; Phil. 2 : 10; Eph. 1 : 21.

23. "Let all those who present others to the Lord seek to be first themselves pure," vers. 22-24; Jer. 14 : 10-12; Mal. 1 : 10, 13.

24. Christ's whole life and every step of his life fulfilled prophecy, ver. 23; Acts 3 : 22-24; 10 : 43.

25. They that wait on the Lord shall not wait in vain, vers. 25-27; ch. 18 : 7, 8; Gen. 49 : 18; Ps. 37 : 5-7; Lam. 3 : 25, 26.

26. Christ is the Consoler of human hearts, ver. 25; John 14 : 1, 16-19; 2 Cor. 1 : 5; Heb. 2 : 17.

27. We are not prepared for death until we by faith have seen the Lord's Christ, vers. 26-30; John 3 : 18; 8 : 24; Phil. 3 : 9-11.

28. We should seek the guidance of the Spirit into the paths of duty and blessing, ver. 27.

29. We should seek Christ in his house, vers. 27, 49; Ps. 63 : 2; 68 : 24.

30. How abundantly are the promises of God fulfilled! Simeon not only sees but embraces the promised Consoler, ver. 28.

31. No eye is satisfied with seeing until it sees Christ, ver. 30; Eccles. 1 : 8; Ps. 17 : 15; John 8 : 56; 1 John 3 : 2.

32. Christ is the centre and glory of his people and the Light of the world, vers. 31, 32; Isa. 11 : 10; John 8 : 12; 9 : 5.

33. We have reason often to wonder, not only at the greatness of revealed truth, but also at our stupidity in not beholding it, ver. 33; ch. 24 : 25; Mark 8 : 21; John 8 : 43; 2 Pet. 3 : 16.

34. Christ is the rock of salvation to some and the stone of stumbling to others. The knowledge of him leaves none where it found him, ver. 34; Isa. 28 : 16; 1 Cor. 1 : 23; 2 Cor. 2 : 16; Ps. 89 : 26.

35. Christ is the great Touchstone of human hearts, ver. 35; ch. 12 : 49-53; Matt. 26 : 75; 27 : 4, 5.

36. Those whose age or position in life permits, should devote much time to the active duties of piety and charity, vers. 36, 37; ch. 8 : 2, 3; 1 Tim. 5 : 5-10.

37. They who persevere in watching, praying, and Christian labor shall not go unrewarded, vers. 37, 38; Isa. 40 : 31; Mic. 7 : 7; Acts 10 : 4.

38. The conversation of Christians should savor of Christ. How much might Christian women thus accomplish! ver. 38; Prov. 10 : 20; 15 : 14; Eph. 4 : 29; Col. 4 : 6.

39. When public duties are accomplished, we should return to private duties. Both are important, and between them there is no necessary conflict, ver. 39; 1 Tim. 5 : 4; Eph. 6 : 4.

40. Children should seek from above those graces and gifts which will make them like the child Jesus, ver. 40; Prov. 2 : 6; 8 : 17; James 1 : 5.

41. Parents should not only attend public worship themselves, but also take their children with them, vers. 41, 42; Gen. 18 : 19; Deut. 4 : 9; Prov. 22 : 6.

42. Christ has made the age of twelve significant. Childhood and youth should

*The ministry of John the Baptist ; the baptism of Jesus.*

## III. NOW in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Cæsar, (Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea, and

be devoted to our Father's service, vers. 42, 49; Ps. 34 : 11; Prov. 20 : 11; Matt. 21 : 15, 16; Eph. 6 : 1; 2 Tim. 1 : 5.

43. How many, in journeying, lose sight of Jesus! ver. 43; Ps. 119 : 93.

44. How many seek Jesus now among earthly friends! ver. 44; John 7 : 34; 8 : 21-24.

45. The places whither persons resort indicate their character. It is a good sign when the young seek places of worship and religious instruction, vers. 45, 46; Prov. 20 : 11.

46. We should expect to find Jesus in his house and among his professed people, vers. 46-49; Matt. 18 : 18-20; 28 : 20.

47. "Children may instruct a parent if they do it respectfully and modestly," ver. 49; 1 Sam. 19 : 4, 5.

48. Children who cheerfully obey their parents in that respect resemble the child Jesus, and by it may show their love to him, ver. 50; Eph. 6 : 1-3.

49. As most of our Saviour's life was spent in private and at humble Nazareth, so God calls for service mostly in private and in the humble walks of life, ver. 51; Mic. 6 : 6-8; Matt. 6 : 1-8.

50. That youth is the most beautiful which combines a corresponding physical, mental, and spiritual growth, ver. 52; Prov. 15 : 20; 2 Tim. 1 : 5.

51. "Try to be little, like the Little One, that you may increase in stature with him."—BONAVENTURA. Vers. 40, 52.

## CHAPTER III.

Having briefly recounted the birth, infancy, childhood, and private life of Jesus, Luke now proceeds to relate the ministry of John the Baptist (vers. 1-18); his imprisonment (19, 20); the baptism and genealogy of Jesus, 21-38. This chapter and the first thirteen verses of the next chapter form an introduction to the narrative of Christ's public ministry.

1-18. THE MINISTRY OF JOHN THE BAPTIST. Preaching and baptizing.

The effect of his ministry on others; its result on himself, Matt. 3 : 1-12; Mark 1 : 1-8. Luke in some respects is the fullest; he alone gives the exact date consistent with what he had said concerning himself in ch. 1 : 3. He also alone quotes the prediction in vers. 5, 6, and alone records the exhortations of John to the people, the publicans, and the soldiers.

1. In the fifteenth year . . . of Tiberius Cæsar. Since Luke is writing for the race, and Judea had already been reduced to a Roman province, he very properly designates the time in the reign of the Roman emperor. *Tiberius Cæsar* was the second Roman emperor, successor to Augustus, who began his reign August 29th, A. D. 14. Augustus, however, admitted Tiberius to a share in the empire from about the beginning of A. D. 12. He reigned till A. D. 37, and died at the age of seventy-eight. In early and middle life he distinguished himself as an orator, soldier, and administrator of civil affairs. But upon being raised to supreme power, he became slothful, self-indulgent, cruel, licentious, and vindictive, a scourge to the Roman people. If *the fifteenth year* be taken from the time when he began to reign alone, then John commenced his public ministry A. D. 28, when he was over thirty-two years of age. It is, however, better and more common to compute from the time when Tiberius was associated in the government, which would fix the fifteenth year at A. D. 26, when John was somewhat over thirty years old. John, being six months older than Jesus, would probably commence his ministry about six months before him, ver. 23. The word also translated **reign** is such as may well include the two years of associated power. Compare chronological note on ch. 2 : 8. See author's *Harmony*, note on § 9, 3.

**Pontius Pilate.** Herod the Great left his kingdom to three sons, Archelaus receiving half of it, including Judea, Idumea, and Samaria. After Archelaus was deposed, A. D. 6, Judea and Samaria were annexed to the

Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of Ituræa and of the region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias the tetrarch of Abilene, 2 °Annas and Caiaphas being the high priests,) the <sup>° John 11. 49, 51; 18. 13; Ac. 4. 6.</sup>

Roman province of Syria, and governed by procurators, an office subordinate to a governor of a province, the sixth of whom was Pontius Pilate. He was appointed A. D. 25, and held his office ten years during the reign of the emperor Tiberius. He was noted for his severity and cruelty; and by several massacres, to one of which Luke refers (ch. 13 : 1), he rendered himself odious to both the Jews and Samaritans. The latter accused him of cruelty before Vitellius, the governor of Syria, by whom he was ordered to Rome to answer to the charge before the emperor. But Tiberius having died before he arrived, Pilate is said to have been banished by his successor, Caligula, to Vienna, in Gaul, and there to have committed suicide. The traveller who descends the Rhone, in the South of France, may see still standing the very tower from which, as tradition says, Pilate precipitated himself and died. **Being governor, or procurator.**

**Herod.** This was Herod Antipas, the son of Herod the Great. He received from his father Galilee and Perea, and received the title of **tetrarch**, a Greek word meaning a ruler of a fourth part, which became a common title for those who governed any part of a province, subject only to the Roman power. He continued in office until A. D. 39, when he was banished to France, whither Herodias followed him; both died in exile. He was cunning (ch. 13 : 32), unscrupulous (ch. 3 : 19), superstitious (ch. 9 : 9), sensual and weak, Matt. 14 : 9. Compare on ver. 19 and ch. 9 : 7-9.

**Philip,** Herod, a son of Herod the Great by Cleopatra, a woman of Jerusalem. After his father's death he became tetrarch of **Ituræa**, commonly supposed to be the same with the modern province of *Jedur*, south of Damascus, and embracing the eastern slopes of Hermon, and of the region of **Trachonitis**, which lay east of Ituræa. He built a new city on the site of Paneas, near the source of the Jordan, which was called *Cæsarea Philippi*, Matt. 16 : 13. He was by far the best

of Herod's sons, and ruled well. He must not be confounded with his half brother Philip, whose wife Herodias Herod Antipas seduced, and who lived in private life, having been disinherited by his father.

**Lysanias**, supposed to be a descendant of a prince of the same name, who lived sixty years before this, and was put to death by Antony.—**JOSEPHUS**, *Antiq.* xv. 4, § 1. It is probable that Josephus mentions this very Lysanias when he speaks of the "tetrarchy of Lysanias," "Abila of Lysanias," and "the kingdom of Lysanias," *Antiq.* xviii. 6, § 10; xix. 5, § 1; *Jew. War*, ii. 12, § 8. It may also be added that a coin has been found with the name *Lysanias, tetrarch*, upon it, and also an inscription was seen by Pococke on the remains of a Doric temple at the ancient Abila, which mentions *Lysanias, tetrarch of Abilene*.

**Abilene** was the district round Abila, a town eighteen miles north-west of Damascus. How large this district was is unknown. It was a part of the dominion of Herod the Great, but upon his death, or soon after, was given to Lysanias.

**2. Annas and Caiaphas being the high priests.** According to the best manuscripts, this should read, *Annas being high priest, and Caiaphas*. Annas was high priest for several years, but was deposed by Valerius Gratus, and after several changes in the office, Caiaphas, son-in-law of Annas, was appointed about A. D. 25, and remained in office until A. D. 37. Since there could be only one high priest at a time, and Caiaphas was actual high priest during Christ's public ministry, the question arises, How could Annas also be spoken of as high priest? The following will be a sufficient answer. 1. Having held the office once, according to Jewish custom, he retained the title. Thus it is common to speak of "the governor," "the senator," and the like, though the person so named has gone out of office. 2. Annas was still the legitimate high priest according to

word of God came unto John the son of Zacharias <sup>¶ ch. 1. 80.</sup>  
 3 <sup>¶</sup> in the wilderness. <sup>¶</sup> And he came into all the country  
<sup>¶</sup> Mk. 1. 4, 15; Jn. 1. 6-8.

the law of Moses (the office being for life, Num. 20 : 28; 35 : 25), and may have been so regarded by the Jews, although, under Roman rule, Caiaphas alone could actually officiate. With reverence for a divinely-appointed office, Luke may have thus mentioned Annas first, while he gave Caiaphas the second place. 3. Annas may have held the office of *sagan*, or substitute of the high priest, who officiated occasionally in the room of the high priest when anything hindered him or rendered him unfit for his office. He was also a ruler and governor over other priests. This office is mentioned by the later Talmudists. 4. Annas exercised great influence, and living to old age secured the high priesthood to five of his sons. His influence both with Caiaphas and the people is evinced by the fact that Jesus when betrayed was first brought before Annas, John 18 : 12-14, 24.

#### The word of God came to John.

Like the prophets of old, John was specially directed to utter the divine message to the people and to baptize, Jer. 1 : 2; Ezek. 6 : 1. This marked the beginning of John's ministry, as is evident from the whole account, not some later appearance of John which was the cause of his imprisonment, as some have supposed.

**In the wilderness**, of Judea, the barren, hilly, and sparsely-settled region between Hebron and the Dead Sea. The word *wilderness*, or *desert*, in the New Testament denotes merely an untilled, unenclosed, and thinly-inhabited country.

This was in "the fulness of the time" (Gal. 4 : 4), in an age ripe for the coming of Christ and his forerunner. "It was an age of transition, of uncertainty, of doubt. In the growth of general corruption, in the wreck of sacred institutions, in those dense clouds which were gathering more and more darkly on the political horizon, it must have seemed to many a pious Jew as if the fountains of the great deep were broken up. Already the sceptre had departed from his race; already its high priesthood was contemptuously tampered with by Idumæan tetrarchs

or Roman procurators; already the chief influence over his degraded Sanhedrim was in the hand of the supple Herodians or wily Sadducees. It seemed that nothing was left for his consolation but an increased fidelity to Mosaic institutions and a deepening intensity of Messianic hopes. At an epoch so troubled and restless, when old things were rapidly passing away, and the new continued unrevealed, . . . there was a general expectation of that 'wrath to come' which was to be the birth-throe of the coming kingdom, the darkness deepest before the dawn. The world had grown old, and the dotage of paganism was marked by hideous excesses. Atheism in belief was followed, as among nations it always has been, by degradation of morals. . . . Philosophy had abrogated its boasted functions except for the favored few. Crime was universal, and there was no known remedy for the horror and ruin which it was causing in a thousand hearts. . . . There was a callosity of heart, a petrifying of the moral sense, which even those who suffered from it felt to be abnormal and portentous. Even the heathen world felt that 'the fulness of the time had come.'"—DR. FARRAR, *Life of Christ*, vol. i., p. 105.

3. **And he came**; from his seclusion (ch. 1 : 80), in obedience to the divine command. **Into all the country about (the) Jordan**, the region lying between the fords opposite Jericho and the Dead Sea. He went through this region announcing the word of the Lord to all the inhabitants. Here, too, were the great routes of travel, and it was very probably in the spring, near the passover, when crowds would be going and returning from Jerusalem. **The Jordan** is the chief river of Palestine running from north to south. It is formed by the junction of three rivers before it enters the "waters of Merom," now Lake of Huleh. Issuing from this lake, the Jordan flows nine miles to the Sea of Galilee. Thence it pursues its crooked course to the Dead Sea. Lieutenant Lynch, of the United States Navy, who traversed the river in 1848, found that although the dis-

4 about Jordan, preaching the baptism of <sup>†</sup>repentance <sup>†</sup>for the remission of sins; as it is written in the book of the words of Esaias, the prophet, saying, <sup>†</sup>The voice

<sup>†</sup>Mt. 4. 17; 10. 7  
Ac. 17. 30.  
<sup>†</sup>ch. 1. 77.  
<sup>†</sup>Mt. 3. 3; Mk. 1.  
3; John 1. 23.

tance from the Sea of Galilee to the Dead Sea is but sixty miles in a straight line, it is two hundred miles by the course of the river. It rushes over not fewer than twenty-seven rapids, and many others less precipitous. Its current is usually swift and strong. Its width varies at different points from seventy-five to two hundred feet, and its depth from three to twelve feet. Its fords and its clear running waters were admirably adapted for the baptism of the multitude who came to John.

**Preaching.** *Proclaiming*, announcing publicly. Travelling the country, he delivered his brief messages, first to individuals, families, and small companies wherever found, and afterward to crowds who flocked to hear him.

**The baptism.** The word *baptism* is the Greek *baptisma* transferred into our language with its final letter dropped. It means literally a *plunging*, an *immersion*. In this all lexicographers are agreed. Its figurative meaning is based on this ground-meaning, and always expresses an idea of immersion, ch. 12 : 50. But it is only with the literal meaning that we have here to do. See on ver. 7. The baptism of John was a new rite. It was not founded on the immersions of the old dispensation, under which persons performed the ceremony of bathing or immersing the whole body, not on others, but on themselves, Lev. 15 : 6; 16 : 4. The immersion of one person by another, as a divinely-appointed act, is peculiar to Christianity, and was first introduced in connection with it. It was practiced neither among Jews nor heathen. Some, indeed, would find it on proselyte baptism among the Jews, but this appears not to have been known till long after John. Indeed, the earliest mention of proselyte baptism is found in the Babylonish Talmud, a Jewish commentary of the sixth century. John himself declared that he received his commission to baptize directly from God, John 1 : 33, and Jesus intimated that the rite was revealed to John from heaven, ch. 20 : 4. As the new rite was a distinguishing feature of his ministry,

he was called *The Baptist* (ch. 7 : 20), and his preaching was specially designated as that of baptism. **Baptism of repentance**, so styled because it implied, enjoined, and symbolized that thorough change of mind denoted by repentance. It represented him receiving it as dead and buried to sin, with its guilt and defilement, and rising a new man to a new life—a life never to end and devoted to God. Compare John 5 : 24; Rom. 6 : 3, 4. See on ch. 13 : 2. **For the remission of sins.** Unto forgiveness of sins as connected with repentance. John directed the faith of the penitent to “him who should come after him” (Acts 19 : 4), through whom forgiveness and salvation were to be obtained, ver. 16; John 1 : 15-17, 29. He doubtless held out promises of pardon and salvation, ver. 6.

4. **As it is written.** Closely connected with what precedes. The preaching and baptism of John were the fulfilment of certain prophetic predictions. Luke, in writing for the race, recognized the authority of the Old Testament. **In the book**, roll or scroll of linen, papyrus, or parchment, the ancient form of a volume, written inside and unrolled for reading. **The words**, the prophetic discourses which Isaiah wrote. **Esaias**, the Greek form of the Hebrew name *Isaiah*. **Saying** should be omitted according to the best critical authorities. Isaiah began to prophesy under the reign of Uzziah, about 759 B. C., and continued the prophetic office about sixty years under Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah. The predictions here quoted are found in Isa. 40 : 3-5; 52 : 10. John also applies it to himself. See John 1 : 23. The figure here used is founded on an Eastern custom of sending persons to prepare the way for the march of a monarch through a wild and uncultivated region.

**The voice of one crying.** It is not John, but his preaching and mission, which are made prominent. His whole public life was as a sermon. His preaching was indeed a *voice* of one *crying aloud*, of short duration, but by its great earnestness exciting attention, and

of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way  
 5 of the Lord, make his paths straight. Every valley  
 shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be  
 brought low; and the crooked shall be made straight,  
 6 and the rough ways *shall be* made smooth. And "all  
 flesh shall see the salvation of God.  
 7 Then said he to the multitude that came forth to  
 be baptized of him, <sup>v</sup>O generation of vipers, who

<sup>v</sup> ch. 2. 10; Ps. 98  
 2; Isa. 52. 10.  
<sup>v</sup> Ge. 3. 1, 15; Mt.  
 12. 34; 23. 33;  
 John 8. 44; Rev.  
 12. 9.

the place of his preaching was the **wilderness**. The wilderness was a striking emblem of the spiritual desolation of Israel at that time. **Prepare ye the way**. Remove the obstructions and repair the roads. Repent of sin, renounce and forsake it. **Of the Lord**, Jehovah, as applied to the Messiah. See on ch. 1:76. **Make his paths straight and smooth**. There seems to be a reference to a level as well as to a direct road, as appears from the next verse.

5. Luke extends his quotation beyond either Matthew or Mark. **Every valley shall be filled**, etc. Thus a smooth and even road would be formed through a wild, rough, and uneven country. Diodorus, in his account of the marches of Semiramis, the celebrated queen of Babylon, into Media and Persia, says: "In her march to Ecbatane she came to the Zarcean mountain, which, extending many furlongs, full of craggy precipices and deep hollows, could not be passed without making a great circuit. Desirous of leaving an everlasting memorial of herself, as well as of shortening the way, she ordered the precipices to be digged down and the hollows to be filled up; and at great expense she made a shorter and more expeditious road, which was called the road of Semiramis." Thus the mountains of pride would be levelled, the valleys of unbelief would be filled up, their sinful and crooked ways straightened, and their rough paths of selfishness, sensuality, and worldliness would be made smooth.

6. **And all flesh**. This quotation is added from Isa. 52:10, and is in harmony with the spirit of Luke's Gospel—the gospel for the race. The "middle wall" should be levelled. So remarkable and conspicuous would be the preparation and the march of Zion's King upon the straight and

smooth highway that the whole human race should see **the salvation of God**, the Messiah, who alone brings salvation. Compare notes on ch. 1:69 and 2:30.

7. **Then**. Rather, *Therefore*. In accordance with the design of John's ministry, as just described by prophetic quotations, he addressed the multitudes who came to him for baptism in the language that follows. **The multitude**, or *crowd*. The news would soon spread throughout the whole of Palestine by means of the people who attended the feasts; and as the country was not large, companies of pilgrims could soon gather from all quarters, Matt. 3:5. It was also the sabbatical year, when the people were comparatively free from agricultural labors, Ex. 23:11. **To be baptized**. Literally, *To be immersed*. This has been the meaning of the verb in the original in every stage of the Greek language, and it is still its meaning in the modern Greek. In accordance with this meaning, the Greek Church in all of its branches has uniformly practiced immersion from the earliest period to the present. Compare the author's *Notes on Matthew*, ch. 3:6. and his *Notes on Mark*, ch. 1:4; also see Dr. Conant's *Baptizein*, Carson *On Baptism*, and kindred works.

**Generation of vipers**. Matthew (3:7) informs us that Pharisees and Sadducees were present, who were thus particularly addressed. Luke, in writing for Gentiles, did not need specially to specify these two classes. Doubtless many in the multitude had come from idle curiosity, others were envious and jealous, and some, especially of the Sadducees, were sneering at the dangers impending in a future life. Yet all seemed somewhat aroused and anxious. At a glance John perceives their selfish and wicked motives in coming,

- hath warned you to flee from <sup>w</sup>the wrath to come? <sup>v</sup>Ro. 5. 9; 1 Thes. 1. 10; Rev. 6. 16, 17.
- 8 <sup>z</sup>Bring forth therefore <sup>y</sup>fruits worthy of repentance; and begin not to say within yourselves, <sup>x</sup>We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, That God is able of these stones <sup>a</sup>to raise up children unto <sup>y</sup>Gal. 5. 22, 23; Phil. 1. 11.
- 9 Abraham. And <sup>b</sup>now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees; <sup>c</sup>every tree therefore which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. <sup>d</sup>John 8. 33, 39; Ro. 2. 28, 29; 4. 1, 16; 9. 7, 8; Gal. 4. 28-31.
- 10 And the people asked him saying, <sup>d</sup>What shall <sup>e</sup>Mal. 3. 1-3. <sup>f</sup>ch. 13. 7, 9; Mt. 7. 16-19; John 15. 6. <sup>g</sup>Ac. 2. 37. <sup>h</sup>Mt. 8. 11, 12; Ac. 15. 14; 1 Cor. 1. 27, 28; Gal. 3. 27-29.

and at once indicates their character. *Brood of vipers*, persons both deceitful and malignant, hypocritical, and holding pernicious doctrines and principles; hence, injurious to others and exposed to coming wrath. The viper is a very poisonous serpent, Acts 28 : 3-6. **Who hath warned you.** *Who did warn you, or Who warned you.* An expression of surprise and distrust. What has moved you to this when you think yourselves the "children of Abraham" and the models and teachers of the people? Who showed you that you must flee? Who awakened in you a fear of coming judgment? Strange that such formalists should be thus aroused! It was a Jewish maxim that no circumcised person could ever be lost. **Wrath to come.** Impending wrath, which was to be visited upon those who rejected the kingdom of heaven and neglected preparation. The Jews expected troublous times in connection with the appearance of the Messiah, Mal. 3 : 1; 4 : 5; Isa. 60 : 12; 63 : 1. John referred prophetically to the wrath coming upon the Jewish nation at the destruction of Jerusalem, and upon all the wicked at the general judgment, 1 Thess. 1 : 10; Matt. 24 : 21, 38, 39.

8. **Bring forth therefore fruits,** not merely emotional and selfish fear, but such works and conduct as will show your sincerity and shall be **worthy of repentance**, proper and suitable to such a change. See on ch. 13 : 2. **Begin not to say,** etc. Do not attempt to plead hereditary privileges. The Jews, and especially the Pharisees, thought that, as children of Abraham, they were partakers of the promise made to him, and consequently possessed the favor of God and a right to share in the blessings of the Messiah,

John 8 : 33, 39. **To our Father.** Rather, *For our Father.* For introduces a reason why they should not trust in a hereditary salvation. **God is able of these stones.** God is not of necessity confined to you, the natural descendants of Abraham; but as he created Adam out of the dust of the earth, so he can now form of these stones men who shall be spiritually and truly the children of Abraham. See Gal. 3 : 6, 7. John doubtless pointed to the stones on the banks of the Jordan. As these were the most unlikely material, so God could take the most unpromising persons and make them suitable subjects of the Messiah. John condemns the erroneous view of hereditary piety then prevalent, and teaches that not descent, but repentance, was necessary to the privileges of sonship.

9. **And now also the axe is laid.** Already the axe *lies* at the root ready for use, aimed not at the branches, but **at the root.** The object is not to prune, but to cut down. **Every tree.** Every one is to be dealt with according to his individual character. **Which bringeth not forth good fruit.** Men are to be judged, not by their birth or their professions, but by their hearts and lives. **Is cut down,** without delay, like barren trees for firewood. The execution is to be immediate. **Cast into the fire,** of impending wrath, already mentioned (ver. 7), into fire unquenchable, ver. 17; Heb. 6 : 8. Thus John would prepare the people for the coming of Christ by awakening within them a sense of their true condition and of their spiritual want. Expecting a temporal deliverer, they would without this most certainly reject Jesus.

10. Having awakened convictions, John now directs inquirers. **And the**

11 we do then? He answereth and saith unto them, \*He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none; and he that hath meat, let him do likewise.

12 Then 'came also publicans to be baptized, and said  
13 unto him, Master, what shall we do? And he said unto them, \*Exact no more than that which is appointed you.

\* ch. 11. 41; Is. 58  
7-11; Heb. 6. 10  
Jam. 2. 15, 16;  
1 John 3. 17; 4.  
20.  
† ch. 7. 29; Mt. 21.  
32.  
‡ ch. 19. 8.  
Ex. 23. 1; Le. 19.  
11.

**people, the multitudes, asked him.** Not the Pharisees and Sadducees, who were so provoked with such plain and honest treatment that they turned their backs upon John and his baptism (ch. 7 : 29, 30; Matt. 21 : 25), and said, "He hath a demon" (Matt. 11 : 18), but the common people, who were alarmed, perplexed, and teachable. **What shall, etc.** *What, then, shall we do?* The language of awakened penitents, Acts 2 : 37; 16 : 30.

11. **He answereth.** John answers the inquirers by directing attention to the sin most common among them, and to the particular sins which distinguished certain classes of his hearers. John had observed these, though he had lived so secluded a life. **He that hath two coats,** or tunics, inner garments worn next to the skin, mostly with sleeves, reaching usually to the knees. Two tunics were sometimes worn for ornament or luxury. In such a case the second or upper tunic was longer than the other. **Impart,** give to, or share with. **Him that hath none.** This answer corresponds with what John had preached, "Bring forth fruits worthy of repentance," and to the question which this preaching aroused, "What, then, shall we do?" Avarice and unfeeling selfishness characterized at this time the Jewish people, James 4 : 1-4; 5 : 1-6. The very opposite of these would be the fruits which would indicate repentance in their case. Deeds of justice, self-denying generosity, and charity, though not in themselves a ground of merit, were what should be expected of persons who professed the change of heart and life embraced in repentance, Isa. 58 : 6, 7; Mic. 6 : 8; 1 John 3 : 17; 4 : 20. The **coat and meat,** rather *food,* represent the physical necessities of men. These should not be hoarded, but generously imparted as others have need.

12. There came also **publicans, tax-**

*gatherers* under the Roman government. Publicans consisted of two classes. The first were Roman knights, residing generally at Rome, who levied the revenues of a large district; the second were subordinate collectors, each of whom was required to pay a certain sum to his superior, with the privilege of raising as much more as he pleased for his own profit. This led to extortion and oppression. The latter class were the publicans of the New Testament. Over this class were placed agents in the provinces, who superintended the actual business of collecting the revenues. Such a one was probably Zaccheus, who is styled a *chief publican*, ch. 18 : 2. Publicans were regarded as willing tools of oppression, and instruments of a Gentile or heathen power and a foreign despotism. Their very name was expressive of a depraved and reckless character, ch. 8 : 11; Matt. 18 : 17; 21 : 31. The Jews engaged as publicans were practically excommunicated persons, and excluded by their occupation from respectable society. They were classed with harlots (Matt. 21 : 31) and with the heathen, Matt. 18 : 17. The Jews had a proverb, "Take not a wife out of a family where there is a publican, for they are all publicans." People of this class were also convicted of their guilt under John's preaching, and inquired, **Master,** rather, *Teacher,* **what shall we do,** to show the sincerity of our repentance and to escape the coming wrath? The publicans alone here address John as *teacher*, implying, perhaps, their humble and teachable spirit under the sense of sin.

13. The appropriate fruit of repentance, in persons who were noted for their extortions, would be strict integrity, even-handed justice; hence, John enjoins upon publicans, **Exact no more than that which is appointed you,** by your superiors. He demands not that they should give up

- 14 And the soldiers likewise demanded of him, saying, And what shall we do? And he said unto them, Do violence to no man, neither accuse *any* falsely; <sup>b</sup> and be content with your wages. <sup>b</sup> Phil. 4. 11; 1 Tim 6. 8.
- 15 And as the people were in expectation, and all men mused in their hearts of John, whether he were
- 16 the Christ, or not; John answered, saying unto *them*

their employment, but that they should be honest in the performance of their duties. If they truly repented, they would indeed exhibit other fruits, but this in their case was indispensable. Without it there could no true repentance.

14. **And the soldiers.** Rather, *And soldiers.* Probably Jewish troops; for had they been Gentiles, John would doubtless have enjoined upon them, among other things, the worship of the true God. Such worship is here taken for granted. Who they were is uncertain; they could have been Jewish soldiers of the Roman province of Judea, or of Herod Antipas of Galilee. But whoever they were, they appear to have been engaged in actual military service. The name here applied to them, and translated *soldiers*, means men under arms, or men on the march. These were also aroused by John's pungent preaching; and in concern for themselves, they ask **What, etc., What shall we do, we also?** John's answer was adapted to their sins and temptations. They were prone to insolence, violence, malice, and insubordination. John does not command them to give up their occupation, but to carry into it honesty, kindness, and contentment. These traits would be significant fruits in their case, but without them their repentance would be hollow and valueless. **Do violence to no man, to no one.** The literal meaning of the Greek verb here employed is to *shake violently*, and hence to *vex and harass*, in order by insolent and overbearing treatment or by terror to extort money or gain some selfish end. **Neither accuse any falsely**, in order to receive a bribe or to obtain a reward. **Be content with your wages.** The word translated *wages* literally means "something purchased to eat with bread." Hired soldiers were at first paid partly in rations of meat, grain, and fruit. Hence the word came to

mean *rations, wages, or stipend.* Here it includes both food and money. Seek not unlawfully to increase it by mutiny or by sedition or by dishonest gains from the people.

From the above examples, we catch a glimpse of John's manner of preaching. He was eminently practical, rebuking the particular sins of the people, and enforcing the duties of love, mercy, justice, and fidelity in daily life; demanding a breaking off from sin and the living of a pious life as the evidence of repentance. He does not condemn any particular avocation, but the sins and abuses commonly connected with it. Of course, if any one of his hearers could not follow a given employment without committing these sins, it would be his duty to change his employment.

15. **As the people were in expectation,** that John would clearly declare himself, who he was, John 1: 25. This shows how deep the impression which John had made upon the people. They were waiting anxiously for some indication or declaration from himself which would set the matter at rest. From John 1: 19-28 it appears that a deputation was sent from Jerusalem to obtain from him a definite answer. **And all men mused, etc.** *All were reasoning in their hearts concerning John.* They were pondering all the facts in the case, and considering the reasons for and against. **Whether he were the Christ or not.** Rather, *Whether he was not the Christ*, an indirect question, implying an affirmative answer. Notwithstanding their notions of Christ as a prince and warrior, they were just as ready to conclude that this great and bold preacher in rough garments of camel's hair was indeed the Christ. A single word from him would have at once aroused the Jewish nation. Hence the necessity of his making an emphatic assertion that he was not the Christ (John 1: 20), and of pointing to him as soon to come, vers. 16, 17. **This**

all, 'I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire: whose fan is in

<sup>1</sup>Ac. 1. 5; 2. 2-4;  
1 Cor. 12. 13.

conduct of John shows his moral greatness and the humility becoming so good a man.

16. **John answered, etc.** *John answered them all, saying.* He publicly and frankly declared to all, both to the people who came to his baptism and the deputation which came from Jerusalem, that he was not the Messiah who was soon to appear. **I indeed baptize you with water, in water.** So the versions of George Campbell Norton, American Bible Union, translate. The preposition *en* (in) is omitted in the original (so also in Acts 1 : 5 ; 11 : 16), but in the corresponding phrase that follows *in* is inserted, *in the Holy Spirit*. In the parallel passage in Matthew (3 : 11, 12) the preposition is used in both cases, and so also in Mark (1 : 8) according to some of the best manuscripts, while others read as here. We often find in parallel phrases a preposition now inserted and now omitted with the same essential sense. Thus in 1 Pet. 4 : 1 we find a similar construction, "Christ hath suffered for us *in the flesh*" (without the preposition); "for he that hath suffered for us *in the flesh*" (with the preposition). Compare Eph. 2 : 1, "Dead *in trespasses*" (preposition omitted), with Col. 2 : 13, "Dead *in your sins*" (preposition inserted). Compare 1 John 3 : 18, where the preposition is omitted three times and inserted once.

In these examples, where the preposition is omitted in the Greek, we have what scholars style the *local dative*, defining place. Thus Jelf in his Greek grammar, the best work on the subject (3d edition), § 605, 1, says, "The accident of place is put in the dative, except when, occasionally in poetry, the place is conceived of as the antecedent condition of the action of the verb. So that all verbs *may* be followed by a dative when it is wished to define the place." Also in § 605, 5, he says, "Under the local dative, as expressing the particular point wherein anything takes place, we must class such expressions as, 'I am in the same mind,' etc., SOPH.; 'I am

mostly in this mind,' THUCYD." Compare the examples of local dative given in Dr. Conant's *Baptizein*, Exs. 71, 73, 76, 78, 86, 120, 121, 125. Some regard the dative in this passage and in Acts 1 : 5 ; 11 : 16, as that of *instrument*—that is, the element used in the immersion—but it is far more natural to regard it as dative of place as above. There seems to be nothing in the expression really demanding the instrumental dative. That the Greek *en* (in) is always found in the expression "Baptize in the Holy Spirit" (in this verse; Acts 1 : 5 ; 11 : 16) may be explained from the fact that the *idea of locality* necessarily connected with an immersion always demands the use of *en* in this phrase, since we do not so generally connect locality with the Spirit.

**But one mightier, etc., or The mightier than I cometh.** John (1 : 26, 27) records the more definite language of the Baptist, that the coming One was already in the midst of them. Jesus was mightier in his nature, office, wisdom, power, and aims, John 5 : 27 ; 10 : 30, 41; Matt. 23 : 18. Yet none greater than John had arisen, Matt. 11 : 9-11. **The latchet.** The strap which fastened the sandal to the foot. **Shoes.** *Sandals*, the coverings of the bottom of the feet. They were taken off and laid aside on entering a house. The tying and untying the sandals was the work of the most menial servant. Yet Christ was so mighty a personage that even this work John felt himself unworthy to perform. But John had aroused the whole Jewish nation. How great, ~~th~~ *en*, the Messiah! He should arouse the world, and his power would be felt by every one of the human race.

**Baptize you with the Spirit and with fire.** Literally, *in the Holy Spirit and fire*, the preposition *en* (*in*) being used after baptize, as in Mark 1 : 5, and *fire* being closely united by *and* to *Holy Spirit*. The form of expression is the same in Matt. 3 : 11. The preposition *en* expresses the element in which the baptism takes place. Compare second paragraph on this verse. The bap-

his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and <sup>1</sup> Mic. 4. 12; Mt. 13. 30; Is. 65. 15, 16; Mal. 4. 1.  
 will gather the wheat into his garner; but the chaff

tism in the Holy Spirit and fire must not be referred to water baptism in any sense, for Christ never baptized, but left that to his disciples (John 4 : 2); nor to the common influences of the Spirit which are peculiarly the Spirit's work (John 20 : 22), but to the sending of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, which was peculiarly Christ's work, John 16 : 7. Thus Jesus himself evidently teaches in Acts 1 : 5. So Peter looked back to this baptism in Acts 11 : 16. As Christ's servants are to baptize new-born believers in water, so Christ baptized the new-born church in the Holy Spirit. This he literally did on the day of Pentecost, Acts 2 : 2-4. The words *and of fire*, as well as the external appearance of *tongues as of fire*, express symbolically the fiery, the vehement, ardent, and active power of the Holy Spirit, and as manifested in those receiving this baptism, the fiery zeal and fervor, connected with the gift of tongues and other gifts, then conferred upon them. Such an overwhelming and all-pervading descent of the Holy Spirit, with other manifestations of fire, could aptly be styled a baptism in the Holy Spirit and fire. They were indeed immersed in the divine element. Their souls were penetrated and encompassed on every side, and their bodies by the symbols of the Spirit, which filled the house. *And fire* is omitted in Mark 1 : 8 and Acts 1 : 5, but it is really comprehended in the concise expression "*in the Spirit*," as fire was symbolic of the power of the Spirit.

Many commentators, however, refer these words to the baptism of the righteous in the Holy Spirit, and of the wicked in the fire of judgment. Thus Van Oosterzee says on this passage: "He will, so to speak, wholly immerse you in the Holy Spirit and in the fire. The baptism of fire is appointed for the unconverted, as that of the Holy Spirit for believers. . . . Some are renovated by his baptism, others buried in the fiery baptism of final judgment." The passages quoted for the symbolical use of the word fire are Mal. 4 : 1; Matt. 25 : 41; Jude 7; Rev. 20 : 14, 15; 21 : 8. It is thought that this interpreta-

tion agrees better with the next verse. But this is only apparent, for the next verse does not necessarily refer in any respect to the baptism in the Spirit. The language here refers plainly to one class; for "Holy Spirit" and "fire" are closely united by the pronoun *you* and by the conjunction *and*. He shall baptize those that he shall baptize, in the Holy Spirit and fire.

Christ showed by the baptism in the Spirit and fire that he was the dispenser of the Spirit, through whose power his kingdom would be carried on; that his church was fully commenced, and that the Comforter would be given to believers of all ages.

John, by contrasting his baptism in water with that in the Holy Spirit and fire, showed the superiority of Christ's office, work, and power over his own. As spirit and fire are more powerful, penetrating, and subtle than water, so Christ's work would be higher, more spiritual, and profoundly searching than his, consuming the dross and producing a higher spiritual life, with all the attendant fruits and blessings.

**17. Whose fan.** Whose winnowing shovel is **in his hand**, ready for use. Oxen threshed the grain in the East by treading it out (Deut. 25 : 4), or a threshing-machine was drawn over it, Isa. 41 : 15; Amos 1 : 3. The grain and chaff mingled were thrown up against the wind with the winnowing-shovel; the chaff was thus blown away, while the grain fell in a heap. Thus Christ is the great Winnowing who shall separate the righteous from the wicked. Compare ch. 22 : 31; Jer. 15 : 7. **Thoroughly purge, cleanse his threshing-floor**, by separating the wheat from the chaff. Believers are to be separated, even by severe measures, from both unbelievers and also their remaining sins. The threshing-floor was a circular piece of ground in the open field, levelled and beaten down or paved. An elevated piece of ground was generally selected, for the purpose of having the full benefit of the wind, 1 Chron. 21 : 15, 28, 30.

**The wheat.** The righteous, true believers. **Garner.** Granary, store-

18 he will burn with fire unquenchable. And many other things in his exhortation preached he unto the people.

19 <sup>1</sup> But Herod the tetrarch, being reproved by him <sup>1</sup> Mt. 14. 3-5; Mk 6. 17-20.  
for Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, and for all  
20 the evils which Herod had done, added yet this above  
all, that he shut up John in prison.

house. **The chaff.** The wicked, unbelievers, Ps. 1 : 4.

**Fire unquenchable.** Fire that will not be put out, that utterly consumes, Matt. 13 : 30; 25 : 34, 41, 46; Isa. 66 : 24; Mark 9 : 43-48.

18. **And many other things, etc.** *And with many other exhortations and admonitions such as have just been given, he preached the gospel, or glad tidings, unto the people.* Thus we have John's manner of preaching the gospel. He rebuked sin, called upon the people to repent, and to manifest it by a thorough change of heart and life, proclaimed the Messiah approaching with blessings and salvation to the righteous, the believing, and judgments and destruction to the wicked, the unbelieving. Thus he prepared the way for Christ; and some hearts were ready to receive him when he came, John 1 : 37, 41, 43.

19. The warnings and admonitions of John extended to every class of the people—to the prince as well as to subject. As Luke is giving a brief and summary account of John's ministry, he, by way of anticipation, refers to the imprisonment of John, which occurred several months after Christ's baptism, Matt. 14 : 3; Mark 6 : 17. **Herod Antipas.** See on ver. 1. **For Herodias, his brother Philip's wife.** According to the best critical authorities, this should read, *On account of Herodias, his brother's wife.* Herodias was granddaughter of Herod the Great, daughter of Aristobulus, and niece of Herod Antipas. She married Philip, a son of Herod the Great, who lived in private life, having been disinherited by his father. Herodias, preferring royalty, left him and married Herod Antipas, who, to make way for her, divorced his own wife, daughter of Aretas, king of Arabia, supposed to be the one mentioned by Paul in 2 Cor. 11 : 32. Notwithstanding that Herodias had left her husband and married An-

tipas, she was *his brother's wife.* Compare Mark 6 : 17-20, 29. Not only for this one crime did John reprove Herod, but for all the evils which Herod had done, or *did*—his revellings, debaucheries, and murders. According to Jewish testimony, Herod Antipas "was very wicked and a destroying man. Many of the wise men of Israel he slew with the sword."—DR. GILL on this verse. His wickedness reached its climax in the imprisonment and execution of John.

20. **Added yet above all.** His wickedness had already reached a fearful height, but he *added to all this also. Shut up John in prison,* in the fortress of Machærus, on the eastern shore of the Dead Sea, Josephus, *Antiq.* xviii. 5, 2. This occurred probably about November, A. D. 27, and about a year after our Saviour's baptism. John's ministry continued about eighteen months. He was beheaded probably in March, A. D. 29. See on ch. 9 : 9; also author's *Harmony*, §§ 30, 31. The chronological position of this verse and the preceding one is after ch. 4 : 13. But Luke thus summarily brings to a close his account of the ministry of John, and in the next verse commences his narrative of Christ's ministry, beginning with his baptism.

21, 22. **THE BAPTISM OF JESUS,** Matt. 3 : 13-17; Mark 1 : 9-11. The account of Matthew is the fullest, this of Luke the briefest, but with some important particulars not mentioned by the others—namely, all the people baptized, Jesus praying, and the bodily shape as a dove. Jesus was baptized probably at the ford of the Jordan east of Jericho.

Dr. Harvey, of Hamilton Theological Seminary, who visited the Jordan in April, 1874, writes: "The river runs through a deep ravine with a narrow fringe of green on either bank, and as we rode toward it only the top of the chasm was visible till we came to its brink. The water is slightly discolored,

21 Now when all the people were baptized, 'it came <sup>1Mt. 3. 13-17; Mk</sup>  
 to pass, that Jesus also being baptized, and praying, <sup>1. 9-11; John 1</sup>  
 22 the heaven was opened, and the Holy Ghost descended <sup>32.</sup>

and rushes down to the Dead Sea with a rapid, strong current. At the fords it was then about one hundred and fifty feet across, and very deep; the heavy storms which prevailed in Palestine through March had swollen it. It is rarely fordable. Until lately a ferry-boat has connected the banks, but it was swept away and destroyed by the violence of the stream, and has not been replaced. We found the water soft, and delightful for bathing. The banks are lined with the balsam, the tamarisk, and the oleander. It is a beautiful spot, and worthy of its great history. Here, without doubt, Israel crossed through the divided waters, passing from the plains of Moab to the plains of Jericho. Elijah and Elisha, in a later age, passed over in like manner as God divided the stream before them. It was to this place Elisha sent Naaman the Syrian when he came to him at Gilgal, and the leper 'went down and dipped himself seven times in Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God, and he was clean.' Above all, here Christ was baptized by John; and as 'he went up straightway out of the water, lo! the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him; and lo! a voice from heaven saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.' As 'Jerusalem and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan, went out' to John to be baptized, this must certainly be the place, for the higher point of the river fixed on by some is wholly unlikely, because much too distant and inconvenient of access to the multitudes from Jerusalem and Judea." The exact time of his baptism is unknown. Tradition very generally places it in the winter, about January 6 or 10. If John commenced his ministry in the spring, as is probable, and Jesus was baptized about six months after, then it occurred in the autumn. It may have occurred late in the autumn A. D. 26.

21. When all the people were baptized, or had been baptized. A

brief expression, in which *all* is popularly used for *great numbers*. When the multitudes from all parts of the land connected with that great uprising of the people had been baptized in the Jordan, confessing their sins, Matt. 3 : 6. That the expression must be taken in this restricted and popular sense is evident from the fact that John continued to preach and baptize till his imprisonment. The baptism of Jesus, however, formed the climax of John's ministry; it was the great crowning act, for he came baptizing in water that Jesus might be manifested to Israel, John 1 : 31-34. From that time he began to decrease, but Jesus to increase. All the people were no longer gathering to John. The disciples of Jesus were baptizing more than he, John 4 : 1, 2. **Jesus also being baptized, or having also been baptized.** Jesus was baptized at the time or period when the people were baptized, probably at the close of the greatest baptismal season of John's ministry, but whether publicly or not is not stated. Luke, who makes prominent the human side of Jesus, speaks of his baptism as connected with that of the people, and also gives the additional particular that *Jesus was praying*. It is one peculiarity of his Gospel that Luke often speaks of Jesus as praying, ch. 6 : 12; 9 : 18, 29; 22 : 32, 41; 23 : 34, 46. It was immediately upon his emerging from the water that he prayed, and it was while praying that the **heaven was opened, cleft, parted**, as by a flash of lightning (Acts 7 : 56), and the Spirit descended upon him. There was a sudden and visible parting asunder in a portion of the sky. Jesus saw it, Mark 1 : 10; John also witnessed it, John 1 : 32.

"O happy river! conscious in each drop,  
 From thy clear bottom to thy smiling top;  
 Deep calling unto deep, as rapids swift  
 To foaming cataracts their voice uplift,  
 In eager proclamation, far to near  
 And near to far, loud shouting, God is  
 here!  
 Thou, ever reverent, o'er many a steep,  
 With kneelings many and prostrations  
 deep,

in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased.

Falling and falling, low and lower fall,  
And kiss his feet who is the Lord of all!

\* \* \* \* \*

Breast high in thee, not snow is half so  
white,

Nor half so spotless is th' unsullied light;  
Caressing eddies round and round him  
whirled,

In circling dance, the Worder of the world.  
He stoops to thee in all his heavenly  
charms;

I see him sinking in thy jeweled arms,  
Lost one amazing moment to the sight,  
Then rising radiant, dripping gems of  
light."

ABRAHAM COLES, M. D., LL.D.,  
*The Evangel*, pp. 133-138.

22. In a bodily shape or form, visible at least to Jesus (Matt. 3 : 16) and to John, 1 : 32. Like a dove, or As a dove, referring probably to the shape in which the Spirit descended; for as Luke definitely says that the Spirit descended in an organized corporeal form, it is most natural to refer the words like or as a dove to that form. Some, however, refer it to the manner in which the Spirit descended, gently and swiftly, like the downward flight of a dove. But this leaves the bodily shape entirely unexplained, and makes the comparison to be simply between the descent of the Spirit and a dove, and not, as it plainly seems to be, between the Spirit and the dove. The comparison most naturally implies the visible appearance of the Spirit in the shape of a dove. There was of course nothing material, since it was "the Holy Spirit." This was a fit emblem of the pure, gentle, and peaceful character of Jesus and his work, Isa. 61 : 1-3; Matt. 10 : 16; 11 : 29; 12 : 19-21. The descent of the Spirit was also a token of the Messiah to John, John 1 : 33. Thus Jesus received the heavenly anointing, and here the active and official ministry of Jesus begins, Ps. 45 : 7; Isa. 11 : 2; 42 : 1.

A voice came from heaven, from the Father, attesting the Messiahship of Jesus to John, and through him to the people, John 1 : 32-34. Thou. In answer to Jesus praying, ver. 21. Beloved Son. Not only my Son (Ps. 2 : 7, 12), but emphatically the Beloved,

Isa. 42 : 1. Son not only expresses his Messiahship, but also the close, endearing, and divine relation he sustained to the Father, the dignity both of his office and his divine nature, John 1 : 34.

In thee I am well pleased. In all respects as a Son and a Mediator. Compare the repetition of this heavenly testimony, ch. 9 : 35; Matt. 17 : 5; 2 Pet. 1 : 17. Thus the three Persons of the one God were manifested at our Lord's baptism. The ordinance was honored by his implicit obedience, the descending Spirit, and the approving voice of the Father.

If the question be asked, Why was Jesus baptized? it may be answered, Thus Jesus was to fulfil all righteousness, Matt. 3 : 15. It was an act of holy obedience incumbent on every pious individual. Jesus was thus brought into a personal relation to his own kingdom, into an open and positive connection with his own visible Church. As its Head he submitted to that which was obligatory upon all of its members. It pointed specially to the vicarious nature of his great work. It was only as he was connected with a sinful race, he himself being without sin, that he could appropriately submit to baptism. It prefigured not merely his death, burial, and resurrection, Luke 12 : 50, but also his death to sin—that is, to the sins of the people, that were laid on him—and his life to righteousness—that is, the new life of all his spiritual people. It prefigured sin, as it were, receiving its death and burial with him, and holiness its resurrection and life, Col. 2 : 12, 13; Eph. 2 : 5; Rom. 6 : 3, 4, 8; Ps. 40 : 12.

Another question is often asked, What is the relation of John's baptism to apostolic baptism? They were essentially one. The baptism of John, commencing at the dawn of the new dispensation, was performed in view of an approaching Messiah, "saying to the people that they should believe on him who should come after him" (Acts 19 : 4), "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand," Matt. 3 : 2. This was the first step in the development

*Genealogy of Jesus.*

23 AND Jesus himself began to be <sup>m</sup> about thirty years <sup>= Num. 4: 3, 35, 39,</sup>  
of age, being (as was supposed) <sup>n</sup> the son of Joseph, <sup>43, 47.</sup>  
<sup>m</sup> Mt. 13. 55; John 6. 42.

of the ordinance. As John's preaching was the beginning of gospel preaching (Matt. 3: 2 and Mark 1: 7, 15; Luke 3: 18), so his baptism was the beginning of gospel baptism. Not only was Jesus baptized by John, but also the apostles, so far as we know, ch. 7: 29; John 1: 35-40. Christ's disciples baptizing in the name of Jesus as the Messiah formed the second step, John 4: 2. And the last commission to baptize in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, the final step which made the ordinance complete as an institution of the churches of Christ, Matt. 28: 19.

If it be objected that the twelve disciples of John at Ephesus were re-baptized by Paul (Acts 19: 5), it may be replied that Paul appears to intimate that they never properly received John's baptism, for they had never heard of the Holy Spirit of which John spoke. Besides, they resided at Ephesus, many hundreds of miles from Palestine, and it was about twenty-five years after John's death. Hence they were probably baptized by John's disciples after his death, and such baptism was not valid, for the authority to baptize was entrusted to John, and he had no right to transmit it to others. And besides, if the Holy Spirit was not recognized after Jesus had given his last commission, such baptism could not then be regarded as fully-developed gospel baptism.

23-38. THE GENEALOGY OF JESUS. Compare Matt. 1: 1-17. This genealogy differs from that in Matthew by tracing the lineage of Jesus through the line of Nathan, the son of David, down to Adam; whereas Matthew gives the line of the kings of Judah to David, and extends the descent only to Abraham. Matthew says, "Jacob begat Joseph, the husband of Mary," while Luke puts it, "Joseph, the son of Heli." See below.

23. And Jesus himself began to be, etc. This translation is ungrammatical. It is better to translate, *Jesus himself was above thirty years of age*

when he began his ministry. Compare Acts 1: 1, 22, "began both to do and to teach." *When he began, or beginning*, is explanatory, and in some manuscripts is placed immediately after Jesus; in others at the end of the clause. In either place it is most natural to refer it to his ministry, for Luke had just narrated our Saviour's baptism, which stands at the commencement of Christ's public work. It is also in harmony with Luke's manner, for he had specified the date of the beginning of John's ministry, besides giving the time of the annunciation to Zachariah, of that to Mary, of the circumcision, presentation, and the first visit of Jesus to the temple.

**About thirty years of age.** It is very common for Luke to use the word *about* with a specification of time, ch. 1: 56; 9: 28; 22: 59; 23: 44; Acts 10: 3; compare Acts 2: 41; 4: 4; 5: 36; 19: 7. *About thirty* is not here a round or general number, referring to any year within two or three years of thirty, but a specific designation of time, meaning a few months below or rather *above* thirty. The meaning appears to be that Jesus began his ministry when he was more than thirty and less than thirty-one. This accords with what we know of the time of our Lord's birth and baptism. Thirty was also the age when Levites entered upon their public services (Num. 4: 3, 47; 1 Chron. 23: 3), and when scribes were accustomed to enter upon their office as teachers. Perhaps, as Van Oosterzee remarks, the people would not have been disposed to recognize the authority of a teacher who had not attained that age. However that may be, it was the design of God that the Messiah should not enter upon his public duties until he had arrived at the age of thirty.

Too much stress has sometimes been laid upon the Levitical age of thirty for the sake of showing that Christ was installed into his priesthood by his baptism. The facts are that even the Levitical age differed (Num. 8: 24; 1 Chron. 23: 24), that there was no particular age specified for entering upon

- 24 which was *the son* of Heli, which was *the son* of Matthat,  
 which was *the son* of Levi, which was *the son* of Melchi,  
 25 which was *the son* of Janna, which was *the son* of Jo-  
 seph, which was *the son* of Mattathias, which was *the*  
*son* of Amos, which was *the son* of Naum, which was  
 26 *the son* of Esli, which was *the son* of Nagge, which was  
*the son* of Maath, which was *the son* of Mattathias,  
 which was *the son* of Semei, which was *the son* of Jo-  
 27 seph, which was *the son* of Juda, which was *the son* of  
 Joanna, which was *the son* of Rhesa, which was *the son*

the priesthood, and that baptism had no special reference to Christ's priesthood, but to his public ministry. With almost as much plausibility it might be argued that Christ's baptism had reference to his kingship because David was thirty years old when he began to reign, 2 Sam. 5 : 4.

**Being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph.** Being the reputed son of Joseph. Which was should be omitted in this verse and throughout the genealogy. **The son of Heli.** *The son* should not be in italics, as it is implied in the Greek. The expression, *Being as was supposed*, seems to indicate that Luke had an eye to the real parentage of Jesus, and that he here gives the genealogy of Mary. He was the reputed son of Joseph, but really the son of Heli. This will appear plainer still if, with some, we extend the parenthesis, and read, "Being (as was supposed the son of Joseph) the son of Heli." The grandfather's name is given because, having no human father, Heli was the nearest male progenitor. Mary's name is omitted because it was not common to insert the names of females in genealogical tables, and she was really represented legally by Joseph her husband. *Son* also is frequently used in the wider sense of descendant. But if the above interpretation should be unsatisfactory to any, it may be said that Joseph might be the son of Heli in the sense of son-in-law; and better still, if Mary was an only child, and we do not know that she had any brothers, then Joseph by marriage became the legal son of her father and the representative of his family, Num. 27 : 4; 36 : 5-8. This would at least solve the question, which so troubled the ancients, how Joseph could have had two fathers. In further support

of the view that Luke gives the genealogy of Mary it may be added :

1. Luke, in the first portions of his Gospel, gives greater prominence to Mary, while Matthew gives greater prominence to Joseph. It is most natural, therefore, to suppose Joseph's genealogy to be given by Matthew, and Mary's by Luke.

2. It seems evident that Matthew gives Joseph's genealogy by natural lineage, for so he uses the word "begat" in his table until after the exile, and then the same mode of expression is continued until Joseph. But when it comes to Jesus, it is no longer "begat," but "Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus." As Matthew wrote for Jews, he would most likely give the legal genealogy of Jesus through the royal line of David, showing that he was the legal heir to his throne. But Luke, writing for the race, would most likely give his natural descent to Adam, showing that he was of the "seed of the woman," and the Saviour of the world. If Matthew has given the official descent of Christ, then the most plausible supposition is that Luke has given the natural, for why have another table except it was to show the actual descent of Jesus?

3. The Messiah was to be the son or descendant of David (Acts 2 : 30; Rom. 1 : 3), but this could not have been the case unless Mary was descended from David. The language of the angel, in ch. 1 : 32, implies that Mary was of the lineage of David; and the fact that Joseph was "registered with Mary his espoused wife" (ch. 2 : 5) at Bethlehem seems to indicate that Mary represented a family of David. Unless, therefore, Luke's table presents the natural lineage of Mary, the descent of Jesus according to the flesh is not given in the New

of Zorobabel, which was *the son* of Salathiel, which  
 28 was *the son* of Neri, which was *the son* of Melchi,  
 which was *the son* of Addi, which was *the son* of Cosam,  
 which was *the son* of Elmodam, which was *the son* of  
 29 Er, which was *the son* of Jose, which was *the son* of  
 Eliezer, which was *the son* of Jorim, which was *the son*  
 30 of Matthat, which was *the son* of Levi, which was *the*  
*son* of Simeon, which was *the son* of Juda, which was  
*the son* of Joseph, which was *the son* of Jonan, which  
 31 was *the son* of Eliakim, which was *the son* of Melea,  
 which was *the son* of Menan, which was *the son* of  
 Mattathia, which was *the son* of °Nathan, °which was  
 32 *the son* of David, °which was *the son* of Jesse, which  
 was *the son* of Obed, which was *the son* of Booz, which  
 was *the son* of Salmon, which was *the son* of Naasson,  
 33 which was *the son* of Aminadab, which was *the son* of  
 Aram, which was *the son* of Esron, which was *the son*  
 34 of Phares, which was *the son* of Juda, which was *the*  
*son* of Jacob, which was *the son* of Isaac, which was  
*the son* of Abraham, which was *the son* of °Thara,  
 35 which was *the son* of Nachor, which was *the son* of  
 Saruch, which was *the son* of Ragau, which was *the*  
*son* of Phalec, which was *the son* of Heber, which was  
 36 *the son* of Sala, °which was *the son* of Cainan, which  
 was *the son* of Arphaxad, °which was *the son* of Sem,  
 which was *the son* of Noe, which was *the son* of  
 37 Lamech, which was *the son* of Mathusala, which was  
*the son* of Enoch, which was *the son* of Jared, which

°Zec. 12. 12.  
 °2 Sam. 5. 14; 1  
 Chr. 3. 5.  
 °Ruth. 4. 18-22: 1  
 Chr. 2. 10, etc.

°Ge. 11. 24, 26.

°Ge. 11. 12.

°Ge. 5. 6, etc.; 11.  
 10, etc.

Testament—a conclusion which we cannot accept; for it was equally as important, in order to prove his sonship to David, that his natural as well as his legal descent should be traced to him.

The names **Zorobabel** and **Salathiel** (ver. 27) are not to be regarded as the persons of the same names given by Matthew (1: 12) and mentioned in Ezra 3: 2; Neh. 12: 1. Their position in the two tables points to persons bearing the same names, but living at different times. The mere identity of names is no proof that they were the same persons, any more than that Enoch, Methuselah, and Lamech, descendants of Cain (Gen. 4: 17, 18), were the same as Enoch, Methuselah, and Lamech, the descendants of Seth, Gen. 5: 21, 25. Contemporaries of the same name were common; thus, Joram and Joash, kings of Israel, and Joram, or Jehoram, and Joash, kings of Judah, 2 Kings 8: 16, 23, 24; 13: 9, 10. Compare author's *Harmony*, note on § 3.

We must suppose that both Matthew and Luke took their genealogies from the family records, and that they followed them in their minutest particulars. Had they departed in the least from the originals, it would have been detected by the contemporary Jews, and the authenticity of their narrative would have been weakened just so much in their estimation. Difficulties of difference between the two genealogies, even though they could not be solved, are chargeable, not upon the evangelists, but upon the obscurity of the original records, upon which the Jews were accustomed to depend. The accuracy of Christ's descent was virtually acknowledged by them, since the ancient Jews never disputed the actual descent of Jesus from David. The carrying back of the genealogy by Luke to Adam corresponds with the universality of his gospel.

36. **Cainan.** Not found in the original Hebrew in Gen. 11: 12, 13, but

was the son of Maleleel, which was the son of Cainan, which was the son of Enos, which was the son of Seth, which was the son of Adam, which was the son of God. "Ge. 1. 26, 27; 5. 1, 2; Is. 64. 8.

found in the Septuagint version, which Luke followed; or perhaps he took his account from family records. Differences in the forms of names, in the Revised version, result from a better text, or from giving those familiar in the Old Testament.

38. **Adam, the son of God,** by creation. Thus Jesus was shown to be the Son of God, not only by miraculous conception, in which divinity was united to humanity, but also in his human descent through Adam to God. Similar to Adam, he had a body prepared by God himself. We have here an additional evidence that Luke has given the natural lineage of Jesus through Mary.

#### REMARKS.

1. The gospel comes to us as historic truth, ver. 1; ch. 1: 3, 4; Tit. 1: 13, 14; 2 Pet. 1: 16.

2. Ministers are called of God. Retirement in early life often gives a fitting opportunity for preparing for great future usefulness, ver. 2; 2 Cor. 5: 20; 1 John 4: 6; 2 Sam. 7: 8; Amos 7: 15.

3. The proper preaching of baptism implies the preaching of repentance. The former naturally follows and prefigures the latter, ver. 3; Acts 2: 38; Rom. 6: 4.

4. Christ is a King. As his kingdom is spiritual, a spiritual preparation is necessary, ver. 4; ch. 24: 47; Rom. 14: 14, 17.

5. The gospel is the great leveller, and at the same time the great elevator, of human character, ver. 5; ch. 13: 14; Isa. 2: 17; 2 Cor. 10: 5.

6. The gospel is for all; and all shall see Christ, either as a personal or as a neglected Saviour, ver. 6; Phil. 2: 9-11; Rev. 1: 7.

7. The most wicked have their compunctions of conscience; these, if unheeded, will make their condemnation the greater, ver. 7; Matt. 27: 3; Acts 8: 24.

8. Outward conditions, such as birth,

Christian friends, transient sorrow, a profession of religion, will not save one, ver. 8; ch. 13: 3, 5.

9. Every sinner has at least one warning. The axe is first laid at the root. No fruitless soul, however exalted, will be spared, ver. 9; Prov. 1: 24-26; John 3: 18, 19; 2 Cor. 5: 10.

10. The renunciation of darling sins, and the forsaking of cherished wicked practices, are among the best fruits of repentance, vers. 10-14; Jer. 36: 7; Ezek. 18: 27.

11. If persons fall into the abuses of a lawful calling, they fail of presenting an important fruit of repentance, vers. 10-14; Dan. 4: 27.

12. True repentance includes a sense of personal pollution and guilt, vers. 7-14; Ps. 51: 2-4; Isa. 64: 6; Dan. 9: 20; Acts 2: 37; 1 Tim. 1: 13.

13. True repentance is connected with a view of God's mercy in Christ, vers. 7-16; ch. 1: 76-78; Isa. 53: 4-6; 1 Tim. 1: 15.

14. Christ is the dispenser of the Spirit and of spiritual gifts, ver. 16; John 16: 7.

15. Christ is the great Winnower, separating the righteous from the wicked. The work is already commenced. It will be thoroughly completed at the judgment, ver. 17; Matt. 10: 34-36; 25: 31-46; John 5: 22.

16. Gospel preaching includes threatenings as well as promises. John, in preaching the gospel, enforced whatever truth prepared the way for Christ, ver. 18; Col. 1: 28. "The preacher who leads men truly to repent must faithfully rebuke their distinctive and individual sins."

17. The preacher, and indeed every Christian, should strive to please God, though they displease men, ver. 19; Lev. 19: 17; Gal. 1: 10.

18. All who do not repent are adding sin to sin, ver. 20; 2 Tim. 3: 13.

19. As Christ indicated his connection with the race, and especially with his followers, by his baptism, so by baptism we indicate our connection with him, ver. 21; Matt. 3: 15; Gal. 3: 27; Col. 2: 12.

*The temptation of Jesus.*

IV. AND <sup>v</sup> Jesus, being full of the Holy Spirit, returned <sup>v</sup> Mt. 4. 1; Mk from Jordan, and <sup>w</sup> was led by the Spirit into the wil- 1. 12, 13.  
<sup>v</sup> ver. 11; ch. 2. 27; 1 Ki. 18. 12; Eze. 11. 1, 24; 40. 2; 43. 5.

20. Like Jesus, his followers should receive baptism with a heart in communion with God, ver. 21; Acts 10 : 47.

21. Christians should possess the dove-like spirit of Christ, gentleness, harmlessness, love, and purity, ver. 22; Matt. 10 : 16; Gal. 5 : 22.

22. How many wonders attest that Jesus was truly the Wonderful!—The angels and the star at his birth, the descending Spirit and the witnessing Father at his baptism, ver. 22.

23. Heaven is opened to us by the Son, vers. 21, 22; John 1 : 51; 14 : 6.

24. Let us accept of Christ as our Mediator, and love him who is accepted and loved by the Father, ver. 22; John 5 : 23; 1 Tim. 2 : 5.

25. Jesus made the age of thirty significant as the beginning of his public ministry. A minister at that age should be fully equipped for his work, ver. 23.

26. Christ is the centre of history. Toward him all things converged before his coming, and since then his influence has gone forth upon all things, vers. 23–38.

27. How fleeting is human life! How earthly memories depart! How few names are handed down to posterity! Let us see to it that our names are written in heaven, vers. 23–38; ch. 10 : 20; Phil. 4 : 3.

28. The Bible reveals the origin and unity of the race, vers. 23–38.

29. We should see to it that we can trace our genealogy spiritually up through Christ to God, ver. 38; Rom. 8 : 15–18.

## CHAPTER IV.

Luke now proceeds to relate the conflict of Jesus with Satan and his triumph over him, vers. 1–13; the beginning of his public ministry in Galilee, 14, 15; his first rejection at Nazareth, 16–30; his teaching and healing at Capernaum, 31–41; and his first missionary tour throughout Galilee.

1–13. THE TEMPTATION OF JESUS, Matt. 4 : 1–11; Mark 1 : 12, 13. Mark only makes a brief but vivid reference;

Matthew and Luke are about equally full, but distinct. The third temptation with Matthew is the second with Luke, and the reverse. The order of Matthew is to be preferred, as it more carefully indicates the order of time and observes a more natural climax. Matthew (4 : 1) and Luke (4 : 1) state generally that Jesus was *led* by the Spirit into the wilderness. Mark (1 : 12) vividly brings to view the impelling power of the Spirit: *driveth him*, urged him on. Matthew (4 : 3) has *stone* and *bread* in the plural; Luke (4 : 3) has them in the singular. The evangelists may be giving the sense and not the exact words of Satan, or we may suppose Satan to have first said, *Command these stones to be made* (literally) *loaves of bread*, and then, pointing to a particular stone, to have said, “*Command this stone that it be made bread.*” The quotation from Deut. 8 : 3 is given more fully by Matthew (4 : 4) than by Luke (4 : 4); but that from Ps. 91 : 11, 12, is fuller in Luke (4 : 10, 11) than in Matthew (4 : 6). The meaning in both is the same. So also Luke (4 : 6, 7) gives the language of Satan more at length than Matthew (4 : 9). The evangelists may have been aiming to give the sense rather than the precise words in their exact order. Such variations show that they did not copy from one another. Since they present no discrepancy, they are evidences to the independence and truthfulness of their narratives. Other differences will be noted below.

1. **Jesus, being full of the Holy Spirit**, just received at his baptism, was fully prepared for his public ministry and for the temptation which it was necessary to undergo before entering upon it. Compare 1 Cor. 10 : 13. This important fact is only mentioned by Luke. **Returned from Jordan.** Rather, *from the Jordan*. See on ch. 3 : 3. According to Mark (1 : 12), this was “*immediately*” after his baptism. **Led by the Spirit.** Literally, *in the Spirit*; in the fulness and under the power of the Holy Spirit he was **led into the wilderness**. Some suppose it to have been

2 derness, being forty days <sup>\*</sup>tempted of the devil. And <sup>\*</sup>Ge. 3. 15; Heb. 2.  
<sup>7</sup>in those days he did eat nothing; and when they <sup>7</sup>18; 4. 15.  
 3 were ended he afterward <sup>\*</sup>hungered. And the devil <sup>7</sup>Ez. 34. 23; Deu.  
<sup>\*</sup>Heb. 2. 14. 9. 9; 1 Ki. 19. 8.

east of the Jordan, but since it is styled "the wilderness," without further specification, it was probably the wilderness of Jordan west of Jericho, ch. 3 : 2. This is still one of the most dreary and desolate regions of the whole country. The wildness of certain parts of it is strikingly indicated by Mark, "He was with the wild beasts." The mountain Quarantania, in this wilderness, so called from the forty days of fasting, which tradition has marked as the site of the temptation, is described by Robinson as "an almost perpendicular wall of rock twelve to fifteen hundred feet above the plain." "The side facing the plain is as perpendicular, and apparently as high, as the rock of Gibraltar."—DR. THOMSON, *Land and Book*, vol. ii., p. 450. "Trench reminds us that Adam was tempted in a garden, and by his fall turned the world into a wilderness. Christ takes up the battle where Adam left it, in a wilderness, and by his victory converts the world into a garden."—DR. F. JOHNSON.

2. **Being forty days tempted**, etc. It is better to connect this verse more closely with the preceding, placing a comma after "forty days" instead of after "wilderness," thus: *led in the Spirit into the wilderness forty days, tempted by the devil*. The most natural meaning is that Jesus was under the power of the Spirit, and also tempted during the forty days. The language in Matt. 4 : 3 does not necessarily indicate the first assault of Satan. Those recorded by Matthew and Luke were doubtless the most signal assaults of the tempter. *Forty* is a significant number in its scriptural usage with reference to sin, Gen. 7 : 4; Num. 14 : 34; Deut. 9 : 18; 25 : 3; Ezek. 4 : 6; 29 : 11. *To tempt* here means to *entice* or *solicit to sin*.

**The devil**. The name means a trader, a false accuser, and answers to Satan of the Old Testament, which means adversary, Job 1 : 6; Zech. 3 : 1. There is but one devil. In all passages in the common version where "devils" or a "devil" occurs the meaning is demons or a demon—that is, inferior evil spirits

under the direction and control of the devil. Both Satan and the demons were probably once angels of light, 2 Pet. 2 : 4; Jude 6. The Scriptures frequently speak of him as a personal agent, ascribing attributes and acts to him, John 8 : 44; 14 : 30; 2 Cor. 11 : 3, 14, 15; Eph. 6 : 11, 12; 1 Pet. 5 : 8, 9; 1 John 3 : 8; Rev. 2 : 10; 3 : 9; 20 : 10. Whether he appeared in visible form is not stated, though fairly implied. The acts ascribed to him render it probable that the devil appeared in a bodily form, and possibly as an angel of light, 2 Cor. 11 : 14.

**In those days, the forty, he ate nothing**. Luke alone makes this definite statement, showing that Jesus observed a total abstinence from all food. Compare similar fasting of Moses and Elijah, Deut. 9 : 18; 1 Kings 19 : 8. **And when they were ended he afterward hungered**. *Afterward* is not necessary, and should be omitted according to the highest critical authorities. A high state of spiritual enjoyment will render a person for a time independent of the common necessities of life. Jesus, with his perfect bodily organism and his holy nature full of the Holy Spirit, appears to have been in such a state as to be quite insensible to the demands of appetite until the forty days were ended. Then, according to the design of the Spirit, *he hungered*, doubtless with all the intensity that such long fasting would naturally produce. Thus, it became him as a man, the second Adam, to be tempted and to overcome. As a man there was a possibility of falling; as God-man there was no possibility. The human soul of Jesus was free from all tendency to evil; he could, therefore, be tempted only from without. Yet he "was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin," Heb. 4 : 15. But since he could not be tempted through evil desires, he was tempted through the senses; and that Satan might bring his temptations the more thoroughly to bear, Jesus hungered, he felt the strong cravings of appetite necessarily resulting from long fasting. He was worn and weak for

- said unto him, If thou be the Son of God, command  
 4 this stone that it be made bread. And Jesus answered  
 him saying, "It is written, That man shall not live by  
 bread alone, but by every word of God. \*Ex. 23. 25; Deu.  
 8. 3.  
 5 And the devil, taking him up into an high mountain,

want of food, thus presenting a rare opportunity for Satan to bring upon him his strongest and most artful temptations.

3. Jesus is now exposed to the three forms of temptation, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life, 1 John 2 : 16. They run parallel with the temptation of our first parents in the garden, Gen. 3 : 6. In the first, Jesus is tempted to unbelief and selfishness; in the second, to ambition and idolatry; and in the third, to presumption and vanity.

**If thou be the Son of God.** The original is worthy of careful study. *Son* is emphatic, but has not the article before it, as in the title *The Son of God*, so often applied to the Messiah. The tempter thus lays emphasis, not on his Messiahship, but on *his Sonship*. The expression is equivalent to *If thou be God's Son*, hence possessed of extraordinary and supernatural powers, etc. It may have some reference to the declaration at his baptism, "Thou art my beloved Son." The devil may have been himself in doubt about the Messiahship of Jesus, though not about his Sonship. **If thou.** He would have him doubt the reality of his Sonship, and also distrust his Father. As if he had said, "Use the means at your disposal to supply your wants, instead of depending on God, whom you call your Father, but who appears to have forgotten you: *command that this stone—be pointing to some particular stone—be made bread*, and thus you will satisfy your hunger and at the same time give evidence of your Sonship." Thus the tempter would lead him both to distrust God and exercise a selfish principle. The temptation addressed to Jesus was much stronger than that addressed to our first parents, since they had all the fruit of the garden, except of one tree, at their disposal.

4. **It is written.** It is remarkable that all the quotations with which Jesus rebuffs Satan are from Deuteronomy, and within the compass of a few verses.

Monod sees in Jesus the true Israel of which the nation was a type. As Jesus is tempted as a man, so does he meet every temptation exactly as any one else might meet it, by the simple and appropriate use of God's word. To have performed a miracle would have been contrary to his uniform principle of action. With him miracles were for the honor of his Father, for the good of others, and for confirming his mission and doctrine; he never performed one to defend or relieve himself, Matt. 20 : 28; 26 : 53, 54. As a prophet he had been led by the Spirit to fasting, and it became him to wait, and not to relieve himself by a miracle unless divinely directed.

**Man shall not live, etc.** In the passage here cited (Deut. 8 : 3) Moses tells the people that God, by giving them manna, had taught them that life could be sustained, not only by bread, but by anything he might appoint for that purpose. And Jesus, in quoting it, shows his reliance on his heavenly Father's care, and his determination to seek no means to sustain life but such as God should appoint.

**By every word of God.** Abbreviated quotation according to the sense. These words are omitted by Westcott and Hort, and by recent English versions. To complete the idea, they may have been transferred from Matt. 4 : 4, by an early copyist. The idea is, man shall live on whatever God may appoint, and by whatever means he pleases, John 4 : 32, 34. Jesus makes no reference to his divine Sonship. He was not called upon to prove that to Satan, much less to perform a miracle at his suggestion. Yet throughout these temptations he acts as the Son of God, but speaks with all the humility and with all the holy and unselfish principle becoming to the Son of man. As Satan tempted Jesus through the bodily appetite, so he approaches men everywhere; and thus drunkards, gluttons, and debauchees become his prey.

5. This second temptation is the third

showed unto him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. And the devil said unto him, All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them: for <sup>b</sup>that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it. If thou therefore wilt worship me, all shall be thine. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Get thee behind me, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.

<sup>b</sup> John 12. 31; 14. 30; Eph. 2. 2; Rev. 13. 2, 7, 10-20; Deu. 6. 13.

and last in Matthew, which is doubtless the correct order, since Matthew gives the notes of succession and time; and this is the severest temptation, and the most open display of satanic craft and power. Luke follows the order and position of places, the desert, the mountain, the temple. "Perhaps this order is intended to suggest that temptation will find a man in solitude, amid the sublimest scenes of nature, and even in the house of God." **Taketh him up.** Rather, *Leadeth him up. A high mountain.* This is omitted by some of the oldest manuscripts, but is found in others and in ancient versions. What mountain cannot be determined. Some suggest Nebo, from one of whose summits—namely, Pisgah—Moses had a view of the promised land, Deut. 34 : 1-4. Others suggest the Mount of Olives or one of the high summits north of Jericho. Tradition, with some probability, says Mount Quarantania, on the northern boundary of the plain of Jericho.

**All the kingdoms of the world,** *of the habitable world,* applied to the Roman empire (ch. 2 : 1) and to the world as known to the ancients, Rom. 10 : 18. Not merely Palestine, but also the heathen world, over which Satan exercised spiritual dominion. From the lofty elevation the kingdoms or tetrarchies of Palestine and adjacent regions could be seen, and the more distant empires of the world might be suggested by the tempter. The force of the words, **showed him all,** etc., rather demands that these kingdoms should have come up before his vision. That there was something supernatural in this agrees with the words **in a moment of time,** which fact is recorded by Luke alone. The suddenness of the view added much to the power of the temptation.

6. **All this power,** thrones, domin-

ions, empires. **The glory of them,** crowns, palaces, gardens, armies, riches. **For that is delivered unto me.** Rather, *For it has been delivered to me.* Luke alone records this. Satan now appears in his character as "the prince of this world," John 12 : 31; 14 : 30; 16 : 11; 2 Cor. 4 : 4. He showed himself also the father of lies (John 8 : 44), for he had nothing but usurped power; the kingdoms of the world were not his by right, but Christ's (Ps. 2 : 8), and therefore he could not give them. Yet there was enough truth in the falsehood to make it insidious.

7. **If thou therefore wilt worship me,** do me homage, acknowledging my authority and my right to give thee the kingdoms of the world. This would be renouncing God and transferring allegiance to Satan. The meaning is well expressed by *worship me.* Jesus is thus tempted to secular power and ambition, to become a temporal, worldly, and a false Messiah, and also to devil-worship and idolatry. So the temptation to worldliness, to pomp and show, comes to us as individuals, and to churches. Never perhaps stronger than now, and in America.

8. Jesus instantly repels the thought and Satan, the author of it. **Get thee behind me, Satan.** This should be omitted according to the best manuscripts and the highest critical authorities. It is found in Matt. 4 : 10, from which it seems to have been transferred into Luke by a later hand. Satan, after this repulse, can no longer doubt, if he did before, the Messiahship of Jesus; after this, demons always knew him. Jesus again answers as a man, and appeals to Scripture, citing Deut. 6 : 13: **Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God,** etc., quoted from the Septuagint version, with the allowable variation of *worship for fear,* to corre-

9 'And he brought him to Jerusalem, and set him on a pinnacle of the temple, and said unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down from hence: for  
10 it is written, He shall give his angels charge over  
11 thee, to keep thee: and in *their* hands, they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a  
12 stone. And Jesus answering said unto him, It is said, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God. \*Mt. 4. 5; Ps. 91  
11; Deu. 6. 16.

spond with the words of Satan. **Only** is not expressed in the original Hebrew, but is fairly implied.

9. The second temptation, according to Matthew. **He brought him to Jerusalem.** Perhaps the devil bore away Jesus, as the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, Acts 8 : 39. Jesus permitted Satan to exercise great power over him. While the language both here and in Matthew seems to require more than an inward revelation or vision, an actual going from place to place, it does not necessarily determine whether the devil did or did not transport him through the air. He brought him *into Jerusalem*. See on ch. 2 : 22.

**A (the) pinnacle of the temple,** some high point of the temple buildings well known by that name. The Greek word translated *pinnacle* means literally a *winglet*, and is applied to a wing-shaped or pointed structure, a gable or pointed roof. It was probably either Solomon's porch, on the east side, which overlooked the valley of Jehoshaphat or Kidron, or the elevation of the middle portion of the southern portico, looking down at a fearful height of about six hundred feet into the valley of Hinnom. The latter, which Josephus describes as a dizzy height, is the most probable. For further on the temple, see on ch. 1 : 9. The word translated *temple*, both here and in Matthew, means the whole sacred enclosure or temple buildings.

**If thou be the Son of God.** See on ver. 3. **Cast thyself down.** Satan would now tempt Jesus on the side of that confidence in his Father which he had expressed (ver. 4), inducing him to presume upon it, and thence lead him into vain display and vanity. The temptation was to presumption and spiritual pride. Having been repulsed by the word of God, Satan essays to use the same weapon in overcoming Jesus. **If thou be the Son of God, cast thy-**

self down from this dizzy height: it cannot hurt thee, for thou art under thy Father's care, and it is in accordance with his will; for it is written, etc. It will be also a miracle worthy of thee, and a striking proof of thy Sonship, and becoming known will attract the people after thee."

10, 11. **He shall give his angels charge.** This passage (Ps. 91 : 11, 12) expresses the care of God over the righteous. And the inference was that if such a promise had been granted to all righteous persons, it would certainly apply more forcibly to the Son of God. But the devil both misquotes it and misapplies it. He omits an important part, "Keep thee in all thy ways"—that is, the ways along which God's providence leads the believer. To do an act of rashness, vanity, and ostentation on such a promise would indeed be "to tempt the Lord thy God," ver. 12. Origen aptly remarks that Satan is careful not to quote the next verse, which foretells his defeat: "Thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder: the young lion and the dragon shalt thou trample under feet."

12. **It is said,** in Scripture. Jesus still as a man combats the devil by the right use of Scripture. It is worthy of notice that he does not correct the devil's false quotation and misapplication of Scripture, but simply shows his false position by quoting another passage. What you advise cannot be right; for it is contrary to another portion of God's word, and his truth cannot be contradictory.

**Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God,** Deut. 6 : 16. The word *tempt* here means *to put on trial*, put to the *proof*, to *test*. Thus in Gen. 22 : 1, God is said to have tempted Abraham; in other words, he put *his* faith and obedience on trial, he tested them. So the Israelites tempted God at Massah by

13 And when the devil had ended all the temptation, <sup>4</sup>ch. 22. 53; John 14. 30; Heb. 2. 17, 18; 4. 15. he departed from him <sup>d</sup>for a season.

*Jesus teaches in Galilee; visits Nazareth, and is rejected.*

14 <sup>e</sup>AND Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit <sup>e</sup>Mt. 4. 12; John 4. 43; Acts 10. 37.

asking water to drink, and asking in such a spirit that they would judge, from the reception given to their request, "whether the Lord was among them or not," Ex. 17 : 2-7. In the application of this passage, our Saviour intimates that he must not put God on trial by exercising a presumptuous confidence or by needlessly testing his veracity. The latter would savor of unbelief, while display or ostentation would be opposed to humility. To test prayer in any such spirit would be profanely to put God to the proof. In every trial connected with the path of duty he could trust God; but he would not put himself needlessly into dangerous circumstances, and thus trifle with his promises.

13. **All the temptation**, rather, *every temptation*, every available kind. He was "tempted in all points" as we are, but "without sin," Heb. 4 : 15. Thus Satan exerted his utmost power, used every art, and left no means untried, but he found no place in the Saviour's breast, and met a decided resistance at every point. **Departed from him for a season**, until a time, an opportune season, secretly intending some future assault, or *till a new opportunity occurred*. Luke states a historical fact; for though we know not how often Satan may have assaulted Jesus afterward, either secretly or through others, he certainly renewed his attacks near the close of our Saviour's ministry, when he entered into Judas and aroused all the powers of darkness into deadly conflict, ch. 22 : 3, 53; John 14 : 30. "The positive temptations of Jesus were not confined to that particular point of time when they assailed him with concentrated force. . . . But still more frequently in after life was he called to endure temptation of the other kind—the temptation of suffering; and this culminated on two occasions, namely, in the conflict of Gethsemane, and in that moment of agony on the cross when he cried, 'My God, my God,

why hast thou forsaken me?'"—ULLMANN, *Sinlessness of Jesus*, Eng. trans., p. 140.

It is probable that on the last day of the temptation the deputation from the priests and Levites came to John (John 1 : 19); and on the day following Jesus returned from the wilderness, and was saluted by John as the Lamb of God, John 1 : 29.

Christ's temptation holds an important place in his life and work. It was an assurance of a life of obedience, and a pledge of victory over all subsequent assaults. As he bore a relation to the race similar to that which Adam bore (Rom. 5 : 12-19), the temptation has an important position in the plan of redemption. He was also thus prepared to sympathize with the tempted, and to rescue them, Heb. 2 : 18; 4 : 15.

14-30. **JESUS RETURNS TO GALILEE AND EXERCISES HIS MINISTRY THERE. REJECTED AT NAZARETH.** Matt. 4 : 12, 13, 17; Mark 1 : 14, 15; John 4 : 1-4, 43-54. Between this and the preceding paragraph an interval of several months is passed over, during which time Jesus exercised his ministry in Judea. John (1 : 15 to 3 : 36) alone gives an account of this ministry. The first three Evangelists, who give special attention to Christ's Galilean ministry, pass it over in silence. On the rejection at Nazareth see on ver. 16.

14. **And Jesus returned**, etc. After leaving Galilee to be baptized, ch. 3 : 21. This may be a general statement, including the two returns of Jesus, that before the marriage at Cana (John 1 : 43; 2 : 1) and that after John was cast into prison, Matt. 4 : 12; John 4 : 1-3. It seems, however, somewhat preferable to refer it only to the latter, as Luke here begins to relate Christ's active ministry in Galilee after John's imprisonment, Luke 3 : 19, 20. **In the power of the Spirit.** Under the full influence of the Holy Spirit, which descended upon him at his baptism, attended him in the wilderness, and continued with

into Galilee: and there went out a fame of him through  
 15 all the region round about. 'And he taught in their  
 synagogues, being glorified of all.

<sup>ch. 13. 10; Mt. 9.  
35; 13. 54; John  
18. 20.</sup>

him in his ministry. The evidence of this was manifested in his preaching.

The traditional description of our Lord's appearance is of no value, being the result of rather late tradition, mingled with the imagination of some in the Middle Ages. Yet the following description of his costume by Dr. Farrar must be quite near to life: "He is not clothed in soft raiment of byssus or purple, like Herod's courtiers or the luxurious friends of the procurator Pilate. He does not wear the white ephod of the Levite or the sweeping robes of the scribes. There is not on his arm or forehead the phylacteries (those little text-boxes) which the Pharisees make so broad; and though there is at each corner of his dress the fringe or blue ribbon which the law enjoins, it is not worn of the ostentatious size affected by those who wished to parade the scrupulousness of their obedience. He is in the ordinary dress of his time and country. He is not bare-headed, as painters usually represent him—for to move about bareheaded in the Syrian sunlight is impossible—but a white turban, such as is worn to this day, covers his hair, fastened by a fillet round the top of the head, and falling back over the neck and shoulders. A large blue outer robe, pure and clean, but of the simplest materials, covers his entire person, and only shows occasional glimpses of the seamless woollen tunic of the ordinary striped textures so common in the East, which is confined by a girdle round the waist, and which clothes him from the neck almost down to the sandalled feet."  
 —*Life of Christ*, vol. i., p. 311.

**A fame, report, of him**, of his teaching and his doctrine; of the things he did at the feast (John 4 : 45); of his miracle at Cana of Galilee on a previous visit, John 2 : 1-12. The healing of the nobleman's son (John 4 : 46-54) probably occurred a little after this. As he returned to Galilee a report, not only of what he then taught, but also of what he had said and done, went through all the region round about, through the whole surrounding country of Galilee.

**15. He taught.** *He himself taught.* Not only was he known by reports of his words and acts, but in his own person, by his teaching. **Being glorified of all, being praised, honored by all.** While teaching he was the object of universal applause.

Here we get a glimpse of the style of our Lord's ministry. He *taught*, entered the synagogues, and, like a Jewish teacher or rabbi, expounded the Scriptures and instructed the people. Synagogue means *assembly, congregation*, and is applied both to a religious gathering having certain judicial powers (ch. 8 : 41; 12 : 11; 21 : 12; Acts 9 : 2), and to the place where the Jews met for their public worship on ordinary occasions, ch. 7 : 5. Synagogues appear to have been first introduced during the Babylonish captivity, when the people, deprived of their usual rites of worship, assembled on the Sabbath to hear the law read and expounded. Compare Neh. 8 : 1-8. In the days of Jesus there was a synagogue in almost every town in Palestine and wherever Jews resided, and in the larger towns several. It is said that there were not less than four hundred and sixty or even four hundred and eighty synagogues in Jerusalem. When the Jews were not able or not permitted to have a synagogue in a town, they had their place of prayer outside the town, usually near a stream or the sea-shore, for the convenience of ablution, Acts 16 : 13.

The times of meeting at the synagogues were the Sabbath and feast days, and afterward on the second and fifth days of the week. Each synagogue had a community, with its president, or ruler (Luke 8 : 49; 13 : 14; Acts 18 : 8, 17), and elders (Luke 7 : 3-5), who might chastise (ch. 10 : 17; Acts 22 : 19; 26 : 11) or expel (John 9 : 34) an offender. See also Mark 5 : 22 and Acts 13 : 15, where the rulers and elders appear to be spoken of indiscriminately as *rulers*. It ought to be added that it is not a matter of certainty how far or how perfect was the organization of the synagogue in the time of Christ. Its organization was probably somewhat changed

- 16 And he came to <sup>a</sup>Nazareth, where he had <sup>b</sup>been brought up. And, as his custom was, <sup>c</sup>he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and <sup>d</sup>stood up for to read. And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And

<sup>a</sup>Mt. 2, 23; 13, 54  
<sup>b</sup>Mk. 6, 1.  
<sup>c</sup>Ps. 22, 22; 40, 9, 10  
<sup>d</sup>John 18, 20; Ac 13, 14; 17, 2.

and developed after the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans.

Synagogues were generally built on eminences, and in imitation of the temple, with a centre building supported by pillars, with courts and porches. In the centre building, or chapel, were a pulpit, lamps, and a chest for keeping the sacred books. It was filled up with seats, fronting the pulpit, which stood on a platform toward the western end. Behind the pulpit were the high seats of honor, the "chief seats," where the scribes and Pharisees loved to sit facing the people, Matt. 23 : 6.

The officiating person stood while reading the Scriptures; but when he and others expounded them, they did it sitting, ver. 20.

16. Some, with Alford and Olshausen, regard this visit to Nazareth the same as that recorded in Matt. 13 : 54-58 and Mark 6 : 1-6. But, with Meyer, Stier, Robinson, Tischendorf, Wieseler, Ewald, Ellicott, Alexander, and others, I prefer to regard them as different. For this one occurred before Jesus made Capernaum his place of residence (ver. 31; Matt. 4 : 13), but the other took place some time after, and is placed both by Matthew and Mark after the teaching by the sea-side. Indeed, Matthew really settles the question, for he refers to two visits to Nazareth, the first (Matt. 4 : 13) being the one just before making Capernaum his residence, and hence parallel with this. There is a sufficient diversity for holding this view. In the first visit Jesus is alone and performs no miracle, ver. 23; in the second he is accompanied by his disciples and heals some that are sick, Mark 6 : 1, 5. In the one he barely escapes with his life, and only through his own superhuman power; in the other he leaves the people marvelling at their unbelief, and goes about the villages teaching. And even the questions and the proverb show the diversity which might be expected on two different occasions. Compare *Notes on Mark 6 : 1-6.*

**Nazareth.** See on ch. 1 : 26. **Where he had been brought up.** Having spent there twenty-eight or more years, Matt. 2 : 23. A most important time when Jesus should first appear as a teacher among his townsmen and in their synagogue. **As his custom was,** specially referring to his attending the synagogue on the Sabbath. We here catch a glimpse of his habit of attending public worship before his baptism. This appears to have been the first Sabbath after his return to Nazareth. **Stood up to read.** In the synagogue the law and prophets were read and expounded by the ruler of the synagogue and others. The Scriptures, except Esther, which might be read sitting, were read *standing*, while *sitting* was the posture of teaching, ver. 20; Matt. 5 : 1. When Jesus *stood up*, he indicated his desire to read, and probably the audience stood while he read; this was at least the custom while reading the law, Neh. 8 : 5.

According to a rabbinical canon seven were allowed to read every Sabbath, a priest, two Levites, and five Israelites. The law was first read, and then the prophets. "I attended the Jewish worship at Jerusalem, and was struck with the accordance of the ceremonies with those mentioned in the New Testament. The sacred roll was brought from the chest or closet where it was kept; it was handed by an attendant to the reader; a portion of it was rehearsed; the congregation rose and stood while it was read, whereas the speaker, as well as the others present, sat during the delivery of the address which formed a part of the service."—DR. HACKETT, *Illustration of Scripture*, p. 232.

17. His request is readily granted by the heads of the synagogue, since his fame as a teacher had preceded his coming to Nazareth. **The book.** The books of the ancients were *rolls* of parchment, papyrus, linen, or other flexible material, which were rolled upon a stick, and upon reading were

when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written, <sup>1</sup>The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me <sup>2</sup>to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me <sup>1</sup>to heal the brokenhearted, to preach <sup>3</sup>deliverance to the captives, and <sup>4</sup>recovering of sight to the blind, <sup>5</sup>Is. 61. 1-31; 58. 6. <sup>6</sup>Mt. 5. 11; 11. 5: ch. 6. 20; 7. 22; Is. 29. 19; Zeph. 3. 12; Zec. 11. 11. <sup>7</sup>Chr. 34. 27; Ps. 34. 18; 147. 3; Is. 57. 15; 61. 1; 66. 2. <sup>8</sup>Zec. 9. 11, 12; Ro. 6. 16-23; 2 Tim. 2. 25, 26. <sup>9</sup>Mt. 12. 27-30; John 9. 39-41; Ac. 26. 18.

gradually rolled around another of equal size. Of the prophet Esaias. Probably the reading of the law was finished and that of the prophets had commenced or was about to begin when Jesus stood up. Compare Acts 13 : 15. The ruler of the synagogue may have been divinely guided in handing him a roll containing the prophecy of Isaiah; perhaps the reading of this prophet fell upon that Sabbath. When he had opened, unrolled the book or scroll, he found the place. This was no accident or mere chance. Jesus unrolled the volume until he found this Messianic prophecy, yet with no seeming effort or searching for it. From this some would calculate at what time of the year this occurred. But such calculation is unreliable, since it is not certain that the rabbinical arrangement of Sabbath Scripture readings was then in use. Besides, according to the rabbins, it was permitted for one either to select from the prophets or read the ordinary lesson of the day.

18. This passage is freely quoted from Isa. 61 : 1, 2, and the clause, *To set at liberty them that are bruised*, seems to be added from the Septuagint of Isa. 58 : 6. The Jews regarded this prophecy as referring to the Messiah. It was indeed most suitable for Jesus to read in beginning his teachings in little, despised Nazareth, John 1 : 46. He thus appears before them, not so much as a miracle-worker as a teacher and the Messiah of prophecy. **The Spirit of the Lord**, etc. He proclaims the abiding presence of the Spirit, and hence his qualification for his saving work, John 3 : 34. **Hath anointed me**. Rather, *anointed me*, referring to what had taken place once. The name *Messiah* in Hebrew, *Christ* in Greek, means *anointed*. Jesus was the anointed one. Prophets, priests, and kings were anointed with oil, 1 Kings 19 : 16; Ex. 40 : 15; 1 Sam. 10 : 1. But

Jesus received a spiritual anointing, John 1 : 32; Acts 4 : 27. He received spiritual power for his work. As persons were designated to office by anointing, so the language here may specially denote his divine appointment. **To preach the gospel**. *To preach good tidings*. The time had now come to announce that the Messiah had come. **To the poor**, the spiritually poor. Those who are humble and feel their need are *meeke*, as the Hebrew has it. Persons of this class are more generally found in the humbler walks of life, 1 Cor. 1 : 26-29. The people of Nazareth were principally of the latter class, but not of the former.

**Hath sent me**. His commission still continued. **To heal the brokenhearted**, Matt. 12 : 20. These are the contrite who mourn on account of their sins, Isa. 57 : 15. This is not found in the oldest manuscripts, and is omitted by the highest critical authority. Luke quotes freely, and probably from memory. **To preach deliverance**, etc. Oriental prisoners were commonly treated with great cruelty, reduced to slavery, or put to death. Hence liberty to captives was correspondingly great. The reference here is to a spiritual deliverance from the terrible captivity to sin and Satan.

**Recovering of sight**, to the spiritually blind. The blindness is the result of their captivity and connected with it. Noted prisoners often had their eyes put out (Judg. 16 : 21; 2 Kings 25 : 7), or were imprisoned, 2 Kings 25 : 27, 28. The Hebrew original is, "The opening of the prison to them that are bound." Some would translate, "The opening of the eyes;" and so the Septuagint translates. But they who are kept in the darkness of prison are as the blind, and their coming forth to light and liberty is as the opening of the eyes. The quotation may be regarded as a free translation according to the sense. Jesus opened blind eyes, but his

- 19 to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the  
 20 acceptable year of the Lord. And he closed the book, and he gave it again to the minister, and sat  
 down. And the eyes of all them that were in the  
 synagogue were fastened on him. • Le. 25. 8-10.
- 21 And he began to say unto them, This day is this  
 22 Scripture fulfilled in your ears. And all bare him  
 witness, and wondered at the gracious words which  
 proceeded out of his mouth. And they said, Is not  
 23 this Joseph's son? And he said unto them, Ye will

Ps. 45. 2; Is. 50.  
 4; Mt. 13. 54; Mk.  
 6. 2; John 7. 46.  
 Mt. 13. 55, 56;  
 John 6. 42.

mission was rather to open the eyes of men to see themselves as sinners and to behold him as a Saviour, John 9 : 39.

**To set at liberty**, etc., Isa. 58 : 6. Jesus may have turned to this passage as he read, or quoted it from memory. It seems to have been added here to strengthen the idea of the two preceding clauses, "To preach deliverance," etc. **Them that are bruised.** The whole clause should rather be, *To release the oppressed*, or, as the Bible Union version has it, *To send the oppressed away free*. Christ is represented as sending away the slaves of sin into glorious liberty.

19. **To preach.** *To publish, herald, or proclaim.* **The acceptable year of the Lord.** The time when God was ready and willing to hear and save. Allusion is made to the year of jubilee, which was every fiftieth year, when liberty was proclaimed to all in the land, forfeited estates were restored, and debts were cancelled, Lev. 25 : 8-17. Christ's coming was a spiritual jubilee; he brought in eternal redemption, proclaiming forgiveness, liberty, and restoration. It is strange that some of the Fathers, such as Clement of Alexandria and Origen, supposed that this passage meant that Christ's public ministry continued only a year and something over. The reference is to the times of the Messiah, without any indication of their length. The closing of the reading at this point was remarkable, being much shorter than the usual amount. This rendered emphatic the proclamation of this gospel jubilee to the inhabitants of Nazareth.

20. **And he closed the book.** Luke gives a graphic picture of the manner of Jesus in the synagogue of his own village. Calmly and quietly rolling up the manuscript (see on ver.

17), Jesus gave it again to the minister—the attendant or the servant who had charge of the sacred books, carrying them to the reader and returning them to their place—and then sat down, the posture of teaching, Matt. 5 : 1. **The eyes of all . . . were fastened on him.** All looked intently and steadily upon him. There was something in his manner, and perhaps tone of voice, which riveted their attention and aroused their expectation that he was about to speak.

21. **He began to say**, etc., indicating a solemn and weighty beginning, and implying that the declaration that follows is the beginning and part of a somewhat extended discourse. **This day.** Now, at this very time. **Fulfilled in your ears**, in your hearing, by the glad tidings which Jesus announced, and by the evidences which he gave them that he was the Messiah. The Jews generally understood that **this Scripture** referred to the Messiah. There can be no doubt that they understood Jesus.

22. **All bare him witness**, gave testimony favorable and honorable to him. They were pleased to hear that the privileges and blessings of the Messiah were to be enjoyed by them. At the same time, they wondered, they listened with admiration and wonder at **the gracious words**, the words of grace, possessing peculiar sweetness, benevolence, and persuasive power. The reference is to the manner and form, the outward charms of his discourse, rather than to the matter. The wonderful graciousness and power of Christ's manner is also brought to view in John 7 : 46. **Is not this Joseph's son?** They wondered that their own townsman, and one whom they had known as a workman among them, should thus

surely say unto me this proverb, \*Physician, heal thyself: whatsoever we have heard done in \*Capernaum, 24 do also here in thy country. And he said, Verily, I say unto you, No <sup>u</sup> prophet is accepted in his own <sup>ch. 6. 42; Ro. 2. 21, 22.</sup> <sup>u</sup> Mt. 4. 13; 11. 23. <sup>u</sup> Mt. 13. 51; Mk 6. 1.

<sup>u</sup> Mt. 13. 57; Mk. 6. 4; John 4. 44.

speak. Joseph was a man of humble circumstances; his family had occupied no distinguished place; Jesus had received no rabbinical education. How could he thus speak? How could he be the Messiah? There was unbelief mingled with their admiration. They wanted more evidence. They would witness such miracles as he had wrought at Capernaum (next verse), and then judge. At his second rejection we see a marked advance upon this. His townsmen lay greater stress upon his well-known relatives—mother, brothers, and sisters, Matt. 13 : 55; Mark 6 : 3.

23. **And he said unto them.** Knowing their thoughts and perhaps hearing their question. "Jesus looked at once through the hearts of the men of Nazareth, and saw that they could not, through the veil which his lowly circumstances threw around his spiritual glory, penetrate into his essential nature. He held up, therefore, before them, as in a glass, the likeness of themselves, giving them thus to see that they were incapable of knowing him. He cites to them the Old Testament examples to show that even in the times of their fathers the heavenly message found no acceptance among the immediate companions of the prophets, and that, unable to unfold its power in them, it had taken refuge among the heathen."

—OLSHAUSEN.

**Physician, heal thyself.** A common proverb, adage, or moral sententious saying among the Jews, and in the present instance means, "Pursue the course which you would have another pursue, making similar claims; give the evidence, perform the miracles, which you yourself would require of another." This meaning is in harmony with what follows, and seems to be required by it. Alford interprets very nearly the same: "Exert thy power of healing in thy own country, as presently interpreted; the Physician being represented as an inhabitant of Nazareth; and *thyself* including His own citizens in it." This is better than to say with Olshau-

sen, "Deliver yourself from poverty," or with Meyer, "Deliver yourself from your low condition." It is not the same as our proverb, "Charity begins at home," though somewhat like it. The word *proverb* is the one usually translated parable, but here has the restricted meaning already given. See on ch. 8 : 4.

**Whatsoever we have heard, or we heard done, in Capernaum,** a city on the north-east coast of the Sea of Galilee. See on ver. 31. **Do also here in thy own country, at home, in Nazareth.** Jesus had healed the nobleman's son at Capernaum, John 4 : 46-54. Capernaum was about sixteen miles from Nazareth; the news could come in a day. The demand was one of mingled selfishness, curiosity, and unbelief, not of a candid desire to know the truth and to welcome the evidences of his Messiahship. Thus Jesus had performed no miracle this time at Nazareth, neither did he, on account of his sudden leaving, ver. 30. At his second rejection he healed a few sick people, Mark 6 : 5.

24. Jesus answers this desire of his townsmen by a proverbial saying and two illustrations from the Old Testament. **Verily. Amen, truly,** certainly. Jesus employed this word at the beginning of important utterances to give them force. As emphatically the Lawgiver of his people he could speak with an authority above all other teachers. **VERILY, I say unto you.** No one else could thus speak. He is also the *Amen*, the faithful and true witness, Rev. 3 : 14. **No prophet,** or religious teacher, ch. 1 : 76. **Is accepted,** is approved, finds favor. Jesus states a general fact. All other things being equal, one who has been familiar to us from early life is treated with less reverence than one who has not been thus familiar. If they honor him less, they must expect less attention. Jesus gives one reason for not granting a desire the gratification of which would do them no good. "It is your own fault, he says, that the physician pays less atten-

- 25 country. But I tell you of a truth, many widows  
 were in Israel in the days of Elias, when the heaven  
 was shut up three years and six months, \*when great \*1 Ki. 17. 1; 18. 1  
 26 famine was throughout all the land; †but unto none 2; Jam. 5. 17.  
 of them was Elias sent, save unto Sarepta, a city of †1 Ki. 17. 9.  
 27 Sidon, unto a woman that was a widow. And many  
 lepers were in Israel in the time of \*Eliseus the \*1 Ki. 19. 19.  
 prophet; and none of them was cleansed, †saving \*2 Ki. 5. 1-14.  
 Naaman the Syrian.  
 28 And all they in the synagogue, when they heard

tion to you than to those more remote.”  
 —BENGEL.

25. **Of a truth, in truth, truly,** a strong expression, giving emphasis to the declaration which follows. In addition, he shows that his conduct was in harmony with that of two of their greatest prophets, who were divinely directed not to act according to the proverb, “Physician, heal thyself,” and whose miraculous power was exerted on strangers. **In Israel.** In the land or among the people of Israel. **Elias, Elijah.** See on ch. 1 : 17. **Three years and six months.** So also in James 5 : 17. But in 1 Kings 18 : 1 it is stated that in the third year Elijah was commanded to show himself to Ahab with the promise of rain. The discrepancy is only apparent, for it was the third year of Elijah’s residence at Sarepta, the famine having commenced a year before, 1 Kings 17 : 1, 9.

26. **But unto none of them,** unto none of the widows in Israel. Thus, the widows of Israel were distinguished from the widow who was not of Israel. The two examples of miraculous power in behalf of Gentiles accord with the spirit of Luke’s Gospel, which was for the race. **Save unto Sarepta,** etc. *But unto Sarepta of Sidonia* was he sent. Sarepta is the Greek form of the Hebrew name Zarephath, 1 Kings 17 : 9-16. According to Josephus (*Antiq.* viii. 13, 2), it lay between Tyre and Sidon, and according to Jerome, it lay on the sea-coast. The ancient name seems to be preserved in Sarafend, a town about ten miles south of Sidon. About a mile east of the modern village, on the shore of the Mediterranean, are the ruins of what is supposed to be the ancient town. Instead of **Sidon**, it should read, according to the best authorities, *Sidonia*, the region Sidon.

Sidon was a city of Phœnicia, on the Mediterranean Sea, twenty miles north of Tyre and about sixty miles north of Nazareth. Its modern name is Saida.

27. **Many lepers,** having a most fearful and foul skin-disease peculiar to Egypt, Palestine, Syria, and some other portions of the East; in its worst form most terrible in its effects and absolutely incurable. See on ch. 5 : 12. **Eliseus.** The Greek method of spelling the Hebrew name *Elisha*. On the prevalence of leprosy in the time of Elisha, compare 2 Kings 7 : 3. Elisha succeeded Elijah about 905 B. C. **None of them, in Israel, was cleansed,** freed from the disease and its uncleanness—that is, no Israelite was cleansed, but a person who was not of Israel. **Saving Naaman the Syrian.** More correctly, *But Naaman the Syrian* was cleansed. For an account of this, see 2 Kings 5 : 1-19. Thus, God in his sovereign pleasure bestows his favors where he pleases. As in these two cases Israelites were passed over and God’s special favors were bestowed upon Gentiles, so now Jesus intimates that he is acting on a like principle, and that the inhabitants of Nazareth, who thought they had special claims on him, would be passed by, while other places would enjoy his miraculous power. A more remote inference would be that the special favors and blessings of the gospel would pass over to the Gentiles. Every such reference to Gentiles was specially offensive to Jews. Stier and Alford call attention to a close parallelism between these two examples and those of the Syrophœnician woman (Mark 7 : 24) and the ruler’s son at Capernaum, John 4 : 46.

28. **All they in the synagogue.** The indignation was general. This does not forbid the idea that some even

29 these things, were filled with wrath, and rose up,  
<sup>b</sup>and thrust him out of the city, and led him unto <sup>b</sup>John 8. 37, 59  
 the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that <sup>1</sup>s. 37, 14, 32.  
 30 they might cast him down headlong. But he <sup>c</sup>pass- <sup>c</sup>John 8. 59; 10. 39.  
 ing through the midst of them went his way.

in Nazareth may have believed on him. **Were filled with wrath.** Because (1) the doctrine of God's sovereignty is always displeasing to the unrenewed heart; (2) because they were to be passed by as unworthy, and the favor bestowed on others; and (3) because the Gentile examples adduced suggested the possibility of Gentiles being preferred to Jews in the bestowment of the blessings of the Messiah. Compare Acts 22 : 22 for a similar instance of murderous rage. Compare also Deut. 32 : 21; Rom. 10 : 19.

The following from Dr. Farrar's *Life of Christ* (vol. i., p. 226) is worth adding to the above: "What then? Were they in his estimation (and he but 'the carpenter!') no better than the Gentiles and lepers? This was the climax of all that was intolerable to them as coming from a fellow-townsmen whom they wished to rank among themselves, and at whose words their long-suppressed fury burst into a flame. The speaker was no longer interrupted with a *murmur* of disapprobation, but by a roar of wrath. With one of those bursts of sanguinary excitement which characterize that strange, violent, impassioned people—a people whose minds are swept by a storm as sudden as those which in one moment lash into fury the mirror surface of their lake—they rose in a body, tore him out of their city, and then dragged him to the brow of the hill above."

29. **Rose up**, in wild excitement, without any reverence for the place, the day, or the occasion. Compare the rage against Stephen, Acts 7 : 57, 58. **They thrust him out**, cast him out violently from the city, as an unworthy inhabitant, and as deserving death outside the gate. Possibly their first thought was to merely thrust him out of the city, but their rage increases as they hurry him along; and determining on his death, **they led him unto the brow**, the cleft, precipice, of the hill, the range of hills, on which **their city was built**. "A worthless tradition has

transferred this event to a hill about two miles to the south-east of the town. But there is no evidence that Nazareth ever occupied a different site from the present one; and that a mob so exasperated, whose determination was to put to death the object of their rage, should repair to so distant a place for that purpose, is entirely incredible. The present Nazareth lies along the hillside, but much nearer the base than the summit. A precipice almost perpendicular, forty or fifty feet high, is found still just above the modern village, near the Maronite church, over which it is hardly possible that a person should fall without being killed instantly. This in all probability is the very precipice down which his infuriated townsmen attempted to hurl Jesus. The singular precision of the narrative deserves a remark or two. . . . In the first place, it is not said that the people went up or descended in order to reach the precipice, but simply that they brought the Saviour to it, wherever it was; and in the second place, that it is not only said that the city was built 'on the brow of the hill,' but equally that the precipice was on 'the brow,' without deciding whether the cliff overlooked the town (as is the fact) or was below it. It will be seen, therefore, how very near the terms of history approach a mistake and yet avoid it. As Paley remarks in another case, none but a true account could advance thus to the very brink of contradiction without falling into it."—HACKETT'S *Illustrations of Scripture*, pp. 313, 314.

**Might cast him down headlong.** Not a usual mode of punishment among the Jews; but compare 2 Chron. 25 : 12 and 2 Kings 9 : 33. It was contrary to a Jewish canon to inflict punishment on the Sabbath. The people of Nazareth had become a furious mob.

30. **Passing through the midst of them.** Some suppose that Jesus effected his escape by his composure and self-control, in connection, perhaps with some confusion among the crowd;

*Jesus resides at Capernaum; teaches and heals.*

31 AND [he] <sup>d</sup>came down to Capernaum, a city of <sup>4</sup>Mk. 1. 21; Mt. 4. 13.

others, that he so awed them by a majestic look that they made a way for him to pass; and still others, that he exerted some miraculous influence upon them, such as affecting their sight, rendering himself invisible, or restraining them. While it is true that Christ and his apostles did not work miracles of mere self-preservation, it seems at times that the divinity within Jesus shone forth with awe-producing power, John 18 : 6 ; 10 : 39 ; 8 : 59.

It is most reasonable to suppose that this divine power was felt by the Nazarenes in this instance, for Jesus was in their hands. They could not take his life unless he freely gave it, John 10 : 18. But his hour had not yet come. In the simplicity of the narrative we see evidences of its truthfulness. A spurious gospel would have sought to present something more startling, such as saving himself while being cast down the precipice. **Went his way**, departed from Nazareth. Here ends a paragraph. In this account we have an explanation of Matthew's brief allusion, "And leaving Nazareth." We see why he left Nazareth and made Capernaum his chief place of residence.

31, 32. JESUS FIXES HIS ABODE AT CAPERNAUM. Teaches in the synagogue, Matt. 4 : 13-16; Mark 1 : 21, 22. The favorable reception given to Jesus is in marked contrast to the murderous treatment he received at Nazareth.

**And came down to Capernaum.** Rather, *And he came*, etc. This begins a new paragraph. Luke, however, brings our Lord's removal to Capernaum into connection with his rejection at Nazareth, and is indirectly confirmed by Matt. 4 : 13. Jesus had been at Capernaum before for a short time (John 2 : 12), but now he made it the principal place of his residence. The expression *came down* accords with the fact that Nazareth was on elevated ground and Capernaum was about 600 feet below the Mediterranean. *Capernaum* was the name of a fountain (Josephus, *Jew. War.* iii. 10, 8), and a town situated on the north-west shore of the Sea of Galilee, on the borders of the tribes of Zebulun and Naphtali. It was

a thriving commercial place on the road from Damascus to the Mediterranean, and a central position for travelling and performing missionary tours into Lower and Upper Galilee, Perea, and Judea. It was thus peculiarly fitted as the principal residence of Jesus during the three years of his ministry. "It is called his own city," Matt. 9 : 1. Its name was appropriate for his dwelling-place, meaning *village of Nahum*, or *consolation*. It was also the residence of Andrew, Peter, James, and John, who were natives of Bethsaida (John 1 : 44), and probably of Matthew. Its present complete desolation forcibly illustrates our Lord's denunciation in Matt. 11 : 23. Its name is lost and its exact site is still in doubt. The most probable spots are: (1) Dr. Robinson supposes it to have been at *Khan Minyeh*, on the northern borders of the fine plain of Gennesaret, about five miles from the Jordan, where there is the copious fountain of *Ain et-Tin*, and ruins of some extent still remain. See Robinson *Bib. Researches*, ii. 403-4, iii. 344-358. (2) Mr. Tristram maintains that its site is at the Round Fountain, three miles farther south, near the south end of the plain of Gennesaret, where is found the catfish which Josephus states the fountain of Capernaum produced. A considerable stream also flows from it to the lake, which also answers to Josephus' description, *Land of Israel*, p. 442. (3) But Dr. Thomson and the majority of later travellers place the site near the head of the lake at *Tell Hum*, about three miles north of *Khan Minyeh*, and about the same distance from the point where the Jordan enters the lake. It is argued that *Hum* is the closing syllable of Capernaum, and that its first part, *Caphar*, which signifies a village, has given place to *Tell*, meaning a site or ancient ruin. Tradition of Jews and Arabs fixes the site of Capernaum here. But no fountain is found nearer than two miles.

Rev. Dr. S. Graves thus defends and describes the latter site: "This I believe to be the *true site* of Capernaum, and this one ruin of fallen and broken columns is believed by Lieutenant Wil-

32 Galilee, and taught them on the sabbath-days: and they were astonished at his doctrine: <sup>°Mt. 7. 28, 29; 1 Thes. 1. 5; Tit. 2. 15.</sup> for his word  
 33 was with power. <sup>°Mk. 1. 23-28.</sup> 'And in the synagogue there was a

son, as stated in his recent survey, to be the synagogue which the pious centurion built for the Jews, to which allusion is made in Luke 7:5 'For he loveth our nation and hath built us a synagogue,' or, as it is in the Greek, 'the synagogue,' the article showing that it was some marked and noted building.

"I examined these most interesting remains with all the care that a burning sun and the brief hour or two allotted me would allow of. I found eleven bases of columns *in situ*, and three others out of their original places. These measured at the top nearly three feet in diameter, and the columns that once stood upon them were two feet four inches in diameter. The ornamental architrave which these pillars supported, and which was lying about in fragments, was three feet in height. The brownstone which composed the sides was twenty inches in thickness. The building was in the Corinthian order and the workmanship very creditable, though not of the highest style; the coarseness of the material would hardly admit of this. The exact form of this edifice it was difficult to make out, but the fragments of it covered nearly the third of an acre, and further excavations, I am sure, would reveal something of far greater interest."—*The Standard*, Chicago, April 3, 1873.

But on the contrary, Rev. Dr. Robert Patterson defends the first of the above sites as follows: "On the other hand, Khan Minyeh is exactly the distance from Tiberias and the Jordan which the ancient itineraries describe, and in its fountain and aqueduct meets all the descriptions given of the sources of Capernaum's fertility, which the exuberance of its vegetation fully confirms. Accordingly, the six ministers of our party, after reading the arguments of half a dozen authors on all sides of the question, unanimously agreed that Khan Minyeh marks the site of Capernaum, that Bethsaid is Bethsaida, and Tell Hums is the site of the ancient Chorazin. Its magnificent columns are hidden by luxuriant thistles and mustard.

'Woe unto thee, Chorazin!'"—*The Sunday-school Times*, Philadelphia, May 25, 1872. In view of all that has thus far been discovered and written, I am not yet prepared to give up Khan Minyeh as the most probable site of Capernaum. **Galilee.** See on ch. 1:26.

Capernaum was a most fitting place for Jesus to carry on his ministry. Not only could he cross the lake in any direction, but he could go forth by roads to every part of Galilee. To the south also he could pass down the Jordan valley on the western side, or crossing a bridge at the south of the lake could go through Perea to the fords of the Jordan near Jericho, or pass over the mountains of Zebulun to Nazareth, and thence through the plain of Esdraelon to Samaria and Jerusalem.

**And taught them.** Better, *And he was teaching them.* This begins a new sentence, and intimates what was his usual practice. He preached repentance and the good news of the kingdom of God, Matt. 4:17; Mark 1:14, 15.

32. **They were astonished,** struck with wonder **at his doctrine.** Rather, *at his teaching*, both as to its matter and his manner of instruction. The reason of their astonishment is given: **for his word was with power.** His instruction was with *authority*. He taught as the great Author and Revealer of truth, expounded it in all its fulness and spiritually, and enforced it by his personal authority, Matt. 7:28, 29. All God's teachings have a self-evidencing light and a self-asserting power. Conscience yields to their force; for as lungs were made for air, so was conscience for truth.

33-37. **JESUS HEALS A DEMONIAK IN THE SYNAGOGUE,** Mark 1:23-28. Luke is somewhat briefer than Mark, and with sufficient difference to show the independence of his account. According to Mark 1:16-22, this miracle followed the calling of the four disciples.

As this is the first miracle recorded by Luke, a few thoughts on the **MIRACLES OF CHRIST** will be in place. He

man, which had a spirit of an unclean devil, and

performed them in proof of his divine mission, John 2 : 22; 9 : 3-5; 10 : 25, 37. The Jews expected the Messiah would work miracles, Matt. 12 : 38; Luke 11 : 16, 17; John 7 : 31; so also did John the Baptist, Matt. 11 : 3. The miracles of Christ were variously designated. When they were specially regarded as evidences of his divine mission, they were called *semeia*, *signs*, ch. 8 : 11; John 2 : 11; when as the manifestation of supernatural power, they were called *dunameis*, *mighty works*, corresponding more strictly to the word *miracle* in common English usage, ch. 6 : 2; 9 : 39; when as extraordinary and portending phenomena, exciting astonishment or terror, they were called *terata*, *wonders*, John 4 : 48; Acts 2 : 22; compare Mark 13 : 22; and when viewed still more generally and comprehensively, as something completed and to be reflected on—the natural acts and products of his being—they were called *erga*, *works*, John 7 : 3, 21. In our common version the first of these is translated *signs*, *miracles*, *wonders*; the second, *mighty works*, *mighty deeds*, *wonderful works*, *miracles*; the third, *wonders*; and the fourth, *deeds*.

To get a full and correct conception of Christ's miracles they should be viewed in all these aspects. They were not simply the manifestations of a supernatural power, but also the product of that power inherent in our Lord, the natural fruits, the outworkings, of his own divine nature; they were not merely adapted to impress the mind deeply and excite astonishment or terror, but they were also the signs, the evidences, of himself and of the truth of which he was the embodiment. They were, in fine, the supernatural phenomena produced by his own power in proof of his divine nature and work. They were not in violation of nature nor necessarily a suspension of its laws, but rather above nature, so far as we know, or in accordance with laws and principles unknown to us. It is indeed in accordance with nature to expect miracles in connection with a new dispensation. "All the great chapters of nature's history," says Prof. Hitchcock, "begin with them; and if the Christian dispensation were destitute of them, it would be out of harmony

with the course of things in the natural world."—*Bib. Sac.*, July, 1863, p. 552.

33. **In the synagogue.** See on ver. 15. **A spirit of an unclean devil**, or *demon*. A peculiar expression. Bengel says: "*Spirit* denotes its mode of working; *demon*, its nature." Alford observes: "*Spirit* is the *influence*, *demon* the *personality*, of the possessing demon." While *demon* points unmistakably to a personality, it seems to me that *spirit* means more than influence—that it rather presents the demon as an acting rational intelligence. The original Scriptures recognize but one devil, but many demons, who are subject to Satan, their prince, Matt. 9 : 34, 25 : 41; Rev. 12 : 9. The one here is called "an unclean demon," with reference to his moral vileness and wickedness. Mark (1 : 23) calls him "an unclean spirit." Demons are also called evil spirits, ch. 7 : 21; 8 : 2. They were the authors and promoters of wickedness and all uncleanness.

It is evident from this and other similar miracles that the sacred writers in their account of demoniacal possessions did not speak in mere accommodation to the opinion of the Jews, but stated as matters of fact that individuals were actually possessed with demons. Demons are spoken of as personal beings, ch. 11 : 24-26; James 2 : 19; Rev. 16 : 14, etc.; Jesus addressed them as persons and they answered as such, ver. 35; Mark 5 : 8; 9 : 25; they showed a supernatural knowledge of Jesus, ch. 4 : 34; Matt. 8 : 29; they requested, and were permitted, to enter a herd of swine, ch. 8 : 32. Jesus also distinguished between casting out demons and the healing of diseases, ch. 7 : 21; Mark 1 : 32-34; Matt. 8 : 16. A person might be dumb as a result of demoniacal possession, but not every dumb person was possessed with a demon, Mark 7 : 32; Matt. 9 : 32, 33. Nowhere is demoniacal possession made identical with any one disease. Yet various mental and bodily disorders are attributed to the agency of the devil or demons, ch. 9 : 39, 42; Acts 10 : 38. The bodies of individuals are represented as forcibly possessed by a consciousness and will foreign to themselves, so that there appears to have been a

34 cried out with a loud voice, saying, Let *us* alone; what have we to do with thee, *thou* Jesus of Nazareth? <sup>a</sup> art <sup>b</sup> Ge. 3. 15. thou come to destroy us? <sup>b</sup> I know thee who thou art; <sup>b</sup> ver. 41.

double will and a double consciousness, ch. 9 : 39 ; 11 : 14 ; Mark 7 : 25, 30. From such passages it is evident that the Scriptures speak of Satan and demons as personal beings, and that they were permitted to take possession of the bodies of men and inflict on them various sufferings. To regard the language of the sacred writers as a mere accommodation, the devil and his angels as mere myths, or the principle of evil and the possessions as mere diseases, is contrary to the plainest statements and to the uses of language. In the same way all history might be discredited and the actual existence of the principal men of past ages disproved.

We may know the fact, though unable to explain how demons possessed men. We know too little, it may be, of the connection between body and spirit, and of the operation of spirit on spirit. The soul, however, gives and receives impressions through the nervous system. Soul operates on soul. One thus obtains complete power over another. Why may not evil spirits, under certain conditions, do the same?

To the frequent inquiry, How comes it that similar possessions do not occur at the present day? it may be answered: (1) It cannot be proved that they do not sometimes occur even now. It cannot be said that in many cases of insanity, and in some cases of mental and moral disease, the malady may not be traced to the direct agency of demons. (2) But admitting that such possessions are not common, yet there was a reason in our Saviour's day for the external manifestation of Satan's power. The crisis of the moral history of the world was at hand. The devil was allowed to exercise unusual power in temptation on the souls and bodies of men, in order that Christ might meet him openly and manifest his power in his victory over him. When God was manifested in the flesh, then demons may have been permitted to manifest themselves specially among men. And that demoniacal possessions were more specially limited to that age is not an unfair inference from both sacred and profane history. For it is a

remarkable fact that we have no cases of these possessions in the Old Testament and none in the Epistles of the New Testament, and that Josephus speaks of no real possessions except in the generation in which Christ exercised his ministry.

**He cried out.** The unclean spirit. He had such control of the man that he spoke through him, using his organs of speech, and that too **with a loud voice.** The personality of the demon is distinctly recognized. Neither a disease nor a myth could thus cry out.

**34. Let us alone.** Rather, *hah!* an interjection expressing surprise and displeasure. The very presence of Jesus was a torment to demons. He was "manifested to destroy the works of the devil," 1 John 3 : 8. **What have we to do with thee?** *What to us and thee* in common? Our relations and our business are wholly different from thine. Wilt thou, then, disturb us? This form of expression occurs several times in the New Testament. Jesus thus addressed his mother at the marriage in Cana of Galilee. It always implies disapprobation, though sometimes employed in friendly reproof. The demon uses the plural here with reference to fallen spirits as a class, of which he was a representative. They want nothing to do with him, but he has determined only the more to do with them. **Thou** is superfluous.

**Art thou come?** or *didst thou come?* Is this the object of thy coming? **To destroy us**, who constitute the kingdom of darkness, of which this one was a representative. The man could not have been included in *us*, for it was the saving of the man and his own expulsion that the demon feared. The *destruction* consisted in sending them down to hell, Matt. 8 : 29 ; 10 : 28.

**I know thee who thou art.** Doubtless by fame and report, but more. He felt the awing influence of so holy a being, filling him with dread; he took him at once to be the Messiah; he believed and trembled, James 2 : 19. Compare a similar knowledge in Acts 16 : 17.

- 35 <sup>1</sup>the Holy One of God. And Jesus rebuked him, saying, <sup>1</sup>ch. 1. 35; Ps. 16. Hold thy peace, and come out of him. And when 10; Dan. 9. 24; the devil had thrown him in the midst, he came out Ac. 3. 14; 1 Pet. 3. 22.
- 36 of him, and hurt him not. And they were all amazed, and spake among themselves, saying, What a word *is* this! for with authority and power he commandeth the unclean spirits, and they come out. And <sup>k</sup>the <sup>1</sup>Is 52. 13.
- 37 fame of him went out into every place of the country round about.
- 38 <sup>1</sup>And he arose out of the synagogue, and entered <sup>1</sup>Mt. 8. 14; Mk. 1. into Simon's house. And Simon's wife's mother 29.

**The Holy One of God.** Not merely morally so, but also officially. The Son of God, the Messiah, the one officially set apart and consecrated to this office and work, John 6 : 69. Compare John 10 : 36; Rev. 3 : 7. Demons knew him to be the Son of God, ver. 41; Acts 19 : 15.

35. **Hold thy peace.** *Silence*, a command with authority and restraining power. The testimony was not with believing confidence; demons were not permitted to give it, ver. 41, neither had the time come for so public a promulgation. This Jesus reserved to himself and his followers. **Come out of him.** Two distinct personalities are here recognized. The demon is treated as a person as much as the man. The one was just as much a disease or a principle as the other, no more and no less.

The personality of the demon is further shown by his crying out, convulsing the man, and coming out of him. Such language would not be used of an epileptic fit, as some would have us believe. **Had thrown him in the midst**, of the assembly. Mark (1 : 26) says, *Had torn him*. From the two accounts it appears that the demon convulsed him, threw him into the midst of the company in a spasm, and came out of him and **hurt him not**—that is, did him no real injury. Such paroxysms in connection with casting out demons showed their malignant and degraded nature (ch. 9 : 39), and only made the miracle the more impressive.

36. **They were all amazed.** More correctly, *Amazement came upon all*. The effect of the miracle is here vividly presented. A general amazement took possession of the people, which led

them to discussion and certain conclusions. **Spoke among themselves.** Speaking and reasoning one with another. **What a word is this!** etc. Rather, *What is this word that with authority, etc.* What meaneth this commanding and this obedience? Such a display of superhuman authority and power aroused their amazement and set them to inquiring and reasoning, and made Jesus widely known. **Authority**, which no one could question. **Power**, which none can resist. The former word implies possession of power, the latter denotes its exercise. The word of Christ is still powerful. "I have often found some word of Scripture to me like the gate of Paradise."—LUTHER.

37. Further effect of this miracle. **The fame, etc.** Rather, *A rumor concerning him went out, etc.* This was a popular rumor concerning what he did and taught. It became a common topic of conversation in every place of the country round about Capernaum in Galilee. "The district rung with his fame."—WEBSTER and WILKINSON.

This miracle in public is now followed by one in private.

38-41. **HEALS PETER'S WIFE'S MOTHER AND MANY OTHERS**, Mat. 8 : 14-17; Mark 1 : 29-34. Further evidences of his divine mission and doctrine. Matthew is briefest, but alone refers to a fulfilment of prophecy. Mark is the fullest, and enters most into detail. Luke is nearly as full as Mark, and gives some interesting particulars not recorded by the others.

38. Immediately after leaving the synagogue they enter the house of Simon and Andrew, Mark 1 : 29. These latter had formerly resided at Bethsaida (John 1 : 44), but now had taken up

was taken with a great fever; and they besought him  
39 for her. And he stood over her, and rebuked the  
fever; and it left her: and immediately she arose and  
ministered unto them.

40 <sup>2</sup>Now when the sun was setting, all they that had <sup>2</sup>Mt. 8. 16; Mk. 1  
any sick with divers diseases brought them unto him; <sup>32.</sup>  
and he laid his hands on every one of them, and  
41 healed them. <sup>2</sup>And devils also came out of many, <sup>2</sup>Mk. 1. 34; 3. 11.

their residence at Capernaum. Mark alone mentions the fact that Jesus was attended by James and John; doubtless also by Andrew and Peter.

**Wife's mother.** Mother-in-law. She seems to have resided with Peter. **Simon** is contracted from Simeon, and means *hearkening*. He was called Peter by our Lord upon his first introduction to him, John 1: 42. Peter had a wife. A foolish and slanderous tradition makes him divorce her when he became an apostle. But all the apostles had a right to marriage; and as late as A. D. 57 Peter's wife was living and accompanied him on a missionary journey, 1 Cor. 9: 5. The Romish doctrine of clerical celibacy is unauthorized by Scripture, Heb. 13: 4. Forbidding to marry is one of the marks of the apostasy, 1 Tim. 4: 3. **A great fever, a violent or raging fever.** Luke, being a physician, alone with exactness indicates the severity of the disease. Fevers are common in Palestine, and in the vicinity of Capernaum are of a malignant type. **They besought him.** Luke alone records this. Mark (1: 30) simply says, "They tell him of her." Jesus thus waits for this manifestation of their faith. Thus, too, does he encourage prayer. Compare Ezek. 36: 37.

39. **Stood over her and rebuked the fever.** Matthew (8: 15) merely says, "And he touched her." Mark (1: 31), with greater minuteness, says, "And he came [the standing, according to Luke, is implied], and took her by the hand and lifted her up." By combining the three accounts great fullness is obtained. Luke alone personifies the disease, the fever being addressed as if it were a conscious agent. *Rebuked the fever,* and obedient to his command *it left her.* The fever left her instantly; and as an evidence of a full and perfect cure, *immediately she arose and*

*ministered unto them.* She at once attended to her household duties, waited on the table, and served them. Instead of being weak and exhausted, she was raised to her full strength and to perfect health. Recovery from fever is always slow; the suddenness of the cure showed the reality and greatness of the miracle.

40. Luke proceeds from these two particular miracles, the one public, the other private, to the statement that his miracle-working power was very largely and wonderfully exercised at that time and place.

**When the sun was setting.** It was the cool of the day, and therefore the best time for bringing the sick. The news of Christ's presence in the city and of his wonderful cure in the synagogue had had time to spread, and now the people began to bring their sick. It being the Sabbath also, they may have preferred to wait till its close. But they eagerly avail themselves of the first opportunity, as the Sabbath day is closing. **All they that had any sick, etc.** There was a general bringing of the sick. **He laid his hands, etc.** This is alone stated by Luke. Mark (1: 34) graphically adds, "And all the city was gathered together at the door." By connecting the exercise of his power with this external act on every one, he encouraged their faith individually and pointed toward himself as the source of power. Thus, while Christ healed the sick, we never hear that he was sick himself. His was a life of health. He, indeed, by his sympathies made the sufferings of others his own. "Himself took our infirmities and bore our sicknesses," Matt. 8: 17. Without perfect health he could not have done or endured what he did.

41. **And devils, demons, also.** The special mention of demons is distinct from the "divers diseases" of the pre-

crying out, and saying, Thou art Christ the Son of God. And <sup>o</sup>he rebuking *them* suffered them not to speak: for they knew that he was Christ. \* vers. 34, 35; Mk 1. 25, 34; Ac. 16 16-18.

*First general preaching tour throughout Galilee.*

- 42 <sup>p</sup>And when it was day, he departed and went into a desert place: and the people sought him, and came unto him, and <sup>a</sup>stayed him, that he should not depart p Mk. 1. 35.
- 43 from them. And he said unto them, I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also: <sup>r</sup>for there- q John 4. 40.
- r Is. 48. 16.

ceding verse, showing that demoniacal possessions were not diseases. **Thou art Christ.** This is omitted by the oldest and best manuscripts and the highest critical authorities. The same idea is expressed by what follows. **The Son of God.** See on ch. 1 : 35. That the demons knew that he was Christ and recognized his divinity is a conclusive evidence of their existence and of their actually possessing men. **Rebuking them suffered them not to speak,** to make known his Messiahship. Demons were not to be his messengers to proclaim this glorious fact. His own disciples were to do this, and the proofs on which he rested his claims are referred to in John 5 : 32, 39, 46, 47; 20 : 30, 31. Nor had the time arrived to make this full announcement among the people.

42-44. JESUS MAKES HIS FIRST PREACHING TOUR THROUGHOUT GALILEE, Matt. 4 : 23-25; Mark 1 : 35-39. Matthew is the fullest, but omits the record of Christ's retirement into a desert place, which is related by the other two evangelists. Luke is very brief.

42. **When it was day,** following the cure of Peter's wife's mother. According to Mark 1 : 35, it was early day-break. **Went into a desert place,** an uninhabited and unfrequented place near Capernaum. He went there for quiet, meditation, and prayer, Mark 1 : 35. **The people sought him.** From Mark's account it appears that Simeon and his party sought and found Jesus, and reported to him that all the people were seeking him. And Peter's words are soon confirmed, for the multitude searched with such diligence that they also found him **and stayed him,** held him back, detained him, **that he should not depart from them.**

While Nazareth drove him away, Capernaum invites him back.

43. The reply of Jesus shows that he had other work to do, and that the people understood not the object of his mission. **I must.** There was a moral necessity, founded on his divine mission. **Preach,** etc. Proclaim the good news of his kingdom. **The kingdom of God** is equivalent to *kingdom of heaven* in Matthew (3 : 2, etc.), the former expression having special reference to its central locality, the latter to him whose it is. The same thing is expressed by "kingdom of Christ," or simply "kingdom," Eph. 5 : 5; Heb. 12 : 28. The prophets had represented the Messiah as a divine King (Ps. 2 : 6; Isa. 11 : 1; Jer. 23 : 5; Zech. 14 : 9; Mic. 4 : 1-4; 5 : 2), and especially Daniel (Dan. 2 : 44; 7 : 13, 14), who had spoken of "a kingdom which the God of heaven would set up." Hence, *kingdom of heaven*, or *of God*, became common among the Jews to denote the kingdom or reign of the Messiah. Their own theocracy was also typical of it. They, indeed, perverted the meaning of prophecy, and expected an earthly and temporal kingdom, the restoration of the throne of David at Jerusalem, and the actual subjugation of all nations. John the Baptist, Jesus, and the apostles, however, rescued the phrase from error, and gave it its full and true meaning. This *kingdom, reign, or administration* of the Messiah is spiritual in its nature (John 18 : 36; Rom. 14 : 17), and is exercised over, and has its seat in, the hearts of believers, Luke 17 : 21. It exists on earth (ch. 13 : 18, 19, 41, 47); extends to another state of existence (ch. 13 : 43; 26 : 29; Phil. 2 : 10, 11); and will be fully consummated in a state of glory, 1 Cor. 15 : 24; Matt. 8 :

44 fore am I sent. \*And he preached in the synagogues \*Mk. 1. 38, 39. of Galilee.

11; 2 Pet. 1 : 11. It thus embraces the whole mediatorial reign or government of Christ on earth and in heaven, and includes in its subjects all the redeemed, or, as Paul expresses it (Eph. 3 : 15), "the whole family in heaven and earth." *Kingdom of God and church* are not identical, though inseparably and closely connected. The churches of Christ are the external manifestations of this kingdom in the world. **To other cities also.** Not merely at Capernaum, but in adjacent villages, towns, and cities, Mark 1 : 48. **Therefore am I sent.** *Because for this was I sent.* Not from Capernaum, but from his Father, John 16 : 28. His mission was to preach the gospel, ch. 4 : 18-21. This the people failed to understand.

44. **And he preached, etc.** *And he was preaching* in the synagogues throughout Galilee, Mark 1 : 39. Mark also adds, "And cast out devils." This must be the first general preaching tour throughout Galilee, recorded in Matt. 4 : 23-25, since, according to the first two evangelists, it occurred not long after the calling of the four disciples, Matt. 4 : 18 and Mark 1 : 16. We cannot suppose two such extensive tours in the course of a few weeks.

#### REMARKS.

1. The proper preparation for temptation and trial is to be filled with the Spirit, ver. 1; Acts 13 : 9; Eph. 5 : 18.

2. Though God often leads men into trials and places of temptation, yet he gives them means for overcoming, vers. 1, 2; 1 Cor. 10 : 13; 2 Cor. 12 : 9; Dan. 2 : 17-20; James 5 : 11; 2 Pet. 2 : 9.

3. Seasons of great spiritual enjoyment are often followed by great temptations. Thus it frequently is with the blessed experiences in baptism, vers. 1, 2; Matt. 16 : 17, 22, 23; Acts 6 : 1 and 8 : 1.

4. Solitude has its special dangers and temptations. Man was made a social being, vers. 1, 2; 1 Kings 19 : 4, 9-11.

5. The Christian, and especially the young convert, may expect to be tempt-

ed to doubt his own adoption and to distrust God, ver. 3.

6. Intense hunger is no excuse for crime or for distrusting Providence. God has a full supply. Faith in him will ensure victory over the wants of the world, vers. 3, 4; Matt. 6 : 33; John 6 : 27, 32.

7. In overcoming one temptation we may fall into another. Our faith may be turned into presumption or overcome by ambition, vers. 6, 9.

8. The word of God, the sword of the Spirit, is our weapon in temptation, vers. 4, 8, 12; 1 John 2 : 14.

9. To secularize religion, to take the kingdom of the world through carnal weapons, to depend on worldly pomp, vain display, fashion, wealth, fine churches, and the like, is a forsaking and renouncing of the spiritual nature, power, and weapons of Christ's kingdom, ver. 6; Rom. 14 : 7.

10. We should wait God's time and way for receiving what he intends to bestow. Christ would receive nothing from Satan. The shortest and easiest way is not always the best, vers. 6-9.

11. Neither religion nor duty should be compromised for riches or honor, ver. 8; Prov. 23 : 23.

12. We have but to resist the devil and he will flee from us, ver. 8; 1 Pet. 5 : 8, 9; James 4 : 7, 10.

13. Satan uses the holiest places and things to tempt men, vers. 9, 11; Acts 5 : 3.

14. Wicked men who appeal to Scripture to support or cover up their own crimes, and errorists who misquote the word of God and pervert its meaning, are following in the footsteps of the devil, vers. 9, 10; 2 Pet. 3 : 16.

15. We have no right to test God merely for the sake of testing him, nor to trifle with his promises by throwing ourselves into uncommanded dangers, ver. 12.

16. In Christ's victory over Satan, all true believers have a pledge of their own. He shows that he is able to succor those that are tempted, ver. 13; 1 Cor. 10 : 13; Heb. 2 : 17; 4 : 15.

17. Jesus by his own example teaches

us to maintain the public worship of God, vers. 16, 31; Lev. 19:30; Heb. 10:25.

18. The Bible is, above all others, the book of public worship and of the Lord's Day; it is the ground and proof of truth, ver. 17; Acts 13:27; 15:21; 17:2, 3.

19. As Christ was anointed with the Spirit for his work, so should his followers be for theirs, ver. 18; 1 John 2:20, 27.

20. How glorious the mission and work of Jesus! vers. 18, 19.

21. Jesus brings to the sin-bound soul its jubilee, ver. 19; Ps. 89:15; Rom. 8:15; Gal. 5:1.

22. Let us look to Jesus as our Teacher, and joyfully accept his instructions, ver. 20; John 6:68.

23. Let us see to it that the mission of Jesus is fulfilled in our hearts and lives, ver. 21; John 17:3; Phil. 3:10; Col. 1:27, 28.

24. How many admire the eloquence of the preacher without being benefited by the truth! ver. 22; Ezek. 33:31, 32.

25. "Requests for divine favor are often refused because prompted by pride or selfishness."—REV. J. P. WARREN. Ver. 23; James 4:5.

26. God bestows ~~as~~ unmerited favors upon men according to his infinite wisdom and good pleasure, ver. 25-27; Matt. 11:25-27.

27. "It is an evidence of great depravity when men complain that blessings are bestowed on others which they themselves reject."—*Amer. Tract Society, N. Y.* Ver. 28; Matt. 23:13.

28. We must not make our views and feelings the rule by which to judge the principles of the gospel administration, vers. 25-28; Job 11:7; Rom. 11:33.

29. How uncertain is human popularity! vers. 22, 28, 29; Matt. 21:9 and 27:20-23.

30. In the treatment of Jesus at Nazareth we see the foreshadowing of that which he should receive from the Jewish nation and from a wicked world, vers. 28, 29; John 1:11.

31. Jesus was invulnerable and immortal till his work was done; so are his people. He is Lord of his own times and of theirs, ver. 30; John 10:18, 28; Luke 21:18.

32. Discouragements should not stop faithful labor. If we cannot do good in

one place, we should go to another, ver. 31; Matt. 10:12, 13; Acts 13:46.

33. Scripture has a self-evidencing power, ver. 32; John 7:17.

34. The Christian teacher comes with the authority of God and truth, ver. 32; 2 Cor. 5:20.

35. A mere intellectual knowledge of Christ cannot save us. The unclean spirit knew Jesus; devils believe and tremble; they know him as a conqueror, and not as a Saviour, vers. 33, 34; James 2:19.

36. Jesus needs neither the service nor the testimony of demons, vers. 35, 41.

37. Christ's victory over devils foreshadows his complete victory over the kingdom of darkness, vers. 35, 36; 1 John 3:8.

38. The displays of Christ's power often produce wonder only, without saving faith, ver. 36; Matt. 9:33; 12:23; Acts 13:41.

39. The fame of Christ should arouse inquiry, and result in that knowledge which is eternal life, ver. 36; John 17:3.

40. A single Christian may be the means of bringing both great temporal and spiritual blessings upon his family, vers. 38, 39; 2 Tim. 1:18.

41. They who feel their need of Christ never seek him in vain, ver. 40; John 6:37; James 5:14; 1 Pet. 5:7.

42. If you would find Jesus, seek him in places of prayer, ver. 42; ch. 5:16; 6:12; 9:28.

43. Like Jesus, we should strive to fulfil our mission. We should not neglect pressing work or present duty, vers. 43, 44; John 9:4; Matt. 5:14-16; 25:19-30.

## CHAPTER V.

This chapter begins with a relation of the miraculous draught of fishes (1-11), which probably took place near the close of our Lord's first general missionary tour throughout Galilee. Then follows the account of healing a leper (12-16) and a paralytic (17-26), the calling of Matthew to be a constant attendant (27, 28), Matthew's feast, and the discourse of Jesus on fasting, 29-39. These several incidents appear to be in chronological order, though they are not all closely connected.

*Miraculous draught of fishes.*

V. AND 'it came to pass, that as the people pressed upon him to hear the word of God, he stood by the lake of Gennesaret, and saw two ships standing by the

<sup>'Mt. 4. 18; Mk. 1. 16.</sup>

1-11. JESUS TEACHES FROM THE LAKE. THE MIRACULOUS DRAUGHT OF FISHES. Most have regarded this as Luke's account of the calling of Peter, Andrew, James, and John, and identical with that related in Matt. 4 : 18-22 and Mark 1 : 16-22. With Alford, Webster, and Wilkinson, and others, I think it refers to a later event, and that it was confirmatory and prophetic of their ministerial work as the constant attendants of Jesus. For—

1. Luke places this miracle after he had commenced his first general missionary tour throughout Galilee; Matthew and Mark place their account before it, Matt. 4 : 22, 23; Mark 1 : 20, 39. They also place it before the healing of Peter's wife's mother, Matt. 8 : 14; Mark 1 : 29. But Luke places it after that event; Simon is spoken of in ver. 3 as one who had already been introduced by that event, ch. 4 : 28.

2. That in Matthew and Mark occurred as the parties were preparing to fish, probably in the early evening, as it was common to fish at night, John 21 : 3; Matt. 4 : 18; Mark 1 : 16. But this in Luke took place in the morning, after having fished all night, ver. 5.

3. The circumstances were not only sufficiently different for two different events, but even demand them, while the points of agreement are easily explained. From a comparison of the four Gospels it appears that the three or four were called, *first*, as *disciples*, John 1 : 35-42; *second*, as constant attendants, ministers, evangelists, Matthew 4 : 19; Mark 1 : 17. Then followed the general preaching tour throughout Galilee, near the close of which they came to the Sea of Galilee, probably in the vicinity of Capernaum. It would appear that they still sometimes went out to fish when near their homes (John 21 : 3), as on this occasion, when Jesus improves the opportunity of confirming the call given a few weeks before, and by his miraculous power to foreshadow their future success as preachers of the gospel. Such a view seems to me nothing

unreasonable, but perfectly natural and consistent. After this they were selected among the twelve apostles, ch. 6 : 12-14. The miracle here related occurred probably not far from the latter part of February, A. D. 28.

1. **And it came to pass, etc.** On a certain occasion, in connection with his preaching throughout Galilee, ch. 4 : 43, 44.

**To hear.** The object of pressing upon him was to hear the word of God. Not only did crowds gather at the synagogues, but multitudes sought instruction in the open air. So it was at the sermon on the mount, which occurred about this time. Some manuscripts read "pressed upon him and heard," merely expressing circumstances, not the purpose; but the common reading is to be preferred.

**Lake of Gennesaret,** from the beautiful and fertile plain of Gennesaret. Called by Matthew and Mark, and once by John (6 : 1), Sea of Galilee, from the province of Galilee, on its west side. John styles it elsewhere Sea of Tiberias, from a city on its south-western shore, built by Herod Antipas, and named in honor of the emperor Tiberias. Luke, whose geographical terms are always more distinctive, calls it a *lake*. The following quotations will give an idea of its present appearance:

"The whole breadth and nearly the whole length of the lake was in view. It lay without a ripple, a mirror of heaven in its framework of hills. I was full eight hundred, perhaps a thousand, feet above it; and though at the distance of two or three miles to the north-west, it seemed quite at my feet, reflecting the light, fleecy clouds that floated above it, and the Gadarene mountains beyond, whose deep gorges were softened by their distance and darkened by their depths.

"Apart from all its associations, the Sea of Galilee is one of the most beautiful objects in nature. It lacks foliage and verdure, it is true, at this season of the year; it lacks the wildness mingled

lake: but the fishermen were gone out of them, and

with the softness and grace of some of the Scotch and Swiss lakes. But the contrast of its deep blue waters with the brown and ochre mountains that stand around it; the variety in outline of its shores, here rising abruptly a thousand feet, here sloping gently away, here rolling upward like receding waves, and here with a grassy reach of glen, lost in a dark gorge beyond, and here again, with a white edge of sand and pebbles, swelling back into a plain, mottled with clumps of thorn and oleanders, now in bloom, where—

‘Thro’ the summer night,  
Those blossoms red and bright,  
Spread their soft breasts o’er.’

As thus beheld, it presents a scene of chaste and sober beauty, of calm and tender repose that one hardly meets with elsewhere.”—DR. S. GRAVES, *The Standard*, April 3, 1873.

“The surrounding hills are of a uniform brown color, and would be monotonous were it not for the ever-changing lights and the brilliant tints at sunrise and sunset. It is, however, under the pale light of a full moon that the lake is seen to the greatest advantage, for there is then a softness in the outlines, a calm on the water, in which the stars are so brightly mirrored, and a perfect quiet in all around which harmonize well with the feelings which cannot fail to arise on its shores. It is, perhaps, difficult to realize that the borders of this lake, now so silent and desolate, were once enlivened by the busy hum of towns and villages, and that on its waters hostile navies contended for supremacy. But there is one feature which must strike every visitor, and that is the harmony of the gospel narrative with the places which it describes, giving us, as M. Renan happily express it, a fifth Gospel, torn but still legible.

“The lake is pear-shaped, the broad end being toward the north; the greatest width is six and three-quarter miles, from Mejdal, ‘Magdala,’ to Khersa, ‘Gergesa,’ about one-third of the way down, and the extreme length is twelve and a quarter miles. The Jordan enters at the north, a swift, muddy stream, coloring the lake a good mile from its mouth, and passes out pure and bright

at the south. On the north-western shore of the lake is a plain, two and a half miles long and one mile broad, called by the Bedawin *El Ghu weir*, but better known by its familiar Bible name of Gennesareth; and on the north-east, near Jordan’s mouth, is a swampy plain, El Batihah, now much frequented by wild boar, formerly the scene of a skirmish between the Jews and Romans, in which Josephus met with an accident that necessitated his removal to Capernaum. On the west there is a recess in the hills, containing the town of Tiberias; and on the east, at the mouths of Wadys Semakh and Fik, are small tracts of level ground. On the south, the fine open valley of the Jordan stretches away toward the Dead Sea, and is covered in the neighborhood of the lake with luxuriant grass.

“The water of the lake is bright, clear, and sweet to the taste, except in the neighborhood of the salt springs and where it is defiled by the drainage of Tiberias. Its level, which varies considerably at different times of the year, is between 600 feet and 700 feet below that of the Mediterranean—a peculiarity to which the district owes its genial winter climate. In summer the heat is great, but never excessive, as there is usually a morning and evening breeze.”—CAPTAIN C. W. WILSON, *Recovery of Jerusalem*.

Dr. Robert Patterson (*Sunday-school Times*, May 25, 1872) speaks of seeing half a dozen fishing-boats near Tiberias, a place which he styles “simply a ruin and its people utterly destitute of energy.”

2. **Two ships.** Fishing-boats. According to some of the oldest manuscripts, *two small ships. Standing by the lake.* Stationed at anchor by the shore of the lake. Dr. George Campbell translates, “Aground near the edge,” which is allowable. The ships or boats, being small, could doubtless be run aground or set afloat as occasion required. According to Josephus, there were about two hundred and thirty of these on the lake, and four or five men to each. **The fishermen.** They are thus styled in a general way, as if strangers. Such names as are necessary to the narrative are afterward given.

- 3 were washing *their* nets. And he entered into one of the ships, which was Simon's, and prayed him that he would thrust out a little from the land. <sup>¶</sup> And he sat down, and taught the people out of the ship. ¶ Mt. 13. 2.
- 4 Now, when he had left speaking, he said unto Simon, <sup>¶</sup> Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for ¶ John 21. 6; Eccl 11. 6.
- 5 a draught. And Simon answering said unto him, Master, we have toiled all the night, and have taken ¶ Ps. 127. 1, 2; John 15. 14.
- 6 nothing: <sup>¶</sup> nevertheless, at thy word I will let down the net. And when they had this done, <sup>¶</sup> they inclosed a great multitude of fishes: and their net brake. ¶ John 21. 6, 7; 1 Cor. 15. 58; Gal. 6. 9.

Only Simon had yet been mentioned by Luke, ch. 4 : 38. **Were washing their nets.** Rather, *the nets*. The servants or the hired men may have been doing this. Compare Mark 4 : 20. The words imply that they had finished their fishing. From ver. 5 we learn that it was after an unsuccessful night's labor.

3. **Entered, etc.** On account of the pressure of the people. **Simon's.** See on ch. 4 : 38. Luke calls him Peter only once (ver. 8) before his call to be an apostle, and Simon only twice after that event, ch. 22 : 31 ; 24 : 34. He is here spoken of as one already known. **Prayed him.** *Requested him.* It would appear from this that Simon was still in the ship or near it. Jesus would naturally enter into Peter's ship both on account of his acquaintance with him and because he may have resided with him when at Capernaum. The request that he should **thrust or put out a little from the land** implies that the boat was standing by the shore, ver. 2. **And he sat down.** Assuming the usual posture when teaching, ch. 4 : 20. The boat was his pulpit. Compare Mark 4 : 1.

4. **When he had left, or ceased, speaking.** He may have dismissed the people; yet it is not necessary to suppose this. He may have finished his discourse with a proper ending and then have immediately said to Simon, **Launch out into the deep, or Put out, etc.,** the same verb being used as in ver. 3. The verb here is in the singular, showing that the command was to Peter as the steersman of the ship. The additional command, **Let down your nets,** is in the plural, addressed to the fishermen collectively, including Peter personally, ver. 5. The object was for

**a draught.** This was indeed a trial and test of Peter's faith, as appears from his answer. The trouble, too, in obeying the command was probably increased by having hung out the nets to dry.

5. **Master.** The word thus translated is used in the New Testament only by Luke, ch. 8 : 24, 45 ; 9 : 33, 49 ; 17 : 13. It is very properly translated *Master*, one who is set over, one who has the authority of a teacher among his disciples. It was an appropriate word to use now, as Peter was about to yield, not to his own judgment, but to the word of Jesus. **We have toiled all the night, etc.** As night was the usual time for fishing, and they had been unsuccessful, it was not likely, according to human judgment, that they would now succeed by day. **Nevertheless, at thy word, etc.** In reliance upon thy word. Peter sacrifices his own practical knowledge to the authoritative word of Jesus. His faith was not great, as the sequel shows, but he had the spirit of obedience. He was not expecting a miracle, and probably, at most, but a small haul of fish. Note, Peter says, **I will,** as the director; but in the next verse the plural is used of all the fishermen. They act with him and under him. **Net,** rather, *nets*.

6. **And when, etc.** *And having done this.* The obedience was prompt and unreserved. **They enclosed a great multitude.** The secret of the miracle was that he had dominion over "the fishes of the sea." Ps. 8 : 8 ; 1 Cor. 15 : 27 ; Eph. 1 : 22. At the will of Jesus the fish gather in multitud-s. Behold the reward of obedience. **Their net brake,** rather, their nets were breaking, showing what a large multitude were enclosed therein. The expres-

- 7 And they beckoned unto *their* partners, which were in the other ship, <sup>a</sup>that they should come and help them. <sup>b</sup>Gal. 6. 2  
 And they came, and filled both the ships, so that they  
 8 began to sink. When Simon Peter saw *it*, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, <sup>b</sup>Depart from me; for <sup>c</sup>I am a  
 9 sinful man, O Lord. For he was astonished, and all that were with him, at the draught of the fishes which  
 10 they had taken: and so *was* also James, and John, the sons of Zebedee, which were partners with Simon.

<sup>b</sup> Ex. 20. 19; Judg. 13. 22; 2 Sam. 6. 9; 1 Ki. 17. 18.  
<sup>c</sup> Job 40. 4; Is. 6. 5.

sion is a popular one, meaning that the nets were beginning to tear, which would result in a serious rent without great care and unless help should be obtained. It is used very much like the expression "began to sink" in the next verse. The nets were the casting-net, which was thrown from the boat and hauled up on board of the vessel.

7. **They beckoned unto their partners.** They were near enough to their comrades of the other boat to signal them to come quickly to their help. Some have supposed that they were incapable of speaking on account of fear and astonishment. Perhaps in their amazement and haste they beckon to them, which would, on account of the distance, be more easily understood than their call. Their partners appear to have been James and John, ver. 10. They and their boat were probably by the shore, ver. 2. They came, filled their boats until they **began to sink**, a popular expression meaning they were on the point of sinking from the weight of the fish.

8. **When Simon Peter saw it.** The miracle was such that Peter as a fisherman was prepared to judge. The draught was so far beyond anything he had ever seen or heard that he is overwhelmed with amazement and with a conviction of the superhuman power of Jesus. *Peter* means stone; he was so named when he was first introduced to Jesus, John 1: 42. It was fitting for Luke to style him here not only Simon, but also Peter, when relating this deep religious experience which was so essential to his usefulness and character as one of the foundation stones in Christ's spiritual kingdom.

**Fell down at Jesus' knees**, in homage and adoration. Had Jesus been a mere man, he would have rebuked him, Acts 10: 26; 14: 15. **De-**

**part from me**, etc. An exclamation of unworthiness and of personal sinfulness in the conscious presence of divine holiness and power. This was one of the occasions before the crucifixion when Peter caught a glimpse of Christ's divine nature as Son of God. Compare similar experiences of God's people under a vivid perception of the presence and power of God, Job 40: 4, 5; 42: 6; Isa. 6: 5, and the marginal references above. It would seem that Peter not only felt unworthy to have one so great and holy with him in the ship (compare ch. 7: 6, 7), but also, under his awe-inspiring presence, dreaded lest some judgment might come upon him on account of sins of heart or life. The Jews on seeing spirits feared death, ch. 2: 9; Judg. 6: 23; Dan. 10: 17.

9. **For**, introducing the reason of Peter's act and exclamation, as just related. **He was astonished.** *Astonishment possessed him, or seized him.* He was quite overwhelmed with awe. **And all that were with him**, under him in his ship, not including James and John, who are mentioned in the next verse. The omission of the mention of Andrew is noticeable. It seems very probable that he was temporarily absent.

10. **James and John.** The mention of James first here and elsewhere leads to the conclusion that he was the elder brother. John had probably before believed in Jesus as the Messiah; he was doubtless the one who went with Andrew to the dwelling of our Lord, John 1: 39. He did not then give up his occupation, but doubtless was much with Jesus, and witnessed the events recorded in the second, third, and fourth chapters of his Gospel. Jesus addressed Simon personally, who had shown both by act and word so great astonishment. **Fear not.** A penitent

And Jesus said unto Simon, Fear not; <sup>d</sup>from hence-  
11 forth thou shalt catch men. And when they had  
brought their ships to land, <sup>e</sup>they forsook all, and fol-  
lowed him.

<sup>d</sup>Mt. 4: 19; Mk. 1  
17; Ac. 2: 38, 41.

<sup>e</sup>ch. 18: 28; Mt. 4:  
20; 19: 27; Mk.  
1: 18; Phil. 3: 7,  
8.

*Healing of a leper.*

12 'And it came to pass, when he was in a certain city,  
behold a man full of leprosy: who seeing Jesus fell

<sup>f</sup>Mt. 8: 2; Mk. 1:  
40.

in Peter's state of mind need not fear the presence of the Friend of sinners. **Henceforth thou shalt catch men.** Literally, *take men alive, capture, catch* them by winning them. Fishes are taken for death, but men in the gospel net for eternal life. The miracle was symbolic, and prophetic of his calling as a preacher of the gospel.

The similarities and contrasts between this miracle and that recorded in John 21: 1-15 are striking. In this the net began to tear, in that it did not. Hence, Trench supposes this to be symbolical of gathering men into the outward kingdom of God on earth, from which some may be lost; but that of the elect in the kingdom of glory, of whom none are lost. In this it is, "Thou shalt catch men;" in that "Feed my lambs;" "feed my sheep."

So also in the calling of the four disciples Jesus said, "I will make you fishers of men," referring specially to their *calling*, in this, "thou shalt catch men," referring more to the *work* in that calling. Thus there is an advance upon the former occasion, and a greater advance on this in that related by John.

11. **They forsook all.** Peter, James, and John. They forsook their nets, the ships, the fishes, their friends, hired servants, and their work, and followed Jesus, showing their faith in him and their willingness to pursue their spiritual calling in his kingdom. They forsake, not merely in form, but in heart, 2 Tim. 3: 5; Ezek. 33: 31.

12-16. **JESUS HEALS A LEPER; RETIRES INTO THE WILDERNESS**, Matt. 8: 1-4; Mark 1: 40-45. Mark enters most into detail; Matthew is the briefest. Luke, while substantially agreeing with the two others, shows the differences of an independent narrator. Matthew (8: 1, 2) plainly fixes the miracle immediately after the sermon on the mount. Mark and Luke have no defi-

nite note of time. Jesus probably preached the sermon on the mount soon after the miraculous draft of fishes, while the multitude gathered by his first missionary tour was large. It thus formed a climax to that preaching tour, which he terminated almost immediately after.

12. **When he was in a certain city**, or more exactly, *one of the cities* of Galilee. Some suppose this to have been Capernaum, but probably not, for Luke would hardly thus have spoken indefinitely of Capernaum. He had commenced from Capernaum, preaching throughout all Galilee (ch. 4: 31, 44; Matt. 4: 23; Mark 1: 21, 35, 39), and a little time after this returned to that city, Mark 2: 1.

**Behold.** Calling attention to a wonderful event. **A man full of leprosy**, an aggravated case of this disease, covering his whole body from head to foot. Leprosy was a most fearful and foul skin-disease, and in its worst form was the most terrible of all diseases, and absolutely incurable. See Lev. chs. 13, 14, where it is described with certain enactments. It probably began internally, after which it showed itself in swellings, scabs, bright spots, or slight reddish eruptions, grouped in circles, covered with a shiny scale or scab. The disease was not contagious, though it often became hereditary for generations. Its progress was not generally rapid. A leper from birth sometimes lived as many as fifty years, while those afterward infected, sometimes as many as twenty. It was sometimes sent as a special judgment for sin, and hence was called a *plague* or *stroke*, Num. 12: 10; 2 Kings 5: 27; 2 Chron. 26: 20.

Whether this disease is identical with modern leprosy has been much disputed. The latest testimonies favor the belief that, under certain forms, it continues to prevail. Dr. Thomson (*The Land and the Book*, vol. ii., p. 516-520)

on *his* face, and besought him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. And he put forth *his* hand, and touched him, saying, I will: be thou clean. And immediately the leprosy departed from

speaks of it as existing in the East. He saw a number near Jerusalem. "They held up toward me their handless arms, unearthly sounds gurgled through their throats without palates—in a word, I was horrified. . . . I subsequently visited their habitation, . . . and have made many inquiries into their history. . . . New-born babes of leprous parents are often as pretty and as healthy in appearance as any, but by and by its presence and workings become visible in some of the signs described in the 13th chapter of Leviticus. The scab comes on by degrees in different parts of the body; the hair falls from the head and eyebrows; the nails loosen, decay, and drop off; joint after joint of the fingers and toes shrink up and slowly fall away." Thus slowly the victim dies, and no power of medicine is able to stay the disease or mitigate its tortures.

Leprosy is a striking emblem of sin and its effects. It was indeed regarded as a living death (Joseph. *Antiq.* iii. 11, 3). The leper was unclean; he was to rend his garments, let his hair hang dishevelled, wear garments of mourning as for the dead, and live in exclusion outside the camp or city. Neither Miriam, the sister of Moses, nor King Uzziah was exempted from this regulation, Num. 12 : 15; 2 Chron. 26 : 21. Not only was he to be excluded from society while diseased, as if in effect dead, but if cleansed he was to be cleansed by the same means as by uncleanness through touching or handling the dead, Num. 19 : 13-20; Lev. 14 : 4-7. Thus sin affects the soul, rendering it unclean, separating it from God, producing spiritual death, unfitting it for ever for heaven and the company of the holy, and ensuring its eternal banishment as polluted and abominable. Some, as they look on infancy, reject with horror the thought that sin exists within. But so might any one say who looked upon the beautiful babe in the arms of a leprous mother. But time brings forth the fearful malady. And so the leprosy of sin man-

ifests itself in every human character as it comes forth from infancy.

**Seeing Jesus.** The leper beheld in Jesus one sent from God and who could help him. **Fell on his face and besought him.** He came to Jesus with the most earnest and humble entreaty, and in his respect and reverence kneeling down and falling on his face, Mark 1 : 40. **Lord.** This term was applied as a title of address to God and to man, signifying, according to circumstances, *sir*, or *master*, or *most revered one*, or *Jehovah*. As the leper bows before this great Teacher and Worker of miracles, the idea of *Master* most appropriately fits his language. **If thou wilt, thou canst.** If thou art willing, thou art able. The leper had faith in the miraculous power of Jesus, but had a doubt about his willingness to exercise it on such an object as he—on one so unclean. He determined to press his case earnestly and leave it on the will of Jesus alone, *If thou wilt.* **Make me clean.** Cleanse me, heal my leprosy, and thus remove my uncleanness.

13. Jesus is moved with compassion (Mark 1 : 40), and to show his willingness he **put forth his hand**, and contrary to the Jewish law **touched him**. But Christ was himself the Lawgiver and the Fulfiller of the law. As it was in harmony with the law of the Sabbath to do good and save life, so was it with the law of leprosy to remove the disease and the defilement. Jesus was also purity itself. He purified, but contracted no uncleanness. Before his power, as symbolized by stretching forth his hand and touching him, the leprosy fled and the leper was cleansed. And even thus he touched our sinful human nature, yet remained without any taint of sin. **I will; be thou clean.** Language beautifully and strikingly corresponding to that of the leper. Jesus grants a full and perfect answer to his request.

**Immediately.** The cure was instantaneous. The leprosy, the cause of his defilement, **departed from him**, and as a consequence he was

- 14 him. <sup>a</sup>And he charged him to tell no man: but go, and show thyself to the priest, and offer for thy cleansing, <sup>b</sup>according as Moses commanded, for a  
 15 testimony unto them. But so much the more went there a fame abroad of him: <sup>1</sup>and great multitudes came together to hear, and to be healed by him of their infirmities.
- 16 <sup>k</sup>And he withdrew himself into the wilderness, and prayed.

<sup>κ</sup>Mt. 8. 4; 2 Kl. 5. 10, 14.

<sup>h</sup>Le. 14. 4, 10, 21 22.

<sup>1</sup>Mt. 4. 25; Mk. 1 7; John 6. 2.

<sup>k</sup>ch. 6. 12; Mt. 14 23; Mk. 6. 46.

cleansed. So Jesus cleanses the sinner by healing the seat of disease.

14. **He charged him**, commanded him, **to tell no man**. Jesus frequently gave this prohibition, Mark 5 : 43 ; 7 : 36. His reasons were various, according to circumstances. As a general principle, it accorded with his modest and unostentatious bearing, and with the peacefulness and spirituality of his kingdom (Matt. 12 : 16-20), which came not with observation, Luke 17 : 20. Sometimes he would repress rather than encourage the excitement of the people, who beset him in such crowds as greatly to trouble him (Mark 3 : 9, 20), and to make him a temporal king, John 6 : 45. At other times he doubtless had the good of the persons healed specially in view. In this instance the prohibition was temporary, only binding till he should go and show himself to the priest. He would have him remain silent, so as to promptly obey this requirement of the Mosaic law. He would not arouse undue excitement (Mark 1 : 45), nor would he expose himself or the healed leper to the charge of violating the law. Possibly he would have him appear before the priest before any prejudicial report of his cure reached him which should prevent him acknowledging the cure.

**Show thyself to the priest**. At Jerusalem. Possibly the leper, finding himself cleansed, was disposed to remain among his relatives; but Jesus with great earnestness and in an authoritative manner sends him at once to Jerusalem in obedience to the requirement of the law. **Offer for thy cleansing**. Offer because of thy cleansing, which would be first recognized by the priest. There were two stages in the ceremonial of purification of the leper, Lev. 14 : 1-32. The purifying ceremonies and offerings were

united with confessions of sin and pollution, and with grateful acknowledgment of God's mercy. As the leprosy was a striking type of sin, so these ceremonies were typical of the forgiveness of sin and justification through the blood of Christ, and of the anointing of the Holy Spirit for sanctification, Heb. 10 : 21, 22; 1 John 2 : 20. **A testimony unto them**. To the people that he was cured, and that he might safely be readmitted into society. He had been pronounced unclean by the priest, who alone could pronounce him clean and readmit him into the congregation.

15. **But**, notwithstanding this precaution, **so much the more went there a fame**, *went the report abroad concerning him*. This was because of the thoughtless disobedience of the man who had been healed in heralding his cure, Mark 1 : 45. The consequence was that **great multitudes** gathered to him to **hear** and to be **healed** of their weaknesses and various ailments. Another result stated by Mark (1 : 45) was that he could no longer enter into any city, both because it had become known that he had touched a leper and the crowds and excitement might attract the suspicious notice of the authorities. He was therefore obliged for a while to be chiefly in desert-places.

16. **And he withdrew himself**, etc. *But he was withdrawing himself and praying*, or better as the Bible Union version has it, *And he was wont to retire into the solitary places and pray*, a reference to his habit of secret devotion, of which Luke speaks more frequently than the other evangelists, ch 3 : 21; 6 : 12; 9 : 18; 11 : 1. *He is emphatic*, and his retiring into solitary places is in contrast to the multitude coming together to hear and be healed. While during these days they were thus

*Jesus heals a paralytic at Capernaum.*

17 And it came to pass on a certain day, as he was teaching, that there were Pharisees and doctors of the law sitting by, which were come out of every town of Galilee, and Judæa, and Jerusalem: and <sup>1</sup>the power of the Lord was present to heal them. <sup>m</sup>And, behold, <sup>n</sup>ch. 6. 19; Mt. 11 5. <sup>o</sup>Mt. 9. 2; Mk. 2. 3.

anxiously seeking him he was accused to retire for prayer.

17-26. JESUS HEALS A PARALYTIC, Matt. 9 : 2-8; Mark 2 : 1-12. Matthew is the briefest; Mark the most minute and graphic; Luke, equally full as Mark, gives evidence of an independent narrative. It is now about three months since he began his ministry in Galilee, and about fifteen months since his baptism. It was probably March A. D. 28.

17. **On a certain day.** The indefinite note of time is consistent with the fact, brought out by Mark, that several days had intervened since the healing of the leper, Mark 2 : 1. **He was teaching,** at Capernaum. He had returned thither from his first preaching tour throughout Galilee, Mark 2 : 1.

**There were Pharisees.** The *Pharisees* were a religious party or sect which originated about one hundred and fifty years before Christ. Their name means *separatists*; they were those who separated themselves from Levitical and traditional impurity. To become a member of the Pharisaic association one must agree to set apart all the sacred tithes and refrain from eating anything that had not been tithed, or about the tithing of which there was any doubt. As the tithes were regarded as holy, so the eating and enjoying them were regarded as a deadly sin. A Pharisee must ascertain whether the articles which he purchased had been duly tithed, and have the same certainty in regard to the food he ate both in his own house and in the houses of others. As publicans and sinners were not careful about this, Pharisees would, of course, not eat with them, for in so doing it was assumed that they partook of food which had not been duly tithed, ver. 30. Neither would they associate with them, for, as excommunicated persons, they regarded them as very heathen, Matt. 18 : 17. It was also binding on them to observe strictly the laws of purity, according to

the Mosaic ritual and the traditions of the elders, Mark 7 : 3. They held strictly to their oral law or traditions, attaching more importance to them than even to their written law, Matt. 15 : 1-6. They were the formalists of their age and nation, and were too often characterized for their ostentation, self-righteousness, and hypocrisy. They were the most numerous sect among the Jews, and had great influence with the people.

**Doctors, teachers, of the law.** These were learned men who taught and expounded the Jewish law. They were *law-teachers*, lawyers, scribes, ver. 21. **Sitting by.** Distinguished hearers, Pharisees, and eminent instructors, they sit as becoming their dignity, while the people stand. Doubtless they had been invited to seats as distinguished persons. **Out of every town,** etc. A general popular expression, meaning from all parts of Galilee and Judea. Some had also come from Jerusalem, the seat of the theocracy and of ecclesiastical power. Jesus was in the height of his popularity, and opposition was beginning to show itself. Curiosity, jealousy, and a desire to watch his words and acts very likely united in bringing them to Capernaum. It may be that his interpretation of the law, so much in opposition to Pharisaic teaching, which appeared in his preaching, of which the sermon on the mount a little before was a specimen, aroused the Jewish teachers to attend a public discourse of Jesus, in order that they might know for themselves and be able to bring and prove charges against him.

**The power of the Lord, etc.** This is somewhat obscure and difficult of interpretation. Literally, *The Lord's power was to heal them*, or, *There was power of the Lord to heal them*. Some with Meyer and Alford refer the word *Lord* to God, since it is without the article in the original, and they maintain

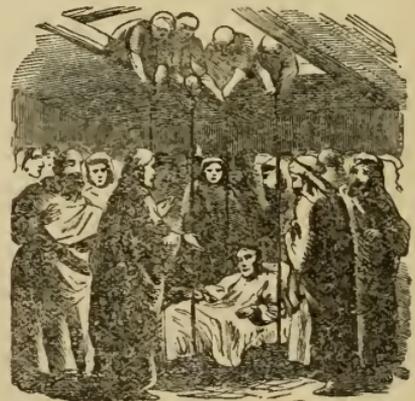
men brought in a bed a man which was taken with a palsy: and they sought *means* to bring him in, and to lay him before him. And when they could not find by what *way* they might bring him in because of the multitude, they went upon the housetop, and let him down through the tiling with *his* couch into the midst

that it always takes the article when it is applied to Christ. But the majority of expositors apply the term here to Jesus, regarding the ellipsis to be supplied as harsh, "The power of the Lord was (with Jesus)," implying so that he *could* "heal them." To me it seems that either interpretation may really amount to the same thing. If we say *God's power was to heal*, it was the divine power in the Lord Jesus, or if we prefer to interpret *Christ's power*, it refers to the divine power which dwelt in him; and in either case it was manifested, exerted on them that were sick. But by the text preferred by the latest critics, *And the Lord's* (God's) *power was that he should heal*, that is, it was with him to heal those who needed healing.

18. **Behold, men brought, etc.** Vividly stated in the original, as if passing before the eyes, *Behold, men bringing on a bed. A man which was taken with a palsy, who had been paralyzed*, having lost the power of muscular motion. He had very likely been some time in this condition. Mark states that he was "borne by four," each holding a corner of the bed on which he lay. **To bring him in**, the house where Jesus was, Mark 2:1. **To lay him before him**, to draw the attention of Jesus to him, and to have him exercise his healing power upon him.

19. They were unable to bring him in on account of the multitude, who filled both the house and the doorway, Mark 2:2. **They went upon the house-top**, by means of stairs or a ladder, or very likely, ascending the stairs within an adjoining house, they pass from its roof to that of the house where Jesus was. "Stairs on the outside of houses are almost unknown in Palestine at present, and would only expose the inmates to violence and pillage."—DR. HACKETT, *Wm. Smith's Dictionary*, p. 1104, note. Roofs are commonly flat in the East. They re-

moved that portion of it over Jesus. **Let him down through the tiling**, the burnt clay or tiling. Some suppose that Jesus was in an open court, around which an Eastern house was built, in which case they removed the bulwark, or parapet, which was a safeguard against accident (Deut. 22:8), and a light thin covering which projected beyond the parapet over part of the central court. Others think that he was in a room adjoining the court, and that, as it was but a one-story house, the roof was uncovered. Others, regarding the house as more than one-story, suppose an upper room, the largest room of the house, where the Jewish rabbis frequently taught, and the roof opened for the bed. Luke, in the words above, implies the removing of the tiles and the earth or plaster which composed the roof. The language of Mark (2:4), "had broken it up," seems to imply that it was the actual roof, and not the mere parapet, with a thin projection beyond. They *lower* the bed by still holding the four corners, or by means of cords or ropes,



THE COUCH LET DOWN.

Acts 27:30; 2 Cor. 11:33. **Couch.** A mattress or pallet, which could be easily carried, possibly a mere blanket

20 before Jesus. And when he saw their faith, he said  
 21 unto him, Man, thy sins are forgiven thee. °And  
 the scribes and the Pharisees began to reason, saying,

°Is. 43. 25; Ac. 3.  
 19; 5. 31.  
 °Mt. 9. 3; Mk. 2.  
 6, 7.

or quilt. "Anciently, however, as at the present time in the East, the common people slept on a light mattress or blanket, with a pillow, perhaps, but without any other appendage. The term 'bed' has this meaning in various passages. It was an article of this description that the paralytic used whom the Saviour directed to 'rise, take up his bed, and walk,' Mark 2:9. It is customary now for those who use such pallets to roll them up in the morning, and lay them aside till they have occasion to spread them out again for the next night's repose."—HACKETT, *Illus. of Scrip.*, p. 113.

Dr. Thomson (*The Land and the Book*, vol. ii., p. 6 ff.) illustrates from modern Arab houses. He supposes those of Capernaum to have been "like those of modern villages in this same region, low, *very low*, with flat roofs, reached by a stairway from the yard or court. Jesus probably stood in the open *lewan* (or reception-room), and the crowd were around him and in front of him. Those who carried the paralytic . . . ascended to the roof, removed so much of it as was necessary, and let down their patient through the aperture. The roof is only a few feet high, and by stooping down and holding the corners of the couch—merely a thickly-padded quilt, as at present in this region—they could let down the sick man without any apparatus of ropes or cords to assist them. . . . The whole affair was the extemporaneous device of plain peasants, accustomed to open their roofs and let down grain, straw, and other articles, as they still do in this country. . . .

"I have often seen it done, and have often done it myself to houses in Lebanon; but there is always more dust made than is agreeable. The materials now employed are beams about three feet apart, across which short sticks are arranged close together, and covered with the thickly-matted thorn-bush called *bellan*. Over this is spread a coat of stiff mortar, and then comes the marl or earth which makes the roof. Now, it is easy to remove any part of this without injuring the rest. No

objection, therefore, would be made on this score by the owners of the house. They had merely to scrape back the earth from a portion of the roof over the *lewan*, take up the thorns and short sticks, and let down the couch between the beams at the very feet of Jesus. The end achieved, they could speedily restore the roof as it was before."

20. **When he saw their faith**, by what they did. It is implied by what follows that the palsied man also exercised faith; perhaps he directed the men to do what they did. **Man**. Both Matthew and Mark say "son" or "*child*," a title of condescension and kindness, and in this case expressive of an endearing spiritual relation between Jesus and the sick man. **Unto him** is omitted by the best critical authorities.

**Thy sins are forgiven thee**. It is now done. It seems that disease had awakened in him a sense of guilt; possibly it had come on him on account of some sinful indulgence. Jesus, perceiving his penitence, and faith in him as the Messiah, addressed first his spiritual nature, and attended to the deeper and more dangerous disease of sin. Thus he gave peace to the sick man's soul, and taught those who heard, that he came not to remove the *lesser evils* only, but *sin*, the root of all. It also encouraged him that his disease would in due time be healed. In our Saviour's miracles there was doubtless a close connection between bodily and spiritual healing. Thus the cleansed Samaritan "glorified God" (ch. 17:15); the blind man near Jericho, having received sight, "followed Jesus, and glorified God," ch. 18:43. Compare John 5:14; 9:35-38. In James 5:14, 15, a close relation is recognized between the raising of the sick and the forgiving his sins. Jesus, however, did not adopt the Jewish notion that every suffering was caused by some specific sin. Such a notion he elsewhere condemns, John 9:3; ch. 13:2-5.

21. **Scribes**, were learned men, who preserved, copied, and expounded the law and the traditions, Ezra 7:16, 12; Neh. 8:1; Matt. 15:1-6. They are

Who is this which speaketh blasphemies? <sup>p</sup> Who can  
 22 forgive sins, but God alone? But when Jesus perceived  
 their thoughts, he answering said unto them,  
 23 What reason ye in your hearts? Whether is easier,  
 to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Rise up  
 24 and walk? But that ye may know that the Son of  
 man <sup>q</sup> hath power upon earth to forgive sins, (he said

<sup>p</sup> Ps. 32. 5; Is. 43.  
25.

<sup>q</sup> Is. 53. 9; Ac. 5.  
31; Col. 3. 13.

called lawyers (ch. 12 : 28 and Matt. 22 : 35), and doctors, or teachers, of the law, ch. 5 : 17, 21. Some regard the latter as teachers of the oral law, the scribes of the written law. Most of them were Pharisees. It is implied from the language of this verse that they were teachers as well as conservators and copyists of the law. They sat in Moses' seat, but their teaching was strikingly defective (Matt. 23 : 2, 13, 23), being narrow, dogmatic, and material; at once learned and frivolous, and mostly occupied about things infinitely little.

**Began to reason**, to consider and argue "in their hearts" (Mark 2 : 6), "said within themselves" (Matt. 9 : 3), unconscious that Jesus knew their thoughts. The reason here appears why Jesus had made the forgiveness of sins so prominent. He knew the feeling it would arouse in the hearts of the Pharisees. It was in accordance with the divine plan that they should commence an opposition which should culminate in his death. It gave him opportunity also to demonstrate to both his enemies and friends his power to forgive sins.

**Who is this that speaketh blasphemies?** The wondering of the Pharisees, as well as the whole context, implies that actual forgiveness by Jesus himself is meant. The word translated blaspheme primarily signified to speak evil, slander, revile, and in its scriptural application to God to speak irreverently, impiously to or of him, also to arrogate to one's self what is the prerogative of God. The latter is the meaning here; for they add, **Who can forgive sins but God alone?** They justly held that it was God's prerogative to forgive sins, but they failed to see the manifestations of divinity in Christ, in his wonderful works and teaching.

22. **But when Jesus perceived.** *But Jesus knowing or perceiving.* The knowledge was intuitive; the percep-

tion instantaneous. **Their thoughts.** "This is a branch of knowledge which was peculiar to the Son of God, whose special prerogative it was not to need that any should testify unto him concerning man, as of himself he knew what was in man," John 2 : 25. **Answering** their secret thoughts and reflections. **What reason ye in your hearts?** In opposition to the questions in the preceding verse. His question implies censure as well as theirs. According to Matthew, "Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts?" The evil was in them, and not in him; the evil was in attributing blasphemy to him whose miraculous power showed the justice of his claim; or deeper still, in their caviling and darkened spirits, which apprehended neither his person nor doctrine.

23. **Whether is easier.** *Which is easier.* Notice that Jesus does not ask which is easier to *do*, but which is easier to *say*, etc. To these faultfinding scribes it would seem easier to pronounce a man's sins forgiven than to pronounce a palsied man well, for they could see the latter, but not the former. And if there was imposture, it would therefore be easier to prove it in respect to that which was physical and seen than in respect to that which was spiritual and unseen.

24. Jesus proposes to give them evidence adapted to their physical and worldly conceptions. To perform a miracle is as really the work of God as to forgive sins. And Jesus proposes to do the former in proof of his power to do the latter. **That ye may know.** Here do we see the wisdom of Jesus in first pronouncing the man's sins forgiven, and then giving an external proof of his power, thus putting an end to their caviling by the miracle that follows.

**The Son of man.** A favorite name with Jesus, yet, with the exception of the expression of the martyr Stephen

- unto the sick of the palsy,) I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy couch, and go into thine house.
- 25 And immediately he rose up before them, and took up that whereon he lay, and departed to his own house, glorifying God.
- 26 And they were all amazed, and they glorified God, and were filled with fear, saying, We have seen strange things to-day. \*Jer. 33. 9; Ac. 4 21.

who beheld his glorified humanity at the right hand of God (Acts 7 : 56), the name is never applied to him but by himself. It is never applied to any one but Christ in the New Testament. In the first three Gospels, where the external life of Jesus is narrated and his human nature brought out prominently, he more frequently calls himself "the Son of man;" but in the fourth Gospel, where his inner life and divine being are specially brought to view, he styles himself more frequently "the Son of God," or simply "the Son." Daniel (7 : 13), in foretelling Christ's coming with the clouds of heaven, implies that, notwithstanding his exaltation and glory, he would come in the form and likeness of men, for he says that he saw "one like the Son of man." See also Rev. 1 : 13; 14 : 14. It was a title of humiliation, though an honor to our race. Jesus applied it pre-eminently to himself as the Messiah, "as God manifested in the flesh," indicating, notwithstanding his divinity, his *true humanity* and his oneness with the human race. The Jews rightly understood it to mean the Messiah (John 12 : 34), though they did not enter into the fullness of its meaning. He was the Son of man in the highest sense (Ps. 8 : 35; Heb. 2 : 6-9)—possessed of all the attributes and characteristics of our common humanity, a perfect and model man, the representative of the race, the second Adam from heaven, 1 Cor. 15 : 45, 47.

**Hath power.** Not delegated *power* or *authority*, but his own as the Messiah, the God-man. The scribes rightly understood Jesus as acting by his own authority, and thereby claiming divine honors for himself, ver. 21. "A mere declaratory absolution they could utter too, and no doubt often did so, but the very manner of our Lord must have evinced that in forgiving, as in teach-

ing, he spoke with authority, and not as the scribes, Mark 1 : 22."—ALEXANDER. **Upon earth.** Not only in heaven, but on earth, where sins are committed and forgiven. Jesus has all power in heaven and on earth, ch. 28 : 18.

**I say unto thee, Arise,** etc. Jesus wrought the miracle by his own divine power. Of his first miracle John (2 : 11) says he "manifested forth his glory," John 1 : 14. The apostles often wrought miracles in his name, Acts 3 : 6; 19 : 13. It is never said of the miracles of Jesus, as of those of Paul, "God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul." It was God in him manifesting his glory, and hence a proof that he could forgive sins.

25. All eyes were fixed on the paralytic, anxiously awaiting the result. **And immediately he rose, stood up, before them, openly,** in the sight of all. The miracle was well attested. He not only stands up, but shows that he is fully restored by immediately taking up **that whereon he lay, or had been lying,** and departing to his own house, **glorifying God.** He made him glorious by grateful and adoring praise. Luke alone records the praising God by the healed man himself.

26. The effects of the miracle on the people. **They were all amazed,** seized with astonishment and ecstatic amazement. **They glorified God.** There was a general ascription of praise from the *multitude* (Matt. 9 : 8), the scribes being confounded by the miraculous proof of Christ's power to forgive sins. **And were filled with fear,** with awe and reverence at such an exhibition of divine power. **We have seen strange things to-day,** marvellous, unheard-of things. Mark has it, "We never saw it on this fashion," a similar exclamation. Both were doubtless, uttered by the multitude. Never before had they seen such power

*The call of Levi, and the feast at his house; discourse concerning fasting.*

- 27 "And after these things he went forth, and saw a publican, named Levi, sitting at the receipt of custom: <sup>Mt. 9: 9; Mk. 2</sup>  
 28 and he said unto him, Follow me. And he left all, <sup>14.</sup>  
 rose up, and followed him.

displayed—a palsied man healed and sins forgiven. Of the two the latter was indeed the most wonderful. It was beyond all they had ever seen or heard.

27, 28. THE CALL OF MATTHEW, Matt. 9 : 9; Mark 2 : 13, 14.

27. After these things which have been related, especially the healing of the paralytic. He went forth, from Capernaum by the sea-side, ver. 17; Mark 2 : 1, 13. Mark also states that Jesus taught the multitude who resorted to him. He saw a publican, a tax-gatherer. See note on chap. 3 : 12.

Named Levi. Called "Levi the son of Alphaeus" in Mark 2 : 14. But in Matt. 9 : 9 we have *Matthew*. The three narratives clearly relate the same circumstances, and point to Levi as identical with Matthew. He probably had two names, like Peter or Paul. Mark and Luke probably designate him by the name by which he was commonly known before his conversion. Matthew probably speaks of himself as he was familiarly known as an apostle; and in ch. 10 : 8 he uses the odious title, *the publican*, which neither of the other evangelists applies to him. *Alphaeus*, the father of Levi, is to be distinguished from Alphaeus, the father of James the Less, Matt. 10 : 3. In the four apostolic catalogues (Matt. 10 : 2-4; Mark 3 : 16-19; Luke 6 : 14-16; Acts 1 : 13) brothers are usually mentioned in pairs, but Matthew and James the Less are never placed thus together. Alphaeus was a common name among the Jews.

**Sitting.** "The people of this country sit at all kinds of work. The carpenter saws, planes, and hews with his hand-adze sitting on the ground or upon the plank he is planing. The washerwoman sits by the tub; and, in a word, no one stands where it is possible to sit. Shopkeepers always sit; and Levi sitting at the receipt of custom is the exact way to state the case."—DR. THOMSON, *The Land and the Book*.

vol. i., p. 191. **At the receipt of custom.** The place of receiving custom, which may have been a regular custom-house or a temporary office. As Capernaum lay at the nucleus of roads which diverged to Tyre, to Damascus, and to Jerusalem, it was a busy centre of merchandise, and must have been an important place for the collection of tribute and taxes. The revenues which Rome derived from conquered countries consisted chiefly of tolls, tithes, harbor duties, tax on public pasture-lands, and duties on mines and salt-works.

**Follow me.** Thus he had addressed Philip, James and John, Peter and Andrew, and others, John 1 : 43; Matt. 4 : 19-21; ch. 9 : 59. To follow Christ is to love, trust, obey, and imitate him.

28. The obedience was immediate and entire. Luke alone says, **He left all.** We are not to understand by this that he left his property without arranging it, so that his employers and others should receive no detriment. The feast which he afterward prepared in his own house, a kind of farewell meal to his business associates, shows that he not only arranged and settled up matters, but that he still held property of his own. **Followed . . .** Like Andrew and Peter (John 1 : 40-42), he had probably before this heard Jesus and recognized him as the Messiah. Like them, he may have been among John's disciples, ch. 3 : 12, 13. Like them, he seems to be called, not as a mere disciple, nor as an apostle (for the apostles were not yet chosen, ch. 6 : 13), but as one of his constant attendants, a preacher of the *good news*, an evangelist.

29-39. MATTHEW'S FEAST, Matt. 9 : 10-17; Mark 2 : 15-22. This feast gives rise to two conversations, one in regard to *eating with publicans and sinners*, the other in regard to *fasting*. There is no sufficient reason for supposing that Matthew relates some other meal.

- 29 'And Levi made him a great feast in his own house: and there was a great company of publicans and of  
 30 others that sat down with them. "But their scribes and Pharisees murmured against his disciples, saying, Why do ye eat and drink with <sup>x</sup>publicans and sin-  
 31 ners? And Jesus answering, said unto them, <sup>y</sup>They that are whole need not a physician; but they that

'Mt. 9. 10; Mk. 2  
15.  
<sup>z</sup>Is. 65. 5; Lk. 19.  
7.  
<sup>z</sup>ch. 15. 2; Mt. 11.  
19.  
<sup>y</sup>ch. 18. 11-13; Ro.  
7. 24; Rev. 3. 17,  
18.

Many suppose that a considerable time intervened between Matthew's call and his feast, while others would put the intervening time between the discourse about eating with publicans and sinners and that about fasting. It is not probable that the feast occurred on the day of his call, but possibly soon after, and occasioned the discourse. It was fitting that he should give a feast upon settling up his matters and leaving his employment. Besides, Matthew, Mark, and Luke agree in putting these incidents into consecutive order. The difficulty lies in the fact that Matthew (9:18) states that while he was discoursing on fasting Jairus besought Jesus regarding his daughter, while Mark (5:22) and Luke (8:41) both relate the latter in a different connection. For some reason unknown to us, Mark and Luke may have deferred the account of raising Jairus' daughter, possibly to bring together the wonderful miracles on opposite sides of the lake, placing last the greater miracle, raising the dead. Or if we adopt the order of Mark and Luke in placing the raising of Jairus' daughter at a later period, then we can harmonize Matthew by supposing a thing very probable—that Jesus discoursed on fasting upon different occasions. He would very likely be asked regarding it at different times, and would very likely give the same or similar answers. See author's *Harmony*, §§ 66, 67, 68.

29. **Made him a great feast.** What is implied in Matthew and Mark is here positively stated—Matthew himself prepared and gave this *reception* and entertainment in **his own house**. It is styled a great feast because of its extensive preparations and abundant provision for a large company. **Publicans.** See on ver. 27. **And of others.** Sinners, ver. 16; Matt. 9:10; Mark 2:15. **That sat down, that reclined at table,** according to the cus-

tom of the time, on a couch, resting on the left arm. It is probable that Matthew gave this entertainment to his late associates and acquaintances both because he was leaving the business and because he would give them a special opportunity of seeing and hearing Jesus. According to Mark (2:15), many of them "followed him," attending upon his teaching.

30. **But their scribes and Pharisees.** Rather, according to the highest critical authorities, *And the Pharisees and their scribes.* Not so much the scribes who belonged to Capernaum as those who were connected with the Pharisaic party. See on ver. 21. **Murmured against his disciples.** With a spirit of cowardice, they come not out boldly to Jesus, but broach the subject to his disciples. We are not to suppose the Pharisees present at the feast; but being a large entertainment, their attention may have been called to the facts in the case either by observing the company through the open hall, or by seeing them come forth from the feast. **Why do ye eat?** etc. Matthew and Mark both give the question as aimed at Jesus "Why eateth your Master?" "How is it that he eateth?" The fault with him implied fault with them. Indeed, it is very likely that both forms of questions were used. **Sinners.** Persons regarded as the basest and most depraved by the self-righteous scribes and Pharisees. That Jesus should call Matthew, a publican, to be a disciple, and then should attend a feast with publicans, was an occasion of opposition from scribes and Pharisees. Later than this they come out more openly against Jesus himself: "This man receiveth sinners and eateth with them," Luke 15:2.

31. **And Jesus answering,** He had either overheard the question, or his disciples had told him, Mark 2:17. **Whole.** Well, in good health. **Need**

32 are sick. \*I came not to call the righteous, but sin-<sup>a</sup> ch. 15; 1 Cor. 6.  
ners to repentance. 11; 1 Tim. 1. 15.

33 And they said unto him, \*Why do the disciples of<sup>a</sup> Mt. 9. 14; Mk. 2.  
John fast often, and make prayers, and likewise *the* 18; ch. 7. 34, 35.

**not a physician.** His great mission as a physician was to heal the disease of sin. If any were really righteous, as the Pharisees imagined they were, then they did not need his healing power. The fact that these publicans and sinners were notoriously vile and wicked showed how sick they were, and how much they needed his attentions.

32. **I came not to call the righteous, but sinners.** Rather, *I have not come to call righteous persons, but sinners.* The article before *righteous* should be omitted. The language refers not to the Pharisees, as righteous in their own estimation, but implies rather that there were no absolutely righteous men living. He came not to call *righteous men*, for there were really none such, Rom. 3 : 23. He came not to call men as unfallen and holy beings, but as sinners, as indeed all are. His mission being to sinners, none should therefore find fault with him for associating with them and trying to save them. The worse they were, the more they needed his help. **Repentance**, an inward change of views and feelings, implying a sorrow for sin, a turning to God, and a change of conduct as the fruits, Acts 3 : 19; 26 : 20; 2 Cor. 7 : 10. See on ch. 13 : 2. Only sinners needed repentance and his saving power.

33. A second ground of Pharisaic opposition is now presented. Closely connected with the question of eating with publicans and sinners was that of fasting. According to the preferable text this is not in the form of a question. **Why do,** should be omitted. **The disciples of John.** Had they possessed the spirit of John and obeyed his precepts, they would have become the followers of Christ, John 1 : 29-36; 3 : 27-34. But even while John was baptizing, some of them showed a spirit of rivalry (John 3 : 26), and much more now after his imprisonment. After his death they still maintained a separate party (Acts 19 : 4, 5), and probably practiced a sort of rigid morality, and in some points resembled the better class of the Pharisees. Luke adds, **and**

**make prayers**, referring to their devotional habits connected with an austere life. John had taught his disciples to pray, ch. 11 : 1. **Of the Pharisees.** See on ver. 17. Matthew (9 : 14) mentions only the disciples of John as the questioners of Jesus, and Luke (vers. 30, 33) only the Pharisees and their scribes, but Mark happily combines the two. **Fast often.** The language indicates what was their practice. They were very probably fasting at that time. The contrast between their fasting and the feasting of Jesus and his disciples at the house of Matthew would be specially apparent, and naturally give occasion to the question asked.

The only stated fast enjoined by Moses was that of the great day of atonement, Lev. 16 : 29. Other fasts were added after the destruction of the first temple, Zech. 7 : 5; 8 : 19; that of the fourth month, commemorating the capture of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans, Jer. 52 : 6, 7; that of the fifth month, commemorating the destruction of the temple, Jer. 52 : 12, 13; that of the seventh month, commemorating the murder of Gedaliah, 2 Kings 25 : 25; Jer. 41 : 1, 2; that of the tenth month, commemorating the beginning of the siege of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, Jer. 52 : 4; that of Esther on the 13th of the twelfth month, commemorating the deliverance of the Jews on that day, Esther 9 : 31; 4 : 16, 17. The Pharisees also observed two weekly fasts (Luke 18 : 12) : on Thursday, because on that day Moses was believed to have re-ascended Mount Sinai, and on Monday, because on that day he returned. The number of annual fasts has been increased in the present Jewish calendar to twenty-eight. The disciples of John doubtless observed the stated fasts of the Jews, and imitated their teacher in respect to his rigid habits of fasting; for John came neither eating nor drinking, Matt. 11 : 18. His imprisonment would be an additional motive for fasting. Besides, many of John's disciples may have been from the Essenes, a

*disciples* of the Pharisees; but thine eat and drink!  
 34 And he said unto them, Can ye make the children of  
 the bridechamber fast, while the bridegroom is with  
 35 them? But the days will come, when the bridegroom  
 shall be taken away from them, and then shall they  
 fast in those days.  
 36 <sup>b</sup> And he spake also a parable unto them; No man  
 putteth a piece of a new garment upon an old; if

<sup>b</sup> Mt. 9. 16, 17; Mk.  
 2. 21, 22; 2 Cor.  
 6. 16.

solitary community of men living on the borders of the Dead Sea, who attended John's preaching in the wilderness and became his disciples. Their former asceticism and their stern habits of self-denial were in strong contrast to the cheerful and social habits of Jesus. **Thine eat and drink.** Notice again their want of frankness. They now complain to him of his disciples. Compare on ver. 30. They thus show a cowardly and censorious spirit.

34. Jesus replies by presenting three illustrations showing that it would be unbecoming for his disciples to fast at that time.

The first illustration is derived from familiar marriage ceremonies. **Can ye make, by your ordinances and rules of practice, the children of the bridechamber fast?** *The sons*, the male attendants of the bridegroom, who upon the day of marriage (Jud. 14 : 11) went with him to the house of the bride in order to bring her home. The language was well fitted to remind the disciples of John that their master had represented Christ as the **bridegroom** (John 3 : 29), and the Pharisees that the prophets, in their predictions of Christ, had used the same figure to illustrate the relation between God and Israel, Ps. 45; Isa. 54 : 5; 62 : 5. The form of the question is that used when a negative answer is expected. Could it be expected that the sons of the bride-chamber would be constrained to fast on a nuptial occasion? By no means. While Jesus, the glorious bridegroom, is with his disciples, who are represented as his attendants, they cannot fast. Nothing would be more unsuitable. It became them rather to rejoice. The idea is that a mere usage is not a sufficient reason for fasting. There must be an underlying reason, something that calls for fasting and makes it becoming. The arbitrary ap-

pointment of fast-days, such as have been made in the Romish and other formal churches, is contrary to our Saviour's teaching.

35. **But the days will come.** The time is coming when the circumstances will be changed, and fasting will be becoming and demanded. **The bridegroom shall be taken away.** Rather, *will* be taken away, as if by violence, the words being a prediction. **Then shall they fast in those days,** when he shall be removed from them. That would be a special time of mourning, and consequently of fasting. There is no ground here for the doctrine of some Romish writers that, according to the declaration of Jesus, the church after his departure should be a fasting church. His exaltation should fill his followers with hope and joy rather than doom them to perpetual sorrow, Acts 5 : 31, 41; John 16 : 7, 13, 14; Phil. 4 : 4. The illustration, however, implies that fasting would be proper on suitable occasions.

36. The second illustration, drawn from the familiar practice of patching, in which he points out what no one of his hearers would think of doing. Luke introduces it as a **parable**, here a simile or comparison, to illustrate a certain truth. He is in some respects fuller than either Matthew or Mark. The latter two represent the injury as done solely to the old garment by inserting into it a piece of unfulled or undressed cloth. But Luke represents a twofold injury to the new and to the old. **No man putteth a piece,** etc. More correctly translated, *No one rending a piece from a new garment puts it upon an old; else both the new will make a rent and the piece from the new will not agree with the old.* Such patching an old garment with unfulled cloth would be an act of unheard-of folly. But equally unbecoming and foolish ap-

- otherwise, then both the new maketh a rent, and the piece that was *taken* out of the new agreeth not with  
 37 the old. And no man putteth new wine into old bot-  
 tles; else the new wine will burst the bottles, and be  
 38 spilled, and the bottles shall perish. But new wine  
 must be put into new bottles; and both are preserved.  
 39 No man also having drunk old *wine* straightway de-  
 sireth new: for he saith, °The old is better,

• Jer. 6. 16.

would it be to unite fasting, which is a sign of sorrow, with the joyous work of my disciples, while I, their Lord, am with them. You must not expect in my kingdom a mere patching up of the old dispensation, or of the system of observances which you practice, but a complete renovation, and one harmonious and congruous in all its parts. A patching the old with the new will destroy both systems.

37. The third illustration, drawn from the common practice and experience in putting up wine in skin-bottles. **New wine, unfermented. Old bottles, or skins.** Vessels and bottles of metal, earthen, or glass were in use among the ancients, and doubtless among the Jews, Jer. 19 : 1; compare Isa. 30 : 14. But bottles or bags made from the skins of animals are here meant, which were used by the Greeks, Romans, Egyptians, and other nations for preserving and transporting liquids, especially wine. They still continue to be used in

visited a large manufactory of these vessels at Hebron, and thus describes them: "These are merely the skins of goats stripped off whole, except at the neck, the holes at the legs and tail being sewed up."

**Will burst the bottles**—that is, the old skins, which have become hard and inelastic, and possibly cracked and rotten, and will not expand as the wine ferments. They prove unfit and burst; thus the bottles are ruined and the wine is lost.

**38. But new wine must be put into new bottles, which are stronger and capable of expansion.** The best text omits, **and both are preserved,** words inserted here from Matt. 9 : 17. Jesus intimates that the doctrines and practices of his kingdom are unsuited to the formalism of the Pharisees, and that the new dispensation was not to be mixed up with the old. The gospel must have its new forms and means for its preservation and propagation.

39. This verse is found only in Luke, and gives our Lord's concluding answer to the question in ver. 33. **No man also having drunk old wine, etc.** So these disciples of John and the Pharisees, having drunk of the customs of the old dispensation, do not desire those of the new, which indeed they have not tasted, for they say, **The old is better,** or, according to some of the oldest manuscripts, *The old is good*—that is, good enough. A fine illustration of men holding on with prejudice or with satisfaction to old habits and customs. The old, though in itself less pleasant, is yet from custom preferred. Others, however, understand the verse to mean: Those who have tasted the freedom, joy, and peace of the gospel will not like to go back to the harsh and burdensome rites of the law. While the latter interpretation states a truth, yet the former seems more natural in



SKIN-BOTTLE.

the East. Dr. Hackett saw them wherever he travelled, both in Egypt and Syria. They are made chiefly of goat-skins, and commonly retain the figure of the animal, the neck of the animal answering for the neck of the bottle. Dr. Robinson (*Researches*, vol. ii., p. 440)

this connection. The expression seems to be somewhat apologetic, and explanatory of the conduct of Christ's opposers. "It is not, however, to be expected of human nature that those who had long been accustomed to one mode of thinking on those things should immediately receive another and different mode. As the natural taste becomes settled, and *no man having old wine* straightway desireth new, so it is with the mind; it must be treated gently and reasonably, and be gradually convinced that the old is not always better than the new."—DR. J. B. SUMNER, *Exposition of Luke*. **Straightway** is omitted by some of the oldest manuscripts. Its insertion or omission is neither inconsistent with the spirit of Christ's words nor does it greatly vary the meaning.

## REMARKS.

1. In every age the common people, above all others, have been among the eager listeners to the truths of the gospel, ver. 1; 1 Cor. 1 : 26; Matt. 11 : 25; John 7 : 48; James 2 : 5.

2. We should do good whenever we have opportunity, but always in the patient, humble, and courteous spirit of Jesus, vers. 1-3; Matt. 11 : 29; 12 : 16-20; 20 : 25-28.

3. Obedience is often the test of faith. Duty is ours, results are God's, ver. 4; Gen. 22 : 12; Ex. 20 : 20; Eccl. 8 : 2; James 2 : 18, 21, 22.

4. Laborers in Christ's service should not be discouraged because success is temporarily withheld, but should follow Christ's directions with expectation, ver. 5; Ps. 30 : 5; Isa. 41 : 10; Jer. 10 : 23; Zech. 14 : 7.

5. No one really loses anything in the service of God and of his Christ, ver. 6; Mark 10 : 28-30; 2 Sam. 6 : 11; 19 : 39; 1 Kings 17 : 9-16; 2 Kings 4 : 8; Acts 27 : 24.

6. The obedience of faith will not go unrewarded, ver. 7; ch. 19 : 8, 9; 1 Tim. 4 : 8, 9.

7. We most feel our sinfulness when we most recognize the glory of God, ver. 8; Job 42 : 5, 6; Isa. 6 : 5.

8. Many of the smaller providential events in our lives are truly wonderful, and prophetic of our future, ver. 9; Acts 2 : 37, 41.

9. It is one of the greatest honors to be a fisher of men, ver. 10; Jer. 16 : 16; 1 Tim. 1 : 12.

10. Christ's calls are in vain except they are heard and fully obeyed from the heart, ver. 11; ch. 14 : 29, 33; Matt. 6 : 21; 2 Tim. 3 : 5.

11. In leprosy we have a striking type of sin, a most loathsome disease, one deeply seated, gradually showing itself on the surface, progressive, fearfully destructive, incurable by human means (2 Kings 5 : 7), and cutting off the person diseased from the society of the clean, ver. 12; Num. 10 : 12; Isa. 64 : 6.

12. In the leper that came to Jesus we have a type of the sinner seeking Jesus and saved by him. He *felt* that he was diseased; he *despaired* of human help; he exercised *confidence* in the power of Jesus; and *submitted* to the will of Jesus and was healed, ver. 13; ch. 15 : 18-21.

13. Christ came, not to destroy the law, but to fulfil it, ver. 14; Matt. 5 : 18; Col. 2 : 14.

14. There is a time to be silent in regard to Christ, as well as a time to speak of him, ver. 14; Eccl. 3 : 7; 10 : 10; Rom. 10 : 2.

15. Christ's career was sublimely noiseless, supremely humble, and divinely wonderful, ver. 15; Matt. 12 : 19, 20; 27 : 54.

16. Secret prayer is the arm of a believer's strength and a means of sustaining spiritual life. If Jesus needed it, how much more his followers! ver. 16; Matt. 6 : 6.

17. Christ is the great Physician, whose power is ready to be exercised on those who truly desire it, ver. 17; Isa. 61 : 1-3.

18. In the palsy we see a type of the helplessness of the sinner, ver. 18; Rom. 8 : 7.

19. There are no barriers but what may be overcome in going to Jesus. Nothing but our own wilfulness can block up the way to his heart, ver. 19; John 4 : 23; 5 : 40; 6 : 37.

20. A sense of sin, connected with confession of faith in Christ, is attended with forgiveness, ver. 20; Ps. 103 : 3; Isa. 35 : 3, 4; 40 : 2; 1 John 1 : 9.

21. A cavilling spirit can easily find fault with Christ, but without reason, ver. 21; John 10 : 37, 38.

22. It is a solemn truth that Jesus can perceive the thoughts of men, ver. 22; Ps. 139 : 4, 5; Heb. 4 : 13.

23. By his miracles Jesus manifested and proved his full power as the Messiah, ver. 24; John 20 : 30, 31.

24. Jesus can forgive sins; his miracles are a proof of this and of his divinity, ver. 23, 24; John 10 : 37, 38; Acts 5 : 31; Heb. 9 : 26; Isa. 43 : 25.

25. The commands of Christ are all reasonable. He is ready to give grace and strength to do whatever he requires, ver. 24; Deut. 33 : 25; 2 Cor. 12 : 9; Isa. 41 : 10.

26. The best evidence that our sins are forgiven is the state of our heart and life, a Christ-like disposition, and a Christian walk, ver. 25; Matt. 7 : 20; Rom. 8 : 13, 16.

27. Christ is the Wonderful—wonderful in his words, wonderful in his deeds, and wonderful in his saving power, ver. 26; Isa. 9 : 6.

28. Jesus calls men from all classes to discipleship. "As the loadstone attracts the iron, and the south wind softens the frozen ground, so does Christ's calling draw sinners out from the world and melt the hardest heart."—RYLE, ver. 27; Acts 13 : 2, 46; Rom. 8 : 30; 9 : 24; 2 Tim. 1 : 9; 1 Pet. 1 : 15.

29. Matthew is an example of a business-man turning to Jesus, and of prompt obedience. "Happy man! You might have spent your life counting money and giving receipts and laying up property to be the fuel for the last fires; but you gave yourself to Christ with all your heart and became the historian of the world's redemption."—NEHEMIAH ADAMS, D.D. ver. 28; Acts 2 : 41; 19 : 18, 19; 24 : 25.

30. We may associate with even the openly wicked when we would do them good. We ought not to despair entirely of any one's salvation. He who called Levi often chooses those who seem the most unlikely to become Christians, and the farthest from the kingdom of God, vers. 27-29; ch. 19 : 5; Acts 17 : 16, 17.

31. Moralists are still offended with Jesus for calling and saving those who are more openly wicked than themselves. Cavilling indicates a depraved heart, ver. 30; Matt. 23 : 13.

32. Christ is the Physician of conscious sinners, not of self-righteous hypocrites. Where there is a sense of

sin there is hope, ver. 31; ch. 18 : 9-14; 24 : 47.

33. Beware of hasty judgments. Prejudice misconstrues the actions of others, vers. 30-32; Prov. 29 : 20; Acts 23 : 3-5; 1 Cor. 4 : 3.

34. Fasting is good when rightly observed on proper occasions. Matt. 6 : 16-18; Joel 2 : 12. But when observed as a mere rite, it becomes a yoke of bondage, Rom. 14 : 1, 17; 2 Cor. 11 : 20; Gal. 2 : 4; 4 : 9-11. The pharisaical spirit is seen in Roman Catholic and formal churches, vers. 33-35.

35. Jesus is the bridegroom of the soul, bringing to it joy and peace, ver. 34; John 3 : 29; Eph. 5 : 25-27.

36. In Christ's kingdom we must not mix together things essentially different, as uniting church and state; receiving believers and unbelievers for baptism and into church fellowship; mingling false doctrines and practices with the true, ver. 36; 1 Cor. 10 : 20; 2 Cor. 6 : 14-16; Eph. 5 : 11.

37. They who would patch the gospel with the rites or ceremonies of the old dispensation lose sight of the spirit of Christianity, and tend to formalism and a slavish legalism, ver. 36; Rom. 14 : 17; Gal. 3 : 2-5.

38. Christian doctrines and precepts are not only true and right in themselves, but in their nature are fitted to man, and adapted to his various circumstances and wants, vers. 37, 38; 1 Cor. 3 : 2; Heb. 5 : 14.

39. Habit and prejudice keep many from Christ. But when men know Christ and his religion, they will never give them up for any other, ver. 39; John 6 : 67-69; Rom. 8 : 35-39.

## CHAPTER VI.

In this chapter Luke proceeds to relate the plucking of the ears of grain and the healing of the withered hand on the Sabbath, with the remarks of Jesus on the purpose and use of the Sabbath, all resulting in increased and organized opposition to him, vers. 1-11. The appointment of the twelve apostles is narrated (12-16); the attendance of great multitudes and the healing of many who were sick or possessed with devils (17-19); after which Jesus delivers the sermon on the plain, 20-49.

*Jesus vindicates his disciples in plucking grain, and himself in healing on the sabbath.*

VI. AND <sup>d</sup>it came to pass on the second sabbath after the first, that he went through the corn fields; and <sup>4 Mt. 12. 1; Mk. 2</sup> <sup>23.</sup>

1-5. THE DISCIPLES PLUCK THE EARS OF GRAIN ON THE SABBATH.—Another ground of pharisaic opposition to Jesus is presented—supposed violation of the law of the Sabbath. The Pharisees censure the disciples; Jesus defends them. About a month, probably, intervened between this and the last event. Matthew's feast probably occurred a little before, and the plucking the ears of grain a little after, the second passover of our Lord's public ministry. Jesus and his disciples may have been returning to Galilee, and a little distance from some village where there was a synagogue. The passover, A. D. 28, commenced March 29th, Matt. 12 : 1-8; Mark 2 : 23-28. Matthew's account is the fullest; Luke's is briefest. Each evangelist gives evidence of an independent narrative.

1. **The second sabbath after the first.** *The second-first Sabbath.* The Greek word translated *second-first* is wanting in some ancient manuscripts, but, upon the whole, is to be regarded as a true reading. It, however, occurs nowhere else, and hence its exact meaning is not easily determined. What Sabbath is here meant cannot be positively known. Its most natural meaning is *the first Sabbath of a second series*, and hence Wieseler supposes that the Jewish years were reckoned by a series of seven, and that this was the first Sabbath in the second year of the sabbatical period of seven years, or the first Sabbath in Nisan, the latter part of March. In like manner Rieland conjectures that the first Sabbath of the ecclesiastical year (of Nisan as above) is meant in distinction from the first Sabbath of the civil year, which began about the latter part of September. To both of these views it may be objected: First, that the first part of Nisan was somewhat early for plucking the ears of grain. Secondly, that the Pharisees would in all probability have censured the disciples for doing that which, according to the traditions, was to be regarded as harvest work, and which was unlawful before

the presentation of the first-fruits of the barley harvest on the 16th day of Nisan, which was the second day of the passover. It seems, therefore, better to regard this plucking of grain as occurring on some Sabbath after the second day of the passover, on which the barley harvest began. The wheat harvest commenced three or four weeks later, continuing in some portions of Palestine into the early part of June.

It has, therefore, been more common to explain as follows: The fifteenth of Nisan was the first day of unleavened bread, or the passover, a day of rest, or a ceremonial Sabbath, Lev. 23 : 6, 7; on the morrow, the 16th of Nisan, the sheaf of first-fruits was to be presented, Lev. 23 : 10, 11; and from this day was to be counted seven full weeks to the day of Pentecost, Lev. 23 : 15, 16. Now the Sabbath here mentioned is supposed to be the first in regard to the series which was to introduce the Pentecost, but second in regard to the first day, or Sabbath, of unleavened bread. It is to be taken as the Sabbath following that mentioned in John 5 : 9, 10. Jesus may have hurried away from Jerusalem on account of the persecution of the Jews, John 5 : 16-18.

While the latter view may be the best, two others may be suggested as having some degree of probability: First, that the Sabbath here intended was the first of the second month; or, second, that the words here mean "the second Sabbath after the first" Sabbath of unleavened bread. Other views seem to me less deserving of notice. Compare author's *Harmony*, § 47.

**Went through the corn fields.** Literally, *sown fields*; fields of grain, of wheat, or barley. He *went along*, going a short distance to some place, through the standing grain, probably by a foot-path which may have bounded the unenclosed field, the grain being within reach. "The practice of leaving the fields of different proprietors unenclosed, or separated only by a narrow foot-path, explains other Scripture statements or

his disciples plucked the ears of corn, and did eat, 2 rubbing *them* in *their* hands. And certain of the Pharisees said unto them, Why do ye that <sup>e</sup>which is 3 not lawful to do on the sabbath days? And Jesus answering them said, have ye not read so much as this, 'what David did, when himself was an hungered, and 4 they which were with him; how he went into the house of God, and did take and eat the showbread,

<sup>e</sup> Ex. 20. 10; Isa. 53. 13, 14.

<sup>f</sup> 1 Sam. 21. 6.

allusions. . . . In this way we may understand the Saviour's passing with his disciples through the corn fields on the Sabbath. Instead of crossing the fields and trampling down the grain, they no doubt followed one of these paths between the fields, where the grain stood within their reach. The object being to appease their hunger, the 'plucking of the ears of corn to eat' was not, according to Jewish ideas, a violation of the rights of property, nor was it for that that the Pharisees complained of the disciples, but for breaking the Sabbath." —DR. HACKETT, *Am. Ed. Dr. Smith's Dictionary of the Bible*, p. 820.

**His disciples plucked . . . did eat, rubbing them in their hands.**

Jesus appears not to have eaten. He was so occupied with his great work as to be insensible to hunger. Luke alone specifies the *rubbing* of the grain between the hands, so as to clear it of chaff. This act, with the plucking, the Pharisees regarded as a kind of reaping and a violation of the Sabbath. The law allowed them to pluck the grain to appease hunger, but not to apply the sickle to another man's standing grain, Deut. 23 : 25. The custom still prevails in Palestine. "So also I have often seen my muleteers, as we passed along the wheat fields, pluck off ears, rub them in their hands, and eat the grains unroasted, just as the apostles are said to have done." —DR. THOMSON, *The Land and the Book*, vol. ii., p. 510. The *disciples* were his personal attendants—probably Andrew, Peter, James, John, Matthew, and others.

2. **Said to them.** *To them* should be omitted, according to the best critical authorities. According to Matthew and Mark, the Pharisees speak to Jesus; but according to Luke, they speak more directly to the disciples. It is perfectly natural to suppose that they spoke to both. **Why do ye,** etc. Implying

censure. It is to be observed that the Pharisees object not to the plucking, but to the time of doing it. It was probably after the offering of the first-fruits—generally a sheaf of barley at the passover, as that was the first grain reaped. Had it been before the passover, doubtless the punctilious Pharisees would have objected on that ground also.

**Not lawful . . . sabbath days,** or *Sabbath*. Unlawful according to their traditions, by which they had loaded this day of rest with grievous restrictions, raising the letter over the spirit, and making formal acts take the place of spiritual observances. According to the rabbins, "he that reaps on the Sabbath ever so little is guilty, and plucking ears of grain is a kind of reaping." Their rule also forbade rubbing them, although if rubbed before, the chaff might be blown from the hand on the Sabbath and the grain eaten. According to Philo, the rest of the Sabbath extended even to plants, and it was not lawful to cut a plaut, a branch, or so much as a leaf.

3. Jesus replies first by referring them to **what David did**, whom they regarded as an eminent servant of God, from which it could be inferred what it was lawful to do under similar circumstances. **An hungered,** etc. See 1 Sam. 21 : 1-6. He puts the case strongly and as a matter of surprise that they should not understand and act upon the principle involved. **Ha. e ye not read so much as this?** *Have ye not read this, or even this?*

4. A continuation of the statement of what David and his men did, showing that the letter of the law must give way to the law of necessity, and hence that it was lawful to do works of real necessity, such as appeasing hunger on the Sabbath. **Into the house of God,** the tabernacle, which was ther-

- and gave also to them that were with him; <sup>ε</sup> which it <sup>ε</sup> Le. 24. 9.  
 5 is not lawful to eat but for the priests alone? And he said unto them, That the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath.  
 6 <sup>b</sup> And it came to pass also on another sabbath, that <sup>b</sup> Mt. 12. 9; Mk. 3  
 he entered into the synagogue and taught: and there <sup>1; ch. 13. 14; 14</sup>  
 7 was a man whose right hand was withered. And the <sup>3; John 9. 16.</sup>

located at Nob, a place a little north of Jerusalem, and within sight of it, Isa. 10:32. **Did take and eat the show-bread.** Simply *took and ate*, there being no emphasis in the original demanding *did*. The *show-bread*, the bread *set forth*, exhibited on a table in the holy place; first in the tabernacle, afterward in the temple. It was *set before* Jehovah (Ex. 25:30), and called in Hebrew *bread of face or presence*—that is, of the divine presence—and probably symbolized God's presence with his people as their sustenance, strength, and support. It consisted of twelve loaves, which were changed every Sabbath, when the old was eaten by the priests, Lev. 24:59. It also seems, from 1 Sam. 21:6, that the bread had just been changed, and hence that David and his men ate it on the Sabbath, which makes reference and argument even more pertinent. Thus, Jesus shows by the example of David, whom all regarded as an eminent servant of God, that things which are unlawful may be done under the law of necessity and self-preservation.

At this point Matthew (12:5-7) presents a second and third argument, the one derived from the labors of the priests in the temple on the Sabbath, and the other from the prophet Hosea (6:6), who declares that God desires not mere external observances, but the inward outgushing of kindness and love, which is the true sacrifice in spirit and of the heart.

Passing over these, Mark (2:27) presents an argument not recorded by either Matthew or Luke, that the Sabbath was designed for the good of man: "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath."

5. The final and crowning argument, growing out from the one just stated, and founded upon the relation of the Sabbath to Christ. *Therefore*; rather, *so that*, as a consequence of the great principle he had just uttered. **The**

**Son of man.** The Messiah, indicating, notwithstanding his divinity, his true humanity, his oneness with the human race and its Head. See on ch. 5:24. **Lord also of the sabbath.** Since he has come in human nature to redeem man, and all things pertaining to the human race are committed to him as its Head, he is emphatically the Lord of the Sabbath, which was made for man's benefit. He is indeed Lord of things in general pertaining to his kingdom, but **ALSO** of the Sabbath. As Mediator, Redeemer, and Sovereign, he presides over it and controls it. Thus, Jesus asserted before these Pharisees his authority over the Sabbath. His disciples were not to be condemned by their interpretation of the law and by their traditions, but were subject to his directions as the Messiah and Lord of the Sabbath.

6-11. **JESUS HEALS A WITHERED HAND ON THE SABBATH.** By precept, example, and miracle Jesus gives a further exposition of the law of the Sabbath. Opposition takes an organized form, and more directly against him, Matt. 12:9-14; Mark 3:1-6. The three narratives are about equally full, each having some particulars of its own. Luke is circumstantial and vivid; the scene seems passing before you.

6. Luke alone gives us a note of time, **on another sabbath**, probably the next Sabbath after the plucking the ears of grain. Notwithstanding the opposition, he entered the **synagogue and taught**. See on ch. 4:15. Where is not mentioned. Probably in Galilee and at Capernanm. **Whose right hand was withered.** Luke alone states that it was his **right hand**. The disease was the drying up or the pining away of the hand, with the loss of the power of motion. It was similar to that with which Jeroboam was afflicted, 1 Kings 13:4-6. It may have been from paralysis, or from a defect in receiving

scribes and Pharisees watched him, whether he would heal on the sabbath day; <sup>1</sup>that they might find an accusation against him. But <sup>2</sup>he knew their thoughts, and said to the man which had the withered hand, Rise up, and stand forth in the midst. And he arose and stood forth. Then said Jesus unto them, I will ask you one thing; is it lawful on the sabbath days to do good, or to do evil? to save life, or to destroy *it*? And looking round about upon them all, he said

<sup>1</sup> Jer. 20. 10.

<sup>2</sup> Ps. 44. 21: Job 42. 2.

nourishment from the body, and was considered incurable.

7. **The scribes and Pharisees watched him** closely, with bad intent. Compare Luke 14: 1 and Acts 9: 24, where the same Greek verb is used. They were watching him maliciously. The growth of opposition is seen in that they now watch intently for an occasion of censure. They may have thought that he would **heal him on the Sabbath**, from his readiness to do good, and from what he had already taught regarding the Sabbath, vers. 1-5. **Might find accusation against him**, not merely to the people but to the local authorities, who were doubtless present and identical with the rulers of the synagogues, ver. 11; Mark 3: 6.

8. **He knew their thoughts.** An evidence of Christ's divinity, which the evangelists do not stop to prove, but take for granted. So God's existence is treated in the Old Testament. **Rise up, and stand forth in the midst.** Doubtless he was called forth to a conspicuous position. Matthew (12: 10) omits this, but relates that they ask him, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?" Knowing their thoughts, he called the man forth, when, seeing his intention, they may have asked, "Is it lawful," etc. Jesus makes the misery and the healing of the man conspicuous, yet he performs the cure with a word, ver. 10.

9. **Is it lawful to do good?** etc. An answer not only to their thoughts, which he knew, but also to their question (Matt. 12: 10), which may be implied in the words, **I will ask you one thing**, or *what is lawful?* etc. See note on preceding verse. Some take to *do good or to do evil* in a general sense; others in a particular sense, meaning *to benefit or to injure.* The

former, I think, is preferable. Jesus first asks in regard to doing good or evil generally on the Sabbath, and then descends to a particular case, **to save life or to destroy it.** It is not unlikely that Jesus intended some reference, not only to what he was doing, but also to the designs of the scribes and Pharisees against him. Is it lawful to do good and save life on the Sabbath, as I am doing, or to do evil and kill, as you purpose to do to me? The question, however, involved a principle. Doing good and saving life is becoming the Sabbath, rather than doing evil and destroying life, and especially are we to choose the former when there is an alternative between the two. He who neglects to do good or save life when he can do so is justly held accountable for the loss sustained, Prov. 24: 11, 12; Ezek. 33: 6. Mark (3: 4) says, "They held their peace;" for it was evident that it was "lawful to do well on the Sabbath," Matt. 12: 12. They were also self-condemned; they were the Sabbath-breakers. Compare ch. 13: 14-17; 14: 2-6.

10. Both Mark and Luke omit at this point the parabolic reference to a sheep fallen into a pit, recorded in Matt. 12: 11, 12. **Looking round about upon them all.** *About* is superfluous. Luke alone gives the strong and expressive word *all*. Mark (3: 5), who is here the fullest and most vivid, says that Jesus looked round upon them "with anger," holy indignation, "being grieved for the hardness of their hearts."

Having silenced his opposers, Jesus proceeds at once to perform the miracle. The wisdom of Jesus is seen here, similar to that in the healing of the paralytic, ch. 5: 22-26; see ch. 5: 24. He also performs the miracle without any bodily effort, or any word except the command, **Stretch forth thy hand.**

unto the man, Stretch forth thy hand. And he did so: and his hand was restored whole as the other. 11 And they were filled with madness: and communed one with another what they might do to Jesus.

*Jesus chooses the twelve apostles; a great multitude follow him.*

12 <sup>1</sup>And it came to pass in those days, that he went out into a mountain to pray, <sup>m</sup>and continued all night in

<sup>1</sup>Mt. 10. 1; Mk. 3  
13; Mt. 14. 23.  
<sup>m</sup>Ge. 32. 24-26; Ps.  
22. 2; Col. 4. 2.

His adversaries, therefore, could not charge him with laboring on the Sabbath. Some suppose the miracle performed before uttering a word, and that Jesus commanded him to stretch forth the hand as an evidence of its restoration. It is better, however, to suppose that the healing took place immediately upon Jesus uttering the command and the man making the effort to obey. The faith of the man is thus brought into its natural relation to his obedience and his cure. It is also in harmony with the declaration which follows, and his hand was restored. Whole as the other should be omitted, according to the best manuscripts. The words are found in Matthew's account, Matt. 12 : 13. The incident affords a good illustration of faith. Christ gave the strength; the man believed, and in obedience to Christ's command stretched forth his hand. So in regard to every divine command we should believe and act; all needed help will be given. Jesus thus showed his power over disease, and gave a practical proof of the correctness of his teachings regarding the Sabbath. It was one of his greatest miracles.

11. The scribes and Pharisees, baffled with argument and deprived of legal ground of objection, since the miracle was performed without outer action, are filled with madness, with such a senseless rage as almost made them beside themselves—a fact stated only by Luke, but at least partly implied by Matthew and Mark.

Communed one with another, and even with the Herodians, their political opponents, Mark 3 : 6. What they might do to Jesus. They were uncertain and wavering regarding what they might do, but the great point was "how they might destroy him," Mark 1 : 6.

12-19. JESUS RETIRES TO A MOUNTAIN AND SELECTS TWELVE APOSTLES. DESCENDS AND HEALS MANY, Mark 3 : 13-19. We must distinguish between their call to discipleship (John 1 : 35-45), their call to be constant attendants, preachers, or evangelists (Matt. 4 : 18-22; Mark 1 : 16-20), and their selection as apostles, here related. After this they were miraculously endowed and sent out on a mission to the Jews (Matt. 10 : 1-4); see on ch. 9 : 1. The two accounts are very similar. Luke is the briefest, but alone records that Jesus passed the night in prayer, while Mark alone gives the reasons for the appointment of the twelve. After this account Luke relates that Jesus descended the mountain and performed miracles. Compare Mark 3 : 7-11.

12. In those days. A general designation of the period during which the miracles just related were wrought, and the Pharisees and others were seeking how they might destroy him. According to Mark (3 : 7-12; compare Matt. 12 : 15-21), just previous to this Jesus retired to the Sea of Galilee, followed by great multitudes, where he healed many, and unclean spirits acknowledged his Sonship. **A mountain, the mountain**, one familiarly so called. There are several mountains on the west side of the Sea of Galilee. Some regard the expression, *the mountain*, to mean the highlands, in distinction from the lowlands on the sea-shore. **Into the mountain** is a common expression signifying *in among*, into the region of the mountain. Thus in Mark 13 : 14 and Luke 21 : 21, 66, "flee into the mountains"—that is, *in among* the mountains. Luke alone says that Jesus went into the mountain to pray and continued all night in prayer, and called his disciples to him when it was day. Luke takes special notice of Jesus

13 prayer to God. And when it was day, he called *unto him* his disciples: <sup>a</sup>and of them he chose twelve, <sup>a</sup>Mt. 10. 1.  
 14 whom also he named apostles; Simon, <sup>o</sup>whom he also <sup>o</sup>John 1. 42.

at prayer, ch. 3 : 21; 5 : 16; 9 : 18; 11 : 1. Jesus resorted to special prayer before great and important events, ch. 22 : 41-44; Mark 6 : 46; John 11 : 41, 42; 17 : 1. One of the greatest of his ministry was now approaching. Its solemnity, sacredness, and importance are thus indicated. He was about to select those who were to be pillars in his future church.

13. **When it was day.** Very probably early in the morning. **He called unto him his disciples.** Those who had attended him on his preaching tours, and others who had become his professed followers. Mark (3 : 13) says, "He calleth whom he would." **And of them, from the number thus called to him, he chose twelve.** Literally, *Having chosen from them twelve*, whose names are given in vers. 14-16, the sentence in the original closing with ver. 19. Doubtless he selected the twelve, "ordained" or "appointed" them, as Mark says, in some solemn and formal way, perhaps by laying his hand upon them and invoking the divine blessing upon them. But if it had been important for us to know, it would have doubtless been recorded.

The number twelve is significant and frequent in Scripture. It is expressive of fulness, completeness, and strength; and was doubtless intended to intimate that he was laying the foundations of a new organization, of which he himself was head and the chief corner-stone. Thus there were the twelve tribes of Israel; the twelve stones of the Urim and Thummim on the breast-plate of the high priest (Ex. 28 : 17-21); twelve loaves of show-bread (Lev. 24 : 5-8); the altar and twelve pillars which Moses erected by Mount Sinai (Ex. 24 : 4); the altar of twelve stones by Elijah (1 Kings 18 : 31); the new Jerusalem with twelve foundation stones, Rev. 21 : 14. The persons thus appointed were called **apostles**—that is, persons *sent forth*; Christ is thus named in Heb. 3 : 1—and are thus styled more frequently by Luke than by the other evangelists, ch. 9 : 10; 11 : 49; 17 : 5; 22 : 14; 24 : 10. Matthew (10 : 2) and

Mark (6 : 30) only one each, John not at all. They are more commonly called in the Gospels *the twelve* (Mark 4 : 10; 6 : 7), or *the twelve disciples* (Matt. 20 : 17), or simply *disciples*, ch. 9 : 12. Mark (3 : 14) gives the reason of their selection, "that they should be with him and that he might send them forth to preach, and to have power to heal sicknesses and to cast out devils." They were to be constant personal attendants as learners and witnesses. They were to learn by his example as well as by his public and private discourses; they were to be witnesses of his life, death, and resurrection, and thus prepared to carry out his work after his departure. They were now *disciples* or *learners*; but after the descent of the Holy Spirit they are called, in the Acts and Epistles, apostles, never disciples. The qualifications for their office were four:

(1.) They had seen the Lord and been eye and ear witnesses of what they testified to the world, John 15 : 27; Acts 1 : 8, 21, 22; 1 Cor. 15 : 8; 9 : 1; Acts 22 : 14, 15.

(2.) They were called and chosen to that office by Christ himself, Luke 6 : 13; Gal. 1 : 1.

(3.) They were infallibly inspired for their work, John 16 : 13; 1 Cor. 2 : 10; Gal. 1 : 11, 12.

(4.) They were to work miracles in evidence of their divine commission, Mark 3 : 14; 16 : 20; Acts 2 : 43. From the above it is evident they would have no successors.

14. Four catalogues of the apostles are given in the New Testament, which, with their connectives, are presented in the table below (p. 145).

From this it appears that each catalogue is divided into three classes, the names of which are never interchanged, and each class headed by a leading name. Thus Peter heads the first class, Philip the second, James the third, and Judas Iscariot stands the last, except in the Acts, where his name is omitted because of his apostasy and death. Notice the connective **And**, by which Matthew enumerates the apostles two by two, in pairs; Mark and Luke one by

named Peter,) and Andrew his brother, James and

one, individually; and Luke in the Acts, mixedly. Even such small differences go to show the independent origin of the Gospels.

And Simon, whom he also named Peter. Simon is contracted from Simeon, and means *hearkening*; Peter signifies *a stone*, equivalent to

	MATTHEW 10 : 2.	MARK 3 : 16.	LUKE 6 : 14.	ACTS 1 : 13.
1	Simon Peter,	Simon Peter,	Simon Peter,	Peter,
2	And Andrew,	And James, son of	And Andrew,	And James,
3	James, son of Zeb-	Zebedee,	And James,	And John,
4	edee,	And John,	And John.	And Andrew.
	And John.	And Andrew.		
5	Philip,	And Philip,	And Philip,	Philip,
6	And Bartholomew,	And Bartholomew,	And Bartholomew,	And Thomas,
7	Thomas,	And Matthew,	And Matthew,	Bartholomew,
8	And Matthew.	And Thomas.	And Thomas.	And Matthew.
9	James, son of Al-	And James, son of	James, son of Al-	James, son of Al-
10	pheus,	Alpheus,	pheus,	pheus,
	And Lebbeus Thad-	And Thaddeus,	And Simon Zelotes,	And Simon Zelotes,
11	deus,			
	Simon the Canaan-	And Simon the Can-	And Judas, brother	And Judas, brother
12	ite,	aanite,	of James,	of James.
	And Judas Iscariot.	And Judas Iscariot.	And Judas Iscariot.	

the Aramaic *Cephas*, first given him as a surname at his introduction to Jesus, John 1 : 42. Jesus doubtless repeated the name at this time; Peter was the name by which he was generally, though not always (Acts 15 : 14), designated as an apostle. It was given him in allusion to his hardy character, noted for decision and boldness, and to the conspicuous position he should hold among the apostles, in subordination to Christ, as one of the great foundations of the church, Eph. 2 : 20; Rev. 21 : 14.

Not only is the name significant, but also its position at the head of the four catalogues of the apostles. He was among the first who recognized Jesus as the Messiah (John 1 : 40-42), and with Andrew, his brother, the first called to be a constant attendant of Jesus, Mark 1 : 16-18. He was spokesman of the apostles, as in Matt. 16 : 16, and the chief speaker on the day of Pentecost. He was also the first to carry the gospel to the Gentiles, Acts ch. 10. Thus Peter may be said to have opened the kingdom of heaven to both Jews

and Gentiles. But though prominent and foremost amongst the apostles, he was not *over* them nor *above* them. That he had no superiority of rank is evident from 1 Pet. 5 : 1, where he describes himself as "a fellow-elder," and from the fact that Paul in Gal. 2 : 7-9 speaks of him as one of the "pillars" together with James and John, and compares him as an apostle to the circumcision to himself as an apostle to the uncircumcision, and rebukes him as an equal. That the apostles were all equal in rank appears from Matt. 18 : 18; 19 : 27, 28; 20 : 25, 26, 28; 23 : 8; John 20 : 21-23; Acts 1 : 8.

The most we know of Peter is derived from the Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles. The latter book traces him to the council at Jerusalem. After this he was with Paul at Antioch (Gal. 2 : 11), labored at Corinth (1 Cor. 1 : 2; 3 : 22), and at Babylon, where he wrote his first Epistle, 1 Pet. 5 : 13. According to a tradition which may be considered in the main reliable, he visited Rome

## 15 John, Philip and Bartholomew, Matthew and Thomas,

in the last year of his life, and suffered martyrdom by crucifixion under the reign of Nero.

**Andrew** was a name of Greek origin, and was in use among the Jews. It is derived from a word that means man, and may have been applied to him on account of his manly spirit. He belonged to Bethsaida (John 1 : 44), and was a disciple of John the Baptist, and had the honor of leading his brother Peter to Christ, John 1 : 40, 41. He resided afterward at Capernaum, Mark 1 : 29. He appears in connection with feeding the five thousand (John 6 : 8), afterward as the introducer of certain Greeks to Jesus (John 12 : 22), and also, with Peter, James, and John, asking concerning the destruction of the temple, Mark 13 : 3. Of his subsequent history and labors nothing is certainly known. Tradition assigns Scythia, Greece, and Thrace as the scenes of his ministry. He is said to have been crucified at Patrae, in Achaia, on a cross in the shape of X, which is therefore called St. Andrew's cross.

**James**, the son of Zebedee. The name is the same as Jacob, meaning *supplanter*. It is applied to three persons in the New Testament. This is James the Greater or elder, and is never mentioned in the New Testament apart from John his brother. They were selected with Peter to witness the restoration of Jairus' daughter (ch. 8 : 51), the transfiguration (ch. 9 : 28), and the agony in Gethsemane, Mark 14 : 33. James was the first martyr among the apostles, being slain with the sword by Herod Agrippa I., Acts 12 : 2.

**John**, whose name means *graciously given by Jehovah*, was, next to Peter, the most noted of the twelve, and characterized by a wonderful mingling of gentleness and firmness. He belonged to a family of influence, as is evident from his acquaintance with the family of the high priest (John 18 : 15), and was in easy circumstances, since he became responsible for the maintenance of his Lord's mother, John 19 : 26, 27. After the ascension of Jesus he resided at Jerusalem. About A. D. 65 he removed to Ephesus, and for many years labored in Asia Minor. He survived

all the apostles, and died at Ephesus about A. D. 100, being then, according to Epiphanius, ninety-four years old, but according to Jerome a hundred. James and John were surnamed "Boanerges," *the sons of thunder*, Mark 3 : 17.

**Philip**. A name of Greek origin, meaning lover of horses. He was a native of Bethsaida, a disciple of John the Baptist, and called by our Lord the day after the naming of Peter, John 1 : 43. He is mentioned in connection with feeding the five thousand, as introducing, with Andrew, certain Greeks to Jesus, and as asking, after the Last Supper, "Lord, show us the Father and it sufficeth us," John 6 : 5-7; 12 : 21; 14 : 8-10. Of the labors and death of Philip nothing is certainly known. A tradition says that he preached the gospel in Phrygia and suffered martyrdom. He doubtless had also a Hebrew name.

**Bartholomew**. The Hebrew form is Bar-Tholmai, or son of Tholmai, the latter meaning *rich in furrows*, or *cultivated fields*, the whole name implying, as some suppose, rich fruit. It is the patronymic, as is generally supposed, of Nathaniel of Cana of Galilee. In the first three Gospels Philip and Bartholomew are constantly named together, and Nathaniel is nowhere mentioned; while in the fourth Gospel Philip and Nathaniel are similarly combined, but nothing is said of Bartholomew, John 1 : 45; 21 : 2. According to tradition, he labored in India (Arabia Felix is sometimes called India by the ancients), and was crucified either in Armenia or Cilicia.

15. **Matthew** was also called Levi the son of Alpheus. See on ch. 5 : 27. His residence was at Capernaum, and his profession a publican. His great humility is shown by styling himself in his Gospel "Matthew the publican" (Matt. 10 : 3), in his comparative silence in regard to leaving all and following Jesus, and to the great feast he gave at his house, both of which are told us by Luke (5 : 28, 29). His name appears for the last time in the New Testament among the eleven in Acts 1 : 13. Tradition assures us that he preached the gospel for several years in Palestine. Earlier traditions state

James the son of Alpheus, and Simon called Zelotes, 16 and Judas, <sup>p</sup>the brother of James, and Judas Iscariot, <sup>p</sup>Jude 1. which also was the traitor.

17 And he came down with them, and stood in the plain, and the company of his disciples, <sup>q</sup>and a great <sup>q</sup>Mt. 4. 25; Mk. 3. 7

that he died a natural death, but a later one says that he suffered martyrdom in Ethiopia.

**Thomas** was also called *Didymus* (John 11 : 16), both meaning a twin, the former Aramæan, the latter Greek. He was probably from Galilee. He was impulsive (John 11 : 16), of an inquiring mind (John 14 : 5, 6), and slow to be convinced, John 20 : 24-29. Tradition affirms that he preached the gospel in India and suffered martyrdom.

**James, the son of Alpheus**, thought to be the one called James the Less, an allusion to his stature, or perhaps, the younger, Mark 15 : 40. His father was probably not the same as the father of Matthew; nor is he to be regarded as the son of Clopas (John 19 : 25), or James the brother of our Lord, ch. 24 : 10. He was more likely the James whose mother was Mary (Matt. 27 : 56; Mark 16 : 1) and whose brother was Joseph, Mark 15 : 40.

**Simon called Zelotes**. He is styled by Mark *the Canaanite*, which is said to be a corrupted Aramaic word equivalent to Zelotes, used here and in Acts 1 : 13; a name given perhaps on account of his former zeal for the law, and possibly as expressive of his character. The name also distinguished him among the apostles from Simon Peter. It has been thought that he belonged to a political sect known among the Jews as Zealots. This was probably not the case, as the party bearing that name do not appear in Jewish history till after the time of Christ. He is only mentioned in the New Testament in the four catalogues.

16. **Judas the brother of James**, or, as some supply, *the son of James*. Brother is preferable, Jude 1. He was also called Lebbeus (Matt. 10 : 3) and Thaddeus, Mark 3 : 18. He was the "Judas, not Iscariot," John 14 : 22. It has been common to regard Lebbeus and Thaddeus as allied names, being derived from Hebrew or Aramæan words, the former meaning heart

and the latter breast, and hence denoting *the hearty, the courageous*. This is, however, doubtful. Judas means *renown*. Some regard him as the author of the Epistle of Jude, but others think that the author of that Epistle was Jude, the Lord's brother.

**Judas Iscariot**—that is, *Judas, man of Karioth*, probably a native of Karioth, a small town in the tribe of Judah, Josh. 15 : 25. He was probably the only one of the apostles who was not by birth a Galilean. His father's name was Simon, John 6 : 71. He carried the bag, and appropriated part of the common stock to his own use, John 12 : 6. The climax of his sins was the betrayal of Jesus, which was speedily followed by suicide. His infamous character doubtless accounts for the position of his name as last on each of the catalogues in the Gospels. Also is omitted by the best authorities. **Was the traitor**, became the traitor. An apostle and traitor, a terrible union, incurring fearful guilt. It was part of infinite wisdom that Christ should have chosen his betrayer among the twelve. God works even through wicked men, as in the case of Balaam. The churches of Christ must not expect absolute purity on earth; some of the chaff must remain among the wheat. The defection of those who have been regarded great in the church will not cause its ruin.

17. Jesus now descends the mountain and displays his Messianic power and grace in healing a multitude. **And he came down**. Literally, *And having come down*, the sentence continuing from the preceding verse. See on ver. 13. **With them**. With the twelve and the other disciples who had been called to him. **And stood in the plain**. *On a plain or level place*. Where this was cannot be ascertained. It appears from ch. 7 : 1 to have been near Capernaum. There is no positive evidence that it was the Horns of Hattin (two summits with a depression between them, and hence the name Horns), about seven miles south-west of Capernaum. It was

multitude of people out of all Judæa and Jerusalem, and from the sea coast of Tyre and Sidon, which came to hear him, and to be healed of their diseases; 18 and they that were vexed with unclean spirits: and 19 they were healed. And the whole multitude sought to touch him: for there went virtue out of him, and healed them all.

• Mt. 14. 36.  
• ch. 8. 46; Mk 5  
30; Num. 21. 8,  
9; Ps. 103. 3;  
John 3. 14, 15.

probably not so far from that city. Robinson contends that there are a dozen other mountains in the vicinity of the lake which would answer the purpose just as well.

**A great multitude.** Luke here gives us a glimpse of the great crowds that attended the ministry of Jesus. He was popular with the masses, who sided with him against the Pharisees. It was not really the design of Jesus to withdraw from the people (vers. 11, 12), but from his enemies, whose influence was greatest in the towns. His friends and all who desired had an opportunity of coming to him in his retirement. **Judea**, south of Samaria, bounded by the Jordan on the east, the Mediterranean on the west, and the territory of the Arabs on the south. The boundary of the province seems to have been often varied by the addition or abstraction of towns. Compare on ch. 1 : 5. **Galilee.** See on ch. 1 : 26. **Sea coast of Tyre and Sidon.** The Jews of that region. Tyre and Sidon were the two principal cities of Phœnicia on the coast of the Mediterranean Sea. Sidon, which means *fishery*, one of the oldest cities of the world, is believed to have been founded by Zidon, the eldest son of Canaan, Gen. 10 : 15; 49 : 13. Its latitude is 33° 34' north, about the same as the middle portions of South Carolina. Tyre, meaning a *rock*, about twenty miles south, was of later date, but grew in importance, and gained an ascendancy over Sidon and became the commercial emporium of Phœnicia. They were the subjects of prophecy and of divine judgments under Nebuchadnezzar and Alexander, Isa. ch. 23; Ezek. chs. 26-28; 29 : 18. The cities that grew up on the ruins of the ancient ones existed in the times of our Saviour, Acts 12 : 20; 21 : 3, 7; 27 : 3. Sidon, now called Saida, contains about five thousand inhabitants, and is spoken of

as dirty and full of ruins. Tyre, now called Sur, is at present a poor town, and has a population of about three thousand. The great multitude following him from Galilee shows his popularity there, while those coming from the outskirts of Palestine and the borders of the Gentiles show how widely his fame was spread abroad. The object of their coming was twofold, to hear him and to be healed of their diseases.

18. **Vexed with unclean spirits,** harassed as with a crowd of demons. We here get a glimpse of the numerous demoniacal possessions which were then permitted. See on ch. 4 : 33. We notice here that they are distinguished from "diseases" in the preceding verse. That it is said **they were healed** is no argument against the reality or demoniacal possessions, for they manifested their power through the bodies of men, and to a greater or less extent excited physical maladies.

19. **The whole multitude.** All of those diseased and who thought they might be diseased. Not only in a time of such enthusiasm would those who were afflicted with serious diseases touch him, but also those troubled with lighter maladies, and even many who only thought that possibly some disease might be lingering about them. **Sought to touch him.** Their eagerness was intense, and their efforts corresponded, showing their faith in him. **There was a touch of faith, for there went virtue out of him, and healed them all.** The word here translated "virtue" is the same one translated power in ch. 4 : 36; 5 : 17. Nearly the same expression is used in ch. 8 : 46. It was his inherent divine power of healing. This power did not, of course, go forth unconsciously, but was exerted with tender and omniscient regard toward each one who touched him.

20-49. THE SERMON ON THE PLAIN

*The sermon on the plain.*

20 And he lifted up his eyes on his disciples, and said,

Compare Matthew, chs. 5, 6, and 7. This discourse and that recorded by Matthew have been regarded by the majority of modern critics as identical, or at least two accounts of the same sermon. Such was the view generally held by the Greek Church. But Augustine, and after him most of the writers of the Latin Church, held that they were distinct. According to Augustine (*De Consensu Evangelistarum*, ii. 19), Jesus first delivered the longer discourse, which Matthew gives, upon the mountain, and after descending to the plain communicated, in an abridged form, the same truths to the multitude there. This is substantially the view of Lange and some others.

After a careful and patient re-examination of the whole subject, the author has been confirmed in the view taken in his *Harmony and Notes on Matthew*, that the discourses are distinct, and uttered on different occasions. So Drs. Whitley, Doddridge, Greswell, Krafft, Alexander, and others. For:

1. The place was different. That in Matthew was *on a mountain* (Matt. 5 : 1), but this in Luke was *on a plain*, ver. 17.

2. The time appears to be different. That in Matthew was connected with our Lord's first missionary tour throughout Galilee (Matt. 4 : 23-25), and *before the call* of Matthew (ch. 9 : 9), and hence *before* the appointment of the apostles, but this in Luke was delivered *after* the twelve were chosen. Although Matthew is not always chronological in his arrangement, yet he appears to be so in regard to the sermon on the mount, and in the last eight chapters of his Gospel, and also in the fourteenth and four succeeding chapters. Considered by itself, Matthew would not very likely have related his own call *after* the sermon on the mount, if it occurred *before* that event. It might also be noted that the sermon on the mount was delivered in presence of a multitude gathered from within the boundaries of Israel (Matt. 4 : 25), but the sermon on the plain in the audience of a multitude gathered not only from the land of Israel, but

from the sea-coast of Tyre and Sidon, ver. 17. The latter would indicate a later period, when the fame of Jesus was more widely spread abroad.

3. The connecting circumstances are different. That in Matthew was delivered near the close of the first missionary tour throughout Galilee, and followed by cleansing a leper, Matt. 8 : 1-4. But this in Luke was preceded by our Lord's retirement from the opposition of scribes and Pharisees and by a night of prayer, and followed by the healing of the centurion's servant.

4. The variations of these two discourses are sufficient to give good grounds for supposing them distinct in time and place. Both seem complete and connected throughout, yet in Matthew there are one hundred and seven verses and in Luke only thirty, and about one quarter of the latter is not found in the former. Thus in Luke four woes are connected with four beatitudes (vers. 24-26), and several other parts are fuller, vers. 34, 39, 40, 45. And notwithstanding their similarity, there is often a marked difference of expression. The objection that Jesus would not have delivered two discourses so similar, and repeated the same truths, seems to my mind not only untenable, but frivolous. We can conceive no reason why he might not have spoken these discourses to two different audiences, especially if we suppose that some little time intervened. That he often repeated his sayings is evident from the comparison of many passages. See, for instance, Matt. 5 : 22 and Luke 12 : 58; Matt. 6 : 9-13 and Luke 11 : 2-4; Matt. 6 : 24 and Luke 16 : 13; Matt. 7 : 13, 14, and Luke 13 : 24; Matt. 16 : 21 and 17 : 22, 23, and 20 : 17-19. It should not be thought strange that our Lord should have repeated the highest and most central truths, when we consider their importance. The same thing has been done by the wisest teachers and by inspired prophets. Compare Jer. 10 : 12-16 with 51 : 15-19.

5. The evangelists give us two fitting occasions for such discourses. When the thousands were gathered by our

Blessed *be ye* poor: for yours is the kingdom of God.

Lord's first general preaching tour, it was fitting that he should give a full public declaration, as in Matthew, concerning the nature of his spiritual kingdom and the character and life required of his followers. So also the choice of the twelve and the attending multitude gave a proper occasion for such a discourse as that recorded by Luke. The objection that Matt. 5 : 13, 14 ; 7 : 6 imply the previous appointment of the apostles is of no force; for such passages do not, at most, imply more than that certain ones had been called as ministers or constant attendants, as was actually the case, Matt. 4 : 18-22.

I suggest the following synopsis of the sermon on the plain: I. Who are the truly happy, and who the truly wretched and miserable? vers. 19-26. II. The duty, extent, and standard of love, vers. 27-36. This forbids a censorious spirit, demands beneficence and generosity. There is added a rule for themselves and their conduct toward their fellow-men, vers. 37, 38. III. Blind and censorious teachers are incapable of guiding others; their censoriousness shows their hypocrisy, vers. 39-42. IV. Jesus confirms what he had said by illustrations from the natural world, and lays down a rule by which they can know the true characters of themselves and others, vers. 43-45. V. A personal application to his professed followers and striking contrast between those who obey and who do not obey his instructions, vers. 46-49. The minuter relations of the discourse will appear in the notes.

20. **He lifted up his eyes.** An Oriental expression representing a solemn and important act, meaning that he directed his eyes at or toward his disciples, the objects of his special regard and attention, as about to address them. *He* is emphatic in contrast to the multitude, who were intent on being healed or witnessing his miracles. From them he turned his eyes toward his disciples in general and the twelve in particular, who were eager to hear his instructions, to whom he directed his discourse in the hearing of the people, ch. 7 : 1. Luke sometimes gives us

glimpses of the eloquence of the look of Jesus, ch. 22 : 61.

**Blessed.** This word (Greek *makarios*) means happy, and is so translated in John 13 : 17 ; Acts 26 : 2 ; Rom. 14 : 22 ; 1 Pet. 3 : 14 ; 4 : 14. Another word (Greek *eulogetos*) is properly translated *blessed*, which in the New Testament is applied only to God, Mark 14 : 61 ; Rom. 1 : 25 ; 2 Cor. 1 : 3. The latter is derived from a verb which means to *speak well of*, to *commend*, and hence to *praise*, to *bless*, and as applied to God means worthy of all praise, *adorable*, *blessed*, with ascriptions of praise and thanksgivings. The passive perfect participle of this verb (*eulogemenos*) also properly means blessed, and as applied to men means those blessed or favored of God, Matt. 25 : 34. The former, *makarios*, is an adjective, and allied to a verb which means to *pronounce happy*, and answers to the Hebrew *ashrey* (*happy*), derived from a verb, to *go well*, to *prosper*, to *be happy*. Our Saviour means that those persons whom he pronounces *happy* are not only in the way to future blessedness, but that they are in the present enjoyment of happiness—happy in their relations and destiny. In the following beatitudes Jesus pronounces those happy whom the world holds to be most unhappy. He runs directly counter to the carnal views of the Jews of his day.

**Be ye poor.** Ye who feel a deep sense of spiritual poverty, who are lowly in heart, and are conscious of your spiritual ignorance and unworthiness, and of your entire dependence on God; ye who are thus spiritual *beggars*, ch. 16 : 20. See Isa. 57 : 15. That the reference is to the poor in *spirit* is evident from the spiritual promise that follows. Such are happy in contrast to the proud and ambitious—those who aspire after worldly pleasures, riches, and honor. **Yours is the kingdom of God.** It is intended for you, and it belongs to you as a *gift* through divine grace. You are subjects and citizens of the Messiah's kingdom, which has God for its Author and End, and you are entitled to the great blessings of Messiah's reign both for time and eternity. See on ch. 4 : 43.

- 21 'Blessed *are ye* that hunger now: for ye shall be filled. \*Ps. 107. 9; Is. 55. 1; 65. 13; Mt. 5. 6.
- \*Blessed *are ye* that weep now: for ye shall laugh. \*ch. 7. 38, 50; Ps. 32. 3-7; 116. 3-8; Is. 25. 8; 57. 18; 61. 2, 3; John 16. 20; 2 Cor. 1. 7. 7. 9, 10; Rev. 7. 14-17.
- 22 \*Blessed *are ye*, when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you *from their company*, and shall reproach *you*, and cast out your name as
- 23 evil, \*for the Son of man's sake. \*Rejoice ye in that \*Mt. 5. 11; 10. 25;
- 1 Pet. 2. 19; 3. 14. \*John 16. 2. \*Ps. 44. 22; Mt. 24. 9; 1 Cor. 4. 10; 1 Pet. 4. 14. \*Mt. 5. 12; Ac. 5. 41; 16. 25; Ro. 5. 3; Col. 1. 24; Jam. 1. 2, 3; 1 Pet. 4. 13.

21. **Ye that hunger.** In accordance with the preceding verse, spiritual hunger is meant. **Now**, in this life and at the present time. Ye who earnestly and even painfully desire holiness, conformity to the divine will, or "righteousness," Matt. 5 : 6. As the hungry long after food, so do those here described ardently long after conformity of heart and life to the divine will, Ps. 42 : 1; John 6 : 35. This hungering and thirsting is indeed an evidence of their spiritual life. In contrast to those who entertain carnal hopes concerning the Messiah's kingdom, and long for worldly possessions, power, and glory, and are ready to use unjust means to obtain them, these hungering souls are happy, for **they shall be filled**. They shall be *satisfied*, so as to desire nothing more, as the hungry man is satisfied with food, Ps. 17 : 15. They shall find complete satisfaction in Christ, having his righteousness accounted to them and being sanctified and conformed to his image, Prov. 21 : 21; Isa. 41 : 17; 60 : 21; 2 Pet. 3 : 13. The fulfilment of this promise begins here and extends to the fully-developed holiness of heart and conduct in the future world.

**Ye that weep now**, a somewhat stronger expression than that in Matthew (5 : 4), "they that mourn," referring to that deep anguish of spirit which manifests itself in groans and tears. This cannot refer to all kinds of weeping, for the sorrow "of the world worketh death," 2 Cor. 7 : 10. It especially refers to those who weep under a penitent sense of their sins—under a feeling of their spiritual poverty—and exercise a godly sorrow that "worketh repentance unto salvation." But it need not be limited to merely those who grieve over their own sins, but may extend to those who, in addition to this, lament the sins of others, and *who*, in sorrow-

ful circumstances and afflictions, mingle their grief with humble hope in God. In contrast to the gay and jovial those are happy, for they **shall laugh**. Not only shall they "be comforted," as in Matthew, but they shall exult with open joy. Their sins shall be forgiven; they shall be supported in trial and cheered with the everlasting favor of God. Christ, "the Consolation of Israel" (Luke 2 : 25), will be their Saviour, the Holy Spirit their Comforter (John 14 : 16, 17, 26), and the Father their Father and eternal Friend, Rom. 8 : 15; 2 Cor. 1 : 3. Their joy shall be complete, pertaining both to the present and the future state, 2 Cor. 1 : 4; 4 : 17; Rev. 21 : 4.

22. **Hate . . . separate . . . reproach . . . cast out.** A climax is expressed in these verbs. *Hate you*, the feeling within which is the foundation of separations, reproaches, and persecution. *Separate you from them*, from their synagogues, their society and intercourse, John 9 : 34; 16 : 2. *Reproach you*, heaping upon you, in addition, opprobrious epithets, as heretics and apostates. *Cast out your name as evil*, as vile and loathsome, defamed and stigmatized in the vilest manner possible. Pliny, a Latin historian, who died about A. D. 116, refers to the fact that primitive Christians were hated merely because they were so called. And Tacitus speaks of Christians as "those who were hated" and as "hating all mankind." *Your name* refers to whatever they might be called, and might apply to a collective name as *Nazarene* or *Christian*, or to an individual name rendered opprobrious on account of their faith. Compare Acts 24 : 5; 28 : 22; 1 Pet. 4 : 13-16. Nero charged upon Christians the crime of the burning of Rome. **For the Son of man's sake**. Because of your faith in me and subjection to me. On

- day, and leap for joy: for, behold, <sup>b</sup>your reward is great in heaven: for <sup>c</sup>in the like manner did their fathers unto the prophets.
- 24 <sup>d</sup>But woe unto you that are rich! for <sup>e</sup>ye have received your consolation.
- 25 <sup>f</sup>Woe unto you that are full! for ye shall hunger.  
<sup>g</sup>Woe unto you that laugh now! for ye shall <sup>h</sup>mourn and weep.
- 26 <sup>i</sup>Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well
- Jam. 5. 1.    <sup>a</sup>ch. 16. 19-25; Mt. 6. 2, 5, 16.    <sup>1</sup>1 Sam. 2. 5; Is. 65. 13; Rev. 3. 17.    <sup>2</sup>Pro. 14. 13; Ecc. 2. 2; 7. 6; Jam. 4. 9.    <sup>3</sup>ch. 12. 20; 13. 28; Job 21. 11-13; Mt. 22. 11-13; 1 Thes. 5. 3.    <sup>4</sup>John 15. 19; Jam. 4. 4; 2 Pet. 2. 18; 1 John 4. 5.
- <sup>b</sup>Psa. 19. 11; Mt. 16. 27; Col. 3. 24.  
<sup>c</sup>1 Ki. 19. 10; 2 Chr. 16. 10; 24. 19-21; 36. 16; Ne. 9. 26; Jer. 26. 8, 20-23; Mt. 23. 31-37; Ac. 7. 51, 52; 1 Thes. 2. 15.  
<sup>d</sup>ch. 12. 15-21; 18. 23-25; Ps. 49. 6, 7, 16-19; Am. 6. 1-6; 1 Tim. 6. 17;

the title Son of man see note on ch. 5 : 24.

23. **Rejoice in that day**, when you shall be thus treated. **Leap for joy.** Be exultant, jubilant with rapturous joy. **Great is your reward.** Not of debt, but of grace. Christians have reason to *rejoice* and *exult* amid persecution in view of a reward so great and glorious, 2 Cor. 4 : 17. **For in like manner**, etc. No new thing was to happen to his disciples; for so was Elijah persecuted, 1 Kings 19 : 1, 2; and Elisha, 2 Kings 2 : 23; and Jeremiah, Jer. 38 : 4-13; and Zechariah, 2 Chron. 24 : 20, 21; and Daniel, Dan. 6 : 11-17. How great was their reward Heb. 11 : 26) who were hastening to join that great cloud of witnesses! Heb. 12 : 1.

A comparison of these beatitudes with those in Matt. 5 : 3-12 reveals a difference not only in number, but also in expression, which harmonizes better with the view of two distinct discourses than of only one discourse. The four woes which follow point to the same conclusion, since they are not in Matthew, and would not very probably follow, Matt. 5 : 12.

24. **Woe unto you.** Not the expression of anger, but of lamentation and warning. *Woe is to you, or Alas for you!* Jesus is not uttering imprecations as a Judge, but as the great Teacher and Prophet he declares the miserable condition of certain classes and warns them against it. **You that are rich.** This is the opposite of spiritual poverty, spoken of in ver. 20. You that make this world your portion (ch. 12 : 21; 1 John 2 : 15) and trust in riches, ch. 18 : 24, 25, and Mark 10 : 24. Such was the character of the Pharisees (ch. 16 : 14,

15, 19) and the Laodicean church, Rev. 3 : 17. Worldly riches are deceitful in their influence, choking the word and rendering it unfruitful (Matt. 13 : 22), and often lead to acts of oppression, James 2 : 6. **For ye have received your consolation**, in the reputation you have enjoyed, in the honors and applause you have received, and in the various worldly pleasures which have fallen to your lot. You have received this, and you will get no more. As you have made the world your portion, you will have none in the future world, ch. 16 : 25.

25. **You that are full.** The opposite of those who have spiritual hunger, ver. 21. Ye who have no cravings after spiritual food, but are satisfied with your worldly portion and with the dainties and luxuries of earth, James 5 : 5. **Ye shall hunger**, being without food. Being reduced to want and bereft of all spiritual good, ye shall famish for need of that which can make the soul happy in the world to come. This will be an endless hunger. **Ye that laugh now.** Opposite of the weeping in ver. 21. Ye who engage in the outward expression of worldly pleasure; who indulge in lightness, frivolity, and dissipation; who live lives of gayety and mirth, and banish from you serious and solemn thoughts, Eccl. 7 : 6. Ye are miserable, for ye shall **mourn and weep.** Your frivolity will be turned into sorrow when you discover your miserable end and are cast out into outer darkness, where there is wailing and gnashing of teeth, Prov. 1 : 25-28; James 4 : 9. This is not inconsistent with rejoicing in the Lord, which is the privilege of Christians at all times ver. 23.

of you! for so did their fathers to the false prophets.

27 <sup>k</sup>But I say unto you which hear, Love your ene- <sup>k</sup> ver. 35; Ex. 23.  
 28 mies, do good to them which hate you, bless them <sup>4; Mt. 5. 43, 44;</sup>  
 that curse you, and <sup>1</sup>pray for them which despitefully <sup>Ro. 12. 20.</sup>  
 29 use you. <sup>m</sup>And unto him that smiteth thee on the <sup>1</sup> ch. 23. 34; Ac. 7.  
*one* cheek, offer also the other. <sup>n</sup> And him that taketh <sup>60.</sup>  
<sup>n</sup> <sup>m</sup> Mt. 5. 39.  
<sup>n</sup> <sup>1</sup> Cor. 6. 7.

26. **Woe unto you.** *Unto you* should be omitted according to the oldest manuscripts and the highest critical authorities. This was spoken to his disciples. In the reason and warning given **false prophets** corresponds with false disciples. This woe is opposite to the beatitude in vers. 22, 23. **All men**, like the term *world*, is here used to denote those who are not Christians. **Shall speak well of you**, shall bestow upon you universal applause. A Christian should strive to have "a good report from those that are without" (1 Tim. 3 : 7); but when his words and conduct are such as to please and delight the ungodly, affording no reproof for their impenitence and wicked practices, he has reason to be alarmed. "The friendship of the world worketh death," James 4 : 4. **For so did their fathers.** *Their* refers to *all men* in the preceding clause. *Their fathers* are specially the wicked Jews of the past ages. **To the false prophets**, who sought to please the popular desires, saying, Peace, peace! when there was no peace, strengthening the hands of evil-doers and daubing unsubstantial walls with untempered mortar or whitewash, 1 Kings 22 : 6-14; Jer. 23 : 14; 28 : 10, 11; Ezek. 13 : 10, 11.

27. Having intimated that they should have enemies and suffer persecution (vers. 22, 26), Jesus proceeds, in this and the nine following verses, to direct them in their treatment of enemies. He enforces the duty of love, its extent, and its standard. By comparing this with the sermon on the mount (Matt. 5 : 38-48; 7 : 12), it will be seen how different the arrangement here, and in some respect the course of thought, indicating that this and that were two separate discourses. These verses hardly bear the form of another report, or even of a repetition, of the same discourse. Great injustice has been done to the sermon on the plain by some expositors by endeavoring to

make it conform to the sermon on the mount.

**But I say unto you.** As Jesus is about to enjoin duty, he thus speaks with authority and as a lawgiver. **Which hear.** My disciples and all that hear me this day. What he had been saying had regard to classes of persons, and was especially for his disciples, but duty has reference to all. **Love your enemies.** Although I have uttered these woes against the enemies of my gospel, and have shown how they will treat my disciples, yet you must not harbor any feelings of revenge or malice toward your enemies, but *love* them. We are not to harbor malignant feelings toward any one. We cannot love the deeds of the wicked, but we can love their souls, and wish them well, and do them good if we have opportunity. This is the best way of subduing hatred and overcoming evil with good, Rom. 12 : 20, 21.

Out of this foundation principle of love flows first a manifestation in act, expressed in the words **Do good to them that hate you.**

28. Closely connected with the preceding verse. A second manifestation of love is, **Bless them that curse you.** Speak words of peace, kindness, and love to those who revile and insult you. And a third is a manifestation in prayer for divine help for that which you cannot accomplish either by word or act, **Pray for them which despitefully use you, abuse you.** Thus cursing is to be met with blessing, a steady and settled hatred with well-doing, and abusive language and conduct—that is, hostile speech coupled with hostile action—with prayer.

29. Jesus gives two examples to illustrate the treatment of enemies which he had just enjoined. **Unto him that smiteth thee on the one cheek, simply, on the cheek.** *The first example* An act of great contempt, personal outrage, and insolence. It was regarded as

away thy cloak forbid not to take thy coat also. •Deu. 15. 7, 8, 10;  
 30 °Give to every man that asketh of thee; °and of him Ps. 41.1; Pro. 21.  
 31 that taketh away thy goods ask them not again. °And 26; Mt. 5. 42;  
 Tim. 6. 18. P Ro. 12. 17-19. °Mt. 7. 12; Gal. 5. 14.

an affront of the worst sort, and was severely punished by Jewish and Roman laws. Offer also the other, proverbial phrase expressing submission to insults and injuries, Lam. 3 : 30. This must not be taken too literally, but must be obeyed in the spirit more than in the letter. Thus, Christ himself did not conform literally to this precept (John 18 : 22, 23), though he obeyed it in spirit by yielding up himself to his persecutors and crucifiers, Isa. 50 : 6. Under private and personal outrages we are not to contend and fight, but we should endure them patiently from Christian principle. This does not prevent us from insisting firmly and kindly that justice should be done us, or from rebuking and remonstrating against injustice whenever practiced against us.

**Taketh away thy cloak.** *The second example.* From personal violence Jesus descends to the demanding of property by legal or forcible means. The *cloak* or mantle was the outer, larger, and more valuable garment. It was worn loose around the body, and made of various materials, according to the circumstances of the wearer. It was commonly of different sizes, nearly square, six to nine feet long and about as many broad, and was wrapped around the body or fastened about the shoulders, and could be thrown off when engaged in labor. It was also used as a blanket or covering to wrap one's self in at night; hence it was not allowed by the law to be taken by the creditor and retained as a pledge overnight, Ex. 22 : 26, 27. This fact shows how great the wrong and violence which would take away this outer garment. But if any one should go so far as to take this away, rather than contend with him, forbid him not to take thy coat also. Do not hinder him from taking thy tunic or under-garment, which was made of linen or cotton and folded close to the body. In matters of personal violence and wrong we are not to show a retaliating and revengeful spirit, but a forgiving and generous one. We are to suffer wrong rather than to do wrong. We are to suffer

loss ourselves rather than to resort to quarrelling or law suits.

30. Jesus proceeds to enjoin liberality toward all. Give to every one that asketh of thee, be he Jew, Samaritan, or heathen. This is to be interpreted by the principles of Christian benevolence as interpreted elsewhere. We must also bear in mind that Jesus is opposing a retaliating and revengeful spirit. We must not out of revenge withhold charity from any whom we believe to be in need. Christians should be benevolent, giving willingly according to what they have (2 Cor. 8 : 12), doing good to all, especially to the household of faith (Gal. 6 : 10); yet their benevolence should be wisely distributed, exercised seldom or never toward those who can but will not work (2 Thess. 3 : 10), and always consistently with their duty to their families, 1 Tim. 5 : 8. As the Lord gives not always to those who ask the very thing that they ask, but that which is better for them (2 Cor. 12 : 8, 9), so the spirit of love and true benevolence should prompt us to give, not always that which may be asked, but that which is best for the receiver. "To give everything to every one—the sword to the madman, the alms to the impostor, the criminal request to the temptress—would be to act as the enemy of others and ourselves."—ALFORD. Jesus doubtless had also in view the hard-hearted, oppressive, and covetous practices of the scribes and Pharisees (ch. 20 : 47); and he emphatically enjoins the spirit of the law in Dent. 15 : 1-11, which they were violating, like their fathers frequently before them, Neh. 5 : 1-5; Ezek. 22 : 7.

**Of him that taketh away thy goods,** without asking, in any injurious manner, as through the grinding exactions of officials; or by consent, having lent or sold them, and the person thus obtaining them is unable or unwilling to return them or an equivalent. Ask them, demand them, not again. Do not show a revengeful spirit, and neither by violence nor by legal forms demand them back, but by a kind and liberal

as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to  
 32 them likewise. \* For if ye love them which love you, \* Mt. 5. 46, 47.  
 what thank have ye? for sinners also love those that  
 33 love them. And if ye do good to them which do good  
 to you, what thank have ye? for sinners also do even  
 34 the same. \* And if ye lend to *them* of whom ye hope \* Mt. 5. 42.  
 to receive, what thank have ye? for sinners also lend  
 35 to sinners, to receive as much again. But † love ye † ver. 27; Le. 25.  
 35-37.

spirit strive to win back the offender to right views and acts. Whatever you do, avoid a retaliating spirit, and show a spirit of forbearance and love.

31. Jesus adds a rule for the manifestation of love toward others. So far from showing any retaliating spirit, **As ye would that men should do**, etc. Make the case of others your own, and as ye would as honest and righteous men that they should do to you, do in a like manner to them. This was indeed no new requirement, but simply the application of the law to love our neighbor as ourselves, Matt. 7 : 12.

Different writers have quoted similar sentiments from heathen and rabbinical authors; but while the latter have rather given the negative part of this command, Christ has given the positive. This may be seen by the following comparison of Christ's precept with three of the best examples found in ancient authors:

CONFUCIUS. B. C.	ISOCRATES. B. C.
500.	400.

What you do not like when done to yourself, do not do to others.	Do not do to others that which would make you angry if done by others to you.
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HILLEL. A. D. 1.	CHRIST.
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Do not unto an- other what thou wouldst not have another do unto thee.	<i>And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them.</i>
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This radical difference will at once be seen: Christ's precept alone commands us to do anything. Not only are we to avoid doing to others what we in their situation would dislike, but we are to do to them whatever we would reasonably and righteously wish them to do to us. This truth, which was included in the law and prophets, and which was more or less clearly apprehended and

expressed by moralists and inspired writers, received its greatest completeness and its most perfect application from our Saviour, and as containing the sum and substance of our duty to our fellow-men may justly be styled the Golden Rule.

32. In this and the two following verses Jesus enforces this principle of love as he had laid it down, by referring in contrast to the love exercised by sinners. His followers should certainly exhibit a higher principle and love than the ungodly. If they love only those who love them, what thank have they, what claim have they to extraordinary praise or moral approbation? Or what is there in that worthy of reward? **For sinners**, wicked persons, destitute of grace, do as much as this. Of the sons of God more should be expected.

33, 34. These verses are not found in the sermon on the mount. It will be noticed that the expressions *What thanks have ye* and *sinners* are repeated three times. *Love* in ver. 32 is the ground principle, and doing good and lending in these verses are the application of love in deeds toward our fellow-men. To merely reciprocate **good** deeds and to **lend** with the expectation of receiving a full equivalent is acting upon a selfish principle and according to the spirit of the world. The Christian should be better than others. "Love for love is justice, love for no love is favor and kindness, but love and charity for all persons, even the undeserving and the ill-deserving, is a Christ-like temper."—DR. ALFRED NEVIN *On Luke*.

35. Jesus enjoins again **love to enemies**, and enforces the deeds of love. The narrow-minded Jew fixed a limit to love. Thou shalt love thy neighbor and hate thine enemy, Matt. 5 : 43. Apostatizing or heretical Israelites were to be slain. An Israelite was not

your enemies, and do good, and <sup>ver. 30; Ps. 37. 26</sup> lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and <sup>Mt. 5. 45.</sup> ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is <sup>Mt. 5. 48.</sup> kind unto the unthankful and to the evil. <sup>7</sup> Be ye therefore merciful as your Father also is merciful.

"bound to do good or show kindness or to lend his money" to a Gentile. What a contrast is this precept of Jesus! **Hoping for nothing again, or in return.** This appears to be the meaning from the connection. Some would render, *not despairing*—that is, about the result; and others, after the Syriac version, *Causing no one to despair*, by refusing his request. But neither of these so fully meets the demands of the context as the common rendering. "To lend with the hope of receiving again is becoming a man; but to lend without such hope becomes a Christian. The latter is enjoined, the former is not forbidden, even as it is lawful to love friends."—BENGEL. Ps. 112 : 5. The spirit of this command condemns usury or lending on exorbitant interest. **Your reward shall be great.** It will bring happiness to your own bosoms and secure the blessing of God. Ye "shall be recompensed at the resurrection of the just," ch. 14 : 14. In what this reward will partly consist is further stated in the next clause.

**Ye shall be the children, sons, of the Highest.** See on ch. 1 : 32. You shall prove yourselves sons of your heavenly Father by showing a likeness to him and partaking of his spirit, Eph. 5 : 1, 2. You shall thus be sharers in the Messiah's kingdom, Rom. 8 : 17. It follows that the love required is not the love of complacency, that which approves of the moral character of all, but the love of benevolence, which desires the true welfare of all. We are to imitate God so far as a son may imitate a father. We are not to usurp a father's authority, and hence we are not to sit in judgment upon others nor execute vengeance on them, but, like true sons, to imitate our Father in goodness and love. **For he is kind unto the unthankful.** One of the great sins of man is ingratitude. **And the evil.** Omit *the*, according to the best authorities. Not two classes of persons, but two qualities of the same class. Evil expresses an advance on the preceding,

and means the notoriously wicked. God is daily bestowing his favors on the worst of men, who are provoking him, rebelling against him, and using his gifts to dishonor him.

36. The standard of love and mercy is here given. Only a perfect standard was it becoming God to give, and only such a standard is suited to man, who is ever prone to imitate the defects, rather than the perfections, of his teachers and their instructions. **Be ye therefore merciful.** This is a different command from that in Matt. 5 : 48, *Be ye therefore perfect*, etc. The latter includes the former, but the former does not include the latter. Yet it may be said that he who has this mercy in exercise will have the other graces which go to make up a fully-developed Christian character. The difference in the two injunctions is sufficient, however, to warrant separate interpretations. Those who have regarded the sermon on the mount and this on the plain as identical have done injustice in making these injunctions one and the same in their interpretations. **Merciful, pitiful, compassionate**, the feelings produced by the misery of others. In James 5 : 11 it is very properly translated *tender mercy*. Yet it is not so strong a word as that in Matt. 5 : 7, "Happy the merciful." We may suppose Jesus to have used a corresponding term in the Aramaic, and thus even in this injunction he exhibited his tender compassion for our weakness in using a term more nearly suited to our capacity. Mercy is the exercise of compassionate love toward the suffering. The merciful make the sorrows of others their own and delight in relieving human distress. They address themselves to the wants of the world. God's mercy extends to all, to both body and soul. He is good to all and his tender mercies are over all his works, Ps. 145 : 9. So our compassion should have reference to both the bodily and spiritual interests of our fellow-men. God is absolutely merciful, but man, at the best is only

37 <sup>a</sup>Judge not, and ye shall not be judged: condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned. <sup>a</sup>Forgive, and 38 ye shall be forgiven. <sup>b</sup>Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your <sup>c</sup>bosom. For <sup>d</sup>with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again.

<sup>a</sup>Mt. 7. 1, 2.  
<sup>a</sup>Mt. 5. 7; Mk. c  
 14, 15.  
<sup>b</sup>Deu. 15. 10; Pro.  
 11. 25; 19. 17.  
<sup>c</sup>Ps. 79. 12.  
<sup>d</sup>Mt. 7. 2; Mk. 4.  
 24; Jam. 2. 13.

relatively merciful. The attribute as a perfection in God is infinitely above the grace or virtue in a complete and perfect man. Yet one is the image of the other, and hence we can imitate it; and the more Christ-like we are, the more perfect the likeness. In our compassionate love, in the feelings and exercise of mercy, we should strive to imitate Christ; thus we shall become like our heavenly Father, and attain the full maturity of this grace in our Christian manhood.

37. The exercise of love forbids a censorious spirit. The self-righteous spirit of the Pharisee blinded him to his own faults and led him to judge others severely, ch. 18 : 9. **Judge not.** The connection with what precedes is close. Here is another difference from the sermon on the mount, where this caution is given in another connection, Matt. 7 : 1. Judge not rashly, censoriously, unjustly, the conduct of others. This does not prohibit judicial and official judgments (1 Cor. 5 : 12), nor the mere formation of opinion (Matt. 16 : 13-16), which is more or less unavoidable, but those voluntary and rash judgments which are the product of a censorious spirit. **And ye shall not be judged.** By God. By avoiding censoriousness you will so far avoid condemnation. But by exercising an unkind spirit toward your neighbor you will only increase the severity of the judgment of God, John 8 : 7; Rom. 14 : 10-13. It is also true that they that judge others rashly are themselves judged in like manner by others. Jesus proceeds to expand this thought, which is not done in the sermon on the mount, where indeed (Matt. 7 : 1, 2) such expansion was not desirable. **Condemn not.** In a censorious spirit do not spy out and denounce others and pronounce what their guilt deserves. **Ye shall not be condemned.** By God and less likely by your neighbor, Rom. 14 : 3, 4; James

4 : 11. **Forgive,** or *release*, pardon their offenses, a spirit the very opposite to that of judging and condemning. Compare Matt. 18 : 21, 35. **Ye shall be forgiven.** This forgiving disposition indicates a state which is right in the sight of God. It is no arbitrary principle which is here laid down, but is so inseparably connected with right feeling that God conducts himself toward us according to the spirit we cherish, Ps. 18 : 25, 26. On this verse Van Oosterzee well remarks: "Undoubtedly, to the spiritual man, who judges all things (1 Cor. 2 : 15), the right to judge, in and of itself, cannot be forbidden; yet it is only granted by the Lord when one has previously cast a look of searching examination upon himself."

38. In accordance with this principle of love, Jesus exhorts them to exercise liberality and generosity. **Give, and it shall be given unto you.** God will bless you, and your kindness and liberality will affect the hearts of others favorably toward you. **Good measure.** The figure used is that of dry measure, as of grain, **pressed down, shaken together, running over,** thus indicating great abundance and liberality. **Shall men give.** Rather, *Shall they give*—that is, shall be given by men and also by God. The connection most naturally demands a reference to both God and men. **Into your bosom,** of your garment. The fold of an Oriental garment, which fell over the girdle, was used as a large pocket for carrying things. Compare Ruth 3 : 15; Ps. 79 : 12. **For with the same measure,** etc. The standard which you apply to others shall be applied to you: "He that soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly," 2 Cor. 9 : 6. "The liberal deviseth liberal things, and by liberal things shall he stand," Isa. 32 : 8. The *same* measure shall be given either by the hand of God or through the instrumentality of

- 39 And he spake a parable unto them, °Can the blind lead the blind? †shall they not both fall into the ditch? ‡The disciple is not above his master: but every one that is perfect shall be as his master.
- 40
- 41 †And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, ‡but perceivest not the beam that is in
- °Is. 9. 16; Mt. 15. 14; 1 Tim. 6. 3-5.  
 †Jer. 14. 15, 16.  
 ‡Mt. 10. 24; John 13. 16; 15. 20.  
 †Mt. 7. 3.  
 ‡Jer. 17. 9.

men. See Judg. 1 : 6, 7 ; 2 Sam. 22 : 26, 27 ; James 2 : 13 ; Rev. 13 : 10.

39. Jesus proceeds to show by a proverbial saying that a teacher who is blind to his own faults—and such is a censorious one—is incapable of guiding others aright. He is addressing his disciples, and specially the apostles, who were to be teachers. **A parable.** A comparison, an illustration or similitude. See on ch. 8 : 4. In the present instance it was a proverbial saying, which Jesus may have frequently used. See it in a different connection in Matt. 15 : 14. It is not found in the sermon on the mount. **Can the blind lead the blind?** into the right path, with safety. The form of the question in the original demands a strong negative answer: No, it is not possible. **Shall they not both fall,** etc., demanding a strong affirmative reply. **The ditch** is an emblem of destruction. The Pharisees are described as “blind leaders” (Matt. 15 : 14) and “blind guides,” Matt. 23 : 16. The reference here is specially to censorious teachers who have a “beam” in their eye, ver. 41. Teachers especially need the light of truth. If ignorant and unskilful, they destroy themselves and others.

40. **The disciple is not above his master,** rather *the teacher.* This verse appears to be a kind of proverbial saying, meaning the disciple cannot expect to become wiser and better than his teacher. Thus the Jewish writer Maimonides says, “He that learns shall not be greater than he of whom he learns, but shall be like him.” **But every one that is perfect,** etc. Better, *But every one shall be completely trained, fully instructed, or perfected as his teacher.* The disciple naturally makes his teacher his model and assimilates himself to him. If ye are blind and censorious teachers, you will infuse the same spirit into your disciples. You will thus be unsafe and unfit instructors. Some would refer the *master* or *teacher* here to Jesus, and make

the expression mean, “I, your Teacher, have never shown a censorious and uncharitable spirit; do not, therefore, assume this to yourselves, but demean yourselves like your Teacher, imitating his example and imbibing his spirit, so that you may be his disciples in deed and in truth.” The former view, however, seems to suit the connection better.

41. Jesus shows the incongruity and the impossibility of censorious and uncharitable persons teaching others aright. The connection with the two preceding verses is natural. He who teaches others should himself have clear views of truth and be properly qualified; he should have no beam in his eye; like a good tree, he should bear good fruit; and being a good man, he should speak out of the good treasure of his heart, ver. 43-45. **Why beholdest thou?** It is common for persons of this spirit to censure those whose defects are by no means equal to their own. This is illustrated by the figure of the eye. The interrogative form used in this verse and the next renders the discourse the more pointed. The singular number indicates a personal application.

**The mote,** a *dry particle* of wood, a minute splinter, represents a small fault; **the beam,** a *joist, a rafter,* denotes a *large* one. Sin blinds men in regard to their own faults, and warps their judgment and makes them censorious in regard to others. **Perceivest.** Observe attentively, scrutinize. In stead of looking at, staring at, the slight obstruction in thy brother's eye, thou oughtest to scrutinize diligently the large one in thine own. The illustration here is an ideal one, and the beam a hyperbolical expression, presenting in a strong light the difference between the faults of the two individuals. Somewhat similar phrases have been found in the writings of the rabbins and in the classics. Compare Num. 33 : 55; Josh. 23 : 13. See also Rom. 2 : 17, 19, 21.

- 42 thine own eye? Either how canst thou say to thy brother, Brother, let me pull out the mote that is in thine eye, when thou thyself beholdest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, <sup>k</sup>cast out first the beam out of thine own eye, and then shalt thou see clearly to pull out the mote that is in thy brother's eye. <sup>k</sup> Pro. 18. 17.
- 43 <sup>l</sup>For a good tree bringeth not forth corrupt fruit; neither doth a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. <sup>l</sup> Mt. 7. 16, 17.
- 44 For <sup>m</sup>every tree is known by his own fruit. For of thorns men do not gather figs, nor of a bramble bush <sup>m</sup>gather they grapes. <sup>n</sup>A good man out of the good <sup>m</sup> Mt. 12.33; 1 John 4. 1. <sup>n</sup> Pro. 10. 20; Mt. 12. 35.

42. **How canst thou say.** The illustration is still further applied. **Either** should be omitted according to the best critical authorities. With what consistency canst thou say, **Let me pull out**, literally, *cast out*, the mote from thine eye? Is it possible that one who has such an obstruction in his own eye should undertake to cast out a small speck from his brother's eye? The self-ignorance, the self-indulgence, and the unbounded assurance of censorious teachers are here brought to view. "Our own sinfulness destroys the spiritual vision which alone can rightly judge sin in others."—THOLUCK.

**Hypocrite.** Pretender, dissembler. One who assumes to be what he is not. The censorious formalist shows himself a hypocrite, in that he indulges greater sins in himself than those which he dwells upon and condemns in others. Jesus rebukes him for his folly, and points out the right course to pursue. **Cast out first the beam.** Sit first in judgment upon thyself. Direct thy attention first to the correction of thine own faults. Then shalt thou see clearly, the obstructions having been removed from thine own eye, to cast out the mote from thy brother's. You will then be able to judge rightly and to assist him in the correction of his fault.

43. **For** introduces a reason for what he had just said, founded on an illustration drawn from the natural world. **A good tree, etc.**—better, *For there is no good tree that bringeth forth corrupt or bad fruit*—a tree good for bearing and of good quality. Censoriousness and a beam in thine eye show that thou art corrupt within and a hypocrite,

ver. 42. **Neither doth a corrupt tree**—*bad* in quality, in opposition to *good*—a worthless tree. A bad and hypocritical teacher cannot be expected to bring forth the good fruits of love toward all. Some of the oldest manuscripts read, *Neither again doth*, etc. Robinson and some others who regard this sermon as identical with the sermon on the mount transpose this verse, placing it after ver. 44, in order to make it conform with Matt. 7 : 16–18. But there is no necessity for this change of order. The connection here seems to be perfectly natural, and surely demands no transposition. How much better to take the discourse as inspiration has left it, and understand it accordingly!

44. **For** introduces an admitted fact as a further reason. So uniform is the law of likeness in the natural world that **every tree is known by, or from, his own fruit.** Just so with men and with teachers. They are known from their spirit, words, acts, conduct, practices, and by the effect of their doctrines on others. **For** from such worthless plants or shrubs as **thorns or a bramble bush** people do not harvest figs and grapes, the choicest and most highly valued fruits of Palestine, Num. 13 : 23, 24. *Thorns* represents the whole class of thorny plants; *a bramble bush*, any prickly shrub. At the present day travellers are struck with the number and variety of thorny shrubs and prickly plants in Palestine. The people gather them and use them for fuel. In like manner, it is vain to expect the fruits of holiness and love from a corrupt heart. "If thy life is evil, it is vain to pretend to teach others."—ALFORD.

treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil: for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh.

46 <sup>p</sup>And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the  
47 things which I say? <sup>q</sup>Whosoever cometh to me,  
and heareth my sayings, and doeth them, I will show  
48 you to whom he is like. He is like a man which built  
an house, and digged deep, and laid the foundation

• Mt. 12. 34.

p ch. 13. 25; Mal  
1. 6; Mt. 7. 21-  
23; 25. 11.  
q Mt. 7. 24-27; John  
13. 17.

45 This verse is closely connected with the preceding, yet it is not found in the sermon on the mount. Jesus, however, used this saying in another connection and in a different order, Matt. 12 : 34, 35. Jesus now pursues an illustration similar to the preceding, applying the principle, that like produces like, to good and bad men. **A good man.** Rather, *The good man*, so also *the evil man*. **Treasure** means stores, anything laid up, be it good or bad; and here refers to inner, spiritual stores—the feelings, thoughts, purposes, of the soul. **Bringeth forth that which is good . . . evil.** Bringeth forth words and deeds good or evil. The heart is a storehouse of the sources of conduct. The words **treasure of his heart**, in the second place, are omitted by the highest critical authorities. **For** introduces a natural reason for what he had just said. **Of, out of, the abundance**, the overflowing of the heart, the inward dispositions and feelings, whether good or bad, **his mouth speaketh.** Language is the overflowing of the soul, and naturally indicates its state and condition, Matt. 15 : 18; Rom. 10 : 9, 10; 2 Cor. 4 : 13. "No man has so much artifice as to command the mouth entirely, so that it shall never discover itself in some unguarded moment."—DODDRIDGE.

46. Jesus in conclusion makes a personal application of his discourse to his real and to his professed disciples. **Why call ye me Lord, Lord.** Many, both real and professed friends, were thus addressing him. The repetition points to a habitual profession. **And do not the things which I say.** Which you certainly would do if you truly accepted me as your Lord. It was applicable to the apostles and all his disciples so far as they did not obey his words. There was much of

evil, the old leaven, in them all. They failed in the exercise of love toward others, and had too much of the censorious and uncharitable spirit which he had been condemning. The interrogative form makes it a two-edged sword; an emphatic warning, on the one hand, against a mere profession, and an emphatic command, on the other, to make their profession and practice agree. The idea expressed in this verse is used with a different application in Matt. 7 : 21-23. The comparison which follows, while analogous to that in Matthew (7 : 24-27), shows considerable diversity. That in Matthew enters more fully into detail, but this in Luke seizes upon strong points, and in some parts is much the more graphic.

47. **Whosoever cometh to me**, as a learner or disciple. These words are not in Matt. 7 : 24. **Heareth . . . doeth.** Doing, obeying, comes by hearing and implies faith, Rom. 10 : 14. **My sayings**, those which he had spoken in this sermon, and also at various other times.

48. **A man which built an house.** Rather, *A man building a house*, who is now engaged in the work. A house is a place of comfort and defence against all kinds of weather. Christians are moulding their characters, cultivating their sentiments, affections, and habits, and founding their hopes. **Digged deep and laid**, etc. Literally, *Who dug and deepened and laid a foundation on the rock.* The successive steps, as well as the diligence and earnestness of the builder, are here graphically brought to view. He was not satisfied with mere digging; he goes deeper and deeper till he reaches the solid rock. So the Christian digs through and throws aside all human foundation, and is not content till he can found his religion and his hopes on Christ and his truth.

on a rock; and when 'the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently upon that house, and could not shake it: \*for it was founded upon a rock. But he that heareth, and 'doeth not, is like a man that without a foundation built an house upon the earth; against which the stream did beat vehemently, and immediately it fell: and \*the ruin of that house was great.

\*Eze. 13. 11-16; 1

Cor. 3. 13, 14

Jan. 1. 12.

\*Col. 2. 7.

\*Jan. 2, 20.

\*Is. 28. 15-18; Heb.

2. 2, 3.

Some commentators refer *the rock* to Christ (1 Cor. 3 · 11); others to the words of salvation which he taught. But he who builds on Christ's words really builds on Christ. Christ is ultimately the rock on which the church and Christians are founded, Isa. 28 : 16.

**When the flood**—rather, *A flood*, an overflowing, an inundation—**arose, the stream beat vehemently upon that house**; it dashed against it, but in vain. The imagery here is the most vivid and familiar to an Eastern audience, accustomed to inundations. Immense quantities of rain fall in Palestine during the winter, between seed-time and harvest. The rivulet swells into a stream, and the stream into a river, sweeping away houses and cattle with the torrent. "In Egypt an entire village founded on the earth the writer saw in ruins, having been swept away by the flood from the mountains of Abyssinia."—REV. W. H. VAN DORN, *On Luke*. The value of such a foundation is seen at once in that such a terrible ordeal **could not shake** that house, much less destroy it. Against the Christian's edifice of faith and hope many trials shall beat, temptations of Satan, persecutions, errors of doctrine and practice, death and the judgment; but none nor all of these shall shake a single hope or grace which is founded on the Rock of ages. Amid all his fiery ordeals he shall stand, because his house **was founded upon a rock**, or rather, according to the best critical authorities, *it was well built*, upon the proper foundation and in its structure. Compare Rom. 8 : 35-39; 1 Cor. 3 : 10-15.

**49. Without a foundation.** Without a foundation of rock (ver. 48), which was the only material worthy to be used or styled a foundation under such circumstances. **Built a house upon the earth**, upon the surface, without digging and finding the rock. The

*earth* represents the works, doctrines, and opinions of men, and all other delusive grounds on which unregenerate men build their hopes for eternity. It is worthy of notice that he *heard*, which was commendable; he *built* his house, had his religion and his hopes of future safety and happiness; but all this was of no avail so long as he rested on things earthly, without any true foundation. Against his house the stream did dash, undermining it, and **immediately**, without giving any show of resistance or affording its owner any protection, **it fell**. And to represent more forcibly this terrible fall, Jesus adds, **The ruin of that house was great**. "The fishermen of Bengal," says Mr. Ward in his *View of the Hindoos*, "build their huts in the dry season on the bed of sand from which the river has retired. When the rains set in, which they do often very suddenly, accompanied with violent north-west winds, the water pours down in torrents from the mountains. In one night multitudes of these huts are frequently swept away, and the place where they stood is the next morning undiscoverable." And thus the man with mere religious knowledge, without the corresponding practice, shall be visited with swift destruction, Prov. 12 : 7; Isa. 28 : 16, 17. Expecting, it may be, to go to heaven, he shall be cast down to hell. "The soul of religion is the practical part, James 1 : 27. Talkative thinks that learning and saying will make a good Christian, and thus he deceiveth his own soul. Hearing is but the sowing of the seed. Talking is not sufficient to prove that fruit is indeed in the heart and life. Let us assure ourselves that at the day of doom men shall be judged according to their fruits. . . . The end of the world is compared to our harvest, and you know that men at harvest regard nothing but fruit."—JOHN BUNYAN in *Pilgrim's Progress*.

## REMARKS.

1. The disciples of Jesus may suffer want together with the reproaches and faultfindings of their enemies. Let them commit their cases to Jesus, who will defend their cause, vers. 1-5; Matt. 9 : 14-17.

2. They who are most destitute of true godliness are often the most tenacious of the forms of the law and of traditions, ver. 2; Matt. 23 : 23, 24; 2 Tim. 3 : 5.

3. We must not sacrifice the spirit to the letter, inward piety to external forms, and especially must we beware of uncommanded observances, ver. 2; Isa. 1 : 12.

4. Jesus taught the right use of the Sabbath—that it is in harmony with the fourth commandment to do deeds of necessity and mercy, and to perform all the labor that public and private worship requires, vers. 3, 4, 9; Matt. 12 : 7, 11, 12.

5. Learn the value of scriptural knowledge. The Bible is our rule of faith and practice, vers. 3, 4; 2 Pet. 1 : 19-21; Ps. 19 : 7-11; 119 : 9, 11, 105.

6. Jesus did not desist from his work because of opposition, ver. 6; ch. 13 : 32, 33; John 9 : 4; 1 Pet. 2 : 21.

7. The wicked watch the friends of God, in order to ensnare or find fault with them, ver. 7; Ps. 37 : 32; 38 : 12; 62 : 4; Jer. 20 : 10; Luke 14 : 1.

8. Whatever is right may be done openly, ver. 8; John 18 : 20; Acts 26 : 26; Eph. 6 : 19.

9. In the stretching forth of the withered hand we have an illustration of the act and effort of faith, ver. 10; Eph. 2 : 8; Heb. 11 : 1; James 2 : 17-20.

10. Christ is opposed by all the elements of a wicked world. Wicked men of the most opposite character and aims band together in their hatred to the truth, ver. 11; Mark 3 : 6; John 15 : 18-20; Acts 4 : 26; 1 John 3 : 12, 13.

11. Jesus has taught us by example to be much in prayer and to have special seasons for drawing near to God, as in times of trial and persecution, or when setting apart men for the ministry, or for other important work, etc., ver. 12; Acts 6 : 6; 12 : 5; 13 : 3.

12. Ministers are called of God, but should not hastily be appointed to

office. There should be a previous discipleship. The apostles had been disciples, and most, and possibly all, of them disciples also of John, ver. 13; Acts 13 : 2; 1 Tim. 5 : 22.

13. As among the apostles, so among ministers and Christians generally, God calls into service every variety of talent. Every gift and ability is needed in his kingdom, vers. 14-16; ch. 11 : 3; 1 Cor. 12 : 4-11.

14. If under our Saviour's ministry a Judas was found among his disciples and apostles, we must not think it strange if now unconverted and wicked men are sometimes found in the church and in the ministry, ver. 16; Acts 8 : 18-23; 2 Tim. 4 : 10; 2 Pet. 2 : 1, 12-16; 2 Cor. 11 : 13-15; 2 Tim. 1 : 20.

15. Watching and prayer prepare the way for toil and preaching, vers. 12, 17, 20; Col. 4 : 2, 3.

16. Doing good to the bodies of men often prepares the way for reaching their hearts and doing good to their souls, vers. 18, 19; ch. 9 : 11.

17. True happiness is very different from what the world thinks it to be. Its seat is in the heart, not in any external condition, vers. 20-23.

18. True religion makes men happy, and none can be truly happy without it, vers. 20-23; Eccl. 11 : 9; 12 : 13.

19. The beatitudes present humiliation on the one hand and exaltation on the other, with present happiness ("Happy ye poor," etc.) and future joy and glory ("ye shall," etc.), vers. 20-23.

20. All true happiness begins with spiritual poverty—a consciousness of a moral deficiency in ourselves, a self-renunciation that yields the heart up to Christ and the claims of the gospel, ver. 20; Ps. 51 : 17; Isa. 57 : 15; Luke 4 : 18.

21. True happiness is increased rather than diminished by the opposition and persecutions of men. If Christians have internal evidences of God's favor, the hatred of the world is an additional evidence. They are the companions of prophets, and shall be participators in their reward, vers. 22, 23; Acts 5 : 41; Heb. 10 : 34; 1 Pet. 4 : 12, 13.

22. He is poor indeed who possesses not heavenly riches, ver. 24; Matt. 6 : 19-21; Rev. 3 : 17.

23. Earth cannot satisfy the longings of the soul nor give lasting joy, ver.

25; Ecc. 7 : 6; Isa. 65 : 13; James 4 : 9.

24. He who seeks the friendship of a wicked world will sacrifice his friendship for Jesus, ver. 26; James 2 : 7; 4 : 4.

25. It is the glory of Christianity that it makes mankind a common brotherhood, and that it is the only religion that demands love to our enemies. These are evidences of its divine origin, and of its universal adaptation to men, ver. 26.

26. We must not imitate the world in returning evil for evil, but our heavenly Father in loving our enemies and doing them the highest good. A revengeful spirit is unchristian, vers. 27, 28.

27. Forgiving injuries instead of avenging them is a mark of true greatness and goodness, vers. 27, 28.

28. The best way of overcoming evil is with good, vers. 29, 30; Rom. 12 : 20, 21.

29. He who simply does to others as others do to him has not yet learned the first lesson of Christianity, vers. 30, 32.

30. If our righteousness does not exceed that of the world's morality, we cannot enter the kingdom of God, vers. 32-34; Matt. 5 : 20.

31. "All hopes of heaven which do not lead us to strive habitually to do to others as we would that they should do to us will fail us at giving up of the ghost," vers. 31-35; Job 11 : 20; Prov. 10 : 28; Matt. 25 : 40-46.

32. We should aim at the highest perfection of every virtue, especially of love and mercy, vers. 35, 36; 1 Cor. 13 : 13.

33. If we are God's children, we shall imitate him, vers. 35, 36.

34. A censorious spirit is opposed to Christ, invites a like spirit from others, and is self-condemnatory, ver. 37; 1 Pet. 2 : 23; 1 Cor. 13 : 4-7; Matt. 18 : 33, 34; Rom. 2 : 1.

35. If we put ourselves in the place of our Judge, and thus pronounce rash and harsh judgments on others, we shall bring judgments upon ourselves, vers. 37, 38; Judg. 1 : 6, 7; Rom. 14 : 10; 12 : 19.

36. Men lose nothing, but are rather gainers, by liberality, ver. 38; Prov. 11 : 24; Ps. 41 : 1; 1 Tim. 6 : 17-19.

37. If teachers and leaders are blind,

how great the darkness! ver. 39; Matt. 6 : 23; Jude 10, 13.

38. Let us strive to be as our Master, and in humiliation and obedience willingly be made perfect through suffering, ver. 40; Heb. 2 : 10.

39. Sin and selfishness blind men to their own faults, and make them censorious and sharp-sighted in regard to the faults of others, ver. 41; 1 Tim. 5 : 13; 2 Tim. 3 : 6-8.

40. To get right ourselves before God is our first duty; then shall we be prepared to set others right. A beam in thine eye unfit thee to take out the mote from thy brother's eye, ver. 42; Rom. 2 : 19-23; Gal. 6 : 1.

41. A knowledge of ourselves is the best preventive of evil speaking and all censoriousness, ver. 42.

42. Every man shall stand or fall by the fruits of his heart and life, his words and his acts, vers. 43-45; Matt. 12 : 37; 2 Cor. 5 : 10.

43. Though we are not to be censorious in judging, it is our duty to prove all things and hold fast to that which is good, and decide by their fruits between true and false teachers, as well as between true and false doctrine, vers. 43-45; Jer. 23 : 16; 2 Cor. 11 : 13; 1 Thess. 5 : 21; 2 Tim. 3 : 5.

44. Profession without the corresponding practice is worthless, ver. 46; Matt. 25 : 11, 12.

45. Christ is our Lawgiver, vers. 47-49; Acts 3 : 21, 22.

46. Those who build on Christ by a living faith and a hearty obedience (the two are inseparable) shall stand against every trial, ver. 48; 1 Pet. 2 : 6.

47. All hopes founded on human merit shall perish; many who now weep, pray, and fast shall be lost because they make these, and not Christ, their dependence, ver. 49; Isa. 28 : 17; Prov. 11 : 7.

## CHAPTER VII.

Having ended his sermon in the plain Jesus heals a centurion's servant (vers 1-10), and the day after raises to life a widow's son (11-15), both of which result in greatly extending his fame, 16, 17. It reaches John at Machærus, who sends two disciples to him; they witness the miracles of Jesus and carry

*Healing of a centurion's servant.*

VII. NOW when he had ended all his sayings in the audience of the people, <sup>v</sup>he entered into Capernaum. <sup>v</sup>Mt. 8. 5.

2 And a certain centurion's servant, who <sup>w</sup>was dear <sup>v</sup>Joh 31. 15.

back the report to their master, 18-23. After their departure Jesus discourses concerning John (24-28), the effect of which discourse upon the hearers is recorded (29, 30), which leads Jesus to speak of the treatment of both John and himself by that generation, 31-35. An interesting incident is added concerning the anointing of Jesus' feet by a penitent woman, which presents in striking contrast the self-righteous and censorious Pharisee, and Jesus as the compassionate Saviour and Friend of sinners, 36-50.

1-10. JESUS AT CAPERNAUM HEALS A CENTURION'S SERVANT, Matt. 8 : 5-13. Luke's account is fuller at the beginning; but Matthew's is fuller at the end. Thus vers. 3-6 below are not in Matthew, and Matt. 8 : 11-13 is not in Luke.

1. **When he had ended all his sayings,** had finished his discourse. This shows that Luke gives us in the preceding chapter a discourse delivered at one time, and not a mere collection of sayings or detached parts of different discourses. **In the audience, the hearing, of the people.** The discourse, which was especially to his disciples (ch. 6 : 20), was also for the information and instruction of the people. **He entered into Capernaum.** The language implies that he was not far from Capernaum when he delivered the preceding discourse. On Capernaum see ch. 4 : 31. This city was the centre of his operations, and to it he frequently returned from his preaching tours.

2. **And** connects a continuous narrative. The language most naturally implies that the miracle now to be related was wrought immediately after the sermon on the plain. Equally natural is the implication that the healing of the leper (Matt. 8 : 1-4) followed immediately after the sermon on the mount. Matthew, who does not give an account of the appointing of the twelve apostles and of the discourse that immediately followed, groups together without strict chronological order a number of remark-

able miracles in connection with that of the leper, after the sermon on the mount. This will help to explain why the healing of the centurion is found in the eighth chapter of Matthew. The prominence of the individual whose servant was healed, the commonness of palsy and the difficulty of its cure, the healing of the individual without touching or even seeing him, may also have been some of the reasons for the selection and position of this miracle in Matthew.

A **centurion** was a Roman officer commanding a hundred men. He was probably in the service of Herod Antipas, and stationed at Capernaum as an important provincial town and a place of considerable traffic on the Sea of Galilee, to preserve order there and in the adjacent country. He was a Gentile (Matt. 8 : 10), but seems to have been strongly attached to the people and worship of Jehovah, and to have regarded Jesus as without doubt a "teacher come from God," and probably as the Messiah, the Redeemer of Israel. He was very probably a "proselyte of the gate," one who lived among the Jewish people and conformed to what were called the seven precepts of Noah, which prohibited blasphemy, idolatry, murder, robbery, rebellion, and eating of blood and of things strangled. Those who submitted to circumcision and became naturalized Jews were termed "proselytes of righteousness." Three other centurions appear in the New Testament, and all in a favorable light—the one at the cross, ch. 23 : 47; Cornelius, Acts 10 : 1; Julius, Acts 27 : 1, 3, 43.

**Servant.** This word properly means bondsman or slave, though it is also used to express the service of choice and devotion. See on 1 Cor. 7 : 21, 23; Gal. 3 : 28; Col. 3 : 11; John 15 : 15; Rom. 6 : 16. The word translated servant in ver. 7 is a different one, meaning literally *my boy*, a familiar way of styling a domestic servant. **Who was dear unto him.** "It was

3 unto him, was sick, and ready to die. And when he heard of Jesus, he sent unto him the elders of the Jews, beseeching him that he would come and heal  
4 his servant. And when they came to Jesus, they besought him instantly, saying, That he was worthy for  
5 whom he should do this: for <sup>x</sup>he loveth our nation,  
6 and he hath built us a synagogue. Then Jesus went with them.

<sup>x</sup>Gal. 5. 6; 1 John 3. 14; 5. 1.

not uncommon in Roman history to find instances of the deepest affection between master and slave."—DR. J. J. OWEN. **Was sick,** with palsy or paralysis, Matt. 8 : 6. **Ready to die,** Matthew says "he was grievously tormented," referring to the violence and painfulness of the disease. It was ready to terminate fatally.

3. **He heard of Jesus,** of his miraculous power, and that he was now at Capernaum. **He sent unto him the elders.** Rather, *He sent to him elders*, the article being wanting in the Greek. They were persons who were elders or magistrates of the city, or more probably officers of the synagogue which the centurion had built, ver. 6. The term elder was first applied to men of age, elderly men (Gen. 24 : 2; 50 : 7); and as persons of ripe age and experience would naturally be called to the management of public affairs (Josh. 24 : 31), it afterward became an official title, Ex. 3 : 16; 4 : 29; 19 : 7; 24 : 1, 9. The office grew out of the patriarchal system. Among the Arabs of the present day the sheikh (the *old man*) is the highest authority in the tribe. Their authority was great, though undefined, Josh. 9 : 18; 1 Sam. 8 : 4, 5. They continued during all the political changes of the Jews; under the kings, 1 Kings 12 : 6; 20 : 8; during the captivity, Jer. 29 : 1; Ezek. 20 : 1; and after the return, Ezra 10 : 8, 14. In the time of Christ there were elders of the people, ch. 22 : 66; Matt. 21 : 23. Cities had their elders, and so had synagogues. A portion of the Sanhedrim was chosen from the elders, ch. 9 : 22; 20 : 1.

Matthew makes no mention of the elders coming to Jesus, and seems to represent the centurion as coming personally. But it was common then, as now, to speak of a person doing what was done by others under his direction.

Thus Jesus is said to baptize, when he only baptized by his disciples, John 4 : 1; see also 19 : 1. Possibly the centurion followed his friends, his earnestness having overcome his modesty.

4. **Besought him instantly.** Rather, *earnestly*. Such is the meaning of the original, and such was the old meaning of the English word "instantly." The elders are urgent, and they bring the case earnestly, and of course quickly, to the attention of Jesus. **Saying that.** Omit *that*. The words **he was worthy**, etc.—rather, *he is worthy that thou shouldst do this for him*, etc.—are what the elders said to Jesus. Notice that while the elders plead the worthiness of the centurion, he alleges his own unworthiness. Great excellence and humility go together.

5. The special reasons of his worthiness which were uppermost in the minds of the elders are given. They did not know the deep piety and strong faith of the centurion. **For he loveth our nation.** A fact worthy of special mention, for Roman officials were often noted for their tyranny and oppression. **He hath built us a synagogue.** *He* is emphatic in the original, *he himself*, of his own expense. The remainder of the clause literally is, *built for us the synagogue*—that is, *built our synagogue*. The definiteness of the expression seems to imply that there was but one synagogue in Capernaum. Some suppose that the ruins of a fine synagogue at Tell Hum mark the site of this synagogue and of Capernaum. This does not necessarily follow. Every town had its synagogue, and doubtless many had much finer ones than Capernaum. See on ch. 4 : 31 for a description of this ancient ruin, etc. The conduct of this centurion was in contrast with many Roman officers who treated the Jewish people and nation with contempt, and with some

And when he was now not far from the house, the centurion sent friends to him, saying unto him, Lord, trouble not thyself: for <sup>7</sup>I am not worthy that thou shouldst enter under my roof: wherefore neither thought I myself worthy to come unto thee: but say <sup>8</sup>in a word, and my servant shall be healed. For I also am a man set under authority, having under me soldiers, and I say unto one, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, <sup>9</sup>Do this, and he doeth *it*. When Jesus heard these things, he marvelled at him, and turned him about, and said unto the people that followed him, I say unto you, <sup>10</sup>I have not found so great faith, no, not in

<sup>7</sup> Pro. 29. 23; Ps 107. 20.

<sup>10</sup> Ro. 9. 31, 32.

who had invaded and wantonly destroyed their synagogues. Yet several examples are recorded of persons building synagogues. Even the Roman emperor Augustus (who died A. D. 14) published a decree that Jewish synagogues should be spared and regarded as schools of learning and virtue.

6, 7. Jesus goes with the elders; and when they approach the centurion's house, he sends **friends**, not his servants, but the intimate friends of his family, and through these the centurion addresses Jesus. Thus what he does through others he does himself. Thus Solomon built the temple. Dr. Thomson (*Land and Book*, vol. i., p. 313) says of this speaking through others: "This is a very ancient and very common custom. Everything is done by mediation. Thus the centurion sent to Jesus elders, beseeching him that he would come and heal his servant. In a hundred instances I have been pressed and annoyed by these mediating ambassadors." Yet it is possible that after this second embassy the centurion may have come out and met Jesus in person. **Trouble not thyself.** He would not put Jesus to any unnecessary trouble to come to his house when the healing could be performed without so doing. He also felt unworthy to have the Saviour honor his dwelling with his presence, not only because he was a Gentile, a heathen, but doubtless also because of a sense of his own spiritual lowliness, his deep sinfulness, and hence unworthiness to receive under his roof the great Redeemer of Israel. He would, therefore, have Jesus **say in, or with, a word.** His authoritative word would

take the place of his personal presence and act, and the servant would be healed. In the use of a single word he believed Jesus could cure his servant. On **servant** see on ver. 2.

8. The reason for thus believing he now states. He knew both what it was to be under authority and what to exercise authority. His power was indeed limited, but even his word was promptly and faithfully obeyed. If the word of a subordinate officer like himself received such obedience, how much more the word of one whose rank was so exalted, and who was manifestly a Sovereign over all diseases!

9. **Marvelled.** Wondered at his faith and humility with admiration. As a man, Jesus exercised the various faculties of the human soul. This instance of faith excited the surprise or wonder of his human nature. To his divine nature all was known, nothing was new or strange. **No, not in Israel.** Not even in Israel, the chosen people of God. Israel was applied to the ten tribes after they separated from Judah, but after the captivity it was applied to the whole nation as settled in Palestine. This was the first instance of faith in Christ's power to heal at a distance. And this great faith was found, not in some favored Israelite, but in one far less privileged and favored—a Gentile! Faith was a frequent and special object of our Saviour's praise, ver. 50; Matt. 15 : 28. Matthew (8 : 11, 12) at this point adds that it would at last be seen that many of the less privileged would be saved, while many of the highly favored would be lost.

10 Israel. And they that were sent, returning to the house, found the servant whole that had been sick.

*Raising of a widow's son.*

11 And it came to pass the day after, that he went into a city called Nain, and many of his disciples went with him, and much people. Now when he came nigh to the gate of the city, behold, there was a dead man carried out, <sup>a</sup>the only son of his mother, and she was a widow: and much people of the city was with her.

<sup>a</sup> 2 Sam. 14. 7.

10. Matthew (8 : 13) relates that Jesus granted the request of the centurion, which is implied, though not stated, by Luke. They who were sent returned and found the **servant** (the same word as in ver. 2) **whole**, restored to health.

11-17. JESUS RAISES A WIDOW'S SON AT NAIN. This miracle is related by Luke only. Luke records the raising from the dead of two persons by Jesus, this one and Jairus' daughter, ch. 8 : 41-56; Matthew and Mark only one each, Jairus' daughter, Matt. 9 : 18-26; Mark 5 : 22-43; and John only one, Lazarus, John 11 : 44. But other persons were probably raised from the dead, of whom we have no particular record, ver. 22; Matt. 11 : 5. Only so much is narrated as was necessary for evidencing the Messiahship of Jesus and for our faith, John 20 : 31.

11. **The day after**, or *soon afterward*, a reading preferred in the Revised version. **Nain**, meaning, according to some, *pasture*, but according to others *gracefulness*, was a town about four miles south-west of Tabor and about twenty-one miles south-west of Capernaum. It is in the vicinity of Endor, and is situated picturesquely on a low mountain-spur, the north-western edge of the Little Hermon, where the hill descends into the plain of Esdraelon. It seems to have been a town of some extent, but it is now little more than a cluster of ruins; the dwellings are small and the inhabitants few. Its modern name, *Nain*, is really identical with its ancient name. It has a fountain, which has had much to do with the continuance of the place till the present time. "It is a small, poor hamlet of some twenty houses, or rather huts. Round the houses, however, are vretty extensive ruins, and the writer

found some traces of what appeared to be an ancient wall. The most interesting antiquities are the tombs hewn in the rock a short distance east of the village. It was in this direction our Lord approached, and probably to one or other of those very tombs they were bearing the corpse when he met and arrested the mournful procession."—J. L. PORTER, *Alexander's Kütto's Cyclo.* The situation of Nain is described as extremely beautiful.

As the Jews generally buried the dead on the same day they died and before sundown, it has been asked, How could Jesus have reached Nain from Capernaum early enough in the day to meet the funeral procession? It must be remembered that the Orientals are early risers and begin their journey very early in the morning. They are also rapid walkers, and therefore Jesus and his disciples could readily have reached Nain before noon. His sermon on the plain and the healing of the centurion's servant add to his fame, and **many disciples and much people**, or *great multitudes*, follow him.

12. **Gate of the city.** The towns and villages were generally enclosed with walls for the sake of protection. **A dead man carried out.** The Jews, as well as the Greeks and Romans, were accustomed to bury their dead outside of their cities or towns, except certain distinguished persons and the kings of the house of David, who were buried within the city of David, 1 Sam. 28 : 3; 2 Kings 21 : 18. **The only son**, and hence the mother's deepest love and her dependence. **And she was a widow.** A double affliction. She was also an object of public and deep sympathy, for **much people**, or *a great multitude*, of the city attended her.

13 And when the Lord saw her, <sup>b</sup>he had compassion on  
 14 her, and said unto her, Weep not. And he came  
 and touched the bier: and they that bare *him* stood  
 still. And he said, Young man, I say unto thee,  
 15 <sup>c</sup>Arise. And he that was dead sat up, and began to  
 speak. And he delivered him to his mother.

<sup>b</sup> Mt. 9. 36; John  
 11. 33-35; Ro. 12.  
 15; Heb. 4. 15.

<sup>c</sup> ch. 8. 54; John  
 11. 43; Ac. 9. 40;  
 Ro. 4. 17.

13. **The Lord.** Thus Luke frequently styles Jesus—a name specially applicable to him, as his divinity was manifesting itself in his words and deeds, ch. 10 : 1; 11 : 39; 12 : 42; 13 : 15; 17 : 6; 22 : 31, 61; 24 : 34. "This sublime title was better known and more used when Luke and John wrote than when Matthew penned his Gospel. Mark holds an intermediate place. This leading doctrine of the faith must be taught and established in the beginning; afterward it might be assumed."

—BENGEL. "May it not be a silent evidence that Luke's Gospel is later than that of Matthew and Mark, and that it was written for those who had not seen Christ in the flesh, but who habitually thought of him as the ascended and glorified Lord?"—WORDS-WORTH. **Saw her** overwhelmed with grief. His eye was ever quick to behold the sorrowing. **Had compassion.** A strong word in the original. His bowels yearned with compassion; his heart was moved with pity. He rebuked the noisy grief at Jairus' house (Mark 5 : 39), but to this sorrowing mother he says, in words of tenderest sympathy, **Weep not.** He first speaks to her soul to turn her thoughts and faith to him. The word translated *weep* has special reference to the outward expressions of grief. The Orientals give vent to their sorrow over the dead in loud cries and lamentations. When Jesus had compassion on her and performed the miracle, it was not only a personal blessing to the bereaved mother, but was for the glory of God and the establishment of his claims as the Messiah, John 11 : 4.

14. Having so far checked and consoled the mother as to fix her expectation and faith on him, Jesus approaches and touches **the bier**, or open *coffin*. His power is at once felt, and the bearers who carried the bier **stood still**, although they were moving, after the Jewish custom, with a quick step. The word here translated *bier* more strictly

means a *coffin*, which was sometimes used among the Hebrews; and if so, it must have been an open one, for the young man, at the command of Jesus, at once sat up, ver. 15. The present customs of Palestine are consistent with either view. Dr. Van Dyck says: "At present coffins are used only in the cities, and even there they have been in use only a comparatively short period. The general way of burial is to array the corpse in its best dress, as if it were living, and lay it on a bier, with no covering at all, or with a cloak thrown over it, leaving the face exposed. The shroud, a long piece of white cotton stuff, is wrapped around the body *at the grave*. The grave has at the bottom, on all four sides, a ledge of stone built up against its sides high enough to allow the body to be deposited in the niche thus made and be covered with boards, the ends of which rest on this ledge and prevent the earth from actually touching the body. I have attended scores of funerals on Lebanon, and I never saw a corpse carried that could not have sat up at once had it been restored to life."—DR. HACKETT'S *Smith's Dictionary of the Bible*.

**Young man.** This term was applied to young men in the prime and vigor of manhood up to the age of forty. We may from the circumstances suppose this one to have been just entering upon manhood. **I say unto thee.** Jesus is the resurrection and the life, John 11 : 25. He had power over death and the grave. **Arise.** A word of power spoken to the soul. So in the cases of Jairus' daughter and of Lazarus he raised from death with a word of command, ch. 9 : 54; John 11 : 43. He did it by his own power. Elijah and Elisha, Peter and Paul, obtained the restoration of life only by intense prayer, through the power of God, 1 Kings 17 : 20; 2 Kings 4 : 33; Acts 9 : 40; 20 : 10.

15. **He that was dead.** Literally, *And the dead.* Another word is used

16 <sup>d</sup>And there came a fear on all: and they glorified <sup>d</sup>ch. 1. 65.  
 God, saying <sup>e</sup>that, A great prophet is risen up among <sup>e</sup>ch. 21. 19; John  
 17 us; and <sup>f</sup>that, God hath visited his people. And 4. 19; 6. 14; 7.  
 this rumor of him went forth throughout all Judæa 40; 9. 17; Ac. 2.  
 and throughout all the region round about. <sup>f</sup>ch. 1. 68; Ex. 4.  
 31.

*Message from John the Baptist; our Lord's answer; and his address to the people.*

18 <sup>g</sup>And the disciples of John showed him of all these <sup>g</sup>Mt. 11. 2.

in the original from that in ver. 12. Thus by two expressions is it rendered certain that death had taken place. **Sat up.** The command is heard by the young man's soul; and at once returning, it reanimates his body through the divine power of Jesus. His sitting up and his beginning to speak were evidences of the completeness of the miracle. He was a well man. Jesus now proceeds to the crowning act. In condescending love and tenderness he delivered him, or gave him, to his mother. For the young man through death had ceased to belong to his mother, but Jesus gave him back again to her. Thus the Saviour gave a tender tribute of honor to maternal love. His tender care for those he raised from the dead is noticeable. He commanded food to be given to the daughter of Jairus (Luke 8:55), and that Lazarus be unbound (John 11:44); and in this case he probably took the young man by the hand and with compassionate pleasure presented him to the rejoicing and grateful mother.

16. **Fear.** A religious awe came upon all, inspiring reverential feelings. Compare ch. 1:65. **Glorified God,** made him glorious by grateful and adoring praise. **That . . . that** should be omitted. Luke gives what the people said, namely: **A great prophet, etc., . . . God hath visited, etc.** Since Elijah and Elisha alone raised the dead, and Jesus appeared to the people of Nain as equal if not superior to those ancient prophets by this wonderful miracle, they speak of him as a *great prophet*. The prophet, the Messiah who was to come, was doubtless in their thoughts, Deut. 18:15, 18. So they also add, God has **visited his people** in mercy, Isa. 59:16-21. Compare ch. 1:68, 78.

17. **This rumor, report,** concerning

Jesus and this miracle, that he was a great prophet, and that perhaps God had visited his people by sending the Messiah. **In all Judæa,** strictly that portion of Palestine lying south of Samaria. But here it seems almost to be used in the wider sense for the whole of Palestine. Compare ch. 23:5, and see on ch. 1:5. At all events, the report went through the whole land and the surrounding regions, **throughout all the regions round about,** so that it reached the ears of John in his imprisonment, ver. 18.

18-35. JOHN THE BAPTIST SENDS A MESSAGE TO JESUS; HIS REPLY, AND HIS DISCOURSE TO THE PEOPLE. Matt. 11:2-19. Luke is the fullest regarding the two disciples of John sent to Jesus, the miracles which Jesus then performed (vers. 19, 20), and concerning the effect of his discourse on the Pharisees and publicans, vers. 29, 30. But Matthew is the fullest on the character of John and the kingdom of heaven suffering violence, Matt. 11:12, 13.

18. **The disciples of John.** These disciples were probably in the vicinity of Machærus, a fortress in the southern extremity of Perea, east of the Dead Sea, and, next to Jerusalem, the strongest fortress of the Jews. The place where the castle of Machærus stood was identified in 1806 with ruins of the modern *Mukaur*, east of the Dead Sea, lying on the lofty summit of the long mountain ridge, Attarus, at its northern termination, near the shore of the Zerka Ma'in, and on its south side. The mountain is extremely craggy, precipitous, and here inaccessible on three sides. Large square blocks of stone still show the remains of the ancient walls. See *Seetzen's Reisen*, vol. ii., 330. "It is surrounded by ravines, at some points not less than

19 things. And John calling *unto him* two of his disciples sent *them* to Jesus, saying, Art thou <sup>h</sup>he that 20 should come? or look we for another? When the

<sup>b</sup>Ge. 3. 15; 49. 10, Num. 24. 17; Deu. 18. 15-18; Dan. 9. 24-26; Zec. 9. 9; John 6. 14.

one hundred and seventy-five feet deep. . . . Into one of the deep ravines beneath the fortress the headless body of John (Mark 6 : 29) may have been cast, which his disciples took up and buried, and then went and told Jesus. . . . The crag on which the old fortress stood is said to be visible from Jerusalem."—DR. HACKETT'S *Smith's Dictionary*, p. 1728.

**Showed him all these things.** Concerning what Jesus taught and did, especially this report of him (ver. 17) and of his miracle at Nain. This verse implies that the incidents here related took place soon after the event just mentioned. This was the second time that John's disciples reported to him the growing fame of Jesus, John 3 : 26.

19, 20. **John calling unto him two of his disciples.** John's disciples still adhered to him, though he was in prison and had fully accomplished his mission, ch. 5 : 33. They were slow to acknowledge Christ to be superior to their master. A separate organization was kept up long after his execution, Acts 19 : 3. Indeed, a sect bearing the name of "John's Disciples" exists to the present day in the East, which is opposed alike to Judaism and to Christianity.

**Sent them to Jesus.** Some of the oldest manuscripts read, *to the Lord*, ver. 13. It was fitting that the disciples should go and see for themselves.

**He that should come.** He that comes. An appellation of the Messiah which appears to have become quite common (ch. 3 : 16; John 11 : 27), and probably had its origin in ancient prophecy, Ps. 40 : 7; 118 : 26; Mal. 3 : 1; Matt. 21 : 9; Heb. 10 : 37. The meaning of the question is, "Art thou he that comes, the Messiah who has been so long expected, or look we still for another?" Possibly, as the later Jews afterward adopted the view of two Messiahs, a conquering Messiah and a suffering Messiah, so John, in this hour of his trial, may have entertained a vague idea that there might be another who should more completely fulfil the predictions of the prophets.

Various reasons have been given for

this inquiry of John. Some think that he asked it for the sake of his disciples, whose minds he wished to satisfy in regard to the Messiahship of Jesus. But to this it is objected that the answer was sent to John himself. Others suppose that doubt existed for some reason or other in John's own mind. And still others think that his inquiry denoted impatient zeal, and implied an intimation to Jesus to assert his Messiahship still more plainly, and that our Saviour's reply was a rebuke similar to that given to Mary, John 2 : 4.

But whatever view we adopt, we must beware of supposing that John had no higher ideas of the kingdom of God than those which were common at that time among the Jews. That he had conceptions of its spiritual nature is evident from his preaching. See Matt. 3 : 7-12; John 1 : 29-31, 34; 3 : 27-36. It seems also evident that the reason of the inquiry must be found principally in John himself; for the answer was sent to *him*, and the import of it was comforting, strengthening, and corrective. While it administered a gentle rebuke, it was adapted to confirm his faith. Having been confined in prison several months, cut off suddenly from active labor, and hearing many reports of Jesus, some vague and some distorted by the prejudices of his disciples, it was not strange that he should have been dejected, like many eminent saints before him, brooding over his own troubles and the slow progress of the kingdom of God. If this his hour of darkness he felt that he needed more light and more strength. Not that he doubted his own office as forerunner, nor that he had any good reason to doubt the divine commission of Jesus nor any of the declarations he had made concerning him, but he felt the inward need of a new confirmation of his own faith by a fresh declaration from Jesus himself. And this was just what he received. This view also makes the analogy between John and his prototype, Elijah, complete. The one was cast into prison by Herod, the other driven into the wilderness by Ahab, and both during their trial were dejected

men were come unto him, they said, John Baptist hath sent us unto thee, saying, Art thou he that should  
 21 come, or look we for another? And in the same hour he cured many of *their* infirmities and plagues, and of evil spirits; and unto many *that were* blind he gave  
 22 sight. <sup>1</sup>Then Jesus answering said unto them, Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard; <sup>2</sup>how that the blind see, <sup>1</sup>the lame walk, <sup>m</sup>the lepers are cleansed, <sup>a</sup>the deaf hear, <sup>o</sup>the dead are  
 23 raised, <sup>p</sup>to the poor the gospel is preached. <sup>q</sup>And blessed is *he*, whosoever shall not be offended in me.

<sup>1</sup>Mt. 11. 4.<sup>k</sup>Is. 29. 18; 35. 4-

6; 42. 7; Mt. 9.

30; John 2. 23;

3. 2; 5. 36; 10.

25, 38 · 14. 11.

<sup>l</sup>Mt. 15. 30, 31.<sup>m</sup>Mt. 8. 1-4.<sup>n</sup>Mk. 7. 37.<sup>o</sup>Mt. 9. 24, 25.<sup>p</sup>ch. 4. 18; Ps 22

26; 68. 10; Is. 61.

1; Jam. 2. 5.

<sup>q</sup>Mt. 11. 6.

and desponding, 1 Kings 19 : 1-4, 14. Doubtless also the disciples of John needed similar and possibly greater encouragement and a severer rebuke than did their master. Very probably John had their good also in view. That the answer of Jesus resulted in their good also appears from the fact that when John was beheaded, they "took up the body and buried it, and came and told Jesus," Matt. 14 : 12.

20. This verse, not found in Matthew, simply states that the men came, and they put the question as instructed.

21. This verse is not found in Matthew's account. Jesus first replies in deeds. **In that same hour.** At that very time when John's disciples came to him. **Infirmities, or diseases, and plagues, and of evil spirits.** Luke, the physician, accurately distinguishes between diseases and evil spirits. **Unto many blind he gave sight.** The original is expressive. He freely and graciously *bestowed sight* on the blind.

22. After manifesting his divine power as the Messiah, Jesus still makes no direct reply, but commands the disciples of John to go and tell John, *make known* to him, his miracles and the preaching which were the evidences of his Messiahship and an exact fulfilment of prophecy, Isa. 29 : 18; 35 : 5, 6; 61 : 1-3. What an example of modesty and humility does Jesus present in his reply! He says not, Report the miracles that I am working, but **what things ye have seen and heard.** **Seen** refers specially to the miracles which were wrought in the presence of John's disciples, ver. 21. **Heard** may refer to accounts of other miracles from eye-witnesses; but its special reference is to the preaching of the good tidings to the poor.

Jesus specifies the more signal things they heard and saw which were the signs of his ministry. **The dead are raised.** They may have witnessed the raising of the dead, or they may have received accounts from reliable witnesses of the raising of the daughter of Jairus (ch. 8 : 41-56), and of the widow's son at Nain, vers. 11-15. The miracles were significant, and symbolical of the healing of the soul. They were attended with spiritual blessings, and indeed were the external signs of inward cures to those who exercised faith in Jesus as the Redeemer. **The poor.** The lowly, the humble, including the idea of being afflicted and distressed. Reference is evidently made to Isa. 61 : 1, and to that class of persons who combined external poverty with humility and a sense of spiritual want. See ch. 4 : 18. **The gospel.** The good tidings of eternal salvation. Pharisees and philosophers and false religionists had overlooked the poor and the lowly. Stier observes that with *the dead are raised* is united *the poor are evangelized, or have the gospel preached to them*, as being a thing hitherto unheard of and strange.

23. **Blessed.** *Happy* in his condition, his relations and destiny. See ch. 6 : 20. **Shall not be offended in me.** Rather, *at me*, as an occasion of offence, of dissatisfaction and dislike. The meaning is, Happy is he to whom I shall not prove a stumbling-block, who shall not *take offence* at my character, conduct, or words, so as to desert and reject me. Mark how carefully put are the words. They are not personal to John himself, nor do they imply that he had really taken offence at Jesus. So far as he remained steadfast, they were full of comfort; but so far as he de-

24 And when the messengers of John were departed, <sup>\*Mt. 11. 7.</sup>  
 he began to speak unto the people concerning John,  
 What went ye out into the wilderness for to see? A  
 25 reed shaken with the wind? But what went ye out  
 for to see? A man clothed in soft raiment? Be-  
 hold, they which are gorgeously appavelled, and live  
 26 delicately, are in king's courts. But what went ye

sponded or wavered in his faith, they were full of warning of what might result from such a condition of mind and course of conduct.

This incident gives Jesus an occasion for uttering the following discourse to the multitude.

24-30. JOHN'S CHARACTER, OFFICE, AND DIGNITY. The effect of the discourse on Christ's hearers, Matt. 11 : 8-15.

24. **When the messengers of John were departed**, so as not to appear to flatter him through them, Jesus began to speak of him in the highest terms of commendation. This shows that John had not gone far in wavering; and we may justly infer that the answer of Jesus dispelled all darkness and despondency that may have possessed his mind. Bengel remarks, "The world praises to the face, censures behind the back; divine truth the opposite." Jesus doubtless intended to prevent the people putting a wrong construction on John's inquiry, and from supposing that he in any sense retracted his testimony in regard to Jesus. He also had an opportunity of affirming the character and high position of John, and showing the wicked treatment that both his forerunner and himself had received; of pronouncing woes upon unbelievers, and extending gracious invitations to those who were in a condition to receive him, Matt. 11 : 20-30. Instead of beginning with positive assertions, he wisely commences with certain interrogations which lead to the most positive affirmations. Referring to the time when they went forth into the wilderness to the preaching and baptism of John, he asks, **But what went ye out into the wilderness for to see?** The word translated *see* is very expressive, meaning *to behold, to gaze at*, as a public show or spectacle. **A reed shaken with the wind?** Surely not a reed shaken by the wind? Some suppose that Jesus refers to reeds as a com-

mon product of the wilderness of Judea, and which grew in abundance on the banks of the Jordan: surely it was not to see the rustling reeds of the desert? Others regard the language as descriptive of John: surely he did not go out to see a man fickle, wavering, and unstable? The latter suits the context the best; for Jesus began to speak concerning John, and he proceeds to the most positive assertions. It also accords with the figurative style of the East. The meaning is, Ye did not go out to see a man who was wavering and easily influenced, like the reeds of the wilderness shaken by the wind; for you found John to be a firm and decided character. Think not, therefore, that he is in any way different now, or that he has changed his views in regard to the great truths and doctrines he then expressed.

25. **But if ye did not go out to see such a character, what, then, went ye out for to see? A man?** Notice the fine climax in these questions. *A reed, a man, a prophet.* **Soft raiment?** Luxurious clothing, a mark of effeminacy and the very opposite to John's dress, Matt. 3 : 4. It is evident that this was not their object; for they would not have gone into the wilderness to find one in costly and luxurious clothing, and who lived **delicately**, but rather to king's palaces. The meaning is, Ye did not go out to see a man in gorgeous or splendid dress and of effeminate habits and character, like those who dwell in the palaces of kings, and especially at the court of Herod; for you found John bold, stern, and inflexible, austere and self-denying, and not one disposed to flatter from motives of expediency, selfishness, or cowardice. Think not, then, that he has been influenced by any such motives in sending his recent inquiry to me, or that the inquiry itself indicates any such trait in his character. Jesus appeals to John's well-known character, and to the esteem in which he was held by the multitude

out for to see? A prophet? Yea, I say unto you, and  
 27 much more than a prophet. This is *he*, of whom it is  
 written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy  
 28 face, which shall prepare thy way before thee. For  
 I say unto you, Among those that are born of women,  
 there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist:  
 But he that is least in the kingdom of God is greater  
 than he.  
 29 And all the people that heard *him*, and the publi-

when he was in the height of his ministerial success. These were a sufficient answer to the supposition that he was either fickle, selfish, or cowardly.

26. **But** if ye went not out to see a luxurious and effeminate person, what, then, went ye out to see? Anticipating their reply, he asks, **a prophet?** for all held John as a prophet, ch. 20 : 6. This he affirms, **Yea**, and adds, **much more than a prophet.** A *prophet* was not only one who foretold future events, but also one who was divinely commissioned as a religious teacher, or who instructed men as to the will of God. John was more than an ordinary prophet. The reason for this assertion is given in the following verse.

27. This verse gives the proof that John was more than a prophet by quoting Mal. 3 : 1. The quotation is according to the sense of the prophecy, not in its exact language. John was the messenger of God who was to prepare the way before the Lord, even the messenger, or angel, of the covenant. He was, in other words, *the forerunner of the Messiah*, and thus superior to all of his predecessors. He was himself the subject of prophecy (one of the two messengers, or angels, spoken of by Malachi), the nearest of all the prophets to the Messiah, and indeed the preparer of his way. The prophets had spoken of Christ from afar; they had *pointed men toward* Christ; but John *announced* his immediate coming (ch. 1 : 76; Matt. 3 : 2, 3, 11), and *introduced* Christ, John 1 : 35, 36. Christ was the Bridegroom, John the friend of the Bridegroom, his groomsman, John 3 : 39. Thus, he enjoyed a distinction never before conferred on any prophet (this verse) or even on any man (next verse). **Prepare thy way.** Fully make ready for thy advent. **Before thy face.** Immediately before thee.

28. **For I say**, etc. According to the best text this verse should read, *I say to you, Among those that are born of women no one is greater than John.* None of the human race had enjoyed his distinction and his relative position to the Messiah. Not that he excelled all others in piety. **He that is least**, etc. Literally, *he that is less*—that is, than all the rest in the kingdom of God. This in English is equivalent to *he that is least.* **Greater than he.** Than John the Baptist. They who are in the kingdom of God constitute the bride of Christ. Inasmuch as the bride enjoys a greater distinction than the friend of the bridegroom, so the weakest and the least distinguished in Christ's kingdom enjoys a distinction above John, the harbinger and groomsman of Christ. Some suppose the passage to mean, He that is less than John, his inferior in all other respects, yet, by virtue of his being in the kingdom of heaven, is greater, more important and distinguished, than he. The former interpretation is to be preferred as the most natural.

29. This verse and the next are not in Matthew's account. Luke here throws in a brief allusion to the effect of these teachings on his hearers. Some eminent authorities, however, suppose that these two verses are the words of Jesus and the continuation of his discourse. This seems to me somewhat arbitrary and unnatural. Alford's remark is very pertinent: "They are evidently a parenthetical insertion of the evangelist, expressive, not of what had taken place during John's baptism, but of the present effect of our Lord's discourse on the then assembled multitude. Their whole diction and form is *historical*, not belonging to discourse." But whether we regard them as Luke's or our Lord's words, they show that the

cans, \*justified God, \*being baptized with the bap-  
 30 tism of John. \*But the Pharisees and lawyers re-  
 jected \*the counsel of God against themselves, being  
 not baptized of him.  
 31 And the Lord said, \*Whereunto then shall I liken  
 the men of this generation? and to what are they  
 32 like? They are like unto children sitting in the

\*ver. 35; Ps. 51. 4;  
 Ro. 3. 4-6.  
 †ch. 3. 12; Mt. 3.  
 5, 6.  
 ‡Mt. 11. 16-19.  
 ††Ac. 20. 27.  
 ††Mt. 11. 16.

success of John's ministry was principally among the more despised classes of the people, while the religious teachers rejected him. See on ver. 31.

**All the people that heard him.** Rather, *hearing it*, the most natural reference being neither to John nor to Jesus, but to what Jesus had just said. **The publicans, tax-gatherers.** See on ch. 3:12. **Justified God,** pronounced this testimony of Jesus concerning John to be true, and hence that God was just and good in sending such a teacher as John. They thus approved of what Jesus had said, and of the preaching and baptism of John. **Being baptized.** They had formerly acknowledged themselves sinners, professed repentance, and had been baptized. They now act consistently. "John struck the first chords, but the sounds would soon have died out in silence if a mightier hand had not swept the yet vibrating strings."—**ELLCOTT.**

30. **Pharisees.** See on Luke 5:17. **Lawyers,** learned and skilled in the Mosaic law; hence interpreters and teachers of the law. A person who is styled a *lawyer* in Matt. 22:35 is called a *scribe* in Mark 12:28. The two terms have generally been considered as nearly equivalent, the lawyer being regarded as a *teaching scribe*. Lawyers are frequently connected with the Pharisees (ch. 14:3), and probably were very generally of that sect. **Rejected the counsel of God,** as exhibited by the testimony of Jesus and as shown by the mission of John. **Against themselves,** to their own hurt. It is, however, better to translate *toward themselves*. They rejected God's plan, purpose, and mission of mercy toward themselves, as presented in the ministry both of John and Jesus. See the tender words of Jesus in ch. 13:34. **Being not baptized of him,** John. Thus they rejected John when

he was exercising his ministry, and now they still reject him as well as the testimony of Jesus concerning him. It is worthy of notice in both this verse and the preceding that being or not being baptized is connected with approval or disapproval of the counsel of God.

31-35. HOW THE MINISTRY OF JOHN AND OF JESUS HAD BEEN RESPECTIVELY RECEIVED, or the childish treatment they had received of that generation, Matt. 11:16-19.

31. **And the Lord said.** This should be omitted, according to the oldest manuscripts and the highest critical authorities. The omission of these words forms the strongest argument for supposing the preceding two verses to be a continuation of our Lord's discourse. But those two verses in the original are historical in style, as remarked above. The change to the style of discourse in this verse was sufficient without formally introducing the words, "And the Lord said." Again, as Jesus now speaks of the conduct of that generation toward John and toward himself, it is more natural to regard the preceding verse as showing not only the rejection of John, but also of our Lord's testimony concerning him; and hence that the words are Luke's. **But whereunto,** etc. Implying that they had not ears to attend to and understand what he had just taught in regard to John and himself. **This generation.** The people of this time, especially the leaders, the scribes and Pharisees. Luke adds, **To what are they like?** as if it were difficult to find an object with which to compare them.

32. **They are like unto children,** who, sitting in the markets, imitate in their plays the scenes of actual life, now of marriage and now of funerals, yet are unable in any way to please one another. The ancient markets were places of public resort where peo-

- market-place, and calling one to another, and saying, We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned to you, and ye have not wept.
- 33 For <sup>\*</sup>John the Baptist came neither eating bread nor <sup>z</sup>ch. 1. 15; Mt. 3  
34 drinking wine: and ye say, He hath a devil. The 4; Mk. 1. 6.  
Son of man is come eating and drinking; and ye say, Behold a gluttonous man, and a winebibber, a friend
- 35 of publicans and sinners! <sup>γ</sup> But wisdom is justified <sup>γ</sup> Hos. 14. 9; Mt  
of all her children. 11. 19; John 3.  
32, 33.

ple congregated for business or for conversation, and the children for amusement. "In the market-places of the East you may often see a boy playing on a reed pipe, and other children dancing to it. We often saw also a funeral train, where some were wailing and others responding in regular measure."

—M. W. JACOBUS.

When they had piped, played on the flute a lively and joyful tune, the others had not danced to the music. It was customary among the Jews, Greeks, and Romans to play the flute at marriage dances. And then, changing their play, they had mourned, *sung dirges* as at a funeral, yet even then the others, being determined to be satisfied and pleased with nothing, had **not wept**, the word implying not only shedding of tears, but also every external expression of grief. These two sets of children represented the childish, freakish, and ill-humored conduct of the scribes and Pharisees toward John and Jesus. Neither of them really represent Christ and his forerunner, for, as Dr. Schaff remarks, they "could with no degree of propriety and good taste be represented as playmates and comrades of their wayward contemporaries."

33. Jesus now applies the illustration just given. **The Baptist.** The baptizer. This title was evidently familiar to the Jews. Matthew speaks of John the Baptist, without any explanation, as a person well known. So also did Herod, Mark 6 : 14. Josephus also says (*Antiq.* xviii. 5, 2) that he was "called," or rather "surnamed, the Baptist." **Neither eating bread nor drinking wine.** John was abstemious and austere in his habits, not living on ordinary food, but on locusts and wild honey (ch. 3 : 4); yet the people, especially the scribes and lawyers, ascribed it to demoniacal instead of divine influ-

ence, saying, **He hath a devil.** See on ch. 4 : 33.

34. **The Son of man**, the Messiah. See on ch. 5 : 24. The title is here very fitting, as the human side of Christ is here brought noticeably to view. **Eating and drinking.** Jesus lived as men ordinarily lived, and gave attention to the social enjoyments of life. Thus he attended the marriage at Cana in Galilee (John 2 : 1-11) and the feast at the house of Matthew, ch. 5 : 29. Yet they also found fault with him. They call him a *glutton*, a *wine-drinker*, a *friend of publicans and sinners*. The last clause suggests, however, their chief objection. He associated with the common people, ate with publicans and sinners, and proclaimed that he came not to call righteous men, but sinners, ch. 5 : 32. He was a Friend, not of their sins, but of their souls. How evident it was from the illustration here given and the opposite modes of life of John the Baptist and Jesus that the trouble was in the hearts of these faultfinders, who were determined to be satisfied with nothing!

35. **But wisdom is**, rather *was*, **justified of**, rather *by*, **all her children.** The meaning is, But though both Christ and his forerunner were condemned by this childish generation, yet the divine wisdom (compare 1 Cor. 2 : 7) displayed in both of these characters, so dissimilar, was justified, acquitted, and approved on the part of her children, those who received her truth and observed her commands. By this language Jesus condemns the Jewish leaders and approves of those who had accepted his doctrine. The former were *childish*, like petulant, peevish children; the latter were *childlike*, teachable, confiding, and faithful. The conduct of the former was condemned by that of the latter. The way is thus

*A penitent woman anoints the feet of Jesus.*

- 36 <sup>a</sup>And one of the Pharisees desired him that he would eat with him. <sup>a</sup>And he went into the Pharisee's house, and sat down to meat. Mt. 26. 6; Mk. 14. 3; John 11. 2. ch. 11. 37; 14. 1.
- 37 And, behold, <sup>b</sup>a woman in the city, which was a sinner, when she knew that *Jesus* sat at meat in the John 11. 2.

prepared for the fearful woes that follow in Matt. 11 : 10-24; his prayer of thanksgiving and his tender invitation to all who were groaning under spiritual bondage to come to him for rest, Matt. 11 : 25-30.

36-50. JESUS DINES WITH SIMON THE PHARISEE, AND IS ANOINTED BY A PENITENT WOMAN. Luke alone relates this incident. It probably occurred very soon after the events just narrated; possibly in the vicinity of Nain. It is altogether different from the anointing related in Matt. 26 : 6-13; Mark 14 : 3-9 and John 12 : 2-8. This took place much earlier, in Galilee; that in Bethany, just before the crucifixion. This was in the house of Simon the Pharisee; that at the house of Simon the leper. Here a penitent woman, a sinner; there a female disciple. Here the anointing was the thankfulness of penitence and love; there for his burial. Here the woman is censured by the host; there by a disciple. Here a sinner is forgiven; there a female disciple is raised to the honor of an everlasting remembrance. A close examination will reveal other differences. That both occurred at the house of a Simon is not strange in a country where the name was very common. There are eight other Simons mentioned in the New Testament, two of them among the apostles, ch. 6 : 14-16. As the other evangelists omit this, so Luke omits the other. Why Luke does not relate the latter we can only conjecture. But of this we can rest assured—that it was not the design of the Spirit that any one evangelist should relate two anointings in some respects similar.

36. **One.** His name, as we incidentally learn from ver. 40, was Simon. It was not important to know the name of either this Pharisee or the penitent woman, since the incident here related is introduced to teach and illustrate certain great truths. **Desired him,** etc. Yet he was careful not to com-

promise himself by showing courtesies to Jesus, lest he should appear as a secret follower, vers. 44-46. Various motives probably induced Simon to invite Jesus, such as curiosity, pride,—since Jesus was very popular,—and some awakened interest in what Jesus had said or done. **Sat down to meat.** *Reclined at table,* according to the Oriental custom at meals. The guests reclined upon their left side, with their head supported by the left arm and their faces toward the table.

37. **A woman in the city which was a sinner.** According to the best manuscripts and the highest critical authorities, *A woman who was a sinner in the city*—that is, publicly, well known as such, one who was leading an unchaste life in the city. The whole narrative implies that she had been emphatically a sinner. *The city* most naturally refers either to Capernaum, his principal place of residence, or to Nain. It was more probably the latter, which is the last city mentioned in the narrative, ver. 11. The name of this woman is withheld, doubtless through delicacy and tenderness toward her. There is no sufficient reason for supposing her to have been Mary Magdalene. Luke introduces the latter in ch. 8 : 2 as one who had never been before mentioned by him. Because Mary Magdalene had been possessed with seven demons does not imply anything against her moral character or life. Injustice has too long been done her by using her name in relation to persons and societies connected with raising the fallen from a life of infamy. **When she knew,** etc. She sought him out. Her heart was already touched. She seems to have seen and heard Jesus. Possibly she had heard that invitation, "Come unto me," etc., Matt. 11 : 28-30. What part of the Pharisee's house it was, where they were dining, we are not told. It may have been in the open court around which the house was built. "In the East the

- Pharisee's house, °brought an alabaster box of ointment; and stood at his feet behind *him* °weeping, and began °to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe *them* with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with the ointment.
- 39 Now when the Pharisee which had bidden him saw *it*, he spake within himself, saying, 'This man, if he

°Mt. 26. 7.

°2 Cor. 7. 10.

°Ge. 18. 4; 1 Sam. 25. 41.

'ch. 15. 2.

meals are most commonly taken in an open court, or a room enclosed on three sides, admitting free access. We took a meal at the house of the consul at Tyre. It was an open area, and several natives dropped in without the least ceremony or restraint to see us."—M. W. JACOBUS. "An Oriental's house is by no means his castle. The universal prevalence of the law of hospitality—the very first of Eastern virtues—almost forces him to live with open doors, and any one at any time may have access to his rooms. When we were at a sheykh's house, the population took a great interest in inspecting us."—DR. FARRAR, *Life of Christ*, vol. i., p. 298. This was the best opportunity for this woman to express her gratitude. It appears to have been the custom then as now in some parts of the East to allow uninvited persons, and even such as the guests would not eat with, to enter the house, and even participate in the conversation going on at the table.

**Alabaster box.** One word in the original, meaning *alabaster*, and well expressed here by *alabaster vase* or *box*. Alabaster was a variety of gypsum, white and semi-transparent, very costly, and used for making vases and vials for ointments. It was considered by the ancients the best for preserving them. Layard found vases of white alabaster among the ruins of Nineveh, which were used for holding ointments or cosmetics. The general shape of these boxes or vases was large at the bottom, with a long, narrow neck. It was common to break this neck in order to open the flask. **Ointment**, an aromatic oil or perfumed unguent, probably obtained from certain trees.

38. **Stood at his feet behind him.** In his reclining position upon his left side his feet would be upon the couch away from the table behind him. See on ver. 36. It was customary to embrace the feet of rabbis or teach-

ers. In unostentatious modesty and in deep humility, in abasement and shame on account of her sins, she approached behind him, **weeping** tears of penitence, the silent language of the heart, which could not be expressed in words. **Began to wash his feet.** The word translated wash means to *wet, moisten, shower*. Her tears fell like rain upon his feet as she was about to anoint them. It was quite customary to put the sandals aside before eating, lest the couch on which they lay be soiled. **Did wipe them with the hairs of her head,** with the long tresses of hair which were flowing loose about her shoulders. "Dishevelled as in grief; most exquisite reverence!"—BENGEL. **Kissed his feet,** tenderly kissed his feet. The expression indicates fondness, affection. It was an act of penitent love. It was not unusual for persons to kiss the feet of a rabbi. **And anointed them with the ointment,** which before she had used entirely upon herself for adornment in her unhallowed life of sin. Notice that this woman in her gratitude and love only so far overcomes her feelings of shame and abasement as to anoint our Saviour's feet, but Mary, the sister of Lazarus, in the boldness of her faith and hope, anoints his head, Mark 14 : 3. Observe also that this woman came to anoint his feet. Her shower of tears and the wiping of his feet with her hair was not an anticipated offering, but the sudden outgushing of her heart, overflowing with penitence and love.

39. **When the Pharisee . . . saw.** Jesus accepts the offering in silence, but the self-righteous spirit of the Pharisee is shocked. Doubtless he was displeased at seeing such a woman enter, and at beholding her perform such an act to one of his guests. According to the traditions, her very touch would render Jesus unclean. **Spake within himself.** He assumes that Jesus is

were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman *this* is that toucheth him : \* for she is a sinner. \* ch. 18. 11 ; Is. 65. 5.

- 40 And Jesus answering said unto him, Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee. And he saith, Master,  
 41 say on. There was a certain creditor which had two debtors : the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty. And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me, therefore,  
 42 which of them will love him most? Simon answered b ch. 13. 4.  
 1 Mt. 18. 28.  
 2 Ps. 32. 1-5 ; 103. 3 ; Is. 43. 25 ; Mic. 7. 18 ; Ac. 13. 38, 39 ; Ro. 3. 24 ; Eph. 2. 8, 9.

ignorant of the character of the woman, and therefore permits the act. He does not for a moment suspect that Jesus would receive such attention from a sinner. **This man, if he were a prophet,** etc. The people regarded Jesus as a prophet, ver. 16. The Jews held that discerning of spirits was a sign of a true prophet, and especially of the Messiah, Isa. 11 : 3, 4 ; 1 Kings 14 : 6 ; 2 Kings 1 : 3 ; 5 : 26. According to the rabbins, one Bar Coziba, who professed to be the Messiah, was put to death because he could not at once tell who was a wicked person and who was not, according to Isa. 11 : 3. Simon, as a Pharisee, doubted concerning Jesus. The apparent ignorance of Jesus increased his doubts.

40. **Jesus answering.** To the thoughts and reasonings of Simon's heart. Jesus shows that he is more than a prophet, that he knew both Simon's heart and this woman's heart, and that her sins were forgiven. The answer of Jesus rather indicates that the doubts of Simon arose, not from malignant opposition, but from erroneous views of ceremonial uncleanness. **Simon, I have somewhat,** etc. A courteous and modest way of approaching his host, and at the same time a call for his special attention. As if he had said, With thy permission I have something to say to thee; shall I say it? **Master.** Rather, *Teacher.* The modesty and courtesy of Jesus calls forth a courteous reply.

41. Jesus presents to Simon a comparison or parable showing that a benefactor is loved in proportion to the benefits received. **A certain creditor,** a lender of money. **Two debtors** are the emphatic words in this sentence, and are the prominent persons in the parable. **Five hundred pence.** Rather, *den-*

*naries*, Roman silver coins worth fifteen cents each, in all amounting to seventy-five dollars. **Fifty pence,** denaries, equal to seven dollars and fifty cents. Money, however, was much more valuable then than now.

42. **And when they had nothing to pay.** Better, *And they having nothing to pay.* They were both bankrupt. If a person has nothing, he is equally a bankrupt whether his debt is large or small. Thus all are before God spiritual debtors and spiritually penniless. How the creditor found this out is not told, nor is it necessary to the parable. **He frankly forgave them both.** The meaning is he forgave them both as an act of kindness and grace. It was an act which would naturally call forth the love and gratitude of these creditors. Jesus then asks, **Tell me, therefore, which of them will love him most?** Jesus would also have the decision from the Pharisee himself, who would thus pronounce on his own case. This was one of Christ's ways of bringing truth home to the heart. Compare the good Samaritan, ch. 10 : 36, 37, and the vineyard let out to wicked husbandmen, Matt. 21 : 40, 41. It is natural to apply this parable to both the woman and the Pharisee, and hence some suppose that the latter had received from Jesus some kindness. Indeed, the presence of Jesus at his table was a kindness and a blessed privilege to the Pharisee. But to apply the parable strictly to the Pharisee would necessitate the supposition that the Pharisee had been forgiven, and that his love corresponded, ver. 47. But the circumstances which gave rise to this parable really demand only the application of the parable to the woman. Jesus is vindicating himself

and said, I suppose that *he* to whom he forgave most.  
And he said unto him, Thou hast rightly judged.

- 44 And he turned to the woman, and said unto Simon,  
Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house:  
thou gavest me no <sup>k</sup>water for my feet; but she hath <sup>k</sup>Ge. 18. 4; 19. 2;  
Judg. 19, 21.

and explaining the case of the woman. He does it the more pointedly by contrasting her conduct with that of the Pharisee. She showed great love, the Pharisee showed a want of love. And thus Jesus gives him a gentle hint that he is without forgiveness.

43. **I suppose.** Simon answers reverently and with frank discretion. There is evidently a softening of the haughty spirit manifested in his heart a little before, ver. 39. We are not to take it for granted that he understood why Jesus thus asked him. He doubtless expected some moral or religious application, but probably did not suspect that the question had reference to himself, perhaps as little as David had when he pronounced judgment on Nathan's parable, 2 Sam. 12: 5-7. He was probably astonished and confounded, not only with the knowledge that Jesus showed concerning himself and the woman, but also with the clear and forcible presentation of forgiveness and love. Christ's knowledge of Simon's inmost thoughts was an evidence to him that Jesus knew the state of this woman's heart. **Thou hast rightly judged.** Jesus speaks as the great Teacher. Simon must have felt that there was power and authority in his words, and he was not only pleased but chiefly impressed with Christ's confirmation of his answer.

OWEN remarks in this place: "We may here justly interpose a caution against the erroneous inference that a vile and notorious sinner, when brought into a state of penitence and belief in Christ, will of necessity surpass in self-sacrificing love one whose external conduct has been so correct that little or no outward change is seen in him when converted to God. This is not the point of the parable. It is simply that the child of grace who has a vivid sense of sin . . . will have a deeper and more abiding sense of his obligations than one whose spiritual vision is so dim that he has a very slight sense of sin and ill-desert. This clear per-

ception of sin, and the dreadful sense of doom which it deserves, are often found in persons who, like Bunyan and Newton, have been vile and open offenders; but it is often seen, and perhaps with equal if not greater frequency, in persons whose external deportment has been, like that of Brainerd, Martyn, and others, correct from their youth upward. It is the lively sense of sin and its consequences which calls forth gratitude in view of God's pardoning love." Yet it should be remembered that there are no little sinners in the sight of God. Every sinner who comes to Christ has had much forgiven, yet not every one has gone to the same extent of rebellion against God.

44-46. **And he turned to the woman,** requiring but a slight change of posture. All this time he had allowed the woman to do her work without specially observing her. Simon, however, had not been without special though contemptuous glances at her. **Seest thou this woman?** Implying that he had seen her, and calling attention to her as the one to whom he would specially apply the parable. **I entered into thy house,** as thy guest, on thy express invitation. *Thy* is emphatic, bringing forcibly to Simon's mind the contrast between his conduct toward Jesus and that of the woman. He gave *no water* for his feet; she, precious *tears*. He wiped his feet with no clean linen; she, with *the hair*, the glory of her head. He gave him not even a *kiss*; she *ceased not* to kiss even his feet. He did not anoint his head with *oil*; she anointed his feet with the more costly and precious *ointment*.

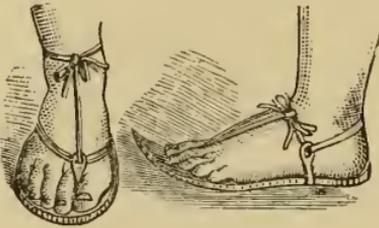
The Pharisee omitted the customary tokens of hospitality. He may have thought it a sufficient condescension and kindness to have invited Jesus to his table. Yet he exhibited at least a want of attention in that he made no effort to show courtesy to Jesus. Indeed, he seems to have done as little as possible without appearing specially censurable.

**Water for my feet.** A common

washed my feet with tears, and wiped *them* with the  
 45 hairs of her head. Thou gavest me no <sup>1</sup>kiss: but this  
 woman since the time I came in hath not ceased to  
 46 kiss my feet. <sup>m</sup>My head with oil thou didst not  
 anoint: but this woman hath anointed my feet with  
 47 ointment. <sup>n</sup>Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins,  
 ° which are many, are forgiven; for <sup>p</sup>she loved much:  
 but to whom little is forgiven, *the same loveth lit-*

<sup>1</sup> Ge. 33. 4; 2 Sam.  
 15. 5.  
<sup>m</sup> Ps. 23. 5; Ro. 3.  
 3.  
<sup>n</sup> 1 Tim. 1. 14.  
<sup>p</sup> Is. 1. 18; 55. 7;  
 Ro. 5. 20; 1 Cor.  
 6. 9-11.  
<sup>p</sup> 2 Cor. 5. 14, 15;  
 1 John 4. 19.

civility in the East, where the feet, without stockings and with sandals, become



SANDALS.

soiled and dusty, Gen. 18 : 4 ; Judg. 19 : 21. Some would apologize for Simon because Jesus had not come from a journey. But this was a very customary civility to strangers before all meals. The words of Jesus imply that there had been some neglect, or at least no pains in bestowing attention upon him. **Washed my feet.** Better, *wet my feet*, the same as in ver. 38. **No kiss**, a common salutation of friendship, Ex. 4 : 27 ; 18 : 7 ; Acts 20 : 37. It is still common in the East. The words of Jesus imply that the custom was common then. **Since the time I came in.** It seems that she followed Jesus very soon after his entering the house. She had come to express her gratitude and love, and had eagerly embraced the first opportunity. **My head . . . didst not anoint.** It was common to anoint the head with oil at feasts, Ps. 23 : 5 ; 141 : 5. Olive oil was generally used. The words of Jesus show that it was then a common civility to guests and strangers. This woman in her humility, not presuming to anoint his head, **anointed his feet.**

47. **Wherefore I say unto you.** Her love was an evidence of forgiveness. Jesus speaks with authority and as one that knows. That he knew Simon's

thoughts as well as he did this woman's, who was an entire stranger to him personally, was an evidence to Simon that he now knew her sins forgiven. **Her sins, which are many**, or more exactly, *her many sins have been forgiven*, as proved by her love. Jesus forgives a penitent not merely a part, but all his sins. **For she loved much.** Jesus introduces this verse with **wherefore**, giving a conclusion drawn from the principle laid down in his parable, as applied to the woman. So also here he gives a reason introduced by **for**. He does not, however, give her love as a ground of merit, the ground of her forgiveness, but as the evidence of it. Her acts showed her love and also her faith in Jesus, ver. 50. Her love was an index of her heart, broken and contrite, blessed of God and forgiven. The parable and context point to this view. Jesus had brought Simon to the decision that whoever was forgiven much loved much (vers. 42, 43), and hence that forgiveness is followed by love as an effect or result. This woman exhibited great love, and hence *her sins are already forgiven*. And this accords with what follows, **but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little**, love arising from forgiveness. If love was the cause of forgiveness, then the language would more naturally be, "he that loveth little, the same is forgiven little." And this teaching of Jesus is in harmony with God's word and Christian experience. "We love him because he first loved us," 1 John 4 : 19.

This last clause, **to whom little is forgiven**, is generally applied to Simon. In his own estimation he had but few sins, and they were forgiven; he felt himself but little indebted to Jesus for any kindness or favor bestowed; hence he had but little gratitude or love to manifest toward him. Indeed, the **ian**

- 48 tle. And he said unto her, <sup>a</sup>Thy sins are forgiven. <sup>a</sup>Mt. 9. 2; Mk. 2.  
 49 And they that sat at meat with him began to say <sup>b</sup>within themselves, <sup>c</sup>Who is this that forgiveth sins <sup>b</sup>Mt. 9. 3; Mt. 2. 7.  
 50 also? And he said to the woman, <sup>d</sup>Thy faith hath <sup>c</sup>ch. 8. 48; 13. 42;  
 saved thee; <sup>e</sup>go in peace. <sup>d</sup>Mt. 9. 22; Mk.  
<sup>e</sup>10. 52; Eph. 2. 8.  
<sup>f</sup>Ro. 5. 1.

guage is such that Simon might infer that his sins had not been forgiven, since he had neglected to show toward Jesus the common courtesies of life. He must have felt that, in contrast to this woman, he had really done nothing worthy of the name of courtesy, and that he totally lacked that love which she exhibited; and hence he had showed no evidence of sins forgiven. If, therefore, these words specially apply to Simon, they are one of those tender but telling sentences of Jesus which contain much more than at first appears. I do not, however, see a real necessity of supposing that Jesus referred particularly to Simon in contrast to the woman. The clause, "To whom little is forgiven" is, after all, but a fuller statement of the principle brought out in the parable, which every one, and Simon among them, could apply to himself. And if Simon did faithfully apply it to his own heart and acts, he could discover nothing but condemnation. "Great forbearance! Simon's conscience might have answered, *Nothing is forgiven me, therefore I love thee not at all.*"—STIER.

48. Turning from Simon to the woman, Jesus assures her personally, **Thy sins are forgiven.** Her sins had been forgiven before; she was in a forgiven state, as her love indicated. This she hoped and felt, but now she is assured of the fact by the Saviour himself. She had been justified before God, now she is justified before men. We see that persons may be forgiven on simple faith, ver. 50, without this lively and personal assurance.

49. At this declaration of Jesus the guests at table in amazement **began to say** (ch. 5 : 21) **within themselves.** They spoke in low tones or in their thoughts. This appears to have been the language of surprise and astonishment rather than of malignant opposition. There is no charge of blasphemy, as in ch. 5 : 21. **Who is this?** Who is he, what his character, that such strange words proceed from his lips? Some understand the sense to be, "*Who*

*is this insolent one?*" It seems hardly required by the context. **That forgiveth sins also?** Rather, *That also, or even, forgiveth sins.* He had raised the dead (vers. 14, 15), and had shown a knowledge of this woman's character, although a stranger to him; but here was something that appeared greater still, the power of forgiving sins. This was a prerogative that belonged to God alone. Who, then, could this be? It was a problem which raised their astonishment, and doubtless in some of them aroused opposition, but which they could not solve.

50. Jesus leaves Simon and the guests to their own thoughts while he further attends to the spiritual wants of this woman. He would not have her nor any in his hearing mistake the ground or the means of her pardon. **Thy faith hath saved thee.** Not *thy love, but thy faith.* And not *thy faith* as a ground of merit, but as an instrument or medium by or through which salvation is received, Rom. 5 : 1. She had embraced the Saviour's invitation, "Come unto me," etc. See on ver. 37. She had come to Jesus in faith and received pardon. Jesus ever emphasized faith, ch. 8 : 48; 17 : 19. It was a word of consolation to her soul, and it pointed to a living fact in her history, exciting her to live by faith. **Go in peace,** a common phrase at parting among the Jews (1 Sam. 1 : 17), like our "Good-bye," or "God be with you." It was not an unmeaning parting word in the mouth of Jesus. Literally, *Go away into peace,* in a state of peaceful serenity and of peace with God, and into such a state in the future and at the end of thy course. It was a parting blessing looking both to a present and a future condition and enjoyment. In other words, Go in the abiding enjoyment of peace.

"Our Lord here approached the believing sinner and enriched her in four general steps, prefigurative of how he will deal with others. First he silently received her approach; then he turned

upon her the light of his countenance; next he addressed specially to her the word of assurance; and last of all he sent her again into the world in the peace of faith."—STIER.

#### REMARKS.

1. Christ is the Wonderful in his words, his deeds, and his saving power, vers. 1-10; Isa. 9 : 6.

2. Soldiers are encouraged to look to Jesus, ver. 2; ch. 3 : 14; 23 : 47; Acts 10 : 1.

3. Acts of beneficence, when done with right motives, are pleasing to God and are to be commended by men, vers. 3-5; Mark 12 : 43; 14 : 8, 9; 2 Cor. 9 : 7.

4. The centurion presents a beautiful example of faith—a belief on testimony, an unwavering confidence in the power of Jesus, and that his power was not limited to time and place, showing itself in earnest entreaty and drawing to itself divine compassion, vers. 3-8.

5. We also have in the centurion a striking exhibition of humility. What thoughts does he have of himself, notwithstanding his prosperous circumstances and his honorable station, and what high veneration for Jesus! Humility rests on faith and is inseparable from it, vers. 6-8.

6. The centurion's faith was condemnatory of the unbelief of the Jews. It was a foreshadowing of that faith by which the Gentiles should surpass Israel, ver. 9; Matt. 8 : 10, 11; Rom. 9 : 31, 32.

7. Faith in Jesus receives an immediate answer, but the evidence of it may not be seen at the moment. By inquiry it was found that the answer of Jesus to the centurion's prayer of faith was immediate, ver. 10; Matt. 8 : 13; Acts 9 : 11.

8. The more we confide in Jesus, the more is he pleased. We cannot put too great a burden of faith upon him, vers. 9, 10; Matt. 15 : 28.

9. Jesus did nothing in vain. His journeys, his walks, his visits, and his rests were all to some purpose. He went to Nain just at the right time, ver. 11; Matt. 4 : 18; John 11 : 4, 6, 11.

10. The young may die. Their bloom and vigor cannot shield them

from the destroyer, ver. 12; ch. 8 : 42, 49; Ps. 90 : 12.

11. Jesus is full of compassion for the afflicted and the sorrowing, ver. 13; ch. 4 : 18, 19; Rev. 5 : 5; 21 : 3, 4.

12. Jesus is the resurrection and the life. By such cases as this, the daughter of Jairus, and Lazarus, he gave proof of his divinity and his power to raise all the dead, vers. 14, 15; John 11 : 25.

13. Jesus has power to quicken dead souls, vers. 14, 15; John 5 : 25; Eph. 2 : 1.

14. The fact that nothing is given of the conversations of this and other men raised to life is an indirect evidence of the inspiration of the gospel. A spurious gospel would have given with great boldness the figments of fancy. God does not intend that we should know more than his word reveals of the other world, ver. 15.

15. Jesus gave the most unmistakable evidence of his Messiahship openly to the people, vers. 11, 16, 17; ver. 10.

16. Our service on earth may not cease with our active labors: in trials and afflictions we may be called to suffer, like John in prison, the will of God, ver. 18; 1 Pet. 4 : 19.

17. It is our duty to study the evidences, and to be fully satisfied that Jesus is the Christ, vers. 19, 20; 1 Pet. 1 : 10, 11.

18. The proofs of the Messiahship of Jesus, from miracles, fulfilment of prophecy, and the preaching of the gospel, are unanswerable and constantly increasing, vers. 21, 22; John 14 : 12; Rev. 19 : 10; Matt. 24 : 14.

19. The miracles of Jesus were types of the spiritual deliverances he brings to the soul, ver. 22; Ps. 146 : 8; Isa. 35 : 3-6; 61 : 1.

20. Let us not be offended with Jesus because prophecy is slowly fulfilled and his cause slowly advances, or because sin abounds and judgment is delayed from coming upon the wicked, ver. 23; 2 Pet. 3 : 9, 10.

21. Beware of flattery. Jesus spoke words of warning, reproof, and encouragement to John through his disciples, but waited their departure before speaking of him in the highest terms. How unlike the world, who praise to the face, but traduce behind the back! vers. 24-28; Ps. 12 : 3; Prov. 26 : 28.

22. How poor an account of gospel blessings can many give who attend upon the preaching of the word! vers. 24, 25; Heb. 5 : 11, 12.

23. How exalted and responsible the position of the Christian minister, who is not only more than a prophet, but even greater than John himself! ver. 28; Eph. 3 : 8.

24. All the prophets and the law until John unite in their testimony that Jesus is the Christ, ver. 27; Matt. 11 : 13, 14; Acts 10 : 43.

25. The most unpromising classes often accept the gospel, while the more highly favored reject it, vers. 29, 30; Matt. 8 : 10-12.

26. Religious cavilers are fickle and childish in their opposition to Christ, his cause, his ministers and people, and the arrangements of his grace and providence, vers. 31-35.

27. The same objections essentially are raised against divine truth now as in the days of John and Christ—the law is too severe, the gospel too lax, vers. 33, 34; 1 Cor. 1 : 23.

28. The children of wisdom sanction the divine arrangements, having learned their fitness and necessity by happy experience. "First, the law, then the gospel; first, death, then life; first, penitence and sorrow, then joy; first, the Baptist, then Christ."—LANGE, ver. 35; 1 Cor. 5 : 24; Rom. 1 : 16.

29. You may show outward respect to Christ and contribute of your means to his cause, yet remain unsaved, ver. 36; Matt. 7 : 21-23.

30. Sinners should resort to Jesus. He came to save them. The greatness of their sins should only hasten their approach, ver. 37; ch. 15 : 2, 7; 10 : 32; 1 Tim. 1 : 15.

31. The proper way to come to Jesus is in penitence, faith, and love, ver. 38; ch. 18 : 14.

32. The self-righteous heart naturally rebels against the doctrine of salvation by grace, and pardon to the most notorious sinners, if penitent and believing, ver. 39; Isa. 65 : 5; 1 Cor. 1 : 23.

33. Jesus knows our hearts, ver. 40; John 2 : 24, 25.

34. The kindness and hospitality of friends should not excuse us from faithfulness and duty to them, ver. 40; Lev. 19 : 17; Col. 4 : 6.

35. Sinners are debtors to God for a

life of perfect obedience. Their own righteousness being but filthy rags, they have nothing to pay, vers. 41, 42; Isa. 64 : 6; Matt. 5 : 26; 6 : 12; John 16 : 8; Rom. 2 : 5; 3 : 23.

36. Pardon is through grace, ver. 42; Rom. 4 : 16; Eph. 1 : 6, 7; 2 : 5.

37. Love is essential to godliness, vers. 42, 43; 1 Cor. 13 : 1; 1 John 4 : 7-18.

38. Love to Christ will manifest itself in the words and acts of daily life, and especially in expressions of gratitude and in religious service, vers. 44-46; John 5 : 42, 43; 1 John 3 : 16, 17; 1 John 5 : 3.

39. We should treat with great tenderness the sinner, however many or great his sins, who feels his guilt and would look to Jesus for forgiveness, ver. 47; Matt. 11 : 28-30; 12 : 20, 21.

40. God's gracious love, which secures to us our salvation, is the foundation of our love to him, ver. 47; 1 John 4 : 10, 19.

41. Jesus alone can forgive sins, ver. 48; Acts 5 : 31; Isa. 1 : 18; John 6 : 37; Eph. 1 : 7; Heb. 8 : 12; 1 John 1 : 7.

42. The displays of Christ's power and mercy too often inspire only wonder in those who behold, ver. 49; Acts 13 : 41.

43. The consciousness of forgiveness leads not to presumption, but to humility and obedience, vers. 47-50; Eph. 4 : 32.

44. Faith is the instrument or medium of our salvation. A believing soul is at peace with God, ver. 50; Rom. 5 : 1, 2; Eph. 2 : 5.

## CHAPTER VIII.

Luke begins this chapter with a reference to our Lord's second missionary tour throughout Galilee (vers. 1-3); then he gives the parable of the sower and its interpretation (9-18), and an incident illustrating the relation of Jesus to his relatives and his disciples, 19-21. The evangelist then proceeds to relate several of our Lord's most wonderful miracles—the stilling of the storm (22-25); the healing of the demoniac of Gerasa (26-39); the raising of Jairus' daughter and the cure of a diseased woman, 40-56.

1-3. JESUS WITH THE TWELVE MAKES A SECOND PREACHING TOUR

*Jesus makes a second general preaching tour in Galilee.*

VIII. AND it came to pass afterward, that he went throughout every city and village, preaching and shewing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God: and 2 the twelve *were* with him, and <sup>u</sup> certain women, which <sup>v</sup> had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities, Mary called Magdalene, <sup>w</sup> out of whom went seven devils,

<sup>u</sup> Mt. 27. 55, 56.

<sup>v</sup> Mk. 16. 9.

THROUGHOUT GALILEE. Certain women who had been healed attend him and minister to him. This tour probably occupied two or three months of the summer, A. D. 28. Recorded only by Luke.

1. **Afterward**, after the events related in the preceding chapter, *following* them, or *soon after* (Revised version). Not much time intervened. Compare ch. 1 : 3, note on "in order." Indeed, we may conceive that this preaching tour really commenced upon our Lord's leaving Capernaum for Nain (ch. 7 : 11); and after remaining there and in its vicinity a little time, it is continued as here related. **He went throughout**, or *journeyed through*, **every city and village**. This is strong and popular language, meaning that he made a general and extensive preaching tour from city to city and from village to village. **City**, a walled town. **Village**, a town without walls. **Preaching**, heralding, announcing. **Showing the glad tidings**. Proclaiming or publishing the glad tidings of the Saviour and his reign. Luke's language is full and emphatic. We catch a glimpse of the activity and abundant labors of Jesus. He preached publicly, everywhere, and to all classes. This was in marked contrast to the exclusiveness of Pharisaic instruction.

**Kingdom of God**. See on ch. 4 : 43. **The twelve were with him**, as his attendants and as learners. They were with him as his witnesses also (Acts 1 : 21, 22), and were becoming prepared for their future work.

2. **And certain women**. A circle of female disciples had been gathered to him from thankful love, and appear to have attended to a considerable extent upon the ministry of Jesus in his journeys. Luke again refers to them in ch. 23 : 55 and 24 : 10. "It was a Jewish custom for women, especially widows, to aid public teachers from

their private property, and therefore to accompany them in their journeys."—**BENGEL. Evil spirits**. Demons. **Infirmities**. Various and inveterate diseases. Luke, a physician, distinguishes between demoniacal possessions and diseases.

**Mary called Magdalene**, or *the Magdalene*, from Magdala, now the village of Mejdal, on the west coast of the Sea of Galilee. She was a woman of some property, as is evident from her ministering to the wants of Jesus, and from the position of her name, not only in connection with but even before that of Joanna, the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward, who, from his official position, must have acquired considerable wealth. Tradition has confounded her with the sinner in ch. 7 : 37, but without evidence or reason. Naming charitable institutions for fallen women "Magdalene hospitals," etc., is unwarranted by Scripture, and is little less than a libelous implication. Neither is she to be confounded with Mary, who anointed Jesus in Bethany, John 12 : 3. She was one of the two women who saw the burial of Jesus (Mark 15 : 47), and one of those who prepared spices and ointment to embalm him. She was early at the tomb on the first day of the week; and lingering there after the other disciples had retired, she was the first to see her Lord, Mark 16 : 1; John 20 : 11-18.

**Out of whom went seven devils**, demons. This is to be taken literally, not figuratively, of sins. It no more follows that persons possessed of demons were unusually dissolute than that insane persons are pre-eminently depraved. *Seven* is a sacred number of completeness, and may mean the definite number *seven* or may be used indefinitely for *several*, Ruth 4 : 15; 1 Sam. 2 : 5; Isa. 4 : 1; Matt. 12 : 45. It probably implies here that her whole nature had been under demoniacal con-

3 and \*Joanna, the wife of Chuza Herod's steward, and Susanna, and many others, † which ministered unto him of their substance. <sup>\* ch. 24. 10.</sup> <sup>† 2 Cor. 8. 9.</sup>

*Parable of the sower.*

4 \*And when much people were gathered together, and were come to him out of every city, he spake by a 5 parable: A sower went out to sow his seed: and as <sup>\* Mt. 13. 3; Mk 4. 3.</sup>

trol. It is also implied, as in Mark 16 : 9 it is plainly asserted, that Jesus cast out these demons.

3. **Joanna, the wife of Chuza Herod's steward.** The connection implies this one also had been dispossessed of an evil spirit or cured of some serious malady. She is again mentioned in ch. 24 : 10. *Joanna*, the feminine of *John*. **Chuza** was a house-steward of Herod Antipas, tetrarch of Galilee (ch. 3 : 1), a manager of his property, concerns, and household affairs. It has been conjectured that he was that nobleman whose son Jesus healed, and who believed with all his house, John 4 : 46, 53. He was evidently a man of some note, and his wife must have been able to contribute largely to the support of Jesus and the twelve. "Professor Blunt has observed in his *Coincidences* that we find a reason here why Herod should say to his *servants* (Matt. 14 : 2), 'This is John the Baptist,' . . . because *his steward's wife* was a disciple of Jesus, and so there would be frequent mention of him among the servants in Herod's court."—ALFORD. Perhaps Joanna was now a widow, and was thus able to devote her time and property to the service of Jesus.

**Susanna** means *Lily*. It is also implied that she had been delivered from demoniacal possession or from some disease by the Saviour's power. This is the only place where she is mentioned.

**Ministered unto him**, according to the highest critical authorities, *to them*, to Jesus and the twelve. **Of their substance**, of their possession, property. Thus not all our Lord's followers were poor. These female disciples appear to have belonged to a class who were in good worldly circumstances. Jesus condescended to live on the gifts and charities of his followers. "He who supported the spiritual life of his people did not disdain to be supported

by them bodily. He was not ashamed to descend to so deep a poverty that he lived on the charities of love. It was only others that he fed miraculously; for himself he lived upon the love of his people."—OLSHAUSEN.

4-15. **THE PARABLE OF THE SOWER.** The various receptions that men give to the word of God. The causes and the consequences, Matt. 13 : 1-18; Mark 4 : 1-21. Mark's account is somewhat the fullest. Luke is the briefest. Indeed, Luke gives but one parable at this point, while Matthew gives seven and Mark three. Yet Luke is rich in parables, such as the importunate friend, ch. 11 : 5-8; the good Samaritan, ch. 10 : 30-37; the rich fool, ch. 12 : 16-21, etc. See chapters 15, 16.

4. **Much people.** Jesus was bringing to an end his second preaching tour throughout Galilee. He was now probably at or near Capernaum. As near the close of his first general preaching circuit, when the crowds of people and the interest were at their height, he delivered the sermon on the mount (Matt. 4 : 23-5 : 1), so now, near the end of this circuit, when a *great multitude* had gathered together of those who had come to him out of every city round about, he speaks to the people in parables. According to Matthew and Mark, the concourse was so great that Jesus went up into a ship and addressed the people, who stood on the shore. A little before this he had healed a blind and dumb demoniac, and the scribes and Pharisees charged him with casting out demons through Beelzebub, the prince of demons, Matt. 12 : 22-45; Mark 3 : 19-30.

**A parable.** The Greek word thus translated comes from a verb meaning *to throw beside*, *to compare*. Hence a parable in the most comprehensive sense is a *placing beside* or *together*, a *comparing*, and may apply to any il-

he sowed, some fell by the wayside; and it was trod-

illustration from analogy, a comparison, similitude, allegory, figurative or poetical discourse, dark saying or proverb, Num. 23 : 7; Job 27 : 1; Ps. 49 : 4; 78 : 2; Matt. 13 : 35. In Luke 4 : 23 it is properly translated *proverb*. Indeed, Luke is less strict in his use of the word than either Matthew or Mark, ch. 5 : 36; 6 : 39. John does not use the word. In a more restricted sense it denotes an illustration of moral and religious truth drawn from events which take place among mankind. The narrative or discourse may be fictitious, but it must be within the limits of probability, else it becomes a fable. Teaching by parables was common in the East, especially among the Jews, 2 Sam. 12 : 1-14; Isa. 5 : 1-5; Ezek. 19 : 1-9.

THE PARABLES OF CHRIST were of the more restricted kind, and deserve especial notice. *First*, they were not *fables*. Fables illustrate human character and conduct; the parables of Christ illustrate moral and spiritual truths. Fables are founded upon supposed words and acts of brutes or inanimate things; the parables of Christ were all founded upon common and familiar incidents in nature and human experience, and all drawn, with one exception, from the present world. None of them was even necessarily fictitious. *Facts* are better than fiction; and Jesus with his omniscience had before him all events connected with the present and future world. It should also be noted that Jesus never uses the fable. His teaching demanded a higher kind of illustration. Compare the fables of Jotham (Judg. 9 : 8-15) and Joash (2 Kings 14 : 1) with the parables of this chapter.

*Second*, they were not *proverbs*. Proverbs are brief, sententious sayings expressing in simple or figurative language the result of human experience or observation. The parables of Christ are more extended, illustrating truth neither obscurely nor briefly, but plainly and in detail. In general it may be said that parables are expanded proverbs and proverbs are concentrated parables. Compare the proverbs, "Physician, heal thyself" (Luke 4 : 23), "A prophet is not without honor, save in his own country," etc. (Matt. 13 : 57), with the

parable of the wicked husbandmen, Matt. 21 : 33-44. Yet many a proverb expanded would be a fable or an allegory.

*Third*, neither were they *allegories*. Dr. Trenchard well remarked that "the parable differs from the allegory in form rather than in essence." The allegory bears to the parable a relation similar to that which the metaphor bears to the simile or comparison. Thus, "That man is a fox" is a metaphor, but "That man is like a fox" is a simile or comparison. So "I am the true vine," etc. (John 15 : 1-8), is an allegory, but "The kingdom of heaven is like the grain of mustard," etc., is a parable. In the parable one thing is *compared with* another, the two kept separate and standing side by side; but in the allegory the two are united and mingled together, and the thing which represents is really invested with the attributes and powers of that which is represented. Thus the allegory is self-interpreting; at least the interpretation is contained within itself. In Bunyan's allegory the imaginary Christian is invested with the attributes and powers of the real one, and thus the signification is mingled with the fictitious narrative. But the parable, strictly speaking, contains in itself only the types which illustrate something without and running parallel with them. Thus in the parables of Christ various facts in the world are made to illustrate great moral and spiritual facts and truths which are always kept separate, yet are always parallel. Compare the allegories of John 10 : 1-16; 15 : 1-8 with the parables of this chapter, or the parable in Isa. 3 : 1-7 with the allegory in Ps. 80 : 8-16.

The parables of Christ were thus the illustration of spiritual things by an analogy of facts and incidents in everyday life and human experience. Their design (ver. 10) and the right mode of expounding them (11-15) will appear as we proceed.

5. **A sower.** Rather, *the sower*, representing the whole class of sowers. The scene was a very familiar one to his hearers. **Went out**, once upon a time from his house, from the village

6 den down, and the fowls of the air devoured it. And some fell upon a rock; and as soon as it was sprung up, it withered away, because it lacked moisture.  
7 And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprang up with it, and choked it. And other fell on good ground, and sprang up, and bare fruit an hundred-

or city. The time is indefinite, but the fact was of common occurrence. Possibly a sower was near at hand in a neighboring field, thus making the parable the more striking and impressive. The sowing season began with October and continued to the end of February. It is not improbable that it was now October.

**Some fell.** Or, more literally, *One fell*, one seed or one portion of seed fell. **By the wayside.** Fields were very commonly unenclosed, or separated only by a narrow footpath. The ordinary roads also were not fenced. Hence the seed of the sower was liable to fall beyond the ploughed field upon the hard ground, path, or road which formed the wayside. The seed was thus exposed to a double danger. It was **trodden down** by travellers passing along the way, an incident noticed only by Luke, and **the fowls of the air**, the birds, such as the lark, sparrow, and raven (ch. 12: 24), **devoured it**.

**6. And some.** Rather, *Another seed or portion of seed fell*, etc. Just as it is now common to say in graphic discourse, "One here, and another there." **Upon the rock**, upon a rocky surface slightly covered with earth. "There was the rocky ground of the hillside protruding here and there through the corn-fields, as elsewhere through the grassy slopes."—STANLEY. It would therefore soon be warmed and soon parched. The seed would spring up quickly, Matt. 13: 5; Mark 4: 5.

**6. As soon as it was sprung up, or springing up, it withered away.** The grain sprang up quickly above the surface, and then quickly died. The hot Oriental sun soon scorched it with its beams, evaporating its vital juices, and **because it lacked moisture**, there being no chance for the plant to grow downward, it withered away.

**7. And some.** *Another seed or portion of seed*, as in ver. 6. **Among**

**thorns.** *Into the midst of or among the thorns*, where the roots of the thorns remained, not having been carefully extirpated. These **sprang up with it** above the surface, and **choked**, strangled, stifled the grain, by pressing upon it, overtopping it, shading it, and exhausting the soil, and hence it yielded no fruit. Thorny shrubs and plants abound in Palestine. "The traveller finds them in his path, go where he may. Many of them are small, but some grow as high as a man's head. The rabbinical writers say that there are no less than twenty-two words in the Hebrew Bible denoting thorny and prickly plants."—DR. HACKETT, *Scripture Illustrations*, p. 134.

**8. And other.** *And another*, as in ver. 6. **On good ground.** *Into the good ground*, the rich, deep soil; neither hard and beaten, nor rocky, nor infested with thorns, but well prepared for receiving the seed. It therefore **sprang up and bare fruit**. Luke states only the highest amount, **a hundredfold**, while Matthew and Mark give the different increase, thirty, sixty, and a hundredfold, the former descending from the highest to the lowest; the latter rising from the lowest to the highest. The independence of the evangelists may thus be incidentally seen, and it also shows how little importance is to be attached to such slight differences.

**Hundredfold.** Thus Isaac, when sojourning in the land of the Philistines, is said to have sowed and "received in the same year a hundredfold," Gen. 26: 12. Herodotus mentions two hundredfold as a common yield in the plain of Babylon, and sometimes three. DR. J. P. NEWMAN (*From Dan to Beersheba*, p. 396) says of the plain of Gennesaret, which may have been near where Jesus was speaking, "Equalling in fertility the plains of Jericho, it is well watered, and its soil is in part a rich black mould. . . . Were it cultivated with intelligence and taste, it would be the

fold. And when he had said these things, he cried, He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

9 <sup>a</sup>And his disciples asked him, saying, What might <sup>a</sup>Mt. 13. 10; Mk. 4  
10 this parable be? And he said, Unto you it is given <sup>10</sup>.  
to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God: but to  
others in parables; that seeing they might not see, <sup>b</sup>Mt. 13. 18; Mk.  
11 and hearing they might not understand. <sup>b</sup>Now the <sup>4. 14.</sup>

paradise of Northern Palestine, producing the choicest fruits luxuriantly, and possessing an eternal spring. Even now, notwithstanding its neglected state, it is dotted with magnificent corn-fields and with groves of dwarf-palms." Jesus too was familiar with the fertile plain of Esdraelon, directly below Nazareth, which could yield grain enough, if properly cultivated, to support the entire population at present in Palestine.

When he had said these things, this parable, he cried, exclaimed in loud and distinct tones, so that all could hear, in order to give emphasis to what he had just spoken. He that hath ears, etc. A call to candid and serious attention. He that can hear, let him now seriously attend and understand the solemn truths taught by this parable.

9. His disciples asked him. When he was alone, Mark 4 : 10. What might this parable be? or better, *What this parable was, what it meant?* The parable just delivered gave occasion for asking not only concerning this parable, but also, according to Matthew (13 : 10), concerning the design of parables generally: "Why speakest thou unto them in parables?" And in the reply of Jesus here recorded both questions are answered, the latter in the next verse. The inquiries of the disciples imply that this was the first time that Jesus taught the multitude by parabolic discourses. Before this his teaching had been plain and direct, intermingled with occasional similitudes, as in the sermon on the mount. But now "without a parable spake he not unto them," Mark 4 : 34.

10. In his reply Jesus speaks first respecting parables generally as used by him in illustrating the things of his kingdom. He uses them, in order that the mysteries of the kingdom might be veiled to the hardened and ill-designing, but illustrated to his believing followers. Unto you it is given to know, etc.

Given by the sovereign will and good pleasure of God, and to hearts prepared by divine grace. Compare Matt. 19 : 11; John 3 : 27; 19 : 11. Unto you is emphatic and in contrast to others, *the rest*, who are not my disciples. The hardened and ill-designing multitude is here specially referred to. The separation between Christians and the world is brought into view. **Mysteries.** *The secrets*, the truths concerning the kingdom of Christ, hitherto hidden, but now being revealed. Mystery refers not to that which is incomprehensible in its own nature, but to what is unrevealed. See Rom. 16 : 25, 28; 1 Cor. 2 : 7, 8; 15 : 51; 1 Tim. 3 : 16; Eph. 1 : 9, 10. **Kingdom of God.** See on ch. 4 : 43. The great truths of the gospel were entrusted and made known to his followers, not to the opposing scribes and Pharisees. Even what prophets had foretold was a mystery to the worldly-minded multitude, 1 Cor. 2 : 14.

To others in parables, implying that parables may veil and darken truth to some, while they illustrate it to others.

That seeing, etc. A full quotation from Isa. 6 : 9. Mark gives the quotation more fully than Luke; Matthew (13 : 14, 15) the fullest of all. The hardness of heart exhibited under the preaching of Isaiah was but a type of that greater hardness which should be shown by the unbelieving Jewish people in the rejection of Christ and his gospel, John 12 : 40; Acts 28 : 26, 27; Rom. 11 : 8. That expresses a purpose, and not a mere result. On account of sin they are left to spiritual deafness and blindness. That seeing clearly and distinctly the external form, as of the parables, they might not—rather, *may not*—perceive the hidden truth and spiritual meaning. And hearing distinctly and clearly the words by which the truths of the gospel are announced, they *may not understand* their spiritual meaning. They

- 12 parable is this: °The seed is the word of God. Those by the wayside are they that hear; then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved. They on the rock *are they*, which, when they hear, <sup>d</sup>receive the word with joy; and these have no root, which for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away.

\* Col. 1. 5, 6; Jam. 1. 21; 1 Pet. 1 23-25.

<sup>d</sup> Ps. 106. 12, 13.

have faculties and opportunities, but they will not rightly use them. Though they have moral and intellectual powers, they are righteously given over to their spiritual blindness and deafness.

11-15. INTERPRETATION OF THE PARABLE OF THE SOWER. Matt. 13 : 18-23; Mark 4 : 13-20. These three accounts are very similar, yet with the differences of independent narratives. Luke is shortest, and Mark somewhat the longest.

11. **The parable is this.** Jesus proceeds to answer the question asked above, ver. 9, to interpret the parable. Compare 40 : 12. **The seed** is made prominent by Luke. **The word of God.** The truths of the gospel. See 1 Pet. 1 : 23. The Bible is the great treasure of gospel seed. What a responsibility resting on those who have it!

12. This parable divides the hearers of the gospel into four classes: the thoughtless, the superficial and fickle, the worldly, and the truly pious. **Those by the wayside**, the thoughtless hearers, represented by the seed sown by the wayside. The fate of the seed is inseparable from the fate of the man; it can, therefore, truthfully represent the man. **They that hear**, by the ear, with no impression on the heart, like seed on the hard and trodden wayside. **The devil.** See on ch. 4 : 2. **Taketh away**, like the birds picking up the grain. He not only does this himself, but by his agents, wicked men and evil spirits, and also by evil thoughts and desires; and, indeed, by anything which will take away the attention from the truths of the gospel. **The word out of their hearts**, which had produced no impression upon it. The heart was indeed the soil on which the seed fell, Matt. 13 : 19. **Lest they should believe.** Rather, *That they may not believe and be saved.* Satan would keep them from salvation by keeping them in unbelief, 2 Cor. 4 : 3, 4.

13. The stony ground, or superficial and fickle hearers. **They on the rock are they**, etc. They are the ones whose case is represented by the seed, etc. These do not merely hear the word incidentally; not mere passive hearers, but emotional and somewhat thoughtful, they **with joy receive the word.** Hearing the glad tidings and thinking upon the pleasures and gains of salvation, they are at once highly pleased and delighted, without counting the cost, Luke 14 : 25-33. Their gladness is not the joy flowing out of repentance. Their emotions are easily aroused, but their heart beneath is hard and unrenewed. There is no deep conviction of sin, no brokenness and contrition of spirit, no change of heart.

Having "no root in themselves" (Mark 4 : 17), they are creatures of excitement, carried away with the novelties, the pleasures, or the sentimental excitements of religion; and hence, as the excitement subsides, they change and turn back. They experience for a while an emotional and apparent faith, **for a while believe**, but believe not with all the heart, Acts 8 : 37. When **temptation**, the first severe trial, comes, they **fall away**, from a mere superficial religion and false profession. As the hot sun causes the deeply-rooted plant to grow, while at the same time it withers the rootless grains on rocky places, so tribulation and persecution strengthen and develop the true child of God (Rom. 5 : 3; 8 : 28; 2 Cor. 4 : 17; Rev. 7 : 14), while they offend, discourage, and completely disaffect the false and superficial disciple, Hos. 9 : 16; 2 Tim. 4 : 10. Such hearers are abundant at the present day among all denominations, and even in the most genuine revivals. It has been estimated that of over twelve hundred thousand persons received as probationers by the Methodist Episcopal Church from 1856

- 14 And that which fell among thorns are they, which, when they have heard, go forth, and <sup>c</sup>are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of *this* life, and
- 15 bring no fruit to perfection. But that on the good ground are they, which <sup>f</sup>in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, <sup>e</sup>keep *it*, and bring forth fruit <sup>a</sup>with patience.

<sup>b</sup> Ro. 2. 7; Heb. 10. 36; 12. 1; Jam. 5. 10, 11.

<sup>d</sup> 1 Tim. 6. 9.  
<sup>e</sup> Ps. 1. 1, 2; Pro. 8. 33, 34; Ac. 2. 41; 17. 11; 1 Pet. 2. 1, 2.  
<sup>f</sup> Job 23. 11, 12; John 8. 31; Col. 1. 23; Heb. 3. 12-14; Jam. 1. 22-25.

to 1865 inclusive, seven hundred thousand never were received into full membership.

14. The worldly hearers. **And that which fell among thorns**, etc. Another class of unfruitful hearers are they whose case is represented by the seed sown among the thorns. Their heart is like the ploughed but ill-prepared field; the soil is rich and deep, but the thorn-roots have not been extirpated. They have conviction of sin, show signs of sorrow and repentance, and pass through an experience similar to that often witnessed in true conversion, but the heart is divided, darling sins are secretly fostered, and the powers of the body and soul are not given to Christ. They are not thoughtless, like those of the first class; nor, like those of the second, do they fail to count the cost, and hence do not participate in their false and fleeting joy. They hear, hear seriously, enter upon a conflict with the world, but fail to conquer. The cause is a heart not consecrated to Jesus. **Go forth**, into the world to their various callings.

**Choked with cares**, of the world, Mark 4: 19; anxious cares about worldly things, which divide the heart between God and the things of this life, James 1: 6-8. This applies especially to the poor, whose struggles with poverty draw off the mind from God, and also to every one who is so unduly anxious about worldly things (Matt. 6: 25) as to prevent him from giving up himself to God and casting his care on him, 1 Pet. 5: 7. **And riches**, alluring the heart and leading it to exercise confidence in wealth; producing self-sufficiency and self-complacency. Hence they take up with a false hope and a mere profession. Matthew (13: 22) and Mark (4: 19) say, "The deceitfulness of riches." **And pleasures of this life**, of life, whatever they may

be, which will draw away the heart from God. Such are the natural accompaniments of such a course, 1 Tim. 6: 9, 10. "Three more sweeping generic terms for worldly-mindedness could not be found in our language."—J. J. OWEN. **Bring no fruit unto perfection**. They may have much of the outward appearance of the disciple, and even apparent fruits, but these, not coming to perfection, are unfit for use, and as worthless as no fruit at all. In the sight of God they are really destitute of good works.

15. The good-ground hearers, or the truly pious. They hear the word attentively and rightly, and receive it into their hearts. According to Matthew (13: 23), they "understand" its true spiritual import. **In an honest and good heart**, earnest and simple-minded, humble and teachable, like the good ground, prepared for the seed, ready to receive it in such a manner as to retain it and act upon it. All hearts are evil by nature, but in some there is a readiness, through the working of the Spirit and the truth, to hear and accept the gospel. It is heard, not thoughtlessly (ver. 15), but seriously; received, not superficially (vers. 16, 17), but deeply in the heart; accepted, not partially (13, 19), but fully, with the whole heart. There is repentance and faith, a full surrender of the heart to Christ. While the soul acts freely, the Spirit works effectually in connection with the truth, and thus, without infringing upon the will, the heart is prepared by divine grace, John 5: 40; 6: 44; 16: 8; 1 Cor. 2: 14. **Having heard the word**, not only with the ear, but also with the heart. And not only hear it, but **keep it**, rather, *hold it fast*, retain it so that it is reflected upon, and it takes root. Hence they **bring forth fruit**, the distinguishing characteristic of this class. **With patience**, with a con-

16 'No man, when he hath lighted a candle, covereth <sup>1</sup>Mk. 4. 21; ch. 11  
33; Mt. 5. 15, 16

stancy of purpose, with a consistent perseverance, through a life of discouragements and trials. This is in contrast to those in ver. 14, who bring forth no fruit unto perfection. Compare Rom. 2 : 7.

The same classes of hearers are found at the present day and in every age. The wisdom of our Saviour's instructions is thus seen in their perfect application through all time.

In these verses our Saviour has given a *model exposition*. From it we learn to avoid two opposite extremes: first, making every point significant; second, overlooking some points which are really significant. The resemblance in the principal incidents is all that should be generally sought. I would give the following general directions:

First of all, seek carefully the grand design of the parable and its centre of comparison; and then, with the mind fixed on these, explain the principal parts accordingly, without giving too much prominence to minute particulars which serve merely to complete the story. In seeking the *design* of a parable, particular attention must be given to its occasion, connection, introduction, and close. The *centre of comparison* is that from which all parts of the parable extend in illustrating its grand design. Avoid fanciful interpretations; beware of seeking comparisons which are foreign to the design of the parable. The interpretation must be natural and easy, not forced and far-fetched. Beware, also, of founding a doctrine or a duty on single phrases or incidental circumstances.

These principles may be briefly illustrated in the parable of the sower, as follows: The *general design* of parables is to illustrate the mysteries of the kingdom of God, vers. 11, 26, 30. The *particular design* of this parable is to illustrate the various kinds of reception men give to the word of God; the causes and consequences are incidentally traced. The *centre* of the comparison is the receptivity of the ground to the seed with that of the heart to the word of God. All portions of the parable and its interpretation are in harmony with this grand design and central si-

multitude. The *sower* is the Son of man, or his representatives, his servants; the *seed* is the word of God; the *ground*, the hearts of men; the seed with its *results*, as sown on the ground, the various classes of hearers. Now, many resemblances might be affirmed which Jesus has not affirmed. This, for example, from a *sower* as a *husbandman*, his *going forth*, the *time* and *manner* of his sowing, the *local position* of the wayside. But these would be foreign to the grand design, and very remotely connected, if connected at all, with the centre of comparison. So also to refer the wayside hearer to thoughtless childhood, the stony ground to ardent and superficial youth, and the thorny ground to worldly-minded maturity would be fanciful as well as unnatural. For these classes may all be found among persons of the same age. And finally, to conclude that there are but three classes of fruit-bearing Christians corresponding to the thirtyfold, the sixty, and the hundred (Matt. 13 : 23; Mark 4 : 20), each bearing no more and no less than the ratio of his class, would obviously be *forced*, and be founding a principle on *single phrases* and *incidental circumstances*.

16-18. ALL OF HIS INSTRUCTIONS DESIGNED TO GIVE LIGHT; HIS HEARERS RESPONSIBLE FOR THEIR MEASURE OF LIGHT, Matt. 13:12; Mark 4 : 21-25. Compare Matt. 5 : 15; 7 : 12; 10 : 26, where Jesus uses the same language on other occasions. Jesus sometimes repeated great and important truths. See Matt. 6 : 9-13 and Luke 11 : 2-4; Matt. 16 : 21; 17 : 22, 23, and 20 : 17-19. The same thing has been done by the wisest teachers and by inspired prophets. Compare Ps. 14 and 53; Jer. 10 : 12-16 with 51 : 15-19.

16. Jesus had told his disciples that it was given them to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God, but not to the unbelieving and hardened multitude, and hence his special reason for speaking in parables at that time, ver. 10. They might possibly infer that these instructions in the great truths of his kingdom were to be kept secret, and that parabolic instruction is, in its very nature, adapted to darken rather than

it with a vessel, or putteth *it* under a bed ; but setteth *it* on a candlestick, that they which enter in may see  
 17 the light. <sup>k</sup>For nothing is secret, that shall not be made manifest ; neither *anything* hid, that shall not  
 18 be known and come abroad. <sup>l</sup>Take heed therefore how ye hear ; <sup>m</sup>for whosoever hath, to him shall be given ; and whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he seemeth to have.

<sup>k</sup> ch. 12. 2 ; Mt. 10 26, 27 ; 1 Cor. 4. 5.

<sup>l</sup> ch. 9. 44 ; Deu. 32, 46, 47 ; Mk. 4, 23, 24.

<sup>m</sup> ch. 19. 26 ; see refs. Mt. 13. 12 ; 25. 29 ; Heb. 2. 1 ; Jam. 1. 19, 22.

enlighten. Jesus, however, dispels any such notions by what he now says. It is the nature of all truth to enlighten ; if it darkens, the fault is in the hearer, not in the truth. His instructions are all intended to be made public, and the hearer will be made responsible for his manner of receiving it.

When he hath lighted a candle, a lamp, the common domestic lamp, covers it with a vessel, a household utensil for containing things. Or under a bed. A couch, probably that on which people reclined at their meals, which was elevated three or four feet above the floor. But men put it on a candlestick, or rather on the lamp-stand, the support on which the lamp is placed, in order that when they enter in the house



A LAMP-STAND.

or room they may see the light, the lamp giving light. "The lamp, being low, was placed on a support sufficiently high to give light through the room ; and this latter would be equally necessary to the candle with its candlestick, as we use the term."—DR. CONANT on Matt. 5 : 15. And thus the truths of the gospel are like the lamp, designed not to be covered up, but to be made known, so as to give light to the world.

17. For. Jesus gives the reason of his figurative language in the preceding verse in a plain and emphatic declaration. For there is nothing secret, concealed, intentionally done in secret, that it shall not be made manifest, revealed and made known. Neither anything hid, by parable or otherwise, that it shall not be known and come abroad, come into open view, be brought to light. Nothing which had been taught or done in secret was to be withheld, but all is designed to be

proclaimed publicly at the proper time. Even their secrecy would help toward their future publicity, Matt. 10 : 27 ; Acts 20 : 27 ; 2 Pet. 1 : 19. And as applied to his parabolic instructions, truth now veiled in parables would be in due time the more manifest through them. That which might seem to hide truth would most beautifully and openly illustrate it. Those who would now withhold the Bible from the people are acting contrary to the design of Christ and of truth.

18. Take heed therefore how ye hear. See to it, consider carefully, that you be not like the superficial hearers of the parable, but like those represented by the good ground, that you hear in a prayerful, humble, and teachable spirit. For. The reason of what he had just said, given as a general principle. Matthew (13 : 12) gives it earlier in the discourse. But its applicability both there and here renders it probable that Jesus used it twice on the same occasion. Whosoever hath. He that, having a teachable spirit, has already some knowledge of the gospel and of Christ. Experimental knowledge and love for Christ, an improvement of this knowledge, and a desire for more are implied in such a state. To him shall be given, more knowledge. He shall have greater means and facilities for its attainment. Whosoever hath not, not having a teachable spirit, has failed to receive and use the instructions of Christ—the truths of the gospel. Hence he has not experimental knowledge and love for Christ, and desires not to know his truth. From such shall be taken away even that which he seemeth to have, or what he thinks he has, that which has been professed him shall be withheld. The possession, however, is not real and truly experimental, but apparent and imaginary. His specula-

*Christ's mother and brethren.*

19 "Then came to him *his* mother and his brethren, <sup>a See parallel, Mt. 12. 46-50; Mk. 3. 31-35.</sup>  
 20 and could not come at him for the press. And it was  
 told him *by certain* which said, Thy mother and thy  
 21 brethren stand without, desiring to see thee. And  
 he answered and said unto them, My mother and my

tive views and notions shall become more confused and darkened. Judas among the twelve was an example of this class. He who uses and improves the light he has shall obtain more light, Hos. 6 : 3; John 8 : 12; but he who neglects to do it shall lose it altogether and be condemned as an unprofitable servant, Matt. 25 : 29, 30.

Matthew follows this parable by those of the tares, the grain of mustard, the leaven, the treasure hid in the field, the merchant seeking goodly pearls, and the net. Mark follows it by the parables of the seed growing secretly, the grain of mustard, and the leaven.

19-21. CHRIST'S MOTHER AND BROTHERS. Who they are in the truest and highest sense, Matt. 12 : 46-50; Mark 3 : 31-35. Luke is the briefest. Matthew and Mark are similar, both presenting some graphic details. They both place also this incident before the parable of the sower and following the charge against Jesus of being in league with Satan. Matthew (13 : 1) fixes it on the day of his parabolic discourse, and Mark is confirmatory. Luke, however, relates this incident after the parable of the sower, without any note of time, most naturally implying that it was at the time when he spoke that parable. He is thus really in harmony with Matthew and Mark, but in his great brevity at this point he inverts the natural order, possibly because, as Oosterzee remarks, this incident "might serve very well to commend the right hearing, inasmuch as it indicates the high rank which the doers of the word (James 1 : 25), according to the Saviour's judgment, enjoy."

19. **Then came**, etc. More correctly, *And his mother and his brethren came*. He was probably speaking in the open air at or near Capernaum. **His brethren**. The presumption is that these were his brothers, the children, younger than himself, of Joseph and Mary. They must be so regarded unless it be shown

to the contrary, or some valid objection established against such a view. Some have regarded them as the children of Joseph by a former marriage. Others take the word *brothers*, in the wider Oriental sense, to mean near relations, kinsmen, Gen. 14 : 8. The first view, I think, is to be preferred. Compare on ch. 13 : 55, 56. Luke alone gives the reason implied in the narrative of Matthew and Mark why his mother and brethren **could not come near him**, because of **the press, or the multitude**, which was so great and so eager to hear him that he and his disciples had not had time to eat bread, Mark 3 : 20. On account of this continuous teaching his relatives had experienced great anxiety, and had gone to lay hold of him, saying, He is beside himself, Mark 3 : 21. All this accomplished nothing. Now his mother and brothers, his nearest and dearest relatives, seek to get a hearing. They not only feared that he might injure himself by overwork and fasting, but they also trembled at the dangers to which he was exposing himself by such plain admonitions. They doubtless wished to caution him, get him away from the multitude and the present excitement, and shield him from the assaults or machinations of those whose enmity he had just embittered by his discourse.

20. The fact concerning his mother and brothers is borne from one to another through the crowd till one of the nearest announces it to Jesus, Matt. 12 : 47; Mark 3 : 32. Luke states it in the most general way, **it was told him**, but how or by whom is not stated. **By certain** should be omitted.

21. Jesus improves the occasion to call attention to a higher and a spiritual relationship, and hence he says **My mother and my brethren**, etc. It should be noticed that this was said not to his mother and brethren, but to the multitude, to him and to others who had just announced the presence of his

brethren are these \* which hear the word of God, and do it. \* John 13. 17; Jam 1. 22.

*Jesus, crossing the lake, stills a storm.*

- 22 <sup>¶</sup> Now it came to pass on a certain day, that he went into a ship with his disciples: and he said unto them, Let us go over unto the other side of the lake. ¶ Mt. 8. 18; L. 4 35.
- 23 And they launched forth. But as they sailed he fell asleep. And there came down a storm of wind on the

mother. Mark (3 : 34) gives the *look* of Jesus upon those who sat around him. Matthew (12 : 49) gives not the look, but the *movement* of his hand, which he stretched out toward his disciples. The look and the stretched-out hand were both with affectionate regard as he said, **My mother and my brethren, my nearest, dearest kindred, whose claims upon me are superior to those of any earthly friends, are these—pointing toward his disciples—who hear the word of God and do it.** Such only are his true disciples, Matt. 7 : 21. Thus they show their spiritual relationship to God the Father, and consequently to him. There is nothing in this language disrespectful to his human relatives.

"My brother and my sister," found in Mark, may be included in the plural *brethren* of Luke. "And mother" makes a climax, the nearest relationship that any human being can hold to me. Even beyond my beloved and highly-favored mother according to the flesh is the nearness and dearness of that relationship which exists between me and my followers. We may view the enumeration of mother, brethren, and sister (Mark 3 : 35) as uniting and concentrating human relationships in one, to express and symbolize the highest spiritual union between Jesus and his disciples. Jesus does not introduce the word *father*, for he had no human father, and he never speaks of any but God as his Father. (Compare ch. 2 : 48, 49. And as Joseph is never mentioned in connection with Mary during Christ's public ministry, it is probable that he was dead.

Jesus thus refused or delayed speaking to his mother and brothers. The whole was an indirect reproof to them for their timidity and over-anxiety on his account.

22-25. JESUS CROSSES THE LAKE; STILLS THE TEMPEST. Matt. 8 : 18,

23-27; Mark 4 : 35-41. The account given by Mark is the fullest, most graphic, and most definite. Luke comes next in fullness and graphic power.

22. As the sermon on the mount was followed by a miracle, so was the great parabolic discourse by the seaside. The former was for the enlightenment of all, and the miracle was before all; the latter was specially for those who had ears to hear, his disciples, and the miracle was performed specially for them. That miracle (the leper, Matt. 8 : 2-4) represents man cleansed and saved by the Saviour in harmony with the law; this might be termed an acted parable or dark saying. In the extremity and darkness of the disciples, Christ appears the solver of their perplexity, and the deliverer from threatening destruction.

**On a certain day.** Mark (4 : 35) says, "the same day" or "*that day*," fixing this voyage and miracle to the evening and night following the parabolic discourse just given. It was probably about sunset.

**He went into a ship with his disciples.** He had entered, in order to discourse to the people, Matt. 13 : 2; Mark 4 : 1. It appears from Matthew that after discoursing from the boat he retired a while to the house, probably where he resided at Capernaum (Matt. 13 : 36); then returned to the boat and possibly discoursed still more; but seeing the multitude continuing (Matt. 8 : 18), he commands to depart to the opposite side, which command was obeyed promptly and in haste. **The other side.** The eastern side of the lake.

23. **Asleep.** He needed sleep, like other men, especially after a day of constant labor. It was his design, also, that this storm should be simultaneous with his sleep, so that his disciples

lake; and they were filled *with water*, and were in jeopardy. And they came to him, and awoke him, saying, Master, master, we perish! Then he arose, and rebuked the wind and the raging of the water: and they ceased, and there was a calm. And he said

Ps. 41. 23; 107. 23-25; Is. 51. 9, 10.

should feel their extremity and be the more deeply impressed with his power over the elements. Like Jonah, he slept in the midst of the storm; but how differently!—the prophet fleeing from duty, Jesus calmly awaiting the exact moment of duty; the prophet the cause, Jesus the allayer, of the storm.

**There came down a storm of wind**, precipitated from the heavens and the surrounding mountains upon the lake. It was one of those sudden, violent squalls or whirlwinds, attended with some rain, to which the lake is subject. Captain C. W. Wilson (*Recovery of Jerusalem*) gives the following graphic description of one of these storms on the Sea of Galilee.

"I had a good opportunity of watching one of them from the ruins of Gamala on the eastern hills. Suddenly, about midday, there was a sound of distant thunder, and a small cloud 'no bigger than a man's hand' was seen rising over the heights of Lubieh, to the west. In a few moments the cloud began to spread, and heavy black masses came rolling down the hills toward the lake, completely obscuring Tabor and Hattin. At this moment the breeze died away; there were a few minutes of perfect calm, during which the sun shone out with intense power, and the surface of the lake was smooth and even as a mirror; Tiberias, Mejdell, and other buildings stood out in sharp relief from the gloom behind; but they were soon lost sight of as the thunder-gust swept past them, and rapidly advancing across the lake lifted the placid water into a bright sheet of foam; in another moment it reached the ruins, driving myself and companion to take refuge in a cistern, where, for nearly an hour, we were confined, listening to the rattling peals of thunder and torrents of rain. The effect of half the lake in perfect rest, whilst the other half was in wild confusion, was extremely grand; it would have fared badly with any light craft

caught in mid-lake by the storm; and we could not help thinking of that memorable occasion on which the storm is so graphically described as 'coming down' (Luke 8 : 23) upon the lake."

**They were filled**, or began to be filled, referring to the boat; the persons in it are figuratively put for the ship itself. Hence, they, the ship, and the disciples were in jeopardy, in peril of sinking. "It was covered with the waves," Matt. 8 : 24.

**24. They, his disciples. Awoke him.** They roused him up, not for his safety, but their own. **Master, Master.** The word here used is somewhat a favorite with Luke, denoting a teacher with authority. The same word is used in ch. 5 : 5, on which see. The repetition shows the intensity of their feelings and their imminent danger. **We perish!** A mingled prayer and complaint, with mingled fear and faith. The cries of intense anxiety, the exclamations of terror, "Master, Master, we are lost! Canst thou lie sleeping here while we are perishing? Save us from impending ruin!" Matt. 8 : 25. How great the tempest, thus to terrify the disciples, who were accustomed to sailing and fishing on the lake!

**He arose.** How patiently he bears their murmuring and their little faith, and how quickly he comes to their relief! **Rebuked the wind and the raging of the water**, the swelling waves. Some infer from the language that Satan and his demons were the cause of the storm, and that they are the objects of rebuke. It may be explained, however, by supposing a strong personification. By thus speaking, Jesus showed that the elements were subject to his bidding. Compare Ps. 106 : 9; 89 : 8, 9. **They ceased.** Both the winds and the rolling waves. The latter was the more remarkable, for the wind sometimes comes and goes suddenly; but the waves continue to roll, subsiding gradually. But here the waves as well as the wind cease sud-

unto them, Where is your faith? And they being afraid wondered, saying one to another, What manner of man is this! for he commandeth even the winds and water, and they obey him. \* Ps. 89. 9.

*Jesus casts out legion, who enter and destroy the swine.*

26 \* And they arrived at the country of the Gadarenes,

\* Mt. 8. 28; 9. 1  
Mk. 5. 1; Is. 27  
1; Jas. 2. 19  
Rev. 20. 18.

denly. And there was a **calm**, a stillness; the wind is lulled, and the lake is without a ripple; what a contrast to the violent agitation of both air and water which had just subsided! Jesus with his disciples in the ship is a beautiful emblem of the church tossed and shaken by the tempests of the world, yet always safe; for Jesus is with her to the end. Compare, in contrast, Ezek. ch. 27, where Tyre is presented under the figure of a vast ship, built, manned, and freighted by the combined skill, strength, beauty, and riches of all nations; but it is broken by the storm and destroyed.

25. Jesus rebukes the troubled hearts of his disciples. Matthew places this before, and Mark and Luke after, the rebuking of the wind. The language comes in perfectly natural while Jesus is rising up from sleep. A part may have been spoken before and a part after the miracle. Thus as he awoke he may have answered their complaining entreaty, "Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith?" Matt. 8 : 26. Then, arising and rebuking the elements, he may have added, "Where is your faith?" Luke 8 : 25; "Why are ye so fearful? How is it that you have no faith?" Mark 4 : 40. Their earnest entreaty showed that they had a "little faith;" but as their terror arose from want of confidence in the power of Jesus, and so completely unmanned them, it could be said comparatively that they had "no faith."

**They being afraid wondered.** Fear and astonishment are mingled together, leading them to exclaim, **What manner of man is this?** Rather, *Who, then, is this* who exercises such perfect control over the elements of nature? **For he commandeth**, rather, *that he commandeth*, with authority as to a subordinate, referring to the proof of Christ's great power, as shown in the obedience of the elements. From Matthew (8 : 27) this seems to be

the exclamation of the crew or sailors on board. But here, and also in Mark (4 : 41), it appears that the disciples shared in their feelings and exclamations of amazement. They indeed believed in Jesus as the Messiah, but such an exhibition of power confounded them—not only confirmed their previous knowledge and belief of his greatness, but excited within them wondering thoughts regarding his divine origin, power, etc. Compare the exclamation of the mariners on a similar occasion (Matt. 14 : 33), "Of a truth thou art the Son of God."

26-40. **HEALING OF THE GADARENE DEMONIAC.** After which he returns to the western side of the lake, Matt. 8 : 28 to 9 : 1; Mark 5 : 1-21. The account of Mark is the fullest and most vivid. That of Luke comes next in fulness and detail.

26. **They arrived.** Rather, *They sailed to*—that is, from where the tempest was stilled. **Country of the Gadarenes.** According to the highest critical authorities, *country of the Gerasenes*; so also in Mark 5 : 1; but in Matt. 8 : 28 the most approved reading is "country of Gadarenes." It should be added, however, that there is some manuscript authority for reading *Gergesenes* in Mark, and especially in Matthew and Luke. We will briefly notice the three cities in order. (1) *Gadara*, now *Umkeis*, was a city of Perea, a chief city of Decapolis, about seven or eight miles south-east of the Sea of Galilee. The territory or "*the country*" of Gadara could well extend to the lake. The hill on which the city was located could not, however, have been the scene of the miracle, for it was not near enough to the lake; and besides, the swine would have had to run down the mountain, ford the Hieromax (now the *Jermuk*), a river as deep and rapid as the Jordan, and then cross a plain several miles before reaching the sea. (2) *Gerasa*, now *Jerash*, on the eastern boundary of Perea, was a town

- 27 which is over against Galilee. And when he went forth to land, there met him out of the city a certain man, which had devils long time, and ware no clothes, 28 neither abode in *any* house, but in the tombs. When he saw Jesus, he cried out, and fell down before him,

of Decapolis, about forty miles southeast of the scene of the miracle. Josephus describes it as rich and populous. Most beautiful and extensive ruins now mark its site. A large tract of country adjacent to the city, possibly extending to the Sea of Galilee, may have borne its name. Jerome states that in his day Gilead was called Gerasa. (3) *Gergesa*, according to Origen, was a city that stood on the eastern shore of the Sea of Galilee. Some reference to its ancient inhabitants may possibly have been made by Gergashites in Josh. 3 : 10. Its ruins, now called *Gersa*, may be seen on the eastern shore of the lake, about midway between the entrance and the outlet of the Jordan. "It is within a few rods of the shore, and an immense mountain rises directly above it, in which are ancient tombs. . . . The lake is so near the base of the mountain that the swine rushing madly down it could not stop, but would be hurried on into the water and drowned."—DR. THOMSON, *The Land and the Book*, vol. ii., pp. 35, 36. This is confirmed by the report of Captain Wilson to a society in England known as the Palestine Exploration Fund, as follows: "Between Gersa and Wady Fik appears to have been the scene of the destruction of the herd of swine; indeed, no other point on that side of the lake is so suitable. From the eastern plateau the ground slopes steeply, in a few places almost precipitously, down to the level of the lake, leaving a margin of fertile land from half a mile to a mile broad between the base of the hill and the water; but at this particular point, and only at this, a spur runs out to the shore. There is no cliff, but a slope sufficiently steep to fulfil the requirements of the Bible narrative." The name as pronounced by the Arabs is very nearly the ancient Gergesa or Gersa. Hence *the country of the Gerasenes* is best explained as referring to the district of this city on the shore of the lake. The country of Gergesa or Gersa probably joined upon that of

Gadara; and as the limits of the territory of each city were not very accurately defined, Matthew could call it the country of the Gadarenes, and Mark and Luke the country of the Gerasenes. **Over against Galilee.** On the eastern side of the lake. This locates the country of the Gerasenes here spoken of on the eastern shore of the lake.

27. **When he went forth to land,** etc. When he landed, immediately the demoniac met him. This shows that the miracle was performed near the shore. **Out of the city,** belonging to the city. Luke alone mentions this. This most naturally implies that the city was near the shore. **A certain man.** Matthew says, "two possessed with devils." This, however, is no contradiction; for he who speaks of the two includes the one, and they who speak of the one do not deny that there were two. One of them may have been more prominent and afterward well known to many, and hence may have been only noticed by Mark and Luke. He only may have gone forth publishing the great things done for him, ver. 39. **Which had devils, demons.** Notice the plural is used; so in Matt. 8 : 28. Luke alone mentions **long time**, which belongs to the next clause, *a long time had worn no clothing*. Thomson (*Land and Book*, vol. i., p. 211) thus refers to this common trait of insanity: "I have seen them absolutely naked in the crowded streets of Beirût and Sidon. There are also cases where they run wildly about the country and frighten the whole neighborhood." **Neither abode, had his temporary residence, in any house, but in the tombs.** The sepulchres of the Hebrews were generally cut out of the solid rock. Caves were also used for this purpose. They are now often resorted to for shelter during the night, and sometimes the wandering Arabs take up their winter abode in them. Compare Judg. 6 : 2. A maniac too is sometimes found dwelling in them.

28. **Saw Jesus.** Luke here briefly

and with a loud voice said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, *thou* Son of God most high? I beseech  
 29 thee, torment me not. For he had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. For oftentimes it had caught him, and he was kept bound with chains and in fetters; and he brake the bands, and  
 30 was driven of the devil into the wilderness. And Jesus asked him, saying, What is thy name? And he said, Legion: because many devils were entered

relates what Mark expands in ch. 5 : 6, 7. **Cried out**, gave one of his un-earthly shrieks. **Fell down before him**, in reverence. The verb here used is not so strong as that used by Mark 5 : 6. Thus he whom no one could tame prostrates himself in reverence before the Son of God. Demons believe and tremble (James 2 : 19), while unbelieving Jews blaspheme, Mark 3 : 22.

**And said.** Thus the demons speak through the man, so thorough was their control over both his body and soul. **What have I to do with thee.** What is there in common between thee and me? Why interfere with me? Ezra 4 : 3. See on ch. 1 : 24. The use of the singular here may be explained by supposing the chief or commander of these unclean spirits as speaking. **Son of God most high.** Evidently recognizing his divine nature. Compare on ch. 1 : 35. **I beseech thee.** What a sight! Demons at prayer. **Torment me not.** The presence of Jesus, sending the demons from the man (see next verse), or sending them into the abyss, or hell, were each and all a torment to the demon. Matt. (8 : 29) adds "before the time"—that is, of final doom, Matt. 25 : 41 ; 2 Pet. 2 : 4 ; Jude 6.

29. Luke here gives the reason of this remarkable and importunate adjuration. **For he had commanded**, more exactly, *For he commanded him.* Jesus had just before this cry commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. This itself was a source of torment, and excited the demon's guilty fears of something even more terrible. Demons seem to have been less miserable in human possession than without it. It should be noted that the unclean spirit did not come out immediately upon Christ's command. This was not owing to the

strength of the demons, or to any inability in Jesus, but to his wisdom, who permitted the unclean spirit to speak imploringly, tell his name, and the great number under him. Thus the great power of Jesus was the more strikingly manifested to his disciples, and for all time. Luke more particularly describes the miserable condition of the man. Compare Mark 5 : 3-5. **For oftentimes**, etc. A more correct translation is, *For during a long time it had seized him.* The possession was of long standing. **He was kept bound.** Rather, *he was bound, being kept* under close confinement, or, as the Bible Union version has it, *being secured with chains and fetters*, so that he could not get away or do violence. **Chains**, specially for binding prisoners. **Fetters**, or shackles, especially for the feet, though they may be applied to any part of the body. **And he brake, asunder, tare or burst asunder the bonds**, showing his unnatural muscular strength. **And was driven of, by, the devil, demon, into the wilderness, desert places**, among the mountains and tombs, Mark 5 : 5. This language plainly indicates the power of a personal demon. Mark adds, "neither could any man tame him," bring him physically and mentally under his power. Matthew (8 : 28) says that he was "exceeding fierce, so that no man might pass that way."

30. **Asked him**, the unclean spirit who had spoken through the man, ver. 28. **What is thy name?** Jesus did not ask this for his own information, but to show the miserable condition of the man and the great combined power of demons, which he was about to overcome. **Legion.** The Roman legion consisted of about six thousand. The word had come to signify any large number with the ideas of order and

- 31 into him. And they besought him that he would not command them to go out 'into the deep.
- 32 And there was there an herd of many <sup>u</sup>swine feeding on the mountain: and they besought him that he would suffer them to enter into them. <sup>x</sup>And he suffered them. Then went the devils out of the man, and entered into the swine: and the herd ran violently down a steep place into the lake, and were choked.

<sup>t</sup> Rev. 20. 3.

<sup>u</sup> Le. 11. 7, 8.

<sup>x</sup> 1 Ki. 22. 22; Ac. 16. 39; 19. 16 17.

subordination. It is about equivalent to *host*, and explained by the unclean spirit himself. For many devils, etc. One chief, superior one, with inferior ones under him. He gives his name as associated with subordinate spirits. It shows his overwhelming power over the entire nature of the man. That evil spirits go often in companies is to be inferred, not only from this, but also from the case of Mary Magdalene, from whom were cast out seven demons, ch. 8 : 2. How many demons there were in this case we have no means of knowing, although the number of the swine, two thousand (Mark 5 : 13), may be suggestive of the number of demons.

31. **They, the demons, besought him.** Some of the best manuscripts and versions read, *he*, the demons, *besought him*, which agrees better with the preceding verse. An unclean spirit at prayer! Yet many men are prayerless. **Not command them.** They acknowledge Christ's power and authority. **The deep.** Rather, *the abyss*, or hell, the abode of lost spirits, Rev. 9 : 1, 11; 20 : 3.

32. **On—better, in—the mountains,** within the region of the mountain. This is consistent with Mark 5 : 11, "nigh unto," rather "by the mountain," on a slope of the mountain; and with Matthew (8 : 30), "a good way off from them," a relative expression, which may be applied to a greater or less distance, according to circumstances and the particular feelings of the beholder at the time. **Many swine.** Mark (5 : 13) states that they numbered about two thousand. **They besought.** The demons all unite in a special petition. They do not ask that they may be made better or have their natures changed; but as they must depart from the man, they ask permission to enter the swine.

**That he would suffer, or permit, them.** They recognize the power of Jesus as Lord. They do not demand but entreat him as one who can do with them as he sees fit. **Swine.** These unclean brutes were congenial with their unclean natures. How they could possess inferior animals is not difficult to imagine, since they so thoroughly possessed the lower and sensual nature of men. They could exert no moral and intellectual influence, as in man, but they could operate through the organs of their bodies, and through their animal and sensual natures.

**He suffered them.** Jesus did not *send* them, but *permitted* them, and the permission was immediate. Why he did this we are not informed. The requests of Satan are sometimes granted (Job 1 : 12; 2 : 6), but always for some good purpose in the end. By giving them this permission it was clearly shown that demons do exist, that those possessed with demons were not simply insane or suffering from mere bodily disease. It also showed the power and malignity of these fiends of darkness and their subjection to Christ, who "was manifested that he might destroy the works of the devil," John 3 : 8. Their final and utter overthrow was foreshadowed.

33. **The herd ran violently down a steep place.** *Rushed down* the overhanging *steep*. The declivity at the base of the mountain at Gersa is said to be almost perpendicular. "The bluff behind is so steep, and the shore so narrow, that a herd of swine rushing frantically down must certainly have been overwhelmed in the sea before they could recover themselves."—MR. TRISTRAM, *Land of Israel*, p. 466. **Choked.** Strangled in the sea, resulting in their death; Matthew (8 : 32) definitely says, "perished in the waters."

- 34 When they that fed *them* saw what was done, they fled, and went and told *it* in the city and in the country.
- 35 try. Then they went out to see what was done; and came to Jesus, and found the man, out of whom the devils were departed, sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed, and in his right mind: and they were afraid.
- 36 They also which saw *it* told them by what means he that was possessed of the devils was healed.
- 37 <sup>1</sup>Then the whole multitude of the country of the Gadarenes round about <sup>2</sup>besought him to depart from them; for they were taken with great fear. And he went up into the ship, and returned back again. Mt. 8. 34.  
Ac. 16. 39.

This miracle and that of the withered fig tree which Jesus cursed (ch. 11 : 12-14, 20) are the only ones which resulted in any destruction of property. Cavillers have seized hold of these in their objections to Christianity. But Christ as the Son of God had a right to send the demons wherever he pleased. The cattle of a thousand hills were also his (Ps. 50 : 10), and he had a right to do what he would with his own, Matt. 20 : 15. The act was one of sovereign authority. Besides, the permission was our Lord's, the destruction of the swine the work of demons. Jesus was no more responsible for what the demons did than he is for what wicked men do, whom he permits to live and to hold positions of power in the world. We must believe that Jesus had wise and good reasons for this permission, as for all he ever did or permitted. The owners may have in various ways showed contempt for the Mosaic law, and hence this judgment upon them. This may have been a special providential sermon for the people of that city and vicinity.

34. The feeders of the swine, astonished and affrighted at the frenzied destruction of the whole herd in the sea, flee and report the catastrophe to the owners in the city and in the country, or fields. Gersa and vicinity are doubtless meant. From Matt. 8 : 33 it appears that they also told "what was befallen to the possessed with devils." Their haste in fleeing did not give them much time for this. But they doubtless saw and heard the demoniac at the base of the mountain, and from his changed deportment inferred some of the facts of the case.

35. The people at once went out to

see for themselves what was done. Such a wonderful occurrence would quickly call out a crowd. Matthew (8 : 34) says "the whole city came out to meet Jesus." They came to Jesus, and found the man, no longer a demoniac, wild and raving, but sitting at the feet of Jesus as a disciple, a learner, ready to hear instruction and obey it; and clothed like others with raiment and in his right mind, with a sane or sound mind. The effect upon them: they were afraid, they were awestruck at such an exhibition of supernatural power, and in the presence of one possessed with greater power than legion.

36. They also which, who, saw it. Those who had been eye-witnesses; probably those who had come with Jesus across the lake, and possibly other spectators with them not mentioned. The keepers of the swine, who fled and told the owners, doubtless returned with the people, but they were probably not able to relate so particularly the circumstances as those who had been nearer the scene of the miracle. Told by what means, rather, how, in what way, the man was healed. They report the circumstances.

37. The effect of the miracle upon the people. The whole multitude, who had thronged to see the strange sight from the country of the Gadarenes round about. According to the highest critical authorities, the Gerasenes, as in ver. 26; from Gersa and the surrounding region. Upon seeing and hearing what was done, they besought him, etc. Luke adds the special reason for this strange request: for they were taken, seized, with great fear. They were not only filled with a super-

- 38 Now <sup>a</sup>the man out of whom the devils were departed besought him that he might be with him. But <sup>b</sup>Jesus sent him away, saying, Return to thine own house, <sup>c</sup>and show how great things God hath done unto thee. And he went his way, and <sup>d</sup>published throughout the whole city how great things Jesus had done unto him.

<sup>a</sup>Mk. 5. 18; Phil. 1. 23.

<sup>b</sup>Ps. 32. 6; 71. 18  
Gal. 1. 23, 24; 1  
Tim. 1. 13-16.

<sup>c</sup>Ps. 66. 13; 126. 2, 3.

stitious awe at such exhibitions of power (compare Deut. 5 : 25; Luke 5 : 8), but with fear that similar results might attend other miracles. Other owners of swine may have thought their traffic in danger, Acts 19 : 24-31. To what extremes do worldly interests excite men! Worldly gain is valued above the blessings of Jesus. To their minds the loss of the herd of swine more than counterbalanced the cure of the demoniac! Jesus answers their prayer and lets them alone. **He went up** (omit up) **into the ship and returned.** We do not read of his ever visiting them again. Contrast the entreaty of the Samaritans, John 4 : 40.

38. **Besought him**, as Jesus was entering the boat, Mark 5 : 18. A variety of reasons doubtless united in leading him to make this request. It was the warm expression and desire of gratitude and love. The mean and selfish request and treatment of the Gerasenes doubtless strengthened this feeling and desire. Very likely, too, he might have feared a repossession by the demons after Jesus departed, Matt. 12 : 43-45.

39. The demons pray, and their prayers are granted, to their own discomfiture, vers. 10, 12; the Gerasenes pray, and their prayer also is granted by being left to their own destruction; the man who had been healed prays, and behold his petition is not granted, for it was not best and he had a work to do. **Return to thine own house.** Where is not told, possibly at Gadara. It was somewhere in Decapolis, Mark 5 : 20. **Show, tell, relate.** There is a time to speak and a time to keep silent, ver. 43; ch. 1 : 44. The proclamation of his miracles often increased the multitude, to his great inconvenience, ch. 1 : 45; 2 : 2; 3 : 9, 10. But here Jesus was about to leave the country. The healed man would be a living witness of the goodness and mercy of Jesus to that whole region against the evil reports of herds-

men and swine-owners. "Let not the story of the destruction of the swine be the only one in circulation; let the deliverance of the poor demoniac also be told, and let him be the person who should tell it."—ANDREW FULLER. A reason for this command may doubtless also be found in the man himself. It was for his good to go to his home and announce the facts of his deliverance. His friends at home needed the spiritual blessings of which he was probably a partaker, and he needed the development which such activity would produce. And nowhere could the great cure be so much appreciated as in his own house. **God**, through the power of Jesus, the Messiah. The healed man speaks of Jesus in the next sentence. It is quite likely that he had some idea of Christ's divine nature, since the demon had called him the Son of the most high God, ver. 28. He had very probably received spiritual as well as bodily deliverance. **Hath done for thee.** Hence he was truly a representative of Jesus to the inhabitants of his country, Matt. 25 : 45. His commission rather implies his belief in Jesus as the Messiah.

Obedient to Christ's command, the healed demoniac began to publish what Jesus had done for him, not only to his own house, but **through the whole city**, probably of Gersa, and according to Mark 5 : 20, through that whole region lying east and south-east of the Sea of Galilee, called Decapolis, a name meaning *the ten cities*. **All did marvel.** No glorifying God, no conversions, are recorded. The great miracle excited wonder, but we are not told that it led to repentance and faith. Something more than miracles is needed to reach and savingly benefit the heart. Still, the healed demoniac may have accomplished a work preparatory to the future proclamation of the gospel.

40. Jesus having returned to the

*Raising of Jairus' daughter; and healing of a woman with an issue of blood.*

40 And it came to pass, that, when Jesus was returned, the people *gladly* received him: for they were all waiting for him.

41 <sup>a</sup>And, behold, there came a man named Jairus, and he was a ruler of the synagogue: and he fell down at Jesus' feet, and besought him that he would

42 come into his house: for he had one only daughter, about twelve years of age, and she lay a dying.

43 But as he went the people thronged him. <sup>e</sup>And a

<sup>d</sup> Mt. 9. 18; Mk. 5. 22.

<sup>e</sup> Mt. 9. 20; 2 Chr. 16. 12; Job 13. 4; Is. 55. 2.

western side of the lake, **the people gladly received him**, welcomed him. They were **all waiting for him**, by the seaside, probably near Capernaum, Matt. 9 : 1. They were expecting his arrival. Very probably they saw his ship in the distance and hastily assembled to receive him.

41-56. RAISING OF JAIRUS' DAUGHTER; HEALING OF THE WOMAN WITH THE ISSUE OF BLOOD. Matt. 9 : 18-26; Mark 5 : 22-43. Mark is the fullest and most graphic of the three evangelists. Luke again comes next in fullness and detail. According to Matt. 9 : 17, 18, these miracles were performed immediately after Christ's discourse on fasting at Matthew's feast. The position of this section then would be just after Mark 2 : 22 and Luke 5 : 39. See on ver. 56. For some reason unknown to us Mark and Luke may have deferred this account till after the healing of the demoniac, possibly to bring together these wonderful miracles on opposite sides of the lake, placing last the greatest miracle, the raising of the dead. Or we may suppose that Christ's discourse on fasting (Matt. 9 : 14-17; Mark 2 : 18-22; Luke 5 : 33-39) finds its position at this point between the healing of the demoniac and the raising of Jairus' daughter. Some suppose that Matthew's feast also (ch. 2 : 15-22) finds its true position here. But every arrangement is beset with difficulty. Did we know more of the circumstances, all would be plain. See author's *Harmony*, notes on §§ 66, 67, 68.

41. **And behold, there came.** These words do not necessarily connect this in time with the preceding miracle. The meaning may be, "And on a certain occasion there came." Or, taking the

last clause of the preceding verse, *On a time he was by the sea, surrounded with crowds, and there came.* According to Matt. (9 : 10, 14, 18) Jesus seems to have been in the house of Matthew, ch. 5 : 29. But it is not necessary to suppose the whole or even a part of Christ's discourse on fasting to have been delivered in the house; see on ch. 5 : 33. It may have been given, after coming forth from Matthew's feast, in a public place.

**A ruler of the synagogue.** One of the elders and presiding officers, who convened the assembly, preserved order, invited readers and speakers, Acts 13 : 15. **Jairus**, probably the Hebrew name *Jair* (Num. 32 : 41), meaning *whom Jehovah enlightens*. **Fell down at Jesus' feet**, in the posture of reverence and earnest entreaty.

42. **For.** Luke gives the reason why Jairus besought Jesus. **One only daughter.** Better, *an only daughter*. Luke alone mentions this. **She lay a dying.** Mark (5 : 23) says "at the point of death." But Matthew (9 : 18), "is even now dead." The father on reaching Jesus may have first given vent to his fears by the strong statement, she "is even now dead," or rather *has just now died*, and then have explained himself by saying that she was at the point of death or dying. His strong faith is shown by his leaving his dying daughter to seek the aid of Jesus, and by his earnest entreaty.

Jesus immediately complies with the request and goes with Jairus to his house. **The people**, multitude, such as so often attended him, followed and **thronged him**, *pressed upon him*, a strong word in the original, crowded upon him almost to suffocation, so that he could not walk without difficulty.

woman having an issue of blood twelve years, which had spent all her living upon physicians, neither  
 44 could be healed of any, came behind *him*, and touched the border of his garment: and immediately her issue  
 45 of blood stanchèd. And Jesus said, Who touched me? When all denied, Peter and they that were with  
 him said, Master, the multitude throng thee and press  
 46 *thee*, and sayest thou, Who touched me? And Jesus said, <sup>† ch. 6. 19; Mk. 5.</sup> Somebody hath touched me: for I perceive that <sup>30.</sup> 'virtue

43. At this point Matthew, Mark, and Luke relate the healing of a woman having a chronic disease which according to the law rendered her unclean, Lev. 15 : 25. The details of her grievous disorder are unnecessary. Her hopeless case and the incurableness of her disease are shown in this and the next verse. It was of long continuance, chronic, twelve years.

**Spent all her living upon physicians.** There was a medical profession and many practitioners. This woman had probably been possessed of wealth and had moved in good society, but the expenses of many physicians had reduced her to poverty. Although she had emphatically spent all, yet she was not benefited (Mark 5 : 26), **neither could she be healed of any, by any.** Luke, a physician, strongly put her case that her disease was incurable.

44. But having heard of Jesus, having faith in his power to heal her, she approaches him in the crowd from **behind**, both from a sense of her unworthiness and her uncleanness, and also to escape observation, and **touched the border**, rather, *the fringe, of his garment*, his mantle, outer garment, Lev. 15 : 38. "It is important, though it may be difficult, to realize the situation of this woman, once possessed of health and wealth, and no doubt moving in respectable society, now beggared and diseased, without a hope of human help, and secretly believing in the power of Christ, and him alone, to heal her, yet deterred by some natural misgiving and by shame, perhaps connected with the nature of her malady, from coming with the rest to be publicly recognized and then relieved. However commonplace the case may seem to many, there are some in whose experience, when clearly seen and serious-

ly attended to, it touches a mysterious chord of painful sympathy."—ALEXANDER.

**Immediately**, etc. The cure in this verse is described as instantaneous and complete. **Stanchèd**, *stopped*. The deep-rooted disease was thoroughly cured.

45. **Who touched me?** The question implies neither ignorance nor dissimulation in Jesus. It was asked in order to call forth the confession of the woman for her own good and the good of others. Compare ch. 24 : 17-19, where Jesus asks questions of the two on their way to Emmaus, not for his own information, but to draw out a statement of their views and feelings. So a judge asks the prisoner whether he is guilty or not guilty, though he may know the certainty of his guilt. Compare Gen. 3 : 9 ; 2 Kings 5 : 25.

A general denial by the multitude followed, **all denied**. The question seemed unreasonable, uncalled for. **Peter and they that were with him.** His immediate followers who believed on him. Luke alone mentions the name of Peter in this connection. It was much like Peter thus to speak both for himself and as spokesman for the disciples. There is a shade of censure in Peter's words. He thinks merely of an accidental and not in the least of a believing touch.

46. But Jesus affirmed that some one had **touched** him, implying a touch of intention and faith, and not a mere thoughtless and accidental *pressing* of the multitude, for he perceived that **virtue**—that is, *power*—had gone out from him. He had an inward consciousness of the fact. He knew it intellectually. The words do not imply that the power went out involuntarily. Others touched him, but felt no saving influence, because theirs was not in

- 47 is gone out of me. And when the woman saw that  
<sup>c</sup>she was not hid, she came trembling, and fall- <sup>c</sup>Ps. 33. 9.  
 ing down before him, she declared unto him before  
 all the people for what cause she had touched him,  
 48 and how she was healed immediately. And he said  
 unto her, Daughter, be of good comfort: <sup>b</sup>thy faith  
 hath made thee whole: <sup>1</sup>go in peace. <sup>b</sup>Mt. 8. 13.  
 49 <sup>a</sup>While he yet spake, there cometh one from the <sup>1</sup>1 Sam. 1. 17.  
 ruler of the synagogue's *house*, saying to him, Thy <sup>k</sup>Mk. 5. 35.  
 50 daughter is dead; trouble not the Master. But when  
 Jesus heard *it*, he answered him, saying, Fear not:  
 believe only, and she shall be made whole.

faith. Her cure was the result and answer of her touch of faith, which reached beyond the fringe of his garment to his divine nature. Compare ch. 6 : 19. Within that nature there was the inherent power to cure diseases and a knowledge of all that was going on. He permitted power to go forth to the healing of the woman when her faith was properly exercised. That it went forth without his permission and direction is not required by the language, and at the same time is inconsistent with his divinity, as well as absurd.

47. **When the woman saw that she was not hid.** Mark (5 : 32) says that Jesus "looked around to see her." Jesus knew, and now by his look he brings out the confession. Compare his look upon Peter, Luke 22 : 61. **She came trembling.** The trembling was the result, the outward manifestation, of her fear, which arose from a sense of his greatness and of her own unworthiness, from her stealthy method of obtaining a cure and his manner of searching her out. In humility and reverence she came, **falling down**, prostrating herself, before him, giving herself up to his power and mercy, and **declared before all the people**, candidly and publicly acknowledged what she had done, why she did it, and with what effect. Thus while Jesus permitted her, in her timidity and sense of shame, to receive his saving power secretly, he called out a public acknowledgment after that power had been experienced.

<sup>a</sup>Nature may shrink back and wish to spare itself the shame of acknowledging its moral pollution, but this weakness must be conquered, and the

tide of love and thankfulness permitted to flow out, full and free, to the glory of divine grace. A genuine faith, though untaught, unspoken, and perhaps slightly superstitious, may receive the first blessing; but then it must be spoken and taught and tested. It cannot remain under the soil, but must shoot up into the face of the sky and live in the light of day."—A. HOVEY, *Miracles of Christ*, p. 168.

48. Having drawn from the woman a proper confession, Jesus now speaks words of comfort and confirms the miracle. **Daughter.** A term of kindness, and doubtless expressive of a spiritual relation sustained to him, 2 Cor. 6 : 18; Heb. 2 : 10. **Thy faith,** etc. According to Matthew (9 : 22), he adds, "Be of good comfort," which words the best text omits here. Jesus makes her faith, though imperfect, prominent. His divine power had been exerted according to her faith. **Go in peace.** A usual form of parting salutation, especially to inferiors, expressive of friendship and good wishes, Ex. 4 : 18; 1 Sam. 1 : 17; Luke 7 : 50; James 2 : 16. Literally, *go into peace*, into a state of serenity and freedom from thy former bodily and spiritual sufferings. He dismisses her with his blessing.

49. **While he yet spake.** How long these moments of delay must have seemed to the anxious Jairus! But in the midst of them, while Jesus was still speaking to the woman, messengers came from the ruler's house announcing the death of his daughter. **Trouble not.** It appears that Jairus had come with the knowledge and consent of his family. **Master. Teacher.**

50. **When Jesus heard it.** The message, which was spoken as it

51 And when he came into the house, he suffered no  
 52 man to go in, save Peter, and James, and John, and  
 53 the father and the mother of the maiden. And all  
 54 wept, and bewailed her: but he said, Weep not; she  
 is not dead,<sup>1</sup> but sleepeth. And they laughed him to  
 scorn, knowing that she was dead. And he put them  
 all out, and took her by the hand, and called, saying,

<sup>1</sup>John 11. 11, 13.

private to Jairus. From words of peace and blessing to the woman, Jesus turns to give comfort to Jairus and encourage his faith. **Fear not**, as if there were no hope and all was lost. Believe only in my power to help you and save your daughter. And to assure his faith, Jesus adds, **She shall be made whole**. He encourages his faith to expect the recovery of his daughter, though somewhat indefinitely. *How*, and really *from what*, Jairus might still be in doubt!

51. Only **Peter, James, and John** are now suffered to go with him and Jairus into the house and into the apartment where the daughter was lying, Mark 5 : 37, 40. The multitude and other disciples, doubtless learning that the child was dead, were the more easily prevailed upon to stay from following Jesus. These three formed Christ's innermost circle of disciples. They were afterward selected to be present at his transfiguration (ch. 9 : 2) and his agony in the garden, ch. 14 : 33. Thus were they fitted to be foremost in labors and sufferings, Acts 2 : 14; 3 : 3, 4; 4 : 3, 13; 8 : 14; 12 : 2, 3.

52. **All wept and bewailed her**, in loud expressions of grief. According to Matt. 9 : 23, the flute-players were performing their doleful music. The custom of mourning for the dead and at funerals is alluded to in such passages as Eccl. 12 : 5; Jer. 9 : 17; 16 : 6, 7; Ezek. 24 : 17; Amos 5 : 16. Similar customs still prevail in the East. "It is customary, when a member of a family is about to die, for the friends to assemble around and watch the ebbing away of life, so as to mark the precise moment when he breathes his last, upon which they set up instantly a united outcry, attended with weeping, and often with beating the breast and tearing out the hair of the head. . . . How exactly, at the moment of the Saviour's arrival, did the house of Jairus correspond with the condition of one at the

present time in which a death has just taken place! It resounded with the same boisterous expression of grief for which the nations of the East are still noted. The lamentation must also have commenced at the instant of the child's decease; for when Jesus arrived, he found the mourners present and singing the death-dirge."—HACKETT, *Illustration of Scripture*, p. 122. In the East burial generally takes place very soon after death. The ancient Jews commonly buried a person the same day that he died. Compare Acts 5 : 5-10.

**Weep not**. Cease your mourning. Many ancient manuscripts have for immediately after *weep not*. **Is not dead, but sleepeth**. Regard her not as dead, but sleeping, for she is soon to come to life again. Some suppose her death only apparent—that she was in a swoon or state of unconsciousness like one dead. But according to what follows, not only did the mourners *know* that she was dead, but at the command of Jesus *her spirit returned*. Jesus used a similar verb when he said, "Lazarus sleepeth," which he explained to mean death, John 11 : 11, 14. It is true that the verb in the latter passage is the one generally used for describing death as a sleep, Matt. 27 : 52; Acts 7 : 60; 13 : 36, etc.; but we find the verb of this passage used also of the dead in 1 Thess. 5 : 10. Jesus also allowed the parents and others to regard the damsel as really dead and raised to life again, Luke 8 : 52, 53, 56. In relation to his power, death was only a sleep from which she should be speedily awakened.

53. The company of mourners was certain that the child was dead, and understanding neither the language nor the power of Jesus **laughed him to scorn**, in derision, **knowing that the child was dead**.

54. **He put them all out**. This clause should be omitted, according to the highest critical authorities. The

55 Maid, <sup>arise</sup>. And her spirit came again, and she arose straightway: and he commanded to give her  
 56 meat. And her parents were astonished: but <sup>he</sup> charged them that they should tell no man what was done.

<sup>a</sup> ch. 7. 14; John 11. 43; Rom. 1 17.  
<sup>b</sup> Mt. 8. 4; 9. 30; Mk. 5. 43.

omission is in harmony with Luke's account, who is less particular than Mark regarding what was done in the house. Suiting his action to his words, Jesus took or seized the hand of the child. This was not necessary to the miracle, but for the good of those present. Their impression was thus deepened, and the faith of the parents strengthened. Called, cried out, Maid, better Maiden, arise. Mark gives the exact Aramaic words which Jesus used: "Talitha cumi."

55. Her spirit came again. This was the actual return of her spirit. She had been really dead. She arose immediately. The cure was instantaneous and complete. The vividness of the narrative is completed by the direction to give her meat, food. She was not only alive, but well. Jesus was not unmindful of the little things which her parents in their amazement overlooked.

56. Her parents were astonished, showing that they regarded her as really raised from the dead. He charged them to tell no one for wise reasons—possibly to prevent arousing the fanaticism of the people and the greater envy of the Pharisees, for his time had not come. Yet notwithstanding this precaution, Matthew tells us (ch. 9 : 26) that the fame went abroad in all that land. There is no contradiction between the evangelists, as some would have us suppose. The death of the child had been announced (ver. 49), but afterward she was alive and well. The mourners and minstrels, who had known of the child's death and were put forth from the house, must have found out that the child was really restored to life. There were thus ways enough for the report to spread, even though the parents and disciples strictly obeyed Jesus, which they may not have done. This is the first instance of Christ's raising the dead of which we have any account, unless we regard the raising of the widow's son at Nain to have preceded this, Luke

7 : 11-17. But aside from questions of harmony, that of the widow's son holds a second and higher place. The ruler's daughter was raised privately almost immediately after dying, the widow's son publicly and on the way to the grave; and afterward Lazarus, also publicly, from the tomb, having been dead four days, John 11 : 39, 45, 46. Thus we have a regular gradation in exhibitions of divine power, which is at least suggestive of the order in which the events occurred. Immediately after this miracle Matthew (9 : 27-34) places the healing of two blind men and the casting out of a dumb spirit.

#### REMARKS.

1. How diligent was Jesus in doing good! May he ever be our model! ver. 1; ch. 4 : 43.

2. None have more reason for gratitude for a Saviour than woman. From the degradation of slavery the gospel has raised her to be the companion of man, and to devoted and most useful service in the kingdom of God, vers. 2, 3; John 20 : 17; Acts 1 : 14; 8 : 12; 9 : 36; Phil. 4 : 3.

3. In view of what Christ has done for us, we should minister to him, vers. 2, 3; 1 John 4 : 10, 19.

4. In our teaching it is well to seek analogies from nature or daily life. Our Saviour exalted familiar doings into chapters and sermons, ver. 4; ch. 6 : 48.

5. As men commit seed to the earth in expectation of a harvest, so should we exercise faith in the promises of God, ver. 4; James 5 : 7, 8; Ps. 126 : 5, 6.

6. "The strong faith of the sower trusts his seed everywhere," vers. 6, 7; Eccl. 11 : 6.

7. He who would understand divine truth must hear with attention and seek divine guidance, ver. 8, 9; 1 Kings 3 : 11, 12; John 14 : 26; Ps. 119 : 18.

8. The truths of the gospel are spe

cially entrusted to Christians, ver. 10; Matt. 16 : 17; 1 Cor. 4 : 1; Heb. 1 : 1, 2.

9. Some persons, though living, are given over to destruction, ver. 10; Rom. 7 : 28; Jer. 6 : 30.

10. Both the sower and the seed are all-important. Without either no fruit can be expected, ver. 11; Rom. 10 : 14, 15; 1 Pet. 1 : 25.

11. You may neglect your soul, but Satan will neglect no means to ensure your ruin, ver. 12; 2 Cor. 4 : 3, 4; 1 Pet. 5 : 8; 1 Tim. 5 : 13.

12. In the Spirit's work of renewing the heart sorrow precedes joy. We have reason to suspect that this is wrong or imperfect where nothing but joy attends professed conversion, ver. 13; ch. 15 : 17-23; 18 : 13, 14; John 16 : 8; 2 Cor. 7 : 10.

13. If we would be the Lord's, the idols of the heart must be renounced, vers. 13, 14; Ezek. 14 : 3-5; Matt. 5 : 29, 30; Rom. 8 : 7; James 4 : 4.

14. When the word of God is truly received into the heart, the soul is subjected and united to Christ, and brings forth fruit to God, ver. 15; John 15 : 4, 7, 8; Gal. 5 : 22-24.

15. If we have received spiritual knowledge, it is our duty to impart it to others, ver. 16; Jer. 23 : 28; 1 Pet. 4 : 10.

16. All mysteries of God relating to man will be made known at the proper time, ver. 17; 1 Cor. 2 : 7-10; Dan. 12 : 9, 10.

17. The eternal interests of men depend on how and what they hear, ver. 18; Rom. 10 : 17; Eph. 1 : 13.

18. The diligent use of religious privileges and opportunities will yield a rich return of blessings, ver. 18; Prov. 13 : 4; 19 : 15; 2 Pet. 3 : 14.

19. How great the honor of being a disciple of Jesus! Even the weakest are among his nearest relatives and enjoy an affection beyond any earthly love, vers. 19-21; Isa. 49 : 15; Rom. 8 : 17.

20. If we would enjoy his love and honor, we must do the will of our heavenly Father, ver. 21; Matt. 7 : 21; 1 John 3 : 2, 10, 14.

21. All, when truly converted, begin to desire to do the will of God, ver. 21; Ps. 119 : 5; Rom. 7 : 22.

22. "Whither our Lord leads, believers may safely venture and follow. Many

are willing to go to heaven by *land*, but dread *unknown* perils."—REV. W. II. VAN DORN. Ver. 22; ch. 9 : 61, 62.

23. Jesus not only labored but *slept* for a purpose—in this instance that his disciples in their extremity might awake him, and that he might the better manifest his power, ver. 23.

24. There is no storm in the world, the church, the family, or the heart, too violent for Jesus to quell, ver. 24; Ps. 46 : 2, 3.

25. Even Christians often distrust Christ in his providence; yet Jesus deals tenderly with their want of faith, ver. 25; ch. 24 : 25; John 20 : 27-29.

26. Jesus is willing to minister, not only where people are ready to receive him, but also where they are ready to reject him, ver. 26; John 1 : 11; Rom. 10 : 21; Rev. 3 : 20.

27. Satan and his angels exert an active influence among men, and are prompt in opposing Christ and his kingdom, ver. 27; John 12 : 31; 14 : 30; 1 Pet. 5 : 8, 9.

28. How deplorable the condition of the sinner under the power of sin and Satan! vers. 28, 29; Jer. 17 : 9; 13 : 23; John 3 : 6; Rom. 8 : 3, 4.

29. If the condition of men under Satan's power can be so terrible in this world, what must it be at last in hell! ver. 29; Matt. 25 : 41.

30. Jesus is Sovereign of the universe, ver. 28; Eccl. 8 : 4; Matt. 28 : 18; Phil. 2 : 9-11; Rev. 19 : 16.

31. An answered prayer is not always a sign of divine approbation, nor an unanswered one a sign of divine displeasure, vers. 30-32; Ps. 78 : 29; 106 : 14, 15.

32. The powers of hell are subject to the word of Jesus; they cannot go beyond his permission, ver. 31; Luke 10 : 18, 19.

33. Jesus may permit our property to be taken from us either in mercy or judgment, ver. 33; Dan. 4 : 34, 35.

34. Multitudes who grovel in the filth of iniquity, like the swine when possessed of the devil, rush madly on in company to their own destruction, ver. 33; 2 Pet. 2 : 12; Rev. 12 : 12.

35. Many, fearing worldly danger or loss on account of Christ, lose their own souls, vers. 33-36; Luke 9 : 23-26.

36. Covetousness ruins multitudes, ver. 37; Luke 12 : 15-21; Col. 3 : 5.

37. Christ often answers the prayer, "Depart from us, for we desire not a knowledge of thy ways," and leaves the petitioners to perish, vers. 37, 38; Job 21 : 14; 22 : 17.

38. How unhappy would wicked men and demons be in heaven with Christ, whom they so much dread! ver. 37; Rev. 6-16.

39. Jesus will not compel repentance. He overcame the tempest in approaching Gerasa, cast out demons on entering the country, but turned back before 'ne opposing will of the wicked inhabitants, ver. 37; Matt. 22 : 3; 23 : 37; John 5 : 40.

40. Jesus knows better than his people where they should go and what they should do, vers. 38, 39; Luke 9 : 57-62.

41. Home has the first claim upon the attention of a Christian, especially of a young convert, ver. 19; Ps. 66 : 16; John 1 : 41, 45; 4 : 29.

42. Persevere in doing good. While some may reject the gospel, others will be in readiness to receive it, ver. 40; Acts 12 : 46-49.

43. Influence and wealth are no preventive of sickness and death, ver. 41; Luke 16 : 22; Heb. 9 : 27.

44. The earnest prayer of faith shall be answered, vers. 42, 50; Luke 7 : 7, 9, 10; James 5 : 15-18.

45. In human diseases and sufferings we see the miseries of sin and the type of the deeper disease of the soul, ver. 43; Gen. 3 : 17-19; Rom. 5 : 12.

46. It is proper in sickness to use medicine and seek physicians, but not to trust in them rather than God, ver. 43; 2 Chron. 16 : 12, 13.

47. Many sinners, instead of looking to Christ, waste their time and strength on physicians of no value, from whom they suffer many things and get no better, but rather grow worse, ver. 43; Job 13 : 4; Jer. 6 : 14; 8 : 11, 22.

48. Happy are they whom times of great extremity lead to Jesus, ver. 44; ch. 7 : 26; Acts 12 : 5; Ps. 116 : 3-8.

49. Many press around Christ, but few touch him in faith, ver. 28; ch. 4 : 45-48; John 6 : 67-69.

50. Jesus was conscious of his indwelling divinity, and through this he performed his miracles, ver. 46; John 1 : 14; 8 : 58; 10 : 36, 37.

51. Sinners in secret may seek and

find Jesus, but he demands of them an open confession, and only in this will they find the full peace and consolation of the gospel, vers. 47, 48; Rom. 10 : 9, 10; Ps. 116 : 13, 14.

52. Faith is a precious grace. It is the appointed means of obtaining pardon and salvation, ver. 48; Rom. 5 : 1; 3 : 26; Heb. 10 : 38.

53. In the darkest hour let the words "only believe" dispel our fear, vers. 49, 50; Luke 24 : 25, 26; Acts 27 : 33, 34.

54. To wail and howl over our dead is heathenish, but to sorrow in submission and hope is Christian, vers. 51, 52; 1 Thess. 4 : 13.

55. To the Christian, death is as a sleep, ver. 52; 1 Cor. 15 : 6, 18; 1 Thess. 4 : 14.

56. The Christian should be nothing daunted though unbelievers scoff at the word and power of Jesus, ver. 53; Isa. 51 : 7; Acts 26 : 8, 24, 25.

57. Jesus in the house of Jairus displayed that power by which he will raise the dead at the last great day, vers. 54, 55; Hos. 13 : 14; John 6 : 40, 44; 1 Thess. 4 : 14; 1 Cor. 15 : 52.

58. As Christ raised dead bodies, so does he raise dead souls to spiritual life, vers. 54, 55; John 5 : 21; Eph. 2 : 1-7.

59. Jesus is mindful of our smallest necessities, ver. 56; ch. 6 : 34, 37; Heb. 4 : 15; 13 : 5.

## CHAPTER IX.

In this chapter Luke hastily passes over several months, touching upon leading points. Beginning with the mission of the twelve (vers. 1-6), he next notices the perplexity of Herod on hearing what Jesus did (7-9); then relates the return of the twelve, their retirement to a desert place, and the feeding of the five thousand (11-17); after which he records the confession of Peter, our Saviour's prediction of his sufferings, death, and resurrection, and his discourse on the necessity of self-sacrifice, 18-27. The account of the transfiguration then follows (28-36); the healing of a demoniac who baffled the disciples (37-43); our Lord's second announcement of his death (44, 45); and his rebuke of the ambition and party spirit of his disciples, 46-50. At this

*Mission of the twelve apostles.*

IX. THEN <sup>o</sup>he called his twelve disciples together, and gave them power and authority over all devils, <sup>•Mt. 10. 1, 5; Mk. 6. 7.</sup> and to cure diseases. And <sup>¶</sup>he sent them to preach <sup>ch. 10. 1, 9; Mt. 10. 7, 8; Mk. 6. 12.</sup>

point Luke begins an important portion of his narrative, which contains much that is not found in the other Gospels. Jesus starts for Jerusalem; is refused the hospitality of a Samaritan village, which arouses the anger of James and John, who are rebuked by Jesus, 51-56. The chapter closes with the replies of our Lord to certain who proposed to follow him, 57-62.

In tracing our Saviour's Galilean ministry it appears: first, that the welcome which Jesus and his words had received in Galilee gradually gave way to suspicion, dislike, and even hostility, by a large number of the people; that this development of opposition was connected with the presence of scribes and Pharisees, who came from Jerusalem to watch his conduct and movements; second, that the external character as well as the localities of his mission was much changed after the beheading of John the Baptist.

1-6. THE TWELVE ENDOWED WITH MIRACULOUS POWER; INSTRUCTED AND SENT FORTH; THEY GO FORTH, PREACH, AND WORK MIRACLES, Matt. 10: 1-42; 11: 1; Mark 6: 7-13. This took place while Jesus and his disciples were making their third general preaching tour throughout Galilee. At what place is unknown, Mark 6: 6. But little variation is found in the incidents related by the three evangelists, but much in the length of the discourse to the twelve. Matthew, who is ever intent on giving the words of Jesus, presents the discourse very fully; Mark briefly gives that portion which refers to their equipment for the journey and their conduct toward the people; Luke presents more briefly that portion given by Mark, but his brevity may in part be accounted for by the fact that he gives quite fully Christ's discourse to the seventy (ch. 10: 2-15), similar to Matt. 9: 37, 38; 10: 9-16, which is not found in the other Gospels.

This endowment of the apostles to work miracles and this mission with appropriate instructions must be dis-

tinguished from their selection and appointment as apostles, which is given in ch. 6: 13; Mark 3: 14, and was followed by the sermon on the plain, ch. 6: 20-49. We must also distinguish it from their call to be constant attendants, preachers, or evangelists, Mark 1: 16-20; also from their call to become disciples, John 1: 35-45.

1. He called his twelve disciples, *the twelve*, omitting *disciples*, according to the best authorities. Matthew (9: 36-38) supplies a connecting link. While prosecuting his third general missionary tour, Jesus had compassion on the multitude that attended him, because of their want of religious teachers, and he called unto him the twelve and began to send them forth to preach and work miracles. The number twelve is significant and frequent in Scripture—twelve sons of Israel; twelve stones of the Urim and Thummim on the breastplate of the high priest (Ex. 28: 17-21); twelve loaves of show-bread (Lev. 24: 5-8); the altar and the twelve pillars which Moses erected by Mount Sinai (Ex. 24: 4); the altar of twelve stones by Elijah (1 Kings 18: 31); the twelve spies who went to search the promised land (Num. 13: 1; Deut. 1: 23); the twelve stones taken from the bed of the Jordan (Josh. 4: 3), etc. So also the woman with a crown of twelve stars (Rev. 12: 1) and the New Jerusalem with twelve foundation-stones, Rev. 21: 14.

**Gave them power and authority,** power to perform and authority to exercise the power, and both delegated from Jesus, who possessed them in himself. It was not over spirits in general, but limited to **all demons**, of whatever grade or power. They were also empowered to **cure diseases**. They were thus to exercise miraculous power similar to that of Jesus. They received all the power and instructions they needed for their immediate work, and no more. This mission was preparatory; it also showed progress in their qualifications. They were the more fully em-

- 3 the kingdom of God, and to heal the sick. <sup>a</sup>And he said unto them, Take nothing for *your* journey, neither staves, nor scrip, neither bread, neither money; <sup>b</sup>ch. 10. 4; 22. 35 Mt. 10. 9; Mk. 6 8.
- 4 neither have two coats apiece. <sup>c</sup>And whatsoever <sup>d</sup>Mt. 10. 11; Mk 6. 10.

powered by the Holy Spirit for their apostolic work on the day of Pentecost, ch. 24 : 49 ; Acts 1 : 8.

2. The great object of their mission is stated, to **preach the kingdom of God**. Their casting out demons and healing the sick were the evidences of their divine commission. **He sent them, by two and two, Mark 6 : 7.**

3. **THE PROVISION FOR THEIR JOURNEY** is noticed in this verse. They are to rely on God for their daily supply. Hence, **take nothing for your journey**. Rather, *for the journey, or for the way*. **Neither staves**, according to the highest critical authorities, *neither staff*. So Matt. 10 : 10. But Mark (6 : 8) says, "save a staff only." This is no discrepancy, but shows the independence of the narratives. If they had a staff, they could use it, but they were not to procure one for the journey, nor even take it if not in their hands. The idea is: Make no preparation for the journey, but go just as you are. **Nor scrip, bag or wallet**, generally made



SCRIP OR BAG.

of leather, for carrying provisions; **neither bread in it, neither money**, the word for *silver or silver coin* being used. **Neither have two coats, tunics, under-garments, worn next to the skin, mostly with sleeves, and reaching generally to the knees.** They were not to encumber themselves with a change of raiment. Compare 1 Sam. 17 : 40, where are mentioned a staff, shepherd's crook or club, and a shepherd's bag, into which David put five smooth stones. Dr. Thomson says that shepherds and farmers in the East generally have a bag or wallet, made from the skins of kids, stripped off whole, and tanned by a simple process.

"The entire 'outfit' of these first missionaries shows that they were plain fishermen, farmers, or shepherds; and to such men there was no extraordinary

self-denial in the matter or the mode of their mission. . . . Nor was there any departure from the simple manners of the country (at present) in this. At this day the farmer sets out on excursions quite as extensive without a para (about a fourth of a cent) in his purse. And the modern Moslem prophet of Tarshiha thus sends forth his apostles over this identical region. Neither do they encumber themselves with two coats. They are accustomed to sleep in the garments they have on during the day, and in this climate such plain people experience no inconvenience from it. They wear a coarse shoe, answering to the sandal of the ancients, but never take two pair of them; and although the staff is an invariable companion of all wayfarers, they are content with *one*."—*The Land and Book*, vol. i., p. 533.

4. In this and the next verse Jesus gives **DIRECTIONS AS TO THEIR CONDUCT TOWARD THE PEOPLE**. **Whatsoever, whatever, house ye enter into, upon your arrival at any town or village, as invited and welcomed messengers or preachers. There abide.** Make that your temporary abode until you **depart**. Go not from house to house (ch. 10 : 7), shifting your quarters. "The reason is very obvious to one acquainted with Oriental customs. When a stranger arrives in a village or encampment, the neighbors, one after another, must invite him to eat with them. There is a strict etiquette about it, involving much ostentation and hypocrisy; and a failure in the due observance of this system of hospitality is violently resented, and often leads to alienations and feuds among neighbors; it also consumes much time, causes unusual distraction of mind, leads to levity, and every way counteracts the success of a spiritual mission. On these accounts the evangelists were to avoid these feasts: they were sent, not to be honored and feasted, but to call men to repentance, prepare the way of the

5 \*And whosoever will not receive you, when ye go out of that city, 'shake off the very dust from your feet for a testimony against them. \*Mt. 10. 14. \*Ac. 13. 51.

6 \*And they departed, and went through the towns, preaching the gospel, and healing every where. \*Mk. 6. 12.

*Herod's perplexity on hearing of the miracles of Jesus.*

7 \*Now Herod the tetrarch heard of all that was done \*Mt. 14. 1; Mk. 6. 14.

Lord, and proclaim that the kingdom of heaven was at hand. They were, therefore, first to seek a becoming habitation to lodge in, and there abide till the work in that city was accomplished."—DR. THOMSON, *Land and Book*, i., p. 534.

5. How they should act toward the rejecter of them and their message. **Whosoever will not receive you**, whether a person or persons, a family or city. For they would be rejected, not merely by individuals, but even by whole communities. Thus the Gerasenes (ch. 8 : 37) and a Samaritan village (ch. 9 : 53) rejected Jesus. Going forth from that place when thus rejected, they were to *shake off the very dust of their feet as a testimony against them*, as a proof or token that they were as the heathen to them, polluted and devoted to destruction, and hence they were desirous of separating themselves from them for ever. The Jews were accustomed to shake off the dust of the heathen when they returned from a foreign country to their own land, by which they renounced all fellowship with Gentiles and proclaimed that the very dust of those foreign countries was polluting to their own. So Jesus enjoins upon his apostles the same symbolical act toward the Jews who rejected the gospel, intimating thereby that they were no longer to be regarded as God's people, but as the heathen and idolaters. Compare Neh. 5 : 13. Paul shook off the dust of his feet against his persecutors at Antioch in Pisidia (Acts 13 : 51), and shook out his garments against the Jews at Corinth, Acts 18 : 6.

6. In this verse we have a summary account of this mission on which they were sent forth.

**They went through the towns**, or *villages*; where is not told us. It seems probable, however, that they went through the southern and south-

eastern portion of Galilee, taking in Tiberias and its vicinity. For (1) Jesus cautioned them against entering a city of the Samaritans (Matt. 10 : 5), which fairly implies that they would at least come near the borders of Samaria; and (2) Herod appears to have had his attention specially directed to Jesus (ver. 7) by this mission of the twelve. Very likely, therefore, they visited Tiberias or its vicinity, the capital of Galilee, where Herod resided most of the time; and if he was absent, his officers or courtiers may have sent him the report. **Preached the gospel.** Expressed in the original by a single verb, *announced the glad tidings*, to the people, individually and collectively, as they had opportunity. Mark (6 : 12) says that they "preached that men should repent."

**Healing everywhere**, in all the villages and places to which they came. Luke is brief, but comprehensive. Mark (6 : 13) says, "They cast out many devils, and anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed them." How long they were out upon this mission is not told us. Some suppose it to have occupied only one or two days; others extend it to several months. The facts that Jesus made a considerable circuit after sending them out (Matt. 11 : 1), that they went through the villages teaching (ver. 6), and that Jesus upon their return invited them to retirement and rest (Mark 6 : 31), point to a quite extensive tour and to considerable time. They probably occupied several weeks, from the latter part of February or the first part of March, A. D. 29, till early in April. The passover that year began April 17, and it was near when the five thousand were fed, vers. 10-17; John 6 : 4.

7-9. HEROD'S OPINION OF JESUS, Matt. 14 : 1-12; Mark 6 : 14-29. Mark is fullest; Luke comes next in detail; but Matthew as well as Mark relates the

by him: and he was perplexed, because that it was  
 8 said of some, that John was risen from the dead; and  
 of some, that Elias had appeared; and of others, that  
 9 one of the old prophets was risen again. And Herod

recent beheading of John the Baptist, which Luke omits.

7. **Herod the tetrarch.** *Tetrarch*, a Greek word meaning *a ruler of the fourth part*, which became a common title for those who governed any part of a province, subject only to the Roman emperor. Hence, in general and popular language, and from courtesy, he is styled *king*, Mark 6 : 14; Matt. 14 : 9. This was Herod Antipas, son of Herod the Great. His dominion comprised Galilee, Samaria, and Perea. He first married a daughter of Aretas, king of Arabia Petraea, but afterward took Herodias, his brother Philip's wife. Aretas, indignant at the insult offered his daughter, waged war against Herod and defeated him. This defeat, according to Josephus (*Ant.* xviii. 5, 2), was regarded by many as a punishment for the murder of John. In A. D. 39 he was banished to France, whither Herodias followed him. Both died in exile. He was sensual, weak (Matt. 14 : 9), cunning (Luke 13 : 32), unscrupulous (Luke 3 : 19), and superstitious, Mark 6 : 20; Luke 9 : 9.

**Heard of all that was done by him.** *By him* should be omitted according to the oldest and best manuscripts. Herod had heard of the preaching and the miracles of the disciples, and that Jesus had sent them forth. The name of Jesus had become famous by the preaching and miracles of the apostles as well as his own. It is probable that Herod was at war with Aretas and making his headquarters at Machærus, a frontier fortress near the Dead Sea, between Perea and Arabia, where John the Baptist was in prison. This, in connection with his voluptuous life, will explain why Herod seems not to have heard of Jesus before. "A palace is late in hearing spiritual news."—BENGEL. The murder of John must at least have startled Herod's conscience and made him uneasy, ver. 20, 26. If he had heard before of Jesus, it had produced no impression on his mind. But now the fame of Jesus, the report of his miracles, preaching, and

doings, at once arrested his attention and produced anxiety in his mind, filled with superstition and tortured by a guilty conscience.

**He was perplexed**, at a loss to know what to think of it; he was in a state of painful uncertainty. **Because** introduces the reason of his great perplexity. **Some** (his servants, Matt. 14 : 2) said, **John the Baptist was risen from the dead**, an opinion to which his own mind was inclined, Mark 6 : 16. *Dead* refers not to a mere state or condition, but to persons in that state, *from among the dead*. Some suppose Herod was a Sadducee, from comparing Mark 8 : 15 with Matt. 16 : 6, and that his guilt and fears now made him a cowardly believer in the doctrine of the resurrection. Infidels and skeptics have been known to renounce their unbelief in times of danger. It was the miracle-working power that specially arrested Herod's attention. John wrought no miracles (John 10 : 41), but now, Herod reasons, the powers are active in John's person because he has come forth from the dead, having thus acquired new spiritual and miraculous power. His fears may have been excited lest Jesus might become a political rival, or lest his superhuman power might be directed against him.

8. **Some that Elias, Elijah, had appeared**, whose coming had been foretold by Malachi (4 : 5) and was generally expected by the Jews. "During certain prayers the door of the house was set open, that Elijah might enter and announce the Messiah. . . . So firm was the conviction of his speedy arrival that when goods were found and no owner appeared to claim them the common saying was, 'Put them by till Elijah comes.'"—HACKETT'S *Smith's Dictionary*, p. 710. John was indeed the Elijah who was to come, Matt. 11 : 14. Notice that of Elijah it is said *had appeared*, since he did not die, but was translated. **Others, that one of the old prophets was risen again.** There were those who were not ready to regard him as the prophet Elijah,

said, John have I beheaded: but who is this of whom I hear such things? <sup>¶</sup> And he desired to see him. ¶ ch. 23. 8.

*Jesus retires to a desert place, where he feeds more than five thousand.*

10 <sup>¶</sup> And the apostles, when they were returned, told \* Mt. 14. 13; Mk 6. 30; John 6. 1

but still like one of the old prophets, though not so great as Elijah. Popular opinion thus accorded to Jesus a higher mission; some higher than others, but none so high as that of the Messiah. His Messiahship was perceived by faith, Matt. 16 : 16, 17. Compare similar reports a little later, Matt. 16 : 13, 14.

9. A statement of Herod's perplexity, ver. 7. **John have I beheaded.** This is the only reference by Luke to the death of John, which at first seems remarkable, since he gives so particular account of his birth. But John's history is given only as he was connected with Jesus as his forerunner. The account of his birth specially presents him as such. His death occurred about seventeen months after his imprisonment, probably early in March, A. D. 29. His active mission had thus been finished for nearly a year and a half. As nothing in his narrative really demanded an account of his tragic end, Luke passes over it with a simple reference. Herod in his perplexity inquires, **Who is this,** etc. Matthew (14 : 2) and Mark (6 : 14) present not so much the doubt in Herod's mind as the feelings and convictions of a guilty conscience. Hence he **desired to see him,** in order to satisfy his mind whether he was John, and also to witness a miracle. He was not, however, gratified till the morning of the crucifixion, ch. 23 : 7-12.

Concerning Machærus, the place of John's execution, Prof. Harvey of Hamilton Theological Seminary, who visited it in 1874, says: "This ancient fortress and town are a day's journey south of Nebo. The castle was built under the later Maccabees as the great south-eastern defence of Palestine. It was greatly strengthened by Herod, who built a palace within it. The citadel stood on the summit of a conical mountain surrounded by deep valleys and with an almost perpendicular ascent. It is three thousand and eight hundred feet above the Dead Sea. Here, according to Jo-

sephus, John the Baptist was beheaded, and it was at the palace within that fortress Herod Antipas was feasting when Herodias demanded the head of the faithful man of God. Such also seems to be the belief of the early Fathers, and the probability is that the story of Josephus is correct. It was wellnigh impregnable, but met its fate ultimately at the hands of the Romans, who took it by stratagem. The summit, which is one hundred yards in diameter, exhibits traces of the massive walls, an immense cistern, and the lower walls of two rooms, supposed to be prisons. The hill itself probably contains many interior chambers, and its sides are perforated with caves. The ruins of the city it protected now cover a full square mile, but its history has mostly perished, like its mouldering palaces."

10. **THE TWELVE RETURN FROM THEIR MISSION AND REPORT TO JESUS,** Mark 6 : 30, 31. Mark again is the fullest.

10. **The apostles.** The word means *persons sent forth.* Jesus gave this title (ch. 6 : 13) to the twelve when he selected them from among his disciples. Mark appropriately applies this title now to the twelve just returning from their mission. **When they were returned.** Possibly the news of the death of John the Baptist may have hastened their return. But as they appear to have returned together, it is more probable that Jesus had directed them to come back a little before the approaching passover. **Told him all,** etc. Made a detailed report of places visited, how they had been received and what they had accomplished, what miracles they had wrought, and what doctrines and precepts they had taught. From comparing Matt. 14 : 12, 13, it appears that simultaneously with the apostles' return was the report of John's disciples respecting the death of their master. They now were probably at Capernaum.

10-17. **JESUS RETIRES AND MIRAC-**

him all that they had done. And he took them, and went aside privately into a desert place belonging to  
 11 the city called Bethsaida. And the people, when they knew *it*, followed him: and he received them, and spake unto them of the kingdom of God, and healed them that had need of healing.

UJOUSLY FEEDS THE MULTITUDE, Matt. 14 : 13-21; Mark 6 : 32-44; John 6 : 1-14. The great importance of this account and miracle may be inferred from the fact that all the evangelists relate it. Mark and John are the fullest and enter most into details. Matthew and Luke are about equally concise.

As the imprisonment of John formed an era in Christ's ministry when he commenced his active and public labors in Galilee (Matt. 4 : 12), so did the death of John form another era when he extended his labors into Northern Galilee and east of the Jordan. Heretofore he had made Capernaum the centre of his missionary operations in Eastern Galilee. But henceforth, making but brief visits to this scene of his former labors, he extends his journeys into Decapolis (Mark 7 : 31) and Northern Galilee, going north-west as far as the neighborhood of Tyre and Sidon (Mark 7 : 24) and north-east as far as Cæsarea Philippi, Mark 8 : 27.

10. **And he took them.** Better, *And taking them with him, he went aside, or retired, privately*, from the western side of the Sea of Galilee, probably at or near Capernaum. The reason of their departure was—(1) the disciples needed rest (Mark 6 : 31); (2) the news of the death of John the Baptist (Matt. 14 : 13); doubtless they were deeply moved; retirement was becoming; (3) withdrawing from the jurisdiction of Herod Antipas, who may now have returned to Tiberias and was desirous of seeing Jesus (ver. 9), to that of the mild Herod Philip (ch. 3 : 1), on the east and north of the Sea of Galilee. These reasons are consistent one with another. **Into a desert place belonging to**, etc. Not a barren waste (ver. 39), but an uncultivated and uninhabited region in the vicinity of Eastern **Bethsaida**, which stood on the north-eastern side of the lake near the Jordan, and which Philip, according to Josephus, advanced to the

dignity of a city, and named it *Julias*. Matthew and Mark record the fact that they went by ship. But according to some of the oldest manuscripts, the words *into a desert place belonging* should be omitted. This omission is supported by the greatest weight of critical authority. If, therefore, we read, *he went aside privately to a city called Bethsaida*, the desert place is to be regarded as pertaining to Bethsaida, or as the Syriac version reads, "the desert part of Bethsaida." The phrase, "*A city called Bethsaida*," points to that one north of the lake and east of the Jordan.

11. **And the people**, etc. Jesus had withdrawn with his disciples from the people without making known his design of crossing the lake; but they saw him and his disciples embarking covertly, and interpret his design, Mark 6 : 33. They tell the news (Matt. 14 : 13), and the people, seeing from the shore the direction that Jesus was going, **followed him**, by going on foot around the northern end of the lake, to the place where they saw that he was about to land. Christ's popularity among the common people, and their eagerness to enjoy his teaching and his miraculous power (John 6 : 2) are here very briefly presented.

**And he received them**, welcomed them, instead of being displeased that they should encroach upon his retirement. Matthew and Mark state that he was moved with compassion at the sight of them. Instead, therefore, of dismissing them, that he and his disciples might enjoy quiet, he **spake unto them of**, or *concerning*, **the kingdom of God**, the truths of his kingdom. The idea of the original is that he continued the work of *teaching* and *healing* till the day began to wear away, ver. 12. Matthew (14 : 14) omits reference to his teaching, and simply says "he healed their sick." But Mark (6 : 34) omits reference to his healing, and says, "he began to teach them

- 12 \*And when the day began to wear away, then came the twelve, and said unto him, Send the multitude away, that they may go into the towns and country round about, and lodge, and get victuals: <sup>b</sup>for we are here in a desert place. But he said unto them, Give ye them to eat. And they said, We have no more but five loaves and two fishes; except we should go and buy meat for all this people. For they were about five thousand men. And he said to his disciples, Make them sit down by fifties in a company.

\* Mt. 14. 15; Mk. 6. 35; John 6. 1, 5.

<sup>b</sup> Ps. 78. 19; 107. 5. 6; Hos. 13. 5.

many things." John (6 : 3, 4) says that Jesus went up into the mountain, or highlands, by the shore, and "there sat with his disciples," which was the posture of teaching, Matt. 5 : 1. Also that the passover was nigh, which began that year, A. D. 29, on April 17th. This also may account in part for the great multitude present, many of whom were on their way to Jerusalem to keep the feast.

12. **Began to wear away, or to decline.** It was now the first evening (Matt. 14 : 15), the decline of day, about three o'clock in the afternoon. The second evening, when he had sent the multitude away (Mark 6 : 47), began at sunset. Jesus had probably been employed several hours in teaching and healing the sick, ver. 11. Hence he must have arrived at the eastern side of the lake quite early in the day.

**The twelve**, who had doubtless been here and there, now come to him while he is still employed with the multitude. **This is a desert place.** See on ver. 32. Away from the villages and thoroughfares no food could be obtained. **The time** (the same word is translated *day* at the beginning of the verse), **the daytime, is far passed**, is far advanced, or far gone; it is now late.

**Send the multitude away.** The first reason for *dismissing* the multitude is already given, the lateness of the hour. Another reason was that they might go **into the towns**, rather, *into the villages around*, among those who had provisions to sell, and buy for themselves; **and into the country around about**, rather, *and into the fields*. *Around about* should not be connected with *country* or *fields*, but with *villages*, as above. The object was

that they might **lodge and get victuals. We are here in a desert place**, away from villages and thoroughfares where lodging and food can be obtained.

13. Jesus commands his disciples to **give them to eat**, declaring that there was no necessity for sending them away, Matt. 14 : 16. This was calculated to excite their expectation and strengthen their faith. Then he asks Philip, in order to try his faith, "Whence shall we buy bread that these may eat?" who answered that two hundred pennyworth (two hundred *denaries*, about thirty dollars) would not be sufficient, John 6 : 5-7. The twelve ask him if they shall go and buy that amount, Mark 6 : 37. And now they state that they have **but five loaves and two fishes**, except they buy. It was Andrew who gave the information that a lad had five *barley* loaves, an inferior kind of food, and two *small* fishes, John 6 : 8, 9. Loaves were usually made in the form of round cakes, and generally about half an inch in thickness. The language of the four evangelists implies that this was all the provisions on the ground. Compare Matt. 14 : 17.

14. Luke gives the number of **men** present. Matthew (14 : 21) says, "Besides women and children." There were probably seven or eight thousand in all, possibly ten thousand.

With authority Jesus says to his disciples, **Make them sit down, recline or lie down**, the customary posture at table, **by fifties in a company**, better, *in companies of fifty*, in separate *parties*, or messes, for the sake of order and convenience. "The scene of this extraordinary miracle is the noble plain (Butaiha) at the mouth of the Jordan, which during most of the year is now

- 15 And they did so, and made them all sit down.  
 16 Then he took the five loaves and the two fishes, and looking up to heaven, he blessed them, and brake, and gave to the disciples to set before the multitude.  
 17 And they did eat, and were all filled: and there was taken up of fragments that remained to them twelve baskets.

as then, covered with 'green grass.'—DR. J. P. NEWMAN, *From Dan to Beer-sheba*, p. 395. "This Butaiha belonged to Bethsaida. At this extreme south-east corner of it the mountain shuts down upon the lake bleak and barren. . . . In this little cove the ships (boats) were anchored. On this beautiful sward at the base of the rocky hill the people were seated to receive from the hands of the Son of God the miraculous bread, emblematic of his body, which is the true bread from heaven."—DR. THOMSON, *The Land and the Book*, vol. ii., p. 29. This plain east of the Jordan forms a triangle, the shore of the lake making one side, the Jordan the second, and the eastern mountains the third.

15. The order of Jesus is quickly obeyed. The multitude, under the direction of the apostles, **all sit down**, recline in companies upon the green grass, Mark 6 : 39. Thus all confusion and all deception was prevented. The multitude could be conveniently served and easily and accurately counted.

16. **Looking up to heaven**, to the sky, which seems to separate us from the place of God's immediate presence. "*Looking up* is a natural and scriptural gesture in addressing God, whom all men, as it were, instinctively regard as dwelling in some special sense above them."—ALEXANDER. Compare 2 Chron. 6 : 13; Ps. 123 : 1, 2; John 11 : 41. **Blessed them**. Implored a blessing on the bread and the fishes. John (6 : 11) says, "He gave thanks." The latter is included in the former. The word translated *bless* is used in praising God for favors (ch. 1 : 64); also in invoking God's blessing (ch. 2 : 34); also in God's conferring favors, Heb. 6 : 14; Acts 3 : 26. These three senses really met in Jesus. For, as a man, he praised God and implored his blessing; while, as God, he granted it. So Matthew (15 : 36) has *gave thanks*,

while Mark (8 : 7) has *blessed*. The same diversity is seen in the account of the Lord's Supper. Matthew (26 : 26) and Mark (14 : 22) have *blessed*; Luke (22 : 19) and Paul (1 Cor. 11 : 24) have *gave thanks*. **And brake**. The usual way of preparing bread for eating. The Scriptures speak of breaking bread, but never of cutting it. The thin loaves, or cakes, were very likely brittle. **And gave**, or *kept giving*, to his **disciples**, a beautiful foreshadowing of their future work of bearing the bread of life to perishing sinners.

17. Three facts stated in regard to the food. **They did eat**, none were passed over, as the following clause implies, **and were all filled**. The appetites of all were fully satisfied. The broken bread and the divided fishes, like the widow's meal and oil (1 Kings 17 : 16), did not waste nor fail so long as the disciples continued to supply the multitude.

**And there was taken up**. This they carried away with them. While these provisions lasted the disciples were constantly reminded of this wonderful miracle. Jesus had given the command, "Gather up the fragments that remain that nothing be lost" (John 6 : 12), thereby teaching a lesson of prudent economy. They were not to expect a continuation of the miracle. **Fragments**, broken pieces of bread and fishes, Mark 6 : 43. **Twelve baskets**. The usual Jewish travelling-basket. The number was twelve; thus each apostle filled his basket. Thus there remained much more than the original provisions, showing an actual increase of food, and not a supernatural restraining and satisfying of the appetite. Some suppose that the provisions taken up were those broken by Jesus, but undistributed. The most natural supposition, however, is that they had been distributed, or mostly so, and that they were gathered up from the ground

*Peter's confession; Jesus announces his sufferings, death, and resurrection, and teaches self-denial.* • Mt. 16. 13; Mk. 8 27.

18 °And it came to pass, as he was alone praying, his disciples were with him: and he asked them, saying, 19 °Whom say the people that I am? They answering

• Dan. 7. 13; Mt. 12. 40; 13. 37, 41; John 1. 50; Ac. 7. 56; Heb. 2. 14-18.

where the companies had eaten. John 6 : 12, 13, especially implies this.

Various attempts have been made by neologists to explain away this miracle by endeavoring to trace it to natural causes, and even by supposing it originally a parable, related by mistake as an actual occurrence. But all such attempts are manifestly absurd and ridiculous. All of the four narratives clearly convey the idea of superhuman power. They do not tell how that power was exerted or how the food was increased, but they do clearly tell us that a few loaves and fishes, which a lad could carry in his basket, were increased so that thousands satisfied their hunger, and there remained at least twelve times more of fragments than of the original provisions. It is not necessary to suppose creative power; for the laws and the elements of the natural world being under the direction of Jesus, he could bring together at his will all the elements constituting the bread and the fishes. The power in one case was as truly omnipotent as in the other. Similar exhibitions of divine power are recorded in the Old Testament, in giving the manna (Ex. 16 : 4) and in multiplying the widow's oil, 2 Kings 4 : 2-7. Compare the turning of water into wine, John 2 : 9.

In this miracle Jesus also exhibited himself as the Bread of Life. See the application that Jesus made of it soon after in the synagogue at Capernaum, John 6 : 26-35, 48-58. The multitude was blind to this deep spiritual import and design, but they felt the force of the miracle as an evidence of the Messiahship of Jesus, and they exclaim, "Of a truth this is the prophet that cometh into the world," John 6 : 14. Possibly a tradition that the Messiah would rain manna from heaven may also have had its influence in leading them to this conclusion.

18-21. JESUS VISITS THE VICINITY OF CÆSAREA PHILIPPI. CONFESSION

OF PETER IN BEHALF OF THE TWELVE. Matt. 16 : 13-20; Mark 8 : 27-30. About at this point the period of preparation of Christ's last sufferings may be said to commence. He begins to prepare the minds of his disciples by clear views of himself, and by distinct intimations of his sufferings.

Between this and the preceding verse Luke passes over many incidents—recorded in Matt. 14 : 22-16 : 13; Mark 6 : 45-8 : 27; John 6 : 22-7 : 1—showing how lightly he touches this portion of our Lord's history. The night after feeding the five thousand Jesus walks on the water, and the day following delivers a discourse in the synagogue at Capernaum. John 6 : 59. Continuing in Galilee (John 7 : 1), he discoursed on unwashed hands, after which he visited the region of Tyre and Sidon and healed a daughter of a Canaanitish woman. Jesus then returns through Decapolis, heals many, and feeds the four thousand; crosses to the western side of the lake, where the Pharisees require a sign; recrosses the lake, cautioning the disciples against the leaven of the Pharisees; and arriving at Bethsaida Julius heals a blind man. From thence he visits Cæsarea Philippi, where Peter utters the confession in this section. See author's *Harmony*, §§ 76 to 87.

18. **And it came to pass.** Luke thus indefinitely introduces a new topic, passing over about three months between this and the last topic, as if he had said, It came to pass on a certain time when Jesus was alone praying. Mark states that they were in the way as they were going among the villages of Cæsarea Philippi. But Luke specially here and elsewhere notices the praying of Jesus, ver. 28; 3 : 21; 11 : 1. He was alone from the multitude. **His disciples were with him.** It was a fitting time and place to draw from his disciples, the twelve, their opinion of him. He therefore asks them, **Whom say the people,** or multitudes who attended his ministry

said, °John the Baptist; but some *say*, Elias, and others *say*, that one of the old prophets is risen again. ° vers. 7, 8; Mt. 14  
 20 He said unto them, But whom say ye that I am? † Mt. 16. 16; John  
 21 †Peter answering said, The Christ of God. ‡And he 6. 69.  
 straitly charged them and commanded *them* to tell no † Mt. 16. 20.  
 22 man that thing; saying, †The Son of man must suffer † Mt. 16. 21; Mk.  
 8. 31; 9. 1; Mt.  
 17. 22.

that I am? or declare me to be. He thus would first call forth the opinion of the masses, who had followed him and were friendly to him. His enemies had expressed their opinion by words and acts, Mark 3 : 6, 22; 7 : 2.

19. In the answer of the disciples we have a vivid picture of the opinions of the people generally. They did not regard him as the Messiah, but intimately connected with him as a precursor or forerunner. Some, like Herod, thought him to be **John the Baptist** risen from the dead, ver. 7; some **Elias**, *Eljah*, who was to come, Mal. 4 : 5; and others **one of the old prophets is risen again**, as Jeremiah (Matt. 16 : 14), who was regarded as the greatest of the prophets, and expected by some of the Jews as one of the forerunners of the Messiah. The Jews held to the actual coming and the bodily resurrection of these men, and not that the soul of any of them had reappeared in the body of Jesus. We find here the same diversity of views as that described in vers. 7, 8. Only persons of strong faith had recognized him as the Messiah, Matt. 9 : 27; 15 : 22; John 4 : 42; 6 : 68, 69; 7 : 31.

20. Jesus now asks the twelve their opinion of him. **But whom say ye**, etc. **Ye** is emphatic, and in contrast to **the multitude** (ver. 18), whose views they had just given. **Ye** have told me the confused and conflicting views of the people; *but ye, whom do ye say or declare me to be?* **And Peter answering**, for the twelve, for Jesus addressed his question to them. Peter appears to have been the spokesman of the apostles, and to have acted somewhat like the chairman of a committee or the foreman of a jury, Mark 10 : 28; Matt. 15 : 15; Luke 12 : 41; John 6 : 68. Compare Matt. 17 : 24; John 13 : 24. The eleven assent to his declaration of their faith, for they make no other reply. **The Christ of God**, the emphatic language of firm conviction. **The Christ, the Messiah, or the**

**Anointed**, as the word means, the One foretold by ancient prophets, and styled the Messiah, or Anointed, by David and Daniel, Ps. 2 : 2; Dan. 9 : 25. He was the Son of David, in whom were fulfilled all the types of *anointed* prophets, priests, and kings of the old dispensation—the great Prophet, Priest, and King. **Of God**, from God, emphatically God's Messiah (compare ch. 2 : 26; Ps. 2 : 2), including Sonship, and described more fully by Matthew (16 : 16), "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Mark and Luke give the main and essential proposition of Peter's answer; Matthew's form is more descriptive, and expresses the fulness of their faith. He also adds what Jesus said to Peter, Matt. 16 : 17-19.

21. **And he straitly, strictly, charged them**, implying that they would incur his displeasure should they disobey. **Should tell no man that thing, or tell this to no one**—that is, this confession "that he is the Christ," Matt. 16 : 20. Had the Jews known him, they would not have crucified him, 1 Cor. 2 : 8. The time had not yet come for the proclamation that he was the Messiah. He must suffer, die, and rise from the dead, and the Spirit must come. Nothing must be done either to hasten or delay the designs of his enemies. The people were not yet ready for hearing this truth, neither were the apostles fully prepared for their work.

22-27. JESUS FORETELLS HIS DEATH AND RESURRECTION; TEACHES THE DUTY AND NECESSITY OF SELF-DENIAL, Matt. 16 : 21-28; Mark 8 : 38-ch. 9 : 1. Luke is the briefest; Mark the most vivid and the fullest on self-denial. Matthew and Mark record our Lord's rebuke of Peter in the region of Casarea Philippi.

22. **Saying**. This is closely connected with the preceding verse. **The Son of man**. See on ch. 5 : 24. Jesus teaches that he **must suffer**, the necessity of his sufferings. Before this he had taught them that he was the

many things, and be rejected of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be slain, and be raised the third day.

- 23 <sup>1</sup>And he said to *them* all, If any *man* will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily,  
24 and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall

<sup>1</sup>ch. 14. 27; Mt. 10  
38; 16. 24; Mk  
8. 34; Ro. 8. 13.

Christ; now he teaches them that he, the Christ, must suffer. Before he had given obscure intimations of both his sufferings (Matt. 10 : 33; John 3 : 14) and his resurrection, Matt. 12 : 40; John 2 : 19; but now he speaks plainly and teaches their necessity. He continued afterward with further particulars, vers. 43-45; 18 : 31-34. Thus he began also to correct their mistaken and worldly views, and in a measure to prepare them for the event when it came and afterward for the better understanding of both this and of ancient prophecy, Isa. 53 : 4-10; Dan. 9 : 26; Luke 24 : 26, 27, 44, 46. Matthew adds the fact that "he must go unto Jerusalem." **Be rejected of**, by the Sanhedrim, the highest civil and ecclesiastical court of the Jews, which consisted of seventy-one members from the three classes immediately named. They denied what Peter and the disciples had confessed; they rejected Jesus as the Messiah, the Son of the living God, ch. 22 : 66-71. **Elders**. See on ch. 7 : 3. **Chief priests**, the heads of the twenty-four classes into which David divided the priests (1 Chron. 24 : 7-18; Luke 1 : 5), the high priest, who was generally president of the Sanhedrim, and his surviving predecessors. **Scribes**. See on ch. 5 : 21. **Be raised the third day**. Jesus died on Friday afternoon and rose on Sunday morning. The time intervening was one whole day and parts of two days, which were counted as three whole days according to Jewish mode of reckoning.

23. **He said to them all**, to the people as well as his disciples. For the duties of self-denial and self-sacrifice were of interest to and binding upon all. But the great doctrine of his sufferings was for the present intended specially for his disciples. It is not strange that a crowd should have collected around him in the vicinity of Cæsarea Philippi as well as elsewhere. Jesus having retired for prayer (ver. 18), the twelve may have first come to

him, and then the people may have drawn near. **If any one will come after me**. Purposes or desires to come after me as my follower or disciple. **Deny himself**. Renounce himself. *Self* must be denied. God, his cause and his glory, must be uppermost and supreme. This differs from self-denial, which has special reference to abstaining from certain gratifications and pleasures; and from cross-bearing, which refers more particularly to enduring reproach with Christ and for his sake. **Take up his cross**. A proverbial expression denoting inner and outer struggles pertaining to the Christian life, ready to yield up life itself for his cause. Taking the cross and following Christ are inseparable. Every one has **his own cross**, which he must **take** willingly and **daily**, and **follow** Christ, not the world or any selfish inclination. Luke alone has *daily*, implying that cross-bearing is continuous and through life. There are the crosses of humiliation, of renunciation of our own wisdom, of self-righteousness, of sinful propensities and habits, of reproach, and of suffering for Christ's sake and our own good; the crosses of repentance, of baptism, and of a life consecrated to Christ's service. The language is an allusion to the severest and most disgraceful Roman punishment, in which the malefactor was often compelled to bear his own cross to the place of execution. So Jesus bore it, John 19 : 17. Compare Isaac carrying the *wood* in Gen. 22 : 6. It was, doubtless, very expressive to the disciples when he uttered it, and was well fitted to prepare their mind for trials as well as for his sufferings and death. Yet that great event served to give an intensity of meaning to this and similar passages, John 12 : 16; Rom. 6 : 6; Gal. 2 : 20; 5 : 24; 1 Pet. 4 : 1, 2.

24. As he is to lose his life, so they must be willing to lose theirs. **For whosoever will save his life**. The truth enunciated in this proverbial form

- lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake,  
 25 the same shall save it. <sup>1</sup>For what is a man advantaged, if he gain the whole world, and lose himself, or  
 26 be cast away? <sup>2</sup>For whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory, and *in*  
 27 *his* Father's, and of the holy angels. <sup>1</sup>But I tell you of a truth, there be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the kingdom of God.

<sup>1</sup>Mt. 16. 26; Mk. 8. 36.

<sup>2</sup>Mt. 10. 33; Mk. 8. 38; 2 Tim. 2. 12

<sup>1</sup>Mt. 16. 28; Mk. 9. 1.

of expression shows the necessity and results of self-denial and self-sacrifice for Christ, and thus gives a reason for what Jesus had just said in the preceding verse. Whoever purposes to save his natural or temporal life, makes this his great object, and hence rejects me, shall lose his higher spiritual life. **But whosoever will lose**, etc. But whosoever shall lose his temporal life for my sake and the gospel's, making it secondary and subservient, shall save his life in the higher and spiritual sense. He shall "find" eternal life, Matt. 16 : 25. He shall save both body and soul to a celestial, heavenly life. Compare Paul's language in Phil. 3 : 7, 8, "I have suffered the loss of all things," etc.

25. **For what is a man advantaged?** or *profited*. Further reason for self-denial in following Christ. The interrogative form makes the statement the more emphatic. It cannot by any means profit him if he acquire the whole world and all of its enjoyments, etc. **Lose himself or be cast away.** The Bible Union version renders the original with great accuracy. "For what is a man profited when he has gained the whole world and *lost or forfeited himself*," *himself* referring specially to his higher nature, his soul, but including his whole being. Compare Matt. 10 : 28. "Destroy both soul and body in hell." *Lost* as a consequence of seeking the world and not following Jesus. *Forfeited* as a penalty for so doing.

26. An additional reason for following Jesus in self-denial and crosses derived from what his hearers might experience at the judgment. **For whosoever shall be ashamed of me**, as his Lord and teacher. **Of my words**, doctrines and precepts, my teachings. See John 12 : 41-43 for an

example of some who were ashamed of him before that generation. In contrast, compare Paul, who was not ashamed of him, Rom. 1 : 16. **Of him also shall the Son of man**, whom you now see, **be ashamed**, he shall rightly and justly disown and reject, **when he shall come**, when, in contrast to his present humble condition, he shall appear in threefold glory: (1) **his own glory**, as the exalted Messiah, Phil. 2 : 9-11. (2) **in his Father's**, in the glorious majesty of God the Father, John 17 : 5; Heb. 1 : 3; Matt. 24 : 30. (3) **of his holy angels**, who surround him with their brightness, Matt. 25 : 31; 2 Thess. 1 : 7; Jude 14. Angels are here styled *holy*, as distinguished from fallen angels, evil spirits. Holiness also has a spiritual glory in it. Jesus evidently refers to his second coming and the judgment, when he shall render to every man according to his works, Matt. 16 : 27; 7 : 21; 13 : 40-42; 25 : 31, 41.

27. **And I say to you of a truth.** A most solemn and authoritative declaration. **There be**, etc. *There are some of those standing here*. Of the twelve and of the multitude, all of whom he was addressing, ver. 23. **Which. Who. Shall not taste**, etc. A strong negative in the original; death is represented by the figure of a bitter cup or goblet—*shall not die*. **Till they see the kingdom of God**, of the Messiah. See on ch. 4 : 43. Mark (9 : 1) adds, "come with power," with the exhibitions of divine and omnipotent power. The kingdom had, indeed, already come or commenced, ch. 17 : 20, 21. The language in Matthew (16 : 28), "till they shall see the Son of man coming in his kingdom," presents Jesus as the King and divine Representative of his kingdom. The fulfilment of

*The transfiguration.*

28 <sup>m</sup> And it came to pass about an eight days after these <sup>m</sup> Mt. 17. 1; Mk. 9. 2. sayings, he took Peter and John and James, and went

this prediction has been variously referred by commentators—(1) to the transfiguration; (2) to the resurrection; (3) to the day of Pentecost; (4) to the destruction of Jerusalem; (5) to the progressive establishment of Christ's kingdom between the effusion of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost and the destruction of Jerusalem; (6) to the second coming of Christ.

The great objection to any of these views appears to be a want of comprehensiveness. They lose sight of a great principle in prophecy—namely, that it often points, not only to the final event itself, but also to types of that event, thus including a series of events all ranging under one description and fulfilled by one prophecy. Thus, the reign of Solomon is a type of the glory and the durability of the reign of Christ, the Son of David, Ps. 72. The return of Israel from their captivity at Babylon is linked in prophecy with the future triumph and glory of spiritual Israel. According to this principle, this prediction was fulfilled to the apostles and disciples in the resurrection (Rom. 1 : 4), to the multitude and people generally in the pentecostal season and the complete miraculous establishment of Christianity (Acts 4 : 25-30 ; 13 : 32-34 ; 2 Cor. 13 : 4 ; Ps. 2 : 6), and to the Jewish nation in his providential coming at the destruction of Jerusalem, which was a type of his final coming.

We can hardly refer this prediction to the transfiguration, which occurred only a few days after; for the expression, "*shall not taste of death till,*" implies some distance of time, and not merely length of privilege. Compare 2 Pet. 1 : 15. So also it is not absolutely necessary to include in the fulfilment Christ's second coming to judgment, yet the reference of Jesus to that coming in the preceding verse (ch. 8 : 38) would naturally suggest that view. Thus, some of those present saw Jesus come as a King in his kingdom, and in this they saw a type and earnest of his final coming. John (John 21 : 22) and probably Philip survived the destruc-

tion of Jerusalem, which occurred about forty years after this.

28-36. THE TRANSFIGURATION. Jesus miraculously presented to three chosen disciples as a spiritual and glorified Saviour, the Redeemer and Lawgiver of his people. An earnest of his future glory and that of his followers, Matt. 17 : 1-9 ; Mark 9 : 2-10.

In the first portion of the narrative Luke is the fullest, but in the latter portion Matthew and Mark. The accounts of the latter two are very similar, but Mark is the more vivid. Luke alone records the subject of discourse between Jesus, Moses, and Elijah, and the sleep of the three disciples.

28. **About an eight days after.** The modern Greeks speak of a week as eight days. Luke here counts the days of Peter's confession and of the transfiguration. Matthew and Mark speak more definitely, "After six days"—that is, from the confession of Peter, ver. 20. It was very fitting that Jesus should make some exhibition of his glory as a divine and human Saviour very soon after Peter's confession and his own prediction of his sufferings and his discourse on self-denial. The specification of time suggests, and indeed implies, some connection or relation between the preceding discourse and the transfiguration. Why Jesus must suffer death, and how glory should follow, was a mystery to the disciples. Jesus gave them a week to ponder his sayings, and then gave some of them this wonderful exhibition of himself as the Messiah, the Son of God and the Son of man, the great Lawgiver and Prophet, the great Priest and King, the suffering and the glorified Redeemer. **He took.** Better, *he took with him*, as companions or attendants, **Peter, James, and John.** The three specially-favored apostles, and the most intimate bosom friends of Jesus. They alone saw Jesus raise the daughter of Jairus (ch. 5 : 37), and they alone were the witnesses of his agony in the garden, ch. 14 : 33. Now they are chosen to behold his transfigured glory. Peter refers distinctly to this wondrous scene,

29 up into a mountain <sup>a</sup>to pray. And as he prayed, the fashion of his countenance was altered, and his raiment was white and glistening. And, behold, there talked with him two men, which were Moses and

<sup>a</sup> ch. 5. 16; Mt. 14. 23; 28. 3; Rev 1. 12-16; 10. 1.

2 Pet. 1 : 16-18. John, in a more general manner, says, "We beheld his glory," John 1 : 14.

**Went up into a mountain.** Rather, *the mountain*. So also 2 Pet. 1 : 18, *the holy mountain*. A definite place was very probably in the mind of Luke as well as of Peter. He brings them up the mountain to a secluded, solitary place, and there they were alone by themselves. **To pray.** Luke only mentions this design. This, together with the fact that the disciples were heavy with sleep, leads to the conclusion that the transfiguration occurred at night, for night was a very common season with Jesus for prayer (ch. 6 : 46; Luke 6 : 12), and he did not descend the mountain till the next day. Besides, the whole scene could be seen to better advantage at night than by day. What *mountain* this was is wisely concealed from us. Tradition says it was Mount Tabor, the highest peak in Galilee, five miles east of Nazareth, but without foundation, for a fortified town stood on the summit of Tabor and was garrisoned by the Romans in the time of Christ. Besides, Jesus was more than fifty miles north of Tabor in the region of Cæsarea Philippi, and it does not appear that he returned to Galilee till after the transfiguration, ver. 30. It was, more probably, on one of the summits of Hermon.

"Standing upon the height which overlooks Cæsarea Philippi, I looked around upon the towering ridges which Great Hermon, the Sheikh of the Mountains, as the Arabs call it, projects into the plain. Full of thought that one of these summits on which I gazed had in all probability witnessed the transfiguration, I had fixed upon one of them which, from its peculiar position, form, and elevation, might aptly be spoken of as a 'high mountain apart,' when, casting my eye casually down along its sides as they sloped into the valley, the remains of three ancient villages appeared dotting its base. I remembered how instantly on the descent from the mountain Jesus had found himself in the

midst of his disciples and of the multitude, and was pleased at observing that the mountain-top met all the requirements of the gospel narrative."—DR. WM. HANNA, *Life of Christ*, vol. i., p. 336.

29. **As he prayed, or while he was praying.** Thus Jesus honored prayer. Again Luke only notices this. **The fashion, appearance, of his countenance was altered,** his bodily form remaining the same. It is interesting to notice that Luke does not use, like Matthew and Mark, the word *transfigured*. Perhaps it was lest his Greek and Roman readers might get a wrong conception from a common use of the word. Matthew (17 : 2) says, "his face did shine as the sun." As faint illustrations the case of Moses may be used, the skin of whose face shone when he descended from the mount (Ex. 34 : 29-35), and that of Stephen, whose face shone before the Sanhedrim as the face of an angel, Acts 6 : 15. In the next clause we learn that the change extended to his raiment. His divine nature shone forth and its glory enveloped his person.

**His raiment,** garments, especially his outer ones, which were visible. **White and glistening.** Literally, *flashing forth light*, a glittering white. The texture of his garment was not changed, but it was bright with the radiating light of his glorified body.

30. Glory was not only manifested in and around his person, but heavenly visitors attended him. **And, behold,** calling special attention to what follows. **Moses and Elias.** *Elias* is the Greek form of the Hebrew name Elijah. While Matthew and Luke say Moses and Elias, Mark puts Elias first, adding *with Moses*. Moses was the representative of the law and Elijah of the prophets. Luke presents them at once, *talking* with Jesus.

It is idle to ask *how* the disciples knew them, since many ways can be conceived by which they could come to this knowledge. Jesus may have saluted them by their names, or the

- 31 Elias: who appeared in glory, and spake of his de-  
 32 cease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem. But  
 Peter and they that were with him <sup>o</sup>were heavy with  
 sleep: and when they were awake, <sup>p</sup>they saw his  
 glory, and the two men that stood with him. • Dan. 8. 18 ; 10. 9.  
 p2 Pet. 1. 17.
- 33 And it came to pass, as they departed from him,  
 Peter said unto Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be  
 here: and let us make three tabernacles; one for thee,

conversation may have indicated it, or they may have known them intuitively through the Spirit, etc. In Moses also they saw, in a glorious, visible form, a spirit of the just made perfect, and in Elijah one in his glorious body. Elijah had been translated nine hundred years before, and Moses died more than fourteen hundred years before, on Mount Nebo, and the Lord "buried him in a valley, in the land of Moab, over against Beth-peor." There is no reason for believing that he had been raised from the dead. He may have appeared in a form assumed by angels on other occasions.

31. **Who appeared in glory**, in a glorified condition. **Spake of his decease**, *his departure* from life. Luke alone records the subject of conversation. Compare 2 Pet. 1: 16. Jesus had announced his death to his disciples six days before this. **Which he should accomplish**, *fulfil*, as appointed and foretold. They speak of that which the law and prophets had typified and foretold. A becoming theme of such historical personages and representatives of the law and prophets. They very probably talked with Jesus regarding the wondrous results of his death in man's redemption.

32. **Were heavy with sleep**, *were weighed down with sleep*. Almost the same expression is found in Matt. 26: 43; Mark 14: 40; Acts 20: 9, where actual sleep is meant. This is the most natural meaning here. **Peter is made prominent**, being alone named. **When they were awake**, *awaking* or *fully awaking*. This is in contrast to "heavy with sleep." From sleep they pass through a state of drowsiness into that of full wakefulness. Thus, Luke makes it certain that it was not a dream, but an actual sight. But some with Alford and Meyer translate, *having watched or kept awake through* the scene of the transfiguration, in which case they sup-

pose the preceding clause to mean *weighed down with drowsiness*, which they resisted. This is allowable, and is preferred by the Improved version. Still the other view seems to me the most natural and best suited to the connection. **They saw his glory**, etc. Now fully aroused and awake they see. It was no vision. They are competent witnesses. From this it would seem that the three apostles did not witness the beginning of the transfiguration. It is no uncommon thing for an Oriental, having wrapped himself in his garment, to lie upon the grass in open air and in a moment fall asleep. So afterward the same three slept in Gethsemane.

33. **As they departed from him**. More exactly, *as they were departing*. By some movement or other Moses and Elijah indicate that they are about to depart. Peter would detain them, and he acts again as spokesman (ver. 20), not of the twelve, but of three. **Answering**. The word *answer* is often used in Scripture as a kind of response to some words, circumstance, or occasion which precedes. Thus what Peter had just seen gave the occasion of what he now uttered. His language was a response of his feelings in view of the circumstances around him, and especially to the movement of the two to depart. **Said to Jesus**. Addressed him as the principal personage and the most familiar to him. **Master**. The same word is thus translated in ch. 5: 5. Mark alone gives *rabbi* the original word that Peter uttered in addressing Jesus. **It is good**, etc., *that we are here*. Joy, a holy, spiritual ecstasy, pervaded the souls of the disciples. Peter felt delight and a desire for more; but he was not prepared for its continuance, as his confusion and mingled terror showed. To work and suffer was better than to remain there. Their time for rest and glory had not yet come. **Peter**,

and one for Moses, and one for Elias: not knowing  
 34 what he said. While he thus spake, there came a  
 cloud, and overshadowed them, and they feared as  
 35 they entered into the cloud. And there came a voice  
 out of the cloud, saying, <sup>a</sup>This is my beloved Son:  
 36 <sup>b</sup>hear him. And when the voice was past, Jesus was  
 found alone. <sup>c</sup>And they kept *it* close, and told no

<sup>a</sup>Mt. 3. 17.

<sup>b</sup>Ac. 3. 22.

<sup>c</sup>Ecc. 3. 7; Mt. 17.  
9.

in his bewilderment, proposes to erect three tabernacles, *booths* or *tents*, doubtless here of branches and leaves of trees, such as could be made in that solitary retreat. Such booths were erected at the feast of tabernacles. He proposes three booths, though six persons were present. He would have one for each of the glorious personages present, and he and his two fellow-disciples act as servants. Luke briefly explains the making of this strange request: **not knowing what he said.** He was bewildered. His words came forth without thought or deliberation. He felt he must say something, and he uttered that which came first into his mind. The cause of this state of mind is given by Mark (9 : 6), "For they were sore afraid." Mark speaks of the first stage of this fear, while Matthew (17 : 6) and Luke (ver. 34) describe its climax and overpowering influence when the voice spoke out of the cloud.

34. Two more wondrous events occur, the cloud and the voice. While Peter was thus speaking **there came a cloud, and overshadowed them**, making a sheltering covering to them—a different covering from what Peter had suggested. Matthew (17 : 5) says it was a *bright* cloud. It was the symbol of the divine presence, as was the cloud over the tabernacle (Ex. 40 : 38), the cloud on Mount Sinai (Ex. 24 : 16, 17), and the cloud in Solomon's temple, 1 Kings 8 : 10, 11. Compare Ex. 16 : 10; Ezek. 10 : 4; Rev. 14 : 14. It was doubtless similar to that at his ascension, Acts 1 : 9. But who are meant *by them*? Some say Jesus, Moses, and Elijah, and some Moses and Elijah only; others the disciples; and others all present. If we merely consulted the nearest antecedents, we should decide that Moses and Elijah are meant; but from the whole connection it seems that the cloud overshadowed all present.

**They feared**, the disciples. **As they entered into the cloud.** We can conceive of Moses and Elijah entering into the cloud, or of the cloud descending and diffusing itself all about them, the disciples being in the outer and less luminous portion of it. I rather incline to the latter view.

35. **There came a voice out of the cloud**, from God the Father, as in ch. 3 : 22, giving the same attestation as that at his baptism. Matthew (17 : 5) gives the fuller form, having the words, "in whom I am well pleased." The divine testimony is attended by the command which was wanting at his baptism. **Beloved.** According to the highest critical authorities, *chosen son*. Compare chap. 23 : 35. **Hear him**, attend to his instructions; hear and obey him as the Messiah, the Prophet and Lawgiver of the church. Compare the prediction in Deut. 18 : 15–19; Acts 3 : 32; 7 : 37. God would now speak through his Son, Heb. 1 : 1, 2. He is emphatically the great Teacher. In these occurrences the disciples were favored with a sign from heaven. To this Peter refers (2 Pet. 1 : 17), and to it John seems to allude, John 1 : 14.

36. This glorious scene ended abruptly. Matthew (17 : 6) relates that when the disciples heard the voice from the cloud they fell on their face, but Jesus touched them, and they recovered from their fear and looked up. The heavenly messengers departed immediately after the voice, and Jesus at once attends to his overpowered disciples. All took but a moment. **When the voice was past**, more literally, *When the voice had come*, when it had been uttered, after it was heard. **Jesus was found alone.** The disciples cast around a searching look (Mark 9 : 8), and they perceived that Jesus was *alone*; the one foreshadowed, foretold, and testified to by the law and the prophets, and the one now to be heard

man in those days any of those things which they had seen.

*Healing of a demoniac.*

37 <sup>‘</sup>And it came to pass, that on the next day, when <sup>‘</sup>Mt. 17. 14; Mk. 9. 14.  
they were come down from the hill, much people met  
38 him. And, behold, a man of the company cried out,  
saying, Master, I beseech thee, look upon my son: for  
39 he is mine only child. And, lo, a spirit taketh him,  
and he suddenly crieth out; and it teareth him that  
he foameth again, and bruising him hardly departeth

and obeyed. The old dispensation is passing away; Jesus remains the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.

We have here an open manifestation and declaration of Christ's power and glory. It is not improbable that this was one of the points in his history to which Jesus referred when he said (Matt. 23 : 18, correctly translated), "All power was given to me in heaven and on earth."

And they kept it close, they kept silent, an emphatic expression. This they did at the express command of Jesus, Matt. 17 : 9; Mark 9 : 9. In those days, while Jesus was with them. Our Lord's command of secrecy extended to his resurrection, Matt. 17 : 9. Mark (9 : 9) relates that the three disciples questioned among themselves what the rising of Jesus from the dead was. Luke passes over the conversation of Jesus while descending the mountain respecting Elijah, which Matthew and Mark give at this point.

37-43. HEALING OF A POSSESSED LUNATIC WHOM THE DISCIPLES COULD NOT HEAL, Matt. 17 : 14-21; Mark 9 : 14-29. Luke's account holds a middle place between that of Mark, which is the fullest and most vivid, and that of Matthew, which is the briefest. Mark alone relates the questioning of the scribes and the amazement of the multitude upon seeing Jesus; also the conversation between Jesus and the father of the demoniac, Mark 9 : 14-16, 21-25. Matthew is the fullest in his report of the reply of Jesus to the nine on their inability to cast out the demon, Matt. 17 : 20, 21. Luke omits all reference to this last point, but alone records the amazement of all at the miracle.

37. The next day, probably the morning after the transfiguration.

From the hill, the mountain. It was probably near the foot of the mountain. See, on ver. 28, Dr. Hanna's description. All the three evangelists agree in placing this miracle immediately after the transfiguration. Much people, a great multitude, met him. Mark, relating more in detail, presents the scribes as questioning the disciples, and makes the words of the father an answer to a question of Jesus to the scribes.

38. Without any explanation Luke presents the anxious father as a special object of attention, And behold, etc. Master, teacher. I beseech thee, the language of earnest entreaty. Look upon my son, in compassion, and exert thy gracious power in his behalf. Matthew (17 : 14) relates that the man came doing homage to him with bended knees. For he is mine only child. This reason which the father gives is recorded only by Luke. The agony and the earnestness of the father were, therefore, the more intense.

39. The father describes the terrible handling of the child by the demon. A spirit. Mark (9 : 16, 25) styles it "a dumb" and "deaf spirit." In Matthew (17 : 15) the child is described as a lunatic—that is, probably, an epileptic. He was possessed with a demon which caused deafness, dumbness, and fits of epilepsy. It was a severe and complicated case. His dumbness consisted in his inability to utter articulate sounds. Taketh him, seizes him, as if to destroy him. At any time the demon might exert his frenzied power upon the child, producing sudden and violent paroxysms. And he suddenly crieth out. It is the child that cries out as the demon seizes him. It, the demon, teareth him, throws him into convulsions. That he foameth.

40 from him. And I besought thy disciples to cast him  
 41 out; and they could not. And Jesus answering said,  
 "O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I  
 be with you, and suffer you? Bring thy son hither. <sup>▪ Dan. 32, 20; Ps</sup>  
 42 And as he was yet a coming, the devil threw him <sup>78. 6, 8, 22; Johr</sup>  
 down and tare him. And Jesus rebuked the unclean <sup>20, 27; Heb. 3</sup>  
 spirit, and healed the child, and delivered him again <sup>10.</sup>  
 43 to his father. <sup>† Zec. 8. 6.</sup> And they were all amazed at the  
 mighty power of God.

Rather, *with foaming*. The child was not only inwardly racked and convulsed, but he foamed at the mouth. **Bruising him**, doing him bodily injury. **Hardly departeth from him**, showing the reluctance of the demon to release its victim. The accounts of the three evangelists show independence, but no real discrepancy. The father, in Matt. 17 : 15, says, "for oftentimes he falleth into the fire and oft into the water," and in Mark 9 : 18, "he foameth, and gnasheth with his teeth, and pineth away." The three descriptions taken together form a fearful picture of the frenzied paroxysms which were added to his habitual dumbness.

40. **I besought thy disciples**. The nine apostles, since Jesus was absent. **They could not**. This lack of power was owing to their weak faith, Matt. 17 : 20. Jesus had given them power to cast out unclean spirits (ch. 6 : 7), and doubtless they had exercised this power, but now they falter, and the enemies of truth prevail. The three most favored apostles were also with Jesus, and this case was an extreme one. Their faith was not equal to the exigency. There is some analogy between Israel turning to idolatry while Moses was absent in the mount and the spiritual weakness of the disciples during our Lord's absence at his transfiguration.

41. **O faithless and perverse generation**. Unbelieving and perverted race, Deut. 32 : 5, 20. That generation and race among whom Jesus was labouring were indeed faithless and led astray by blind guides. The scribes were cavilling, the multitude was amazed at seeing Jesus, the father acknowledged the weakness of his faith (Mark 9 : 22, 24), and the disciples had weak faith or no faith to heal this one. **How long**, etc. An exclamation, not of impatience of life nor of continuance with them, but of holy displeasure at their

unbelief and hardness of heart. **Be with you**, expressing a great closeness, nearness to them. **Suffer you**. *Bear with you*, exercising patience with you in your unbelief. Compare Ex. 32 : 19, 34. How great the unbelief of the people in view of the time he had been exercising his ministry and the wonderful miracles he had performed! Compare John 14 : 9. And his ministry was drawing to a close. **Bring thy son hither unto me**. There is power in me to effect a cure. The command was adapted to awaken and strengthen faith in the father.

42. The order of Jesus is obeyed. **As he was yet a coming**. Mark says, "they brought him." He was very probably carried, several being required to do it. **Threw him down and tare him**, fearfully convulsed him, but not in such a manner as to do him injury. This occurred, Mark tells us, upon the boy seeing Jesus. The sight of Jesus arouses the infuriated demon. He has great wrath, knowing that his time was short, Rev. 12 : 12.

Mark (9 : 20-25) gives a vivid description of the terrible paroxysm of the child and the conversation of Jesus with the father, and the growing faith of the latter, who exclaimed, "I believe, help thou my unbelief."

**Rebuked the spirit**. Bade him come out, Mark 9 : 25. **Healed the child**, by a simple word of command, thus showing his absolute power over the kingdom of darkness. This was especially fitting, as his disciples had shown such weakness. Mark vividly describes the final paroxysms of the child, the violent departure of the demon, leaving him as one dead, and his immediate restoration. **Delivered him again**, or *gave him back*, to his father, as one restored to the family from a condition as good as lost and dead.

*Jesus the second time announces his death.*

But while they wondered every one at all things  
 44 which Jesus did, he said unto his disciples, \*Let these  
 sayings sink down into your ears: for the Son of man  
 45 shall be delivered into the hands of men. †But they  
 understood not this saying, and it was hid from them,  
 that they perceived it not: and they feared to ask  
 him of that saying.

\* Mt. 17. 22; Mk.  
 9. 31; Mt. 16. 21.

† ch. 2. 50; 18. 34;  
 Mk. 9. 32; John  
 8. 27; 10. 6; 12.  
 16; 14. 5-9.

43. The effect of the miracle on all present. This is recorded only by Luke. **They were all amazed**, especially the multitude; their minds were struck with astonishment. **At the mighty power, greatness, majesty**, of God, which was thus exhibited by this miracle. Here, as elsewhere, Luke brings to view the glory of God in the Saviour's miracles, ch. 5 : 26; 7 : 16. For comments on the rest of this verse see below.

43-45. JESUS THE SECOND TIME FORETELLS HIS OWN DEATH AND RESURRECTION. Matt. 17 : 22, 23; Mark 9 : 30-32. The three accounts show independence without discrepancy. That of Mark is somewhat the fullest. Matthew is the briefest; Luke holds a middle place.

43. For comments on the first part of this verse see above. Mark (9 : 30) relates that they now departed from the vicinity of Cæsarea Philippi and passed through Galilee. Matthew (17 : 22) speaks of Jesus abiding in Galilee; and from John 7 : 1-9 we may infer that Jesus, during this whole period, rather sought retirement.

**While they wondered every one**, spoken of the multitude specially, as the disciples are referred to in the next clause. It is not necessary to suppose the multitude present; the feeling of the people generally is described. **He said unto his disciples**, probably the twelve, his nearest and most confidential followers, whom he would specially instruct in these doctrines. Some would also include other disciples in Galilee, from whom the seventy were selected. But the privacy of the journey and the nature of the truths taught limit it rather to the apostles.

44. **Let these sayings sink down**, etc. The words which I am about to speak, let them be lodged permanently in your minds and hearts. The dis-

ciples needed to be prepared for the fiery ordeal. Besides that, they may have been elated with the wonderful miracles which he did, the expectations of Peter, James, and John aroused by the glories of the transfiguration, and all by the promise of Jesus in ver. 27. Thus they have been expecting a speedy manifestation of Jesus as king. They needed again to be taught with great emphasis that he must suffer. **For**. The solemn announcement which this word introduces was a sufficient reason for its sinking in their hearts. **The Son of man shall be delivered**, betrayed by Judas and given up by the Father to men, in order that he may suffer and die, Acts 2 : 23. The divine plan of his sufferings and death had formed the topic of discourse on the mount (ver. 31), and now is the topic to his nearest circle of disciples. It would seem from Luke (ver. 43) that Jesus began these instructions almost immediately after the healing of the lunatic child, and from Matthew and Mark that he continued these instructions while journeying in Galilee. Jesus foretells his betrayal. He thus imparts additional information to what he had given immediately after Peter's confession, ver. 22. He was delivered up by the will and counsel of God, and he was to be betrayed **into the hands of men**. It was thus not a repetition, but a gradual increase in revealing to his disciples the facts of his sufferings. Luke omits here our Lord's reference to his resurrection, which occurs in the conversation as related by Matthew and Mark.

45. **They understood not this saying**. Luke explains this ignorance and uncertainty in the minds of the disciples by adding **it was hid from them that they perceived it not**. *That* expresses not the result, but *purpose*. It was part of the divine plan

*Jesus rebukes the disciples for ambition and censorious zeal.*

46 'Then there arose a reasoning among them, which  
47 of them should be greatest. And Jesus, 'perceiving  
the thought of their heart, took a child, and set him  
48 by him, and said unto them, 'Whosoever shall re-

\* Mt. 18. 1; Mk. 9. 33.  
\* Jer. 17. 10.  
\* Mt. 10. 40; 18. 5;  
Mk. 9. 37; John 12. 44; 13. 20.

that they should not yet understand. It is not difficult to conceive how they reasoned. Jesus often spoke in parables and figures (John 16 : 25, 29), and it was easy to understand him so now. Three of the disciples had seen him transfigured, and might infer that it was not necessary for him to literally die and rise in order to enter upon his full glory. Jesus had taught his followers the necessity of a spiritual crucifixion and death (vers. 23-25), and they might infer a similar meaning was to be given to his language concerning himself. Yet they were perplexed, and so troubled that Matthew (17 : 23) says, "they were exceeding sorry." "Although they were familiar with the doctrine of atonement, they could not receive the idea that the Messiah was to be himself the atoning victim. Other devout men felt similar difficulties; see Acts 8 : 32-34."—*Annotated Paragraph Bible.* And true to life it is added that they feared to ask him of that saying, to question him regarding these things, which seemed to be connected with his own death. There is a natural diffidence in speaking to a person regarding near-approaching death. And this diffidence was increased to fear by the awe-inspiring presence and power of Jesus.

46-50. WHO ARE GREATEST IN CHRIST'S KINGDOM. ZEAL OF JOHN, Matt. 18 : 1-5; Mark 9 : 33-41. Luke is the briefest. Mark is the fullest and most graphic. Matthew, however, omits all reference to the zeal of John, which Mark and Luke record. The three accounts show the diversity of independent narrators with no real discrepancy.

46. According to Matthew (17 : 24-27), they had come to Capernaum, where Jesus miraculously provides the tribute money. While in the way to Capernaum (Mark 9 : 33), **there arose a reasoning among them, or a thought in them**, the same word being used as that translated *thought* in the next verse. The word, however, means *dis-*

*puting* in Phil. 2 : 14; 1 Tim. 2 : 8. Its verb in Mark 9 : 33 means to *reason, discuss*. The clause here may therefore be translated, *There arose a debate, or a dispute, among them*. This was but the development of the thought within them. **Which of them should be the greatest**, or, more exactly, *which of them was greater* than the rest. The Greek comparative here is equivalent to the English superlative. This dispute shows their worldly views of the Messiah's kingdom—that they still expected his earthly kingdom to be soon established, and that those who were greatest now would be greatest then. What gave rise to this disputation we are not told. It is natural to refer to Christ's address to Peter (Matt. 16 : 17-19), and to the privilege accorded the three disciples in being with Jesus on the mount of transfiguration and at the raising of the daughter of Jairus. The failure of the nine to cast out the deaf and dumb demon from the child (ver. 40) may also have had its influence. It is evident, from their disputing the point, that they had not understood Jesus on any occasion as pointing out Peter, or any other disciple, as the greatest.

47. **Jesus, perceiving the thought of their heart**, and the *reasoning* which arose therefrom, teaches humility and true greatness symbolically by placing a child in their midst. Mark relates that, being in a house, Jesus asked them regarding their dispute, and they were silent. **Then he took a child, or having laid hold of a child, and set, or placed, him by him**; and having thus treated him with honor and tenderness, *he said to them*, ver. 48. There is an interesting, though unreliable, tradition that this child was Ignatius the martyr, pastor of Antioch from about A. D. 68 to 107. But as Jesus was in the house, possibly of Peter, and the child was doubtless of the household, it may have been the child of Peter or of one of the other apostles.

48. **Whosoever shall receive,**

ceive this child in my name receiveth me : and whosoever shall receive me receiveth him that sent me :  
 ° for he that is least among you all, the same shall be great.

49 <sup>a</sup> And John answered and said, Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name ; and we forbad him,  
 50 because he followeth not with us. And Jesus said unto him, Forbid *him* not : for ° he that is not against us is for us.

° Pro. 18. 12 ; Mt. 23. 11, 12.

<sup>a</sup> Mk. 9. 38 ; see Num. 11. 28.

° ch. 11. 23 ; see Mt. 12. 30 ; 1 Cor. 12. 3.

cordially to his heart and fellowship. **This child**, one of these spiritual, humble ones ; one of Christ's little ones, whether a child in years or not. The child was a beautiful symbol of the true disciple, who humbly, submissively, and confidently yields himself up to the Saviour's will, guidance, and protection. And it must be received **in my name**, on account of me, because he is my disciple, and sustains a personal relation to me, and from love to me. Here is the reason for receiving one such little one. **Receiveth me**, in one of these little ones as my representative. Christ's disciples are his representatives and one with himself, Matt. 10 : 40 ; 25 : 45. He here shows their nearness to himself and the honor and esteem in which he holds them. And he traces the relation back to the Father : **receiveth him that sent me**. Jesus uses strong language, since he is not only sent by the Father, but is in his divine nature one with the Father. The Father is especially represented in him. Jesus thus taught that his kingdom was spiritual, and that humility and a child-like spirit were essential to true greatness.

49. What Jesus had said respecting the receiving of Christ's little ones, and receiving in his *name*, led John to refer to a recent occurrence. Having found one who did not accompany the apostles casting out demons, they forbade him. This led Jesus to reply, disapproving their conduct, and warning them against giving offences. Matthew omits reference to this incident. Luke gives it briefly, but omits the discourse on offences.

**And John answered.** This was the response of his own feelings in view of what Jesus had just said. The conscience of John was aroused. He remembers how they had hindered one who confessed the *name* of Jesus, for

good reasons, as he then thought, but now he doubts whether they did right. They saw one casting out demons **in thy name**, claiming to do it by thy authority, and uttering thy name in doing it. It appears that this one not merely attempted, as in the case of the sons of Sceva (Acts 19 : 12-16), but actually cast out demons in the name of Jesus. He seems to have been a follower of Jesus, though he did not accompany Jesus and the twelve. **We forbade him.** John very probably took a leading part in this. Compare the proposal of James and John in regard to the village of the Samaritans that did not receive Jesus, ver. 54. When this occurred is not told us. **Because he followeth not with us**, not of our company. Having been commissioned and empowered to cast out demons (Mark 6 : 7), they may have regarded the privilege as exclusively theirs. They thought it wrong for one not commissioned by Jesus to exercise the power in his name. Compare a similar spirit exercised by Joshua, Num. 11 : 26-30.

50. Jesus in his answer shows that the man in question could not have been opposed to him, but was evidently acting in his service and relying upon his power. **Forbid him not**, a general direction. Neither forbid him nor any other one in a similar position. Lange very properly observes here that we should distinguish between forbidding and commanding. They are not to forbid such as seem to be acting in the service of Jesus irregularly, but it does not follow that they are to command it. **For** introduces the reason by a short proverbial phrase. In his kingdom there is no neutrality in the contest between God and sin. "He that is not with me is against me" (Matt. 12 : 30) ; and so he **that is not against us (you) is for us**

*Jesus leaves Galilee for Jerusalem, passing through Samaria.*

51 And it came to pass, when the time was come that

(you). The best text has *you*. Jesus looks upon his disciples as his future representatives and one in interest with him.

At this point Matthew (18 : 15-35) records our Lord's discourse on offences, the method of dealing with an offending brother, and the parable of the unmerciful servant.

51-56. JESUS COMMENCES A JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM. Probably to the feast of the tabernacles, which in the year A. D. 29 began on October 19. A SAMARITAN VILLAGE REFUSES TO RECEIVE HIM, John 7 : 2-10. At this point Luke enters upon a new portion of his narrative, which contains much that is not found in the other Gospels. On account of its few notes of time and place and the similarity of ch. 11 : 14-36 with incidents related by Matthew and Mark at an earlier period, it has been regarded as one of the most difficult portions to harmonize and bring into a chronological arrangement. Some have regarded the task as simply impossible. Others have supposed that Luke from this point to ch. 18 : 15 has thrown together a mass of discourses and incidents without reference to either chronology or order. But such a supposition in regard to one-third of Luke's Gospel is hardly consistent with the accuracy, research, and order proposed by Luke in ch. 1 : 1-4. With Ellicott and some others, I think we can find order and connection, though little apparent chronology. And why not? Luke's narrative has been found regular and orderly thus far when compared with the other evangelists. And so also from ch. 18 : 15 the same order and regularity are observable on a like comparison. Should we not, therefore, expect the same characteristics in this portion of Luke which are peculiar to him? Most assuredly. And this is confirmed by a careful comparison with the Gospel of John. During the last six months of Christ's ministry John records our Lord's journey to the feast of tabernacles (John 7 : 10), his presence at the feast of dedication (10 : 22), his going down from Perea to Bethany to raise Lazarus (10 : 40-42; 11 : 1-17),

and his final journey to Jerusalem from a city called Ephraim, 11 : 54; 12 : 1. Now, by a happy coincidence, we find the same number of references in Luke—three of journeying toward Jerusalem and one of being near Jerusalem. Thus, beginning with the last, Luke 17 : 11, "And it came to pass, as he went to Jerusalem, that he passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee," we find it coincides well with John 11 : 54; 12 : 1, and the last journey of the other evangelists. Proceeding backward we come next to Luke 13 : 22, "And he went through the cities and villages teaching and journeying toward Jerusalem," which most naturally falls in with the journey from Perea to Bethany, John 11 : 1-17. Then, next previous to this, is the presence of Jesus at the house of Mary and Martha, which was at Bethany, Luke 10 : 38-42. This points toward the feast of dedication (John 10 : 22) and the probable presence of Jesus in Judea for a time before that event. And then comes the journey related in this section, which will coincide with that to the feast of tabernacles, John 7 : 10.

Some might prefer to suppose that Jesus returned to Galilee immediately after the feast of tabernacles, and that Luke records here a journey, somewhat protracted, which ended at Jerusalem at the feast of dedication. This is possible. Yet a careful examination of John's Gospel leads rather to the conclusion that Jesus remained in Judea during the two months between the feast of tabernacles and that of dedication. John records no journey to the latter feast, but only our Lord's presence there. His presence in Judea is confirmed not only by Luke 10 : 38, but also by such passages as Luke 13 : 1. That this was the same journey as that in John 7 : 10 is also probable from the fact that the shorter route through Samaria harmonizes with the late time of starting and the privacy of that journey. Even the sending of messengers to a city of the Samaritans to make ready for him is not inconsistent with this privacy, for it may have been in a most

52 'he should be received up, <sup>2</sup>he steadfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem. And sent messengers before his face: and they went and entered into a village of the Samaritans, to make ready for him. And <sup>h</sup>they did

<sup>f</sup> Mk. 16. 19; Ac. 1.

<sup>g</sup> Is. 50. 5-9.

<sup>h</sup> comp. John 4. 4  
9.

quiet and careful manner. Jesus had not gone up to the feast with the great companies which passed through Perea, but now afterward hastens with the twelve by the shortest and a more retired route; and the sending of messengers would tend to expedite the journey.

While we may not regard this as our Lord's final departure from Galilee (see ch. 17 : 11), he doubtless now left it as his place of residence. "But now his earthly home (Capernaum) is to receive him no more. Six months of anxious wandering in Judea and the lands on the further side of Jordan, interrupted only by brief sojourns in remote frontier towns, now claim our attention—six months of ceaseless activities and un-resting labor, of mighty deeds and momentous teaching, yet six months, if not of actual flight, yet of ever-recurring avoidance of implacable and murderous designs that were now fast approaching their appalling and impious climax."—ELLICOTT'S *Life of Christ*, pp. 218, 219.

This presence of Jesus in and near Judea for the six months preceding his last passover would naturally tend to hasten the foul design of the Jews. Had it not been for this, his death might have been delayed. See author's *Harmony*, §§ 97, 98, and introductory note to Part VI.

51. **When the time was come, when the days were being fulfilled, or completed, that he should be received up, or taken up,** into heaven, with the idea of this being done through his own divine power. The reference is to his ascension. This was through the path of suffering, death, and the resurrection. Hence the phrase at least implies, if it does not include, his death and resurrection. Jesus had in view the joy that was set before him, Heb. 12 : 2. The last period of our Saviour's earthly ministry was now entered upon, which appropriately began with the transfiguration and with predictions of his death and resurrection, and culminated in his ascension (ch. 9 : 22, 31, 44;

Mark 9 : 31), and which was throughout manifestly a season of preparation for that final result. The language is thus in perfect harmony with the view that several months intervened before the crucifixion.

**He steadfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem.** He firmly set his face, like one intently fixing his gaze upon an object toward which he eagerly presses. The expression denotes a firm, resolute purpose. This was necessary for enduring the extreme suffering before him, and was anticipatory of the glory that should follow. Ever after this till his work is accomplished does he make Jerusalem the goal toward which he journeys. And during this whole period Luke gives no account of his actual arriving there except the one which stands at the end, and to which all the previous journeyings were but secondary and preparatory. One of the objects of Luke in recording this firm determination of Jesus in going up to Jerusalem was to introduce the incident that follows.

52. **And sent messengers.** Probably some of the twelve, but not James and John, as some suppose, for they are brought into view as another party and witnesses of the treatment which Jesus and his messengers received.

**Before his face.** In advance of him. What follows shows that it was into Samaria. Their object was to provide lodging and entertainment for him. **To make ready for him,** not to preach the gospel and prepare the hearts of the people, but to make the necessary arrangements of hospitality. This seems evident from the fact that when they were refused they went to another village.

**A village,** an unwall'd town. What village is of course unknown. See below. **Samaritans.** Samaria took its name from its capital city, Samaria. According to Josephus (*Jewish War*, iii. 3, 4), it lay between Judea and Galilee, commencing in the north at a village called Ginea, on the southern border of the plain of Esdraelon, and extending

not receive him, because his face was as though he  
54 would go to Jerusalem. And when his disciples  
James and John saw *this*, they said, Lord, wilt thou  
that we command fire to come down from heaven,

southward to the toparchy of Acrabatha, in the lower part of the territory of Ephraim. This Ginea, or En Gannim (meaning "the fountain of gardens"), has been very properly conjectured as the village which rejected Jesus. It was the first Samaritan village at which he would arrive on his route.

The Samaritans were the descendants of heathen colonists from Babylonia, Cuthah, Ava, Hamath, and Sepharvaim, whom Shalmanezar, king of Assyria, sent into the country after he had taken Samaria and carried away the better portion of the ten tribes, and of the remnant of Israelites left behind, whom they intermarried. A mixed people as well as a mixed religion was the result, 2 Kings 17 : 24-41. On the return of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity the Samaritans requested permission to assist them in rebuilding the temple. This they were denied, after which they opposed the Jews and greatly retarded their work, Ezra 4 : 1-5; Neh. 2 : 10, 19; 4 : 1-3. Later still, Manasseh, son of the high priest, married the daughter of Sanballat, the governor of Samaria, and Nehemiah would not allow him to perform the functions of the priest's office, but drove him from the city, Neh. 13 : 28. Accordingly, the Samaritans, under Sanballat, reared a temple on Mount Gerizim, and Manasseh acted there as high priest. This served to deepen the hatred between the Jews and the Samaritans and render it perpetual, John 4 : 9; 8 : 48. The temple on Mount Gerizim was destroyed by Hyrcanus about 129 B. C., but the Samaritans still regarded the place as sacred and as the proper place of national worship; John 4 : 20, 21. They rejected all the sacred books of the Jews except the Pentateuch. A few families of the Samaritans now remain at Nablous, the ancient Shechem. They have a very ancient manuscript of the Pentateuch, are strict observers of the law, keeping the Sabbath and the ancient festivals, and are expecting the Messiah.

53. They did not receive him, to their hospitality; did not furnish lodg-

ing and food for him and his company. The reason: **because his face was as though,** etc., *because his face was as of one going to Jerusalem.* The direction of the journey, his haste, and his manifest and resolute purpose would indicate this, and especially if it was a time of one of the great feasts at Jerusalem. Then, if ever, the hatred of the Samaritans would show itself, for the place of worship (John 4 : 20) was a cardinal point of dispute. The circumstances would indicate that one of the feasts was at hand. From Josephus we learn that the Galileans often took the direct route through Samaria to the feast at Jerusalem, and that on one occasion, when going to a feast, certain Samaritans of Ginea fought with them and killed many. *Ant.* xx. 6, 1; *Jewish War*, ii. 12, 3. In order to escape annoyances, the Galileans often avoided Samaria by crossing the Jordan, passing through Perea, and going to Jerusalem by the way of Jericho.

54. **James and John.** See on ch. 6 : 14. Some have been surprised that one of so mild a disposition as the beloved disciple should have manifested such a spirit and made such a proposition as that recorded here. But they mistake the temperament of the two brothers. It was John who with Peter said to the Jewish rulers, "Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard," Acts 4 : 19, 20. And James had taken such a bold and prominent stand that he was the first of the apostles to suffer martyrdom, Acts 12 : 2. In his Epistles John shows that he was a man of strong convictions, decided statements, and of prompt and earnest action. Jesus, too, had surnamed these two brothers *Boanerges*, or *sons of thunder* (Mark 3 : 17), with reference, doubtless, to their fervent and zealous spirit and their great ministerial power as preachers of the gospel.

Lord, wilt thou that we command, etc. The form of the question

55 and consume them, even as <sup>1</sup>Elias did? But he turned, and rebuked them, and said, <sup>2</sup>Ye know not  
 56 what manner of spirit ye are of. For <sup>1</sup>the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save *them*.  
<sup>3</sup>And they went to another village.

Tim. 1. 15.    <sup>2</sup> Mt. 5. 39; Ro. 12. 18, 19; 1 Pet. 2. 21-23.

2 Ki. 1. 10-14.  
<sup>2</sup> Jer. 17. 9; Ro. 11. 19-21; Jam. 1. 19, 20; 3. 17, 18;  
 1 Pet. 3. 9.  
 Mt. 18. 11; John 3. 17; 12. 47; 1

in the original suggests that they proposed it as worthy of consideration and adoption, Are we to command, etc. In this proposal of James and John we not only see indignation against such treatment of their Master, but also some manifestation of Jewish feelings toward Samaritans. The fact that Samaritans had done this made these brothers the more ready to present their proposal. **Fire, . . . as Elias (Elijah) did.** Having recently seen Elijah on the mount, they were reminded of what he did (2 Kings 1 : 10); and with enlarged views of the greatness and glory of Jesus and elated with their own peculiar privileges, they thought that these unbelieving and inhospitable Samaritans should be dealt with as were the ancient Samaritans by the prophet before them. It is possible also that they may have been in the very vicinity where this judicial act and judgment of the Lord through the prophet was performed. If so, the associations of the place may have helped the suggestion. **Shall we.** John spoke also for his brethren. But the words, *as Elias did*, are omitted by the highest critical authorities. Yet they seem perfectly in place here.

55. **He turned**, short or suddenly, as if taken by surprise. Jesus seems to have been a little in advance, and his attention may have been taken up with the Samaritans and the messengers he had sent, ver. 52. **Rebuked them**, John and the disciples who shared his indignation, with becoming severity mingled with condescending consideration. **Ye know not**, etc. Tischendorf omits all of this verse after *rebuked them*, according to many of the oldest manuscripts, regarding it as an insertion of a later hand. But the words are found in the Vulgate and in four of the manuscripts of the Itala version, both of which versions were made from Greek manuscripts older than any that now exist. They are also found in most other ancient versions, and are quoted by early Christian writ-

ters. The Revised version puts them in the margin. Perhaps an error in copying; or possibly some copyist, regarding them as an implication on Elijah, may have omitted them.

There is also a difference of view in regard to the form of the sentence, some taking it as a declarative and others as an interrogative sentence. According to the first, it should read, *Ye know not of what spirit ye are*; instead of exhibiting my spirit and that of the gospel, ye do not sufficiently know your own hearts nor realize that personal resentment and ostentation are largely mingled with your zeal for me. You therefore lack that humility, sympathy, and self-sacrificing love which belong to the true spirit of my gospel. According to the second, it should be rendered, *Know ye not of what spirit ye are of?*—that ye are not of the fiery and judicial spirit of Elijah, which was befitting his times and the old dispensation, but that ye are of the Holy Spirit, which is dove-like, gentle, forgiving, and loving. The first view seems to be preferable, grammatically more natural, and better suited to the connection. Yet there is nothing in this passage condemnatory of what Elijah did. He acted as a messenger of God. "The few cases in which God has seen fit to vindicate his power and justice by terrible dispensations of Providence are eagerly seized for imitator by the unhallowed zeal of bigotry and party spirit. But this is as much opposed to the spirit of judicial holiness which animated the stern Elijah as it is to the spirit of merciful forgiveness Jesus both showed and taught."—*Annotated Pur. Bible*. "It is very interesting to remember that this same John came down to Samaria (Acts 8 : 14-17) with Peter to confer the gift of the Holy Spirit on the Samaritan believers."—ALFORD.

56. **For** introduces a reason for his rebuke, explaining and confirming what he had said, and correcting the mistake into which John and the other disciples

*The requirements of discipleship.*

57 <sup>a</sup> And it came to pass, that, as they went in the way, <sup>a</sup> See refs. Mt. 8  
a certain *man* said unto him, Lord, I will follow thee 19-22.

had fallen. **The Son of man.** See on ch. 5 : 24. **Is not come to destroy,** etc., not for judgment, but for mercy, John 3 : 17 ; 5 : 45. The sentence, *For the Son of man came not to destroy men's lives, but to save them,* is not found in the oldest manuscripts, and is omitted by most of the highest critical authorities. It appears to have been a truth often uttered by our Lord, and may have been written by some ancient transcriber upon the margin from ch. 19 : 10 ; Matt. 18 : 11, and transferred by some later hand into the text itself. It is, however, most natural in this connection and in perfect harmony with the words and spirit of the whole passage.

**And they went,** etc. Thus Jesus follows his own direction which he gave to the twelve, Matt. 10 : 14, 23. What **village** is not recorded, but one whose inhabitants were more noble and where Jesus may have had friends. Possibly Sychar, where many had believed on him, John 4 : 5, 39-42.

57-62. CONCERNING FOLLOWING JESUS. THE REQUIREMENTS OF DISCIPLESHIP, Matt. 8 : 19-22. Matthew gives the first two incidents in connection with stilling the tempest. I give the preference to Luke's order—(1) because he professes to write a continuous narrative (ch. 1 : 1-4) ; (2) Matthew, less intent on writing such a narrative, groups discourses and events ; (3) the incidents in Matthew occur in that part of the Gospel (chs. 8 and 9) where we have the plainest indications of grouping and classifying. There can be no serious objection, however, against the supposition that the first incident occurred twice, and that Matthew grouped with it the second, which occurred at a later date. The position which Luke gives them is very natural. As Jesus was going toward Jerusalem with a resolution that might be felt, it was perfectly natural that some should propose discipleship, and it was also fitting in this period of our Lord's ministry that he should most plainly lay down the requirements of discipleship.

The following remarks of Olshausen

are worthy of consideration : " In Matthew a portion of this passage stands amidst a collection of the miracles of Jesus, and consequently in a less appropriate connection. Nay, in the account of Matthew there is wanting that very point which with Luke stands prominently forth as the connecting link of the preceding narrative ; for as the sufferings which his enemies were preparing for the Saviour had been there described, so the following history states how it stood between those friends whose affections his appearance and his words attracted. One portion pressed hastily forward, but a single word as to the difficulties caused them to withdraw ; another portion of them were called by the Lord himself, but their anxiety on the subject of the world deterred them from at once embracing the call. In Luke, then, we are not to overlook the contrast between 'Some one said to him' and 'Jesus said to another' (ver 59), which mark the several positions of Christ's different friends."

57. First incident. Self-denial must be expected in following Jesus. **It came to pass, that,** omitted by the highest critical authorities. **As they went in the way,** or *as they were going in the way,* toward Jerusalem. **A certain man.** Matthew says, "a certain scribe." **Lord,** acknowledging his authority as Teacher and Master.

**I will follow,** etc. I will become thy constant attendant, sharing with you toils, dangers, difficulties, and successes, everywhere and at all times. If this is the same incident as that related by Matthew, then he was very probably a professed disciple, since Matthew (8 : 21) speaks of the next person as "another disciple." He regarded Jesus as the Messiah, but, like the disciples in general, had wrong views of the nature of Christ's kingdom. He expected a temporal kingdom, and would naturally expect, as one of the constant attendants of Jesus and a preacher of the glad tidings, to share in its honors and triumphs. Lange supposes that Matthew here relates the calling of Judas Iscariot.

- 58 whithersoever thou goest. And Jesus said unto him, Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.
- 59 And he said unto another, Follow me. But he said, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father.
- 60 Jesus said unto him, Let the dead bury their dead: but go thou and preach the kingdom of God.

• 2 Tim. 2. 4; 4. 5.

58. The reply of Jesus corrects this man's false expectation of comfort and worldly advantage in his service by showing his own unsettled and homeless condition. Jesus does not forbid him, but rather shows him that, so far from expecting worldly emoluments, he must expect to be a sharer in his poverty and sufferings. Jesus would have him count the cost. It does not appear upon hearing this that he did follow Jesus as a constant attendant. He who is not willing to give up all worldly prospects for Jesus is not fit to be a minister of the gospel. **The foxes have holes, dens, lurking-places, and the birds of the air have nests, dwelling-places.** Even wild and inferior animals have their places of safety and abode, but I am a pilgrim, without property and without a home. **The Son of man.** See on ch. 5 : 24.

**Hath not where to lay.** Destitute of a home and its comforts. In following me, therefore, you must expect poverty and hardships. Compare Matt. 8 : 19, 20.

59. Second incident. Jesus must be preferred above all. The former appears to have offered his services in temporary enthusiasm. But this one receives the injunction from Jesus himself. **Follow me,** he was doubtless one who needed encouragement and earnest pressing home of duty. He also acknowledged his authority as **Lord, Master and Teacher. Suffer me.** Permit me. Tradition makes the latter to have been Philip. But he was called long before, John 1 : 43. It could be he only on the supposition that he was becoming slack in the service of Jesus, and that he received the command anew, as in the case of Peter (John 21 : 19), "Follow me." **First to go and bury.** He put a condition on his obeying Christ's command, and placed his duty to his father

before duty to Jesus. The language implies that his father was dead, not, as some suppose, that he should wait till his aged father was dead and buried.

60. Jesus did not grant his request. He could not have done it without acknowledging that this man's duty to his parent was more important than his duty to Christ. In order to teach that no duty arising from human relationship should interfere with a duty arising from a positive command requiring immediate obedience, Jesus answers, **Let the dead bury their dead,** etc. A few interpreters take *dead*, in both cases, in its literal, physical sense, Let the dead bury one another, which is equivalent to their being unburied. This would make the words of Jesus mean, Better let your father remain unburied than not to give my command the immediate obedience required. It accords, however, better with the compassionate spirit of Jesus to suppose that he meant that there were others to bury him. The usual interpretation is therefore preferable, which regards the word *dead* to be used in two senses, the first *spiritual*, as in Rev. 3 : 1, the second *literal*. Let the dead in trespasses and sins bury their kindred and friends who are dead in body. As if Jesus had said, Your father has other children and friends, who are spiritually dead and can be of no service in my kingdom; let them attend to his burial. You have an important duty to perform, higher than any human obligation, not only of love to me and of discipleship, but of the ministry. **Go thou and preach the kingdom of God.** This latter injunction is not recorded by Matthew. Jesus does not disregard the claims of filial duty. He himself was subject to his parents in childhood, and on the cross provided a home for his mother. But he could not sanction the conduct of

- 61 And another also said, Lord, <sup>p</sup>I will follow thee; but let me first go bid them farewell, which are at  
 62 home at my house. And Jesus said unto him, <sup>q</sup>No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.

<sup>p</sup> See 1 Ki. 19. 20. Ecc. 9. 10; Mt. 10. 37, 38.  
<sup>q</sup> ch. 17. 31, 32; Ps. 78. 8, 9; 2 Tim. 4. 10; Heb. 10. 38.

any disciple who would put duty to a fellow-man above that to Christ the lawgiver of his people. That disciple was proposing a wrong principle, and in acting upon it would have done great injury to his own spirituality. Compare the law of the Nazarite, Num. 6 : 7.

61. The third incident. The disciple must not look back. **Lord, I will follow thee.** We are not informed whether Jesus had previously called him or not. We may possibly infer that he was a disciple from the fact that he, like the others, proposed to follow Jesus as a constant attendant. **But let me first go and bid them farewell.** Compare Elisha's request when Elijah called him from the plough, "Let me, I pray thee, kiss my father and my mother, and then I will follow thee," 1 Kings 19 : 20. This incident may have been in the mind of this man and of Jesus, since the figure of the plough and of ploughing is used in the next verse.

62. But while the request of Elisha was granted that of this man was denied. The reason must be found in their different states of heart. Elisha was firm and determined; this man lacked resolution, he was fickle and vacillating. **Having put his hand to the plough, and looking back,** thus exhibiting irresolution and indecision. The ploughman must keep his eye fixed upon his work if he would make a good furrow. If he does not, his work will be imperfect. Especially was this true with the light plough of the East, which was easily overturned and needed a watchful eye and a firm and steady hand. "I often saw the peasants breaking up the soil, and always with a plough having but one handle. The fashion of it recalled to my mind the manner in which the Saviour expressed himself in reference to the inconstant, faithless disciple: 'No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back,' etc. It was interesting to remark this instance of exact conformity to

Oriental habits. Had the plough in that country been made as ours is made, the language would have been, 'No man, having put his *hands* to the plough,' etc. A learned commentator uninformed as to this point would be apt to talk of a grammatical figure here, of an exchange of the plural for the singular, for the sake of a more definite expression. . . . As the soil is generally thin and the plough is so light, the machine glides rapidly over the surface; and unless the laborer, therefore, keeps his eye fixed on it, the plough is liable to slip aside without breaking up the earth at all. The Saviour's illustration implies the necessity of such vigilance, and is founded on the circumstance here mentioned. The calling of the Christian requires singleness of aim, decision, and perseverance; and he who fails to exert these qualities, though he may seem to have taken some of the first steps in the path to heaven, will never reach that blessed world."—DR. HACKETT, *Illustrations of Scripture*, pp. 162, 163.

**Is fit**, literally, *well placcd, well ordered*, suited for the service of **the kingdom of God**, for Christ's kingdom, for work in it, and for proclaiming it. On *kingdom of God*, see on ch. 4 : 43. It was by such a winnowing that our Lord selected his seventy.

This reply of our Saviour was doubtless an adaptation of a proverbial expression to the point in hand. Quotations have been made from heathen authors similar to this. Thus, Hesiod, one of the earliest Greek poets, says, "Let him attend his charge, and careful trace  
The straight-lined furrow; gaze no more  
about,  
But keep his mind intently on his work."

We have in these verses three classes of persons, and our Lord's treatment of them. *First*, the enthusiastic, impulsive, and somewhat unreflecting, whom he would have count the cost. *Second*, the procrastinating, whom he would prompt to immediate action. *Third*,

the vacillating, upon whom he urges an unwavering purpose and an unreserved decision. Some, going beyond this section, find a fourth character in John. They divide and designate as follows: The choleric, vers. 51-56; the sanguine, 57, 58; the melancholic, 59, 60; the phlegmatic, 61, 62. It is often convenient to make such distinctions, although we need not suppose that Luke had precisely this purpose in mind.

## REMARKS.

1. Christ is King in Zion, and ministers are his messengers and derive from him whatever authority they possess, ver. 1; Mark 16 : 15-18.

2. Christ's presence and power attend his servants, ver. 2; Matt. 28 : 20.

3. Ministers of the gospel should go forth to their work trusting in Christ's wisdom to direct, his power to preserve, and his love to supply, ver. 3; 1 Cor. 9 : 8-11; 3 John 7.

4. Ministers should bring the gospel into the family and strive there thoroughly to accomplish their work. And Christians should practically recognize the fact that the laborer is worthy of his hire, ver. 4; Acts 16 : 15; 2 Cor. 11 : 7, 8; 3 John 8.

5. They who receive not Christ's ministers, withholding from them the welcome of their hearts and the support that is their due, and especially those who reject their message, are guilty of great sin and exposed to a most fearful judgment, ver. 5; Matt. 10 : 14, 15.

6. The twelve found Christ's promises verified everywhere, and so will all his servants, ver. 6; Acts 26 : 22; 1 Cor. 1 : 21; 2 Cor. 12 : 8.

7. The most openly wicked often wonder and tremble at the works of Jesus, ver. 7; Isa. 57 : 20; compare Job 15 : 20, 21.

8. How many are ready to give Jesus an honorable position and character, but would withhold from him divinity! ver. 8.

9. In Herod we see the power of conscience in recalling and condemning his sin and in arousing fear and producing remorse, ver. 9; Mark 6 : 20, 26. In him also we have a striking example of making and carrying out a sinful oath.

"It is a great sin to swear unto a sin;  
But greater sin to keep a sinful oath.  
Who can be bound by any solemn vow  
To do a murderous deed?"—

SHAKESPEARE, *2 Henry VI.*, v. 2.

10. Laborers of Christ must give an account to him of what they have done. Happy are they who receive his approval and at last are invited to enter into rest! ver. 10; Acts 20 : 24; 2 Cor. 5 : 10; Heb. 13 : 17.

11. "Be thankful when ordinances are near, and follow them when distant."—W. H. VAN DOREN. Ver 11; Josh. 3 : 3.

12. How often do we fail to properly estimate Christ's power and grace in either our worldly or spiritual matters! ver. 12; Eph. 3 : 20.

13. God uses our extremity to manifest his power. At such times we should manifest our faith in the diligent use of proper means and in prayer and dependence on him, ver. 13; Ex. 14 : 15; Deut. 33 : 25; Ps. 37 : 3; 78 : 19; Isa. 33 : 16.

14. God is a God of order. Let his people, therefore, do all things decently and in order, vers. 14, 15; 1 Cor. 14 : 33, 40.

15. Jesus has by example taught us to give thanks whenever we eat, ver. 16; Deut. 8 : 10; Acts 27 : 35.

16. It is the duty of ministers to feed the spiritually hungry and faint, ver. 16; John 6 : 48, 58.

17. Jesus fully satisfies every spiritual want of the soul, ver. 17; John 6 : 35; 7 : 37, 38; Matt. 5 : 6; Rev. 7 : 16.

18. Jesus is an example of prayer. Every important point in life he hallowed with prayer, ver. 18; ch. 3 : 21; 6 : 12, etc.

19. It is not enough to say that Christ was a great Prophet; we must also acknowledge him as the Messiah and his supreme Sonship, vers. 19, 20; Ps. 2 : 2; Dan. 9 : 25; John 17 : 3.

20. Except we believe and confess that Jesus Christ is the Son of the living God, we can lay no claim to discipleship, ver. 20; Rom. 10 : 9, 10; 1 John 2 : 22, 23; 4 : 15; 5 : 10-12.

21. Men were unprepared to preach or to hear the full proclamation of the gospel until Christ had suffered and risen and the Holy Spirit had come, ver. 21; Eph. 4 : 7-13.

22. Except Christ had suffered, the divine plan and will could not have

been carried out, prophecy could not have been fulfilled, and men could not have been saved, ver. 22; Luke 24 : 26.

23. Self-denial is inseparable from true Christian discipleship, ver. 23; Matt. 10 : 38; Rom. 8 : 13.

24. Religion must fully engage the powers and purposes of the soul, or we are lost for ever, ver. 24; ch. 14 : 26-33.

25. The soul is of infinite value. Nothing can compensate its loss. "Those who have not gained Christ have lost all," ver. 25; ch. 12 : 16-21; Ps. 49 : 8; Matt. 25 : 46.

26. The treatment which men give Christ, his doctrines, and his cause in this world shall they receive from Christ in the world to come, ver. 26; Matt. 25 : 37-45.

27. "It is an unhappy dying when one tastes of death before he has seen the kingdom of God. Salvation is certainly very often nearer to us than we think," ver. 27; Rom. 13 : 11.

28. Prayer is inseparably connected with the pathway to glory, vers. 28, 29; Gen. 32 : 28; James 4 : 8; 1 John 2 : 1.

29. If Jesus was so glorious on the earthly mount, what must he be on the heavenly ! ver. 29; John 1 : 14; 17 : 5; Rev. 1 : 16; Col. 3 : 4.

30. Through Moses and Elijah on the mount both the law and the prophets honored Christ, ver. 30; Acts 3 : 22-24.

31. Christ's death and resurrection his most important work when on earth; Moses and Elijah speak not of his miracles nor of his teaching, but of his departure, ver. 31; ch. 12 : 50; John 12 : 27.

32. Believers in their present state of warfare and trial are permitted to have occasional glimpses of the future glory, ver. 32; John 17 : 22; Eph. 2 : 6; 2 Cor. 3 : 18.

33. If it was good to be on the mount, how good and blessed will it be to dwell with Jesus and his glorified for ever ! ver. 33; Rom. 8 : 18; 2 Cor. 4 : 16-18; 5 : 1-4.

34. Though so ignorant, weak, and sinful here, we can safely rest on Jesus, whom God presents to us as our Saviour and teacher, vers. 34, 35; Ps. 2 : 6, 7, 12; John 10 : 27, 28; 14 : 6.

35. Christ is Lord both of the dead and living, vers. 35, 36; Rom. 14 : 9; Rev. 1 : 18; 3 : 7.

36. The law and the prophets gave way to our great Prophet and Law-giver. Let us hear, honor, and obey him, vers. 35, 36; Acts 3 : 22, 23; 1 Cor. 11 : 1; Gal. 1 : 8, 11, 12.

37. How dependent are Christians on Christ ! He often leaves them in great straits to teach them their great need of him, vers. 37-40; Matt. 14 : 28-31; John 15 : 5.

38. Parents should feel a deep anxiety for unconverted children, and should earnestly entreat Christ to come and save them, vers. 38, 39; Eph. 6 : 4; 2 Tim. 1 : 5.

39. The faithful labors and believing prayers of parents for their children shall not be in vain, vers. 38-41; Gen. 17 : 18-20; James 5 : 16.

40. The followers of Christ are often weak and put to shame before the world because of their unbelief, ver. 40; Matt. 17 : 21.

41. Jesus has complete power over Satan and his kingdom, ver. 41; ch. 10 : 18; 1 John 3 : 8.

42. Excessive manifestation of wickedness and of the devil's power often indicates that Christ is near with victory and salvation, ver. 42; Rev. 12 : 12; 20 : 7-10.

43. In his humiliation Jesus was often exhibiting the evidences of his divinity, ver. 43; Isa. 9 : 6; 2 Pet. 1 : 16.

44. We are not only to meditate on the glories of Jesus, but also upon his sufferings and death, ver. 44; 2 Tim. 2 : 8-12.

45. None need fear to ask Jesus for wisdom and guidance, ver. 45; James 1 : 5.

46. Pride and ambition and seeking after pre-eminence are alike opposed to the will, example, and teaching of Jesus, ver. 46; Matt. 18 : 3, 4; 2 Cor. 12 : 7; 3 John 9.

47. Little children have many characteristics worthy of study and imitation, ver. 47; Ps. 131 : 1, 2; Mark 10 : 14, 15; James 4 : 6, 10.

48. Christ has set us an example of humility, condescension, and love in making the least and the feeblest of his people representatives of himself, ver. 48; Matt. 25 : 45.

49. Mere party zeal is opposed to the spirit of Christ. To forbid any to do good in the name of Jesus is to disobey

*The seventy instructed and sent forth.*

## X. AFTER these things the Lord appointed other

him, vers. 49, 50; 1 Cor. 1 : 11-15; Phil. 1 : 18.

50. There can be no neutrality of heart in Christ's service, ver. 50; Matt. 12 : 30.

51. "If travelling toward the heavenly Jerusalem, the fear of death should not depress us."—W. H. VAN DOREN. Ver. 51; Isa. 50 : 7-11; Acts 20 : 24; Rom. 8 : 18.

52. Hospitality is a Christian duty, especially to Christ's servants, ver. 52; Heb. 13 : 2; Gal. 6 : 10.

53. Beware how you reject Jesus through erroneous views of truth or through prejudice, ver. 53; Rev. 3 : 20.

54. Pride, anger, revenge, and persecution are alike opposed to the spirit of the gospel, ver. 54; Rom. 12 : 19-21.

55. Beware how you through zeal mistake the spirit of the world for that of Christ. Never do that for religion which is contrary to religion, ver. 55; 1 Pet. 3 : 8, 9, 16-18.

56. Christ's love is destructive of selfishness, ver. 56; ch. 19 : 8-10.

57. How sad the day for a people or for an individual when Christ departs from them! ver. 56; Hos. 9 : 12.

58. All who follow Jesus should count the cost. They must be willing, if necessary, like him, to be homeless, ver. 58; ch. 14 : 27-33.

59. Duty to Christ is supreme. No earthly connections or engagements should interfere with our obedience to him, vers. 59, 60; Matt. 10 : 37, 38; 2 Tim. 4 : 10.

60. Christ demands a deliberate and unreserved surrender. He who would follow him must follow him wholly or not at all, vers. 61, 62; ch. 17 : 32; Matt. 10 : 22; James 1 : 12.

## CHAPTER X.

In this chapter Luke relates the appointment and commission of the seventy (vers. 1-16); their return, and Christ's words of warning, gratitude, and blessing (17-24); his reply to a certain lawyer, and the parable of the good Samaritan (25-37); and his visit

at the house of Martha and Mary, 38-42.

1-16. THE SEVENTY APPOINTED, INSTRUCTED, AND SENT FORTH. Woes upon the unbelieving cities of Galilee. Compare the sending out of the twelve, ch. 9 : 1-5. The instructions to the seventy are similar to the first portion of those previously given to the twelve, Matt. 10 : 5-15. The difference between the two seems to be that the seventy are addressed with more special reference to a present emergency and a present duty, while that to the twelve includes also future emergencies, duties, dangers, and work. Why Luke alone gives this account may be explained by the facts that he alone of the first three evangelists relates this portion of Christ's ministry, and that John's Gospel is supplemental.

It has been very common to suppose that Jesus sent forth the seventy from Capernaum. But of this there is no proof. Indeed, the narrative most distinctly affirms that it was after Jesus had left Galilee for Jerusalem, ver. 1 compared with ch. 9 : 51-56. They may have been commissioned while he was yet in Samaria or upon entering into Judea. But if this journey to Jerusalem was, as we have supposed, to the feast of tabernacles (see on ch. 9 : 51-56), then the sending forth of the seventy more probably occurred after our Saviour's arrival at Jerusalem; for he went up hastily and privately to the feast, John 7 : 10, 14. We can hardly suppose that Jesus could have had the time to commission and instruct the seventy on the way, or that there could have been so large a company as eighty-two persons, for the twelve were with him. Luke's narrative seems also to place it after that journey. This harmonizes also with the rabbinical tradition that at the feast of the tabernacles sacrifices were offered for the seventy nations of the heathen world.

If this was so, then the mission of the seventy immediately after the feast appears to be symbolical of the gospel as designed for the whole world, and the relation of this account by Luke is ir

'seventy also, and 'sent them two and two before his face into every city and place, whither he himself would come. \* Num. 11. 16.  
\* Mt. 10. 1; Mk. 6. 7.

2 Therefore said he unto them, 'The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few: "pray ye therefore \* Mt. 9. 37, 38; John 4. 35.  
\* 2 Thes. 3. 1.

keeping with the universal design of this Gospel.

1. **After these things**, which are narrated in the latter portion of the preceding chapter. This opens an account of new events, and very naturally refers to those which occurred after the journey just referred to, ch. 9 : 51-56. By comparing the seventh and eighth chapters of John we learn that Jesus arrived at the temple and taught about the middle of the feast, and that he was still teaching upon the last day of the feast (John 7 : 37), which occurred in the year A. D. 29, on October 26. The break in Luke's narrative between the ninth and tenth chapters seems to be a fitting place for this account of John. Compare author's *Harmony*, §§ 99, 100, 101, and 102.

It would seem, therefore, very probable that at the close of the feast **the Lord appointed other seventy also**. Rather, *appointed also seventy others*. This has reference to the fact that Jesus had previously sent forth the twelve, ch. 9 : 1-6. It could hardly refer, as some suppose, to the messengers sent to provide hospitality in a certain Samaritan village (ch. 9 : 52); for the seventy were to preach the gospel, and are similarly instructed to the twelve. Notice that Luke here terms Jesus *Lord*, as befitting the act that he was doing. See on ch. 7 : 13. As their Lord and Master he *appointed* them. Why he appointed *seventy* has been variously explained. It was a sacred number, like seven and twelve, which it has pleased God to use. Thus there were seventy elders whom God made partakers of the spirit that was in Moses, Ex. 24 : 1; Num. 11 : 16, 17. So also the Jews divided the heathen world into seventy nations, for whom sacrifices are said to have been offered at the feast of tabernacles. See above. Who they were is not recorded anywhere in the New Testament. Tradition mentions many names, some of which are very improbable, but others, such as Matthias, Barnabas, Mark, and

Luke, were possibly among them. Some ancient manuscripts read *seventy-two*, which was probably a correction to agree with the number of the Sanhedrim, which was sometimes said to consist of seventy-two, at other times of seventy-one, and, in round numbers, of seventy.

**Sent them two by two**, as the twelve before them, Mark 6 : 7. They were sent forth in pairs for mutual consultation and assistance, for showing their agreement in doctrine, and for the confirmation of their testimony, as in the mouth of two witnesses every word might be established, Matt. 18 : 16. It is worthy of notice that while the twelve were limited in their mission to the Jews, the seventy were sent forth without any such limitation. **Before his face**. In advance of him or before him. **Into every city and place**. Where we are not informed, except by the additional clause, **whither he himself would come**. Rather, *was about to come*, if time and duties permitted. During the seven weeks between the feast of tabernacles and the feast of dedication Jesus very likely remained in Judea, since John makes no mention of his going elsewhere. The narrative which follows also favors this supposition. After the feast of dedication he went into Perea and there abode, John 10 : 40. We may therefore conclude that the seventy visited different parts of Judea and Perea.

2. The instructions to the seventy. This discourse is similar to that to the twelve (Matt. 10 : 5 ff.), yet not the same; so Luke's sermon on the plain (ch. 6 : 20 ff.) is similar to Matthew's sermon on the mount, but not the same. **Therefore**. According to the highest critical authorities, *And he said to them*. He proceeds to give a reason for sending forth this large band of laborers—the need and opportunity of preaching the gospel. **The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few**. They are too few to gather it. What will it avail, then, if there are not enough to reap it?

the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth  
 3 laborers into his harvest. Go your ways: <sup>2</sup>behold, I <sup>2</sup>Mt. 10. 16.  
 4 send you forth as lambs among wolves. <sup>3</sup>Carry nei- <sup>3</sup>ch. 9. 3; Mt. 10  
 ther purse, nor scrip, nor shoes: and <sup>2</sup>salute no man <sup>2</sup>Kl. 4. 29.

There are vast multitudes who need the gospel, but how few the preachers! Jesus before this addressed the same language to his disciples after the apostles had already been chosen, Matt. 9 : 37, 38.

But how shall this great want be supplied? How shall this vast harvest be garnered? By prayer for laborers to the **Lord of the harvest**. Christ is the Lord of the harvest, ch. 10 : 1 ; 13 : 37. He is God manifested in the flesh. Thus, while he spoke of God, and was so understood by his disciples, he also spoke of himself. They afterward, when they were enlightened, so understood it, John 20 : 21 ; Eph. 4 : 11-15. The harvest primarily referred to the multitude before him, but in its wider sense it included the whole world. **Send forth** expresses an earnest and urgent sending forth of laborers. Pray that the Lord of the harvest will, by the power of his Spirit, *impel and urge forth* laborers, so overcoming their natural unwillingness to engage in such a work, and so laying upon them the duty and the necessity, that they shall go forth feeling and saying, "Woe is me if I preach not the gospel," 1 Cor. 9 : 16.

3. **Go your ways.** *Depart* to your work and to the places where you are to preach the gospel. **Behold, I send you forth.** *Send you forth* is the verb from which *apostle* is derived. Apostles were literally persons sent forth. The seventy were sent forth on a similar mission. They, however, did not constitute a separate order, like the apostles, ch. 6 : 13 ; Matt. 10 : 2.

**As lambs among wolves.** Lambs and wolves are natural enemies; the one is innocent and defenceless, the other malicious and cruel. The seventy were indeed *lambs* of "the good Shepherd" (John 10 : 11), precious and valuable to him who sent them forth. The figure gives an impressive image of them as Christ's precious ones, meek and innocent, unarmed and defenceless, in the midst of cruel foes. Compare Matt. 10 : 16, where this declaration is found in the second division of the dis-

course and Jesus uses the word *sheep* instead of *lambs*. It is very possible that the position and the word here used are significant. In this last period of our Saviour's ministry there were greater dangers, and the seventy were less highly favored than the apostles. Hence it was fitting that these dangers should be made emphatic by this declaration at the opening of their commission, and that they should realize their proper characters and their simple and defenceless condition so clearly expressed by the word *lambs*. And especially so as Jesus does not add, "Be ye therefore wise as serpents and harmless as doves."

4. The provision for their journey. They are to rely upon God for their daily supply. **Carry neither purse, bag for money; nor scrip, bag or sack** for provisions (see note on ch. 9 : 3); **nor shoes**, sandals, soles fastened to the bottom of the feet with straps passing over the foot and ankle. They were to have no extra sandals and nothing to encumber them in their journey or to prevent despatch. They were to go just as they were, without making preparation, and depend on the hospitality of the country. Compare ch. 9 : 3. **Salute no man**, etc., a remarkable prohibition, given to no other of his followers. Oriental salutations are long and tedious, consuming much time. Many mutual inquiries are made about their name, residence, business, etc. Olshausen supposes the prohibition to mean, *salute no one to gain favor*. This is forced and far-fetched. It rather means, *haste, delay not, lose no time in salutations*. It was expected that every one would exchange salutations, except certain persons who were excused, as mourners for the dead and those who fasted for rain. By withholding salutations they would show the urgency of their business, that their minds were absorbed with it and intent on immediately performing it. Compare the similar command of Elisha to Gehazi indicating the importance and haste of his business, 2 Kings 4 : 29. "Inferiors re-

5 by the way. <sup>a</sup>And into whatsoever house ye enter,  
 6 first say, <sup>b</sup>Peace be to this house. And if <sup>c</sup>the son of  
 peace be there, your peace shall rest upon it: if not,  
 7 it shall turn to you again. <sup>d</sup>And in the same house  
 remain, <sup>e</sup>eating and drinking such things as they  
 give: for <sup>f</sup>the laborer is worthy of his hire. Go not  
 from house to house.

8 And into whatsoever city ye enter, and they receive  
 9 you, eat <sup>g</sup>such things as are set before you: <sup>h</sup>and heal  
 the sick that are therein, and say unto them, <sup>i</sup>The  
 20; 10. 7; 11. 11, 12; 23. 13; 25. 1, 14.

<sup>a</sup> Mt. 10. 12, 13.  
<sup>b</sup> 1 Sam. 25. 6.  
<sup>c</sup> 1 Sam. 25. 17; 2  
 Pet. 1. 14.  
<sup>d</sup> ch. 9. 4; Mt. 10  
 11.  
<sup>e</sup> 1 Cor. 10. 27.  
<sup>f</sup> Mt. 10. 10; 1 Cor  
 9. 4; Gal. 6. 6; 1  
 Tim. 5. 17, 18.  
<sup>g</sup> 1 Cor. 10. 27.  
<sup>h</sup> ch. 9. 2.  
<sup>i</sup> ver. 11; Mt. 3. 2;  
 4. 17; 5. 3, 10, 19,

mained standing until superiors had passed by."—VAN OOSTERZEE. Dr. Jahn says that Arabians are so animated on meeting friends by the way that they will repeat no less than ten times the ceremony of grasping hands and kissing and the inquiries about each other's health. That Jesus had respect to the common courtesies of life is evident from the next verse.

5. In this verse and in the six following, Jesus gives directions as to their conduct toward the people. First how to enter a house. Whatever house they should happen to enter, they were **first** to utter the usual salutation, **Peace be to this house** (1 Sam. 25 : 6), which was both a prayer and a blessing, and which indicated the benevolent design of their mission.

6. Where to abide is told them in this and the next verse. **If the son**, rather, *a son*, **of peace be there**, one worthy of peace and ready to receive the gospel or glad tidings of peace, Phil. 4 : 7. Compare the opposite characters, *children of wrath*, Eph. 2 : 3. **Your peace shall rest upon it**, the prayer and blessing of your salutation shall be answered; they shall enjoy the peace you invoke. **If not**, if there be not a son of peace there, if there is no readiness to receive your message, **it shall turn to you again**, your blessing shall return to you, and you shall enjoy the rich reward of having done your duty.

7. **And in the same house**, rather, *and in that house*, where there is a son of peace, a readiness to receive the gospel, **remain**, till your mission in that place is fulfilled; and be not fastidious about your entertainment, but receive what is set before you, **eating and drinking such things as they give**, or, more literally, *what things are with*

*them*, and, impliedly, what is set before you by them. They were not to depart on account of poverty of entertainment, nor were they to press any to provide extra entertainment or more expensive than they could afford, but by their conduct show their gratitude for their hospitality.

The reason for pursuing this course is given: **for the laborer is worthy of his hire**, of his wages, his living. As they were laboring for the good of those to whom they ministered, it was right that they should receive from them the supply of their temporary wants. Compare Rom. 15 : 27; 1 Cor. 9 : 13, 14. It is worthy of notice that this is the only passage in the Gospels quoted in the Epistles. See 1 Tim. 5 : 18, where it is introduced by the expression, "The Scripture saith."

The preceding injunction is further enforced, **Go not from house to house**. They would thus be easy of access and more efficient, would lose no time in accepting entertainments and feasts, and would show a contented spirit in abiding where they were, though a richer hospitality might be offered them.

8. What had just been said of a family is now said of a city. **They receive you**, welcome you to their hospitality.

9. **Heal the sick**. Healing is here placed before preaching, an emphatic intimation of the importance of miracles to them as the evidence of the divine authority of their message. Ye' that miracles were not always to precede preaching is evident from Matt. 10 : 7, 8, where, in the instructions to the twelve, preaching is placed before healing. The twelve were also commanded to "cleanse the lepers, raise the

- 10 kingdom of God is come nigh unto you. But into whatsoever city ye enter, and they receive you not, go your ways out into the streets of the same, and say,
- 11 <sup>1</sup>Even the very dust of your city, which cleaveth on us, we do wipe off against you: notwithstanding be ye sure of this, that the kingdom of God is come nigh unto you. But I say unto you, that <sup>2</sup>it shall be more tolerable in that day for Sodom, than for that city.
- 13 <sup>1</sup>Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Beth-

<sup>1</sup>ch. 9. 5; Mt. 10  
14; Ac. 13. 51  
18. 6.

<sup>2</sup>Mt. 10. 15; Mk.  
6. 11.

<sup>1</sup>Mt. 11. 20, 21.

dead, and cast out demons." Yet the seventy, when they returned, declared with joy that even the demons were subject to them.

They were to say to them that were healed and to the people of that city, **The kingdom of God, the administration of the Messiah, the gospel dispensation** (see on ch. 4 : 43), **is come, or has come, nigh unto you, or upon you**, with the idea of coming down from heaven upon men. Prepare yourselves, therefore, to receive the blessings of the Messiah and of his kingdom. Jesus himself was about to follow in many of these places.

10. In this verse and the next Jesus tells them what to do when rejected. **Receive you not.** Neither welcome you to their hospitality nor regard your message. **The streets.** The comparatively broad streets or avenues leading out of the city. The streets of Oriental cities are generally narrow. **And say, publicly.**

11. **Even the very dust, etc.** *Even the dust that cleaves to our feet from your city. We wipe off.* See note on ch. 9 : 5.

**Notwithstanding, be ye sure of this, know this,** a solemn declaration that the blessing of the Messiah had been offered, that **the kingdom of God is come nigh unto you, rather, has come nigh.** **Unto you** should be omitted, according to the highest critical authorities, thus making their leavetaking the more solemn. It has come near, though you condemn it, and you will be held responsible for it. In ver. 9 we have the message of mercy, in this verse a message of condemnation.

12. **But** should be omitted. **More tolerable for Sodom.** There will be degrees of punishment according to

the degrees of guilt. Sodom, situated where the southern portion of the Dead Sea now is, was a type of aggravated sins (Gen. 13 : 13 ; 18 : 20 ; Jude 7), and of terrible retribution, Deut. 29 : 23 ; Isa. 13 : 19 ; Jer. 49 : 18 ; Amos 4 : 11 ; 2 Pet. 2 : 6. Yet their doom would be less dreadful at the day of judgment than that of those who should reject the gospel message. The greater the light, the greater the guilt and the greater the punishment. The doomed cities of the plain had enjoyed but the dim light that gleamed from the preaching of Lot ; the Jews had their law, their prophets, John the Baptist, and, to crown all, the preaching of Christ and his apostles. In rejecting these their crime was greater than that of the worst of heathen. **In that day,** the day of judgment.

13. In this verse and the two that follow are the woes which Jesus pronounced upon the highly favored but wicked cities of Galilee, where he had frequently been and which he had recently left, no more to reside among them. They are presented as examples of cities which had rejected the kingdom of God, and which should therefore suffer the terrible consequences. The same woes are found in Matt. 11 : 21. Wherefore, some have supposed that both refer to this time, and that Matthew, from his habit of grouping discourses and events, inserted it in connection with other sayings at an earlier date. But there is no necessity for this supposition. It is more natural to suppose that Jesus repeated this, like other weighty sayings. And they were especially appropriate at this time. The preceding verse is certainly repeated, having been uttered before, Matt. 10 : 15. Why not this? Compare on Matt. 11 : 20-24.

saidal <sup>m</sup> for if the mighty works had been done in Tyre and Sidon, which have been done in you, they had a great while ago repented, sitting in sackcloth and ashes. But it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the judgment, than for you. <sup>n</sup> And thou, Capernaum, which art <sup>o</sup> exalted to heaven, <sup>p</sup> shalt be thrust down to hell.

<sup>m</sup> Eze. 3. 6.

<sup>n</sup> Mt. 11. 23.

<sup>o</sup> Ge. 11. 4; Deu. 1

23; Isa. 14. 13

Jer. 51. 53.

<sup>p</sup> Eze. 26. 20; 32

18.

**Woe unto thee**, an exclamation of pity and indignation betokening coming calamity.

**Chorazin** was a city only known from this passage and from Matt. 11 : 21. Jerome informs us that it was situated on the shore of the Sea of Galilee, two miles from Capernaum. Some suppose it to be the modern *Tell Hum*, on the north-west shore of the lake; others suppose it to be the modern *Khorazy*, where are quite extensive ruins, about two miles inland from Tell Hum. If *Tell Hum* be the site of Capernaum, then *Khorazy* is probably the site of Chorazin. But if Capernaum was at Khan Minyah, then Chorazin was probably at *Tell Hum*. It has been suggested that after the latter was destroyed on the exposed coast the inhabitants retired to a more secure spot, carrying with them the name of their home. See on Capernaum, ch. 4 : 31. **Bethsaida** is supposed to be the name of two towns, one on the east and the other on the west of the lake. The name, which means a *house of fishing* or *fishery*, could easily be applied to more than one place, especially where fishing was so common a business. The Bethsaida on the north-eastern border of the lake is referred to in Luke 9 : 10; Mark 6 : 32; 8 : 22. The one mentioned here was on the west side, near Capernaum, the birthplace of Andrew, Peter, and Philip. See also John 1 : 44; 12 : 21.

**The mighty works**. Greek *dunameis*, wonderful works, miracles, the effect of supernatural power. Jesus performed many miracles of which we have no special account, Matt. 4 : 24; 8 : 16; 9 : 35.

**Tyre and Sidon**. See note on ch. 6 : 17.

**A great while ago**. In ancient times. The inhabitants of those ancient cities would have repented, and thus would have escaped the fearful judg-

ment which came upon them. **Sackcloth and ashes**. It was customary in the East for mourners to wear a garment of coarse black cloth, commonly made of hair, designed to hang on the body like a sack, Gen. 37 : 34; 1 Kings 21 : 27; John 3 : 5. To sit in ashes was a token of grief and mourning (Job 2 : 8), as was also strewing them upon the head, 2 Sam. 13 : 19. These would have been the external symbols of their sorrow and penitence, John 3 : 8.

14. **But**. Not only is their sin less than yours, because they enjoyed less light and fewer advantages than you, but also at the day of judgment their punishment will be more endurable than yours.

15. **Capernaum**. On the north-western coast of the Sea of Galilee. See on ch. 4 : 31. **Exalted to heaven**. Exalted in privilege as the residence of Christ. The Lord from *heaven* had come and dwelt there, thus raising it in honor and privileges to the *very heavens*, Matt. 9 : 1. Perhaps its situation on the hill that rises from the plain of Gennesaret may have suggested and made the allusion the more striking. According to some of the oldest manuscripts, this passage should read, "And thou, Capernaum, shalt thou be exalted to heaven? thou shalt be thrust down to hell." In view of the distinction and the privileges of my residence in thee shalt thou be exalted to heaven? Nay, on account of thy misimprovement of them thou shalt, etc. This reading, however, is not to be regarded as settled. **Hell**. Not *Gehenna*, the place of punishment for the wicked, but *Hades*, the *abode of the dead*, the world of departed spirits, and may be translated *the under world*. On *Gehenna* see ch. 12 : 5. *Eades* in the Greek has the same signification as *Sheol* in the Hebrew, both repr. senting the region of the departed. As *Sheol* in the Old Testament is represented figuratively as *beneath* (Isa. 14 : 4; Ezek.

16 <sup>a</sup>He that heareth you heareth me: and <sup>r</sup>he that despiseth you despiseth me; <sup>a</sup>and he that despiseth me despiseth him that sent me.

<sup>a</sup> Mt. 10. 40; 18. 5; Mk. 9. 37; John 13. 20.

<sup>r</sup> 1 Thes. 4. 8. <sup>a</sup> Joh. 5. 23.

*The return of the seventy.*

17 And the seventy returned again with joy, saying,

31 : 17, Amos 9 : 2), so is *Hades* in the New Testament. Thus in this passage it is represented as the *depth below* in contrast to *heaven* as the *height above*. Compare Rom. 10 : 6, 7; Phil. 2 : 10; Rev. 5 : 3, 13. *Under world* thus corresponds with the scriptural conception of this abode. *Hades* occurs ten times in the New Testament—namely, Matt. 11 : 23; 16 : 18; Luke 10 : 15; 16 : 18; Acts 2 : 27, 31; Rev. 1 : 18; 6 : 8; 20 : 13, 14. It occurs also in 1 Cor. 15 : 55 in the text from which the common version was translated, and is there rendered *grave*. The true text reads *death* in both clauses of the verse. *Heaven* and the *under world* here stand in contrast, the one representing height of privileges and blessings, and the other the depth of woe and desolation.

What a commentary are the calamities which came upon those cities, blotting out their existence and leaving nothing but solitary wastes to this day! "And the very generation which rejected him was doomed to recall in bitter and fruitless agony these peaceful, happy days of the Son of man. Thirty years had barely elapsed when the storm of Roman invasion burst furiously over that smiling land. He who will may read in the *Jewish War* of Josephus the hideous details of the slaughter which decimated the cities of Galilee and wrung from the historian the repeated confession that 'it was certainly God who brought the Romans to punish the Galileans,' and exposed the people of city after city 'to be destroyed by their bloody enemies.' Immediately after the celebrated passage in which he describes the lake and plain of Genesaret as 'the ambition of nature' follows a description of that terrible sea-fight on these bright waters, in which the number of slain, including those killed in the city, was six thousand and five hundred. . . . 'One might then,' continues the historian, 'see the lake all bloody and full of dead bodies, for not one of them escaped. And a ter-

rible stench and a very sad sight there was on the following day over that country; for as for the shores, they were full of shipwrecks and of dead bodies all swelled; and as the dead bodies were inflamed by the sun and putrefied, they corrupted the air inso-much that the misery was not only an object of commiseration to the Jews, but even to those that hated them and had been the authors of that misery.'" —DR. FARRAR, *Life of Christ*, vol. ii., p. 101. See JOSEPH. *Jew. War*, iii. 10, § 9.

16. Christ's disciples are his representatives. A vital and inseparable union exists between him and his followers. **He that heareth you heareth me**, etc. From what follows, "he that heareth me heareth him that sent me" is implied. You are my representatives, even as I am my Father's representative. He, therefore, that receiveth you, not merely to his house and board, but also to his heart, welcoming you as my messengers, and consequently your message, heareth both me and my Father. What honor and what blessedness! Matt. 25 : 34-40. **And he that despiseth you**, etc. Rather, *sets at naught, rejecteth you rejecteth me*, etc.

17-24. THE RETURN OF THE SEVENTY. Their joy and our Lord's words of warning, gratitude, and blessing. Since Luke gives the account of their return immediately after their mission, it is natural to infer that they were gone but a few days, possibly a week or two. As they went in haste and in thirty-five companies (ver. 1), they could accomplish much in a short time. Jesus was probably at Jerusalem or in its vicinity. See ver. 38.

17. **Returned**, after having visited the allotted districts, and at the time which had probably been appointed. **Again** should be omitted as unnecessary. **With joy**, at their success and their miraculous power in Christ's name. **Lord**, thus recognizing his divine authority, ver. 1. **Even the dev-**

Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name. And he said unto them, **I beheld Satan as 19 lightning fall from heaven. Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over**

<sup>a</sup> John 16. 11; Heb 2. 14; 1 John 3 8; Rev. 9. 1; 12. 8, 9.  
<sup>b</sup> Ps. 91. 13; Mk. 16. 18; Rev. 20. 1-3.

**ills, the demons.** See on ch. 4 : 33. Not only did they heal the sick, which Jesus commanded them to do (ver. 9), but their faith was so active and strong that they cast out demons. This was the more remarkable, as even nine apostles had some time before this been baffled by a demon, ch. 9 : 40. They rejoiced, therefore, that demons were **subject unto them, or subjected to them.** At the same time, while elated, they acknowledge the source of their power—*through thy name, in thy name*, in thy authority and power, and pervaded by thy influence. There is great simplicity and honesty in their conduct. Jesus, however, finds it necessary to caution and instruct them.

18. In this and the next verse Jesus declares Satan's fall and their power. **And he said unto them**, indicating that what they had reported was no surprise to him. **I beheld, I was beholding**, a vivid expression by which Jesus represents himself as present in the past, a witness of the event. **Satan** means *adversary*, the Hebrew name of the chief or prince of demons. He is here presented as a real personal being. See on ch. 4 : 2. **As lightning**, bringing to view the violence, swiftness, suddenness, and conspicuousness of his fall. It may also be expressive of the fact that he was once an angel of light. **Fall, or fallen.** This should be connected not with lightning, but with Satan. A glance into the past and a picture of the complete overthrow and subjugation of his power in the future. **From heaven, as lightning from heaven**, denoting the greatness of the fall and the complete ruin of Satan. Compare Isa. 14 : 12; Zech. 9 : 14. What is the meaning of this very remarkable expression of our Saviour? Some, as Doddridge, Alford, and others, refer it to the original fall of Satan; others to the future overthrow of Satan and his kingdom, of which the casting out demons was the prelude; while a few would limit it to the days of our Saviour, and to the overcoming Satan and his power in resisting his tempta-

tions, casting out demons, and in the sufferings of the cross. On this I remark—(1) We naturally connect this declaration somewhat with the mission of the seventy, and the fact that they had announced, "Even the demons are subject to us," and hence it involves the idea, *I was beholding*, or *I already beheld*, when ye went forth on your mission. (2) Yet the expression points us back into the past and forward into the future to a thing fully accomplished. It seems, therefore, better to refer this to the whole fall of Satan, beginning with the time when he lost his place in heaven as an angel of light and extending to his final and complete overthrow. The casting out of demons was one of the steps in subjugating him and an evidence of his waning power. Hence the triumphant joy of the seventy was caused by only a small part of the great victory. Jesus had before this been beholding, witnessing, and contemplating the downfall of the prince of demons and the complete and final overthrow of his dominion. Compare Isa. 14 : 9-15; John 12 : 31; 2 Pet. 2 : 4; Jude 6; Rev. 9 : 1; 12 : 9; 20 : 2, 10.

19. The power which they had should not cease. Jesus gives a new assurance, and promises them exemption from personal injury. There seems to be an allusion to Ps. 91 : 13. Compare the promise in Mark 16 : 17. **Behold** introduces something unexpected and surprising. **I give, rather I have given**, according to the highest critical authorities. It is an abiding fact. Jesus, too, is the author of this power, Matt. 28 : 18. **To tread, without injury. Serpents, poisonous reptiles. Scorpions**, large insects, somewhat like a small lobster, several inches long, with a poisonous sting at the extremity of the tail. They live in warm climates and are found in dry and dark places, under stones and in ruins. Their sting is often very painful and sometimes attended with alarming symptoms. That this was literally fulfilled we may infer from Paul's experience, Acts 28 : 2-5. Serpents and scorpions may also be re-

all the power of the enemy : and nothing shall by any means hurt you. Notwithstanding, in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you ; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven. Ro. 8. 31-39.  
Ex. 32. 33 ; Is. 4  
3 ; Heb. 12. 23.

garded as the representatives in the animal kingdom of the kingdom of



SCORPION.

darkness. Compare Gen. 3 : 15 ; Rev. 12 : 9 ; Ezek. 2 : 6. Hence they may be here figures of malignant powers of evil. Thus the Lord said to Paul at Corinth, " Be not afraid, but speak and hold not thy peace ; for I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee, for I have much people in this city," Acts 18 : 9, 10.

**And over all the power,** depends on the word *power* in the preceding clause, and may be thus expressed: *And I have given you power, or authority, over all the might of the enemy, of Satan, the adversary, or enemy.* "The expression originates in that profound view of natural life pervading all Scripture according to which the disorders of sin in the spiritual world express themselves also in the physical."—OLSHAUSEN. While spiritual evil may be mainly referred to, yet the words, *all the power*, indicate that all forms of evil are included. **Nothing shall by any means hurt you,** a strong negative expression, pledging to the disciples safety in the Lord's work and exemption from real injury from anything from without. They would have their trials and persecutions, but they would be like the bush which Moses saw, though burning, yet not consumed.

20. Jesus now tells them the true cause of rejoicing. He may have seen that there was danger of vanity, or of a false trust, or of overlooking the spiritual nature of their work. **Notwithstanding Nevertheless.** You have

this power and I have given you exemption from all real personal injury, nevertheless in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject, are subjected to you, for this is not your great cause of rejoicing, and there is danger lest you fall into a spirit of pride and self-praise. **But rather rejoice.** Omit rather, according to the best authorities. **Because your names are written in heaven,** that you are enrolled in the Lamb's book of life (Rev. 21 : 27) as the

faithful subjects and heirs of his kingdom, and as the objects of divine favor and love. This is so great a distinction that the possession of supernatural gifts is comparatively little beside it. This should be their great cause of gratitude and joy. Compare Ex. 32 : 32 ; Ps. 87 : 6 ; 69 : 28 ; Dan. 12 : 1 ; Mal. 3 : 16 ; Rev. 3 : 5 ; 13 : 8 ; 20 : 12. On the contrary, those that are rebellious are declared as "written in the earth," Jer. 17 : 13. Allusion is here made to an ancient custom of enrolling the names of citizens in a book. When any one was admitted to citizenship, his name was entered upon the list. Notice, also, that Jesus had cautioned them, though acknowledging the source of their power, *in thy name* (ver. 17), for some would perform miracles to whom he would say at last, "I never knew you," Matt. 7 : 22, 23. But the fact that their "names were written in heaven" was an assurance of their heavenly citizenship and future heavenly inheritance, John 10 : 28, 29 ; 17 : 28 ; Rom. 8 : 14-17 ; Heb. 12 : 22-24.

It will be noticed that Jesus does not absolutely, but only comparatively, forbid their rejoicing at their success, the thing not being wrong in itself, but of less importance. Such phraseology is not uncommon in Scripture: thus, "Labor not for the meat that perisheth, but for that meat that endureth unto everlasting life" (John 6 : 27)—that is, labor for the one more than the other, let the latter be the great object of thy

21 <sup>a</sup>In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, <sup>b</sup>Lord of heaven and earth, that <sup>c</sup>thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, <sup>d</sup>and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight.

<sup>a</sup> Mt. 11. 25-27.

<sup>b</sup> 2 Ki. 19. 15.

<sup>c</sup> Ps. 8. 2; John 9.

39-41; 1 Cor. 1.

18-29.

<sup>d</sup> Mt. 16. 17; 21. 16.

endeavor. Compare Matt. 9 : 13; 2 Cor. 4 : 18.

21. In this verse and the next Jesus rejoices, and gratefully acknowledges the divine sovereignty in bestowing salvation on those whom the world despises. The words are given by Matthew in ch. 11 : 25, 26. They fit so admirably in the connection of both Matthew and Luke as to mark them among the favorite sayings of our Lord which were uttered on different occasions.

21. **In that hour.** At that time when the seventy had returned and he had instructed them in regard to the true ground of joy. **Jesus rejoiced in spirit.** *He exulted*, rejoiced greatly *in the Holy Spirit*, according to the best text, under the power of the Spirit who was given him without measure, and who revealed truth to the hearts of men. Jesus illustrates the true ground of joy. Their joy was rather that of sense over the external splendor of their work in exercising superhuman power. His was a holy spiritual exultation over the bestowment of salvation upon the weak ones of the earth and the progress of his kingdom in the hearts of men, and doubtless also in view of the glorious success that should attend these weak instruments in delivering unnumbered multitudes from the power of sin and Satan. The Man of sorrows had a constant source of joy in his Father, and in the prospect of the joy set before him. **Father** intimates the close relation existing between him and the Father. He uses it on five other occasions, this being the second recorded instance. See Matt. 11 : 25; John 11 : 41; 12 : 28; 17 : 1; Luke 23 : 34. **Lord of heaven and earth.** The absolute sovereign. How appropriate thus to designate his Father, when he was about to speak specially of his sovereignty, as one who works all things after the counsel of his own will! Eph. 1 : 11. It should be remarked that Jesus addresses God as Father, but never as *his* Lord. **I thank**

**thee.** The verb in the original is of broad signification, including both praise and acknowledgment: I praise thee and acknowledge to thee the wisdom and justice of thy doings. **That thou hast hid.** *That thou didst hide*, conceal these things concerning the Father, the Son, and the kingdom of heaven. **From the wise and prudent.** The wise and discerning, intelligent, in their own estimation and in the estimation of the world. Wise and discerning in regard to worldly matters and human learning, and many of them in the *letter*, though not in the *spirit*, of the law. Such were many of the scribes and Pharisees, who were the wise men of the nation. **To babes.** Babes in knowledge and simplicity; so considered by the world, and also by themselves; the humble, having a teachable spirit, and feeling their need of heavenly wisdom. They are "the poor in spirit" (Matt. 5 : 3), "the little ones" (Matt. 10 : 42), the believing followers of Jesus. His disciples were mostly poor, unlearned, and obscure men. Jesus thanks the Father that gospel blessings had been thus bestowed. It was a rebuke and just punishment to pride and worldly wisdom, humbling to man and honoring to God, 1 Cor. 1 : 26-29; 2 : 6-8. The *hiding* was the withholding of his grace, a righteous judgment upon a proud and self-righteous generation; the *revealing* was the making known of spiritual truths by his words and grace, an act of infinite compassion and of unmerited and undeserved favor, Matt. 16 : 17; 1 Cor. 2 : 9-14.

**Even so.** A simple affirmation, and should be translated *yea*, as in ch. 7 : 26, and elsewhere. **For.** Rather, *that*. **Seemed good.** Thy good will, purpose, or pleasure. The word in the original includes the ideas both of sovereign choice and benevolence, Eph. 1 : 9; Phil. 2 : 13. This clause presents the highest cause of our Saviour's thanksgiving. Its meaning may be thus expressed: Yea, I do thank thee, O Father! that such was thy good plea-

- 22 • All things are delivered to me of my Father : and no man knoweth who the Son is, but the Father ; † and who the Father is, but the Son, and *he* to whom the Son will reveal *him*. • Mt. 28. 18 ; John 3. 35 ; 5. 21-27 ; Eph. 1. 20-23 ; Phil. 2. 10, 11. † John 1. 18 ; 6. 44, 46 ; 10. 15 ; 17. 25. • Mt. 13. 16, 17 ; 16. 17 ; John 20. 29 ; Eph. 1. 17-19. † Heb. 11. 13, 39 ; 1 Pet. 1. 10.
- 23 And he turned him unto *his* disciples, and said privately, \* Blessed *are* the eyes which see the things
- 24 that ye see : for I tell you, † that many prophets and kings have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen *them* ; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard *them*.

sure. It is good and right, just and best.

22. Jesus now addresses the seventy in the hearing of others, again presenting himself as the revealer of the Father, his close and intimate relation to him, and his own sovereignty. See next verse, where he addresses his disciples privately. Some ancient manuscripts begin this verse thus : *And turning to his disciples he said, No one, etc.* This reading is somewhat doubtful. **All things**, in heaven and on earth (Matt. 28 : 18), were committed by the Father to Christ as a mediator. He is head over all things to the church (Eph. 1 : 22), and the Judge of the living and the dead, John 5 : 22, 27 ; Acts 10 : 42. **No man knoweth. No one knows perfectly who the Son is**, as Son of God and Son of man, but the Father ; neither can any one know perfectly **who the Father is**, in his infinite nature and designs, but the Son (John 17 : 5 ; Heb. 1 : 3), **and he to whom the Son will reveal him.** *Is pleased to reveal him* by his word and by the Spirit. Christ, as the Revealer of the Father, is also a Sovereign, and exercises his good pleasure, ver. 21. The Son and the Father are equally incomprehensible and omniscient.

It has been often remarked that the spirit and form of expression in this verse are the same as those of the discourses given in the Gospel according to John. It is thus an incidental evidence of the credibility of the fourth Gospel. It is a taste, a glimpse, of those high and sublime truths which formed the subject of many of the discourses of Jesus, and which John alone records.

23. In this verse and the next Jesus congratulates his disciples upon their

spiritual perception and upon living in the days of the Messiah. He used similar language to the twelve when in private he gave them the reason for teaching the people in parables, Matt. 13 : 16, 17. The utterance was very fitting to both occasions.

**And he turned him, rather, *And turning himself, to his disciples***, the seventy, he said **privately**. He addressed them apart. Some other disciples may have been present ; but if so, it is not recorded.

**Blessed. Happy.** See on 6 : 20. **The eyes, whoever or wherever they may be. Which see the things, etc.** *That behold*, that see and perceive, so as to truly apprehend the spiritual and glorious truths that are revealed by me. The disciples were indeed happy in contrast to the blinded scribes and Pharisees around them, who both hated and rejected the truth. These humble followers of Jesus, having teachable spirits, had beheld him as the Messiah, and had received from him lessons of heavenly wisdom.

24. They were also happy in comparison to prophets and righteous kings of old. **Many prophets and kings**, such as Isaiah and Micah, David and Hezekiah, many of the most eminently pious men of the old dispensation, **have desired to see those things which ye see**, that ye are beholding, 1 Pet. 1 : 10 ; Job 19 : 23, 24 ; 2 Sam. 23 : 5 ; Isa. 52 : 7 ; and chs. 53 and 54. **And have not seen them.** Did not see them. They saw them not with their bodily eyes, and saw them but very dimly with the eyes of their soul. **And to hear those things, etc.** And to hear what ye hear (1 John 1 : 1), and heard not. They desired to hear Christ and the glorious things revealed by him. Such language as this

*Reply of Jesus concerning eternal life; parable of the good Samaritan.*

25 And, behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying, 'Master, what shall I do to inherit  
26 eternal life? He said unto him, 'What is written in  
27 the law? how readeest thou? And he answering said,

<sup>1</sup>Mt. 19. 16; 22. 35.  
<sup>2</sup>Is. 8. 20; John 5. 39; Ro. 3. 19; 4. 14-16; Gal. 3. 10-13, 21, 22.

could well be repeated by our Saviour at different times.

Christ was the desire of all nations, Hag. 2 : 7. Many in heathen nations shared in these earnest desires. "Socrates uttered the longing of many thoughtful heathen. 'We must wait,' said he, 'till one shall come and teach us our duty to God.' The Cumean sibyl taught that a great ruler should be born of heavenly extraction, whose reign would be universal. 'To give a universal peace and exercise his Father's virtues.' 'To abolish all violence and restore original simplicity.' 'To kill the serpent, and purge all vegetables of poisons.' 'The blessing would extend to the brute creation.' Thus unconsciously did the heathen world prophesy of and long for the Redeemer."—W. H. VAN DOREN.

25-37. JESUS ANSWERS A LAWYER CONCERNING ETERNAL LIFE AND OUR NEIGHBOR. THE PARABLE OF THE GOOD SAMARITAN. We have, in the first portion of this section, a clear instance and illustration of a repetition of a question addressed to our Lord and of his answer. Were it not that Luke has related the question of the young ruler, "What shall I do to inherit eternal life" (ch. 18 : 18), some harmonists and critics would at once conclude that this was but another report of the same occurrence, and would therefore make it parallel with Matt. 19 : 16-30. Such an instance as this should put us on our guard against hastily concluding that two events in the Gospel narratives are the same because they are similar.

The incidents here related took place probably at or near Jerusalem. The illustration of the journey from Jerusalem to Jericho (ver. 30) incidentally confirms the view that he was in Judea. It was just such a one as he would naturally use if he were in Jerusalem or its vicinity. It probably occurred soon after the return of the seventy. It may have been after a pause in the

preceding discourse, while the people continued around him.

25. **A certain lawyer.** See on ch. 7 : 30. A teacher of the law, he doubtless held strictly to the letter of the law. **Stood up,** according to an ancient custom of speaking when about to do something, or of a pupil asking information; in this instance for the purpose of asking a question. **And tempted him,** tested him, put him to the proof to ascertain our Lord's knowledge of the subject, or to see what answer he would give to the question, and from it to judge our Lord's skill in such matters. Some suppose that it was the lawyer's design to ensnare him, and if possible to charge him with heresy. But we see no evidence of evil intention on the part of the lawyer.

**Master, Teacher, what shall I do?** as a means or cause in obtaining eternal life, which was his great end in view. **Inherit,** possess by right, have as my portion. **Eternal life,** an unending blessed existence, everlasting happiness. He was not a Sadducee, but a believer in a future state of existence.

26. It is evident from what follows that Jesus answers the question differently from what the lawyer expected. Instead of gratifying him with some abstruse solution of the question or stating something he must do, Jesus makes the lawyer answer it himself by asking, **What is written in the law?** an apt question, since it was a lawyer who had asked him, whose office it was to understand and explain the law. **How readeest thou?** How do you understand the law to teach regarding this? What is its purport? How would you sum up the law respecting this particular?

27. The answer (Dent. 6 : 5; Lev. 19 : 18) was repeated daily, morning and evening, in the synagogues, and part of it was written on the phylacteries. **Thy God.** Hence you should love him. Whatever be the thoughts or

- \*Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and <sup>1</sup>thy neighbor as thyself.
- 28 And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this do, and <sup>m</sup>thou shalt live.
- 29) But he, willing to <sup>n</sup>justify himself, said unto Jesus,
- 30 And who is my neighbor? And Jesus answering

<sup>k</sup> Deu. 6. 5.

<sup>l</sup> Le. 19. 18.

<sup>m</sup> Le. 18. 5; Ne. 9. 29; Eze. 20. 11, 13, 21; Ro. 10. 3, 5, <sup>n</sup> ch. 16. 15; see <sup>l</sup>e. 19. 34.

desires of men, Jehovah is *their* God, and this fact should call forth their supreme love. **Heart.** Desires, feelings, and affections. **Soul.** Sentiments, passions, and vital bodily powers. **Strength.** Might, ability. **Mind.** Will and intellectual powers. We must not expect here the nice distinctions of philosophical language. Whatever be the exact differences in these four terms, they together express the whole man, with all his affections and powers in the inner and outer life. The command equals, Thou shalt love God supremely. **Thy neighbor.** Thy fellow-man. **As thyself.** The Scriptures forbid *selfishness*, but not *self-love*. Self-love is an original principle in our nature; and though the Scriptures do not command it, they take for granted and imply that men ought to exercise a proper love for themselves. It is not subject to the caprices of the will, as Dr. Alexander remarks, and is therefore wisely made the standard of men's love to one another. The command here is the inner life and principle of the Golden Rule.

28. Jesus approves his answer and urges him to put it into practice. **Thou hast answered right**, according to God's word. **This do, and thou shalt live.** The lawyer had asked what he should *do*, and Jesus tells him. Keep the law perfectly. If he never once violated it in his whole life, either in its letter or spirit, then he could legally claim eternal life. Thus the law was designed for life. Had our first parents never sinned, they would have lived in perfect harmony with the law and enjoyed eternal life. Perfect obedience brings life. But Jesus did not thus command him with the expectation that he would obey it. His design was rather to lead him to the attempt, in order that he might discover his deficiencies and his need of a Saviour and of his perfect righteousness. The law would thus shut him up to the gospel and to faith in Christ. The law would

be his schoolmaster to bring him to Christ, Gal. 3 : 24. But this man's life had not corresponded with his theory. He had not united with it practical disobedience. This is implied in the commands, "This do" and "go and do thou likewise," ver. 37.

29. The lawyer had unexpectedly been made to answer his own question. This, with the expressive words of Jesus, "This do, and thou shalt live," probably brought him to view the law in a somewhat new light. He began to feel the length, breadth, and depth of the requirement, and to be convicted of his shortcomings. He wanted to find some way of escape and of self-justification. **But he, willing**, rather, *wishing*, to **justify himself**, to show that he had kept this divine requirement. Some would explain thus: The answer to his question was so simple that he sees that he is in danger of being put to shame for asking it; and he endeavors to get out of the difficulty by asking another, thereby showing that the precise difficulty is in defining his neighbor, who he is, and who he is not. The former interpretation is, however, to be preferred as the more natural. Besides, our Saviour's teachings were designed not merely to convict the intellect, but also the conscience. **And who is my neighbor?** Whom I am to love as myself. He was hoping, it may be, that Jesus would limit the word neighbor to the Jews, Matt. 5 : 43. The Pharisees so restricted the term as to exclude not only Gentiles and Samaritans, but also publicans and those who shared not their own peculiar views. Or if Jesus should make a different application, the lawyer may have hoped to refute it.

The word *neighbor* signified *one* living near, and was used in a limited sense to mean a friend, an associate, one belonging to the same country or professing the same religion. In its broader sense, Jesus shows that it meant a fellow-man. In the original command

said, A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of

(Lev. 19 : 18) it doubtless had primary reference to Israelites; but that it was not to be limited to them is evident from our Saviour's application of it to all mankind. And this was in harmony with the Old Testament requirement that enjoined love to strangers (Lev. 19 : 34) and kindness to enemies, Prov. 25 : 21. In the following beautiful parable Jesus gives the lawyer an illustration of love to one's neighbor, and shows clearly that any one can act the part of neighbor whenever opportunity offers.

30. PARABLE OF THE GOOD SAMARITAN. This is related only by Luke. It seems like real history. Like all of our Saviour's parables, it is founded on familiar incidents in human observation and experience. "Every circumstance in this parable was full of significance to those who heard it. The Saviour delivered it near Bethany, on the border of the frightful desert, Luke 10 : 25, 38. Jericho was a sacerdotal city. The passing of priests and Levites between that place and Jerusalem was an everyday occurrence. The idea of a caravan-serai, or 'inn,' was not invented probably for the sake of the allegory, but borrowed from the landscape. There are the ruins now of such a shelter for the benighted or unfortunate on one of the heights that overlook the infested road."—DR. HACKETT, *Illustrations of Scripture*, pp. 215, 216.

**A certain man.** Without doubt a Jew, perhaps after some of the feasts journeying from Jerusalem. His acknowledged claim upon the kindness and protection of the priest and Levite also implies that he was a Jew.

**From Jerusalem to Jericho.** On *Jerusalem*, see ch. 2 : 25. *Jericho* signifies "the fragrant place," and was a city of Benjamin (Josh. 18 : 21), situated about eighteen miles north-east of Jerusalem and seven miles west of the Jordan. It was founded probably after the destruction of Sodom, called "the city of palm trees" (Deut. 34 : 3), and famous for its roses and balsam. It was the first city in Canaan taken and destroyed by Joshua (Josh. 6 : 24-26), rebuilt five hundred years afterward by Hiel (1 Kings 16 : 34), and became

distinguished for its school of the prophets and as the residence of Elisha, 2 Kings 2 : 18. Meanwhile, a new Jericho appears to have been built on a neighboring site, Judg. 3 : 13; 2 Sam. 10 : 5; Josephus, *Bell. Jud.* iv. 8 : 2, 3. From Josephus and 2 Kings 2 : 19-22 we infer that the ancient city stood near Elisha's fountain, supposed to be the one now named Ain-es-Sultan, the plain around which is now strewn with ancient ruins and rubbish. Nearly two miles south of this fountain, and near the place where the road from Jerusalem enters the plain, and on the banks of Wady Kelt, stood the modern city, which Herod the Great adorned with splendid palaces and buildings. Ancient ruins now mark its site. It lies on the direct route from Perea to Jerusalem. Jericho was second in importance only to Jerusalem of the cities of Israel, and was the residence of a chief publican, Zaccheus (Luke 19 : 1), on account of the balsam trade. Dr. Robinson found only a single palm tree remaining of the city of the palms, and even that is said now to be gone. Nearly the whole plain is now waste and desolate, though the soil is good. Ribah, a poor miserable Arab village of about two hundred inhabitants, now stands on the plain, and is about a mile and a half nearer the Jordan than either the ancient or later Jericho.

**Went down.** Literally, *Was going down*. Jericho is nearly four thousand feet lower than Jerusalem. **Fell among thieves, robbers.** "We passed out at St. Stephen's gate, wound our way down into the narrow vale of Jehoshaphat, over the south point of Olivet, by the miserable remains of the city of Mary, Martha, and Lazarus, and then prepared to descend, for you remember that we must go 'down to Jericho.' And sure enough, *down, down* we did go, over slippery rocks, for more than a mile, when the path became less precipitous. Still, the road follows the dry channels of a brook for several miles farther, as if descending into the very bowels of the earth. How admirably calculated for robbers! After leaving the brook, which turns aside too far to the south, we ascended and descended

his raiment, and wounded *him*, and departed, leaving  
 31 *him* half dead. And by chance there came down a  
 certain priest that way: and when he saw him, °he  
 32 passed by on the other side. And likewise a Levite,  
 when he was at the place, came and looked *on him*,  
 33 and passed by on the other side. But a certain °Sa-

• Job 6. 14; Ps. 33  
 11; Pro. 21. 13.  
 24. 11, 12; Jam.  
 2. 13-16; 1 John  
 3. 17, 18.  
 P ch. 17. 16; Pro. 25.  
 21, 22; Mt. 5. 43-  
 45; John 4. 9,  
 10; 1 Thes. 5. 15.

naked hills for several miles, the prospect gradually becoming more and more gloomy. Not a house nor even a tree is to be seen; and the only remains are those of a large khan, *said* to have been the inn to which the good Samaritan brought the wounded Jew. Not far from here, in a narrow defile, an English traveller was attacked, shot, and robbed in 1820. As you approach the plain the mountains wear a more doleful appearance, the ravines become more frightful, and the narrow passages less and less passable."—DR. THOMSON, *Land and Book*, vol. ii., p. 440.

"The road from Jerusalem to Jericho leads from St. Stephen's gate . . . over the south-western shoulder of Olivet, near the village of Bethany, through the wilderness of Judea, and descending the mountain of Quarantania terminates on the great plain of the Jordan. . . . For twenty centuries this region has borne a thievish character, and in the lapse of time has not changed its reputation. As in the days of our Lord, it is still infested with robbers, who, from their undiscovered dens or from behind some craggy bluff or beetling cliff, level their long gun at the unwary traveller."—DR. J. P. NEWMAN, *Dan to Beershebz*, pp. 177, 179.

**Stripped him of his raiment**, implying that he was despoiled of everything he had. **And wounded him**, by *inflicting blows* upon him. He may have acted in self-defence or have tried to escape. Besides blows at first to keep him from giving alarm, and to make him sensible that he was completely in their power, they wantonly and cruelly beat him, **leaving him half dead**, or they left him, *as he was, half dead*. The expressive and popular phrase *half dead* describes his critical and dangerous state; he appeared almost in a dying condition.

31. **By chance**, *by coincidence*. It seemed accidental, yet there are no accidents in God's arrangements. **There**

**came down**, etc. In more exact accordance with the original, *a certain priest was going down*, etc., without any special haste. See on ch. 1:5. Jericho was a city of the priests, where twelve thousand resided. As they served at Jerusalem, it would be no uncommon thing for a priest to be travelling that road, even though they more commonly took the longer route by Bethlehem. **And when he saw him, and seeing him**. This led him to the evasive and inhuman act that follows. **Passed by on the other side**. He did not even pause to look at the poor sufferer, but as soon as he saw him took the opposite side of the way in order to shun this object of charity. And this conduct appears specially offensive if we suppose the priest returning from official duty at Jerusalem. His cold-hearted selfishness appears, whether we suppose his act prompted by the dangers of the road, by the fear of being troubled, or by the possible expense.

32. **A Levite**. He belonged to a class, the descendants of Gershon, Kohath, and Merari, the sons of Levi, who assisted the priests in sacrifices and other services and guarded the temple, Num. 3:17; 8:5-22. **When he was at the place, arriving at the place**. He also very probably was returning to Jericho from the temple service at Jerusalem. **Came and looked**, drew near and just seeing the miserable object and getting an idea of the critical condition of the poor wounded sufferer. **He passed by on the other side**. He immediately crossed the road, passing on without doing anything to relieve the man. The priest had showed great and even selfish indifference, but the Levite a cool and calculating selfishness. Both acted in a manner unbecoming humanity and utterly unworthy of their sacred professions and office. Their conduct was a striking violation of the law, Ex. 23:4, 5; Deut. 22:1-4; Isa. 58:7; Mal. 2:6, 7.

maritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and  
 34 when he saw him, he had compassion *on him*, and  
 went to *him*, and bound up his wounds, pouring in  
 oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and  
 35 brought him to an inn, and took care of him. And  
 on the morrow when he departed, he took out two  
 pence, and gave *them* to the host, and said unto him, ¶ See Mt. 20. 2.  
 Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spend-

33. The priest and Levite, whom the lawyer would most certainly call neighbors, being fellow-Jews, having shown by their acts that they had not the spirit of a neighbor, Jesus now introduces a **certain Samaritan**, one whom a Jew would not regard as his neighbor, and with whom he would not associate, on whom he would have looked with a shudder, and in whose very shadow he would have seen pollution. See on ch. 9:52. **As he journeyed, was journeying.** He was on a journey, far from home, and could comparatively ill afford the loss of time and the expense. Yet when he came where the wounded man was, seeing him, **he had compassion on him.** What a contrast to the priest and Levite, who were nearing their home or their journey's end at Jericho, and had abundant time and facilities for such an act of mercy! He, too, as well as they, could plead the dangers of the way, but his pity and benevolence overcame every barrier. "Mark the beautiful climax! First the compassionate heart; then the helping hand; next the ready foot; finally the true-hearted charge."—DR. VAN OOSTERZEE.

34. **And went to him, and going to him.** The emphasis is on the words that follow, **bound up his wounds**, by applying bandages to hold the lacerated flesh in its place. As the man had been robbed of his raiment, the Samaritan probably made bandages from his own garments. **Pouring in, or on, oil and wine.** These were used for medicinal purposes in the East, Isa. 1:6. They were very commonly carried by travellers, Gen. 28:18; Josh. 9:13. The wine may have been used for bathing and cleansing the wounds, and the olive oil for allaying the pain and for its healing virtue. It was also usual for the Jews to mingle oil and wine together for healing of wounds. Set

**him on his own beast**, the Samaritan's, probably an ass. Thus he sacrifices his own comfort and walks in order to save the man. The original would seem to imply that it was with labor that he set him on his beast. With difficulty also he may have held him in his place while **he brought him**, over rough and steep declivities, **to an inn.** The word here translated *inn* means a *place where all are received*, and is only found here in the New Testament. "This is the only place where an *inn*, as we understand the word—a *house for the reception of travellers, kept by a host*, as distinguished from an empty caravanserai—is mentioned. The rabbinical writings frequently speak of such, but under a name adopted from this word."—ALFORD. See on ch. 2:7. The host or innkeeper supplied such few provisions as might be necessary and attended to the wants of travellers left to his charge, ver. 35.

The Samaritan was not content with merely taking him to the inn, thus seeing that he was in a place of safety, but he **took care of him** during the remainder of the day and the night, attending to his wants, nursing him, and thus denying himself of needed rest and sleep.

35. The climax of his benevolence. **On the morrow**, after the occurrence just related. **When he departed**; these words are implied, but not in the best text. The Samaritan showed a delicate regard for the feelings of the wounded man by not doing this act of generosity in his presence. **He took out**, from his girdle, the fold of which served as a pocket to carry money. The verb implies quick action, and may here suggest the cheerfulness with which the deed was done. **Two pence, two denaries**, Roman silver coins worth about fifteen cents apiece. The amount given was fully equal to **two days' wages**. This

est more, when I come again, I will repay thee.  
 36 Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neigh-  
 37 bor unto him that fell among the thieves? And he  
 said, He that showed mercy on him. Then said Jesus  
 unto him, **Go and do thou likewise.**

<sup>1</sup>ch. 6. 32-36; see  
 Mt. 5. 44; John  
 13. 15.

money was not for his own expenses, which he had doubtless paid, but for the future wants of the wounded man. **Host**, the innkeeper. **Take care of him**, attend to his wants and give him all needful care. The same verb is used as in the preceding verse. **Spendest more**, than the two denaries. **I** is emphatic. *I upon my return will repay thee.* He has been robbed and has nothing, but I will pay thee all expenses incurred during his recovery. We may suppose that he was travelling toward Jericho, and that he would **come again** on his way back to Samaria.

"When the greedy avarice of innkeepers, especially in ancient times and in Oriental countries, is considered, the promise to pay all the expenses incurred by the man until his recovery displays, as hardly any other circumstance could do, the benevolence of this Samaritan."—DR. J. J. OWEN. "He was moved with pity as to the past, help for the present, and considerate care for the future."—DR. STIER. "From this narrative has been derived the tenet and name of supererogation—that here the Samaritan did more than his duty. The phrase, 'What thou shalt expend more,' is rendered in the Latin *supererogaveris*, and this voluntary extra bounty obtained this name of supererogation. But no man can ever do more than his duty in the sight of God. 'When we have done all, we are unprofitable servants. We have done that which was our duty to do.'"—M. W. JACOBUS.

36. Having graphically related the parable, Jesus asks, **Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbor to him, etc.?** Notice that the lawyer had asked, *Who is my neighbor*, whom I am to love as myself? Jesus gives three characters, and asks, Which of these showed by his acts that he was indeed a neighbor? But one answer could be given. Jesus thus taught the lawyer, and in such a manner that he could not escape the conclusion, that neighborhood was not confined

to those of one's country, but that it extended to the whole race. He is compelled to admit that the Samaritan was neighbor to the Jew, and hence the Jew was to the Samaritan. **Thieves, robbers**, as in ver. 30.

37. **He that showed mercy on him.** While the lawyer admits the fact, he cannot bring himself to say "the Samaritan."

Jesus now makes the practical application of the parable, **Go and do thou likewise.** Exercise love, kindness, and compassion toward all, whether Jews or Samaritans. Let the same law of love regulate your conduct toward all men, of whatever nation. How fitting this parable in Luke's Gospel, which was originally prepared for the race! It teaches that the law of love is to be exercised toward all, whether of one nation or another, whether friends or enemies.

The ancient interpreters, as well as many modern commentators, suppose that the design of this parable is to represent and teach the great act of mercy which Jesus came on earth to perform. Some have gone into most fanciful extremes. But not the first intimation of any such design is given either in the parable itself or in its connection. Jesus made the application of it himself in enforcing the great law of love toward our fellow-men.

Yet since Christ took our humanity and was thus a brother, the parable can be used to illustrate his love and mercy toward the race. And here is the mistake into which so many have fallen. They have failed to distinguish and keep separate what the parable properly teaches and what it may illustrate in Christ and the history of the world. Without violence to truth, it may illustrate: (1) The race of man in fallen condition, despoiled and ready to perish eternally, through him who is a murderer from the beginning, John 8 : 44. (2) The inefficacy of all human rites to heal and clothe us, or the indifference of formal religion to regard to

*Jesus at the house of Martha and Mary.*

38 Now it came to pass, as they went, that he entered  
 into a certain village: and a certain woman named  
 39 <sup>a</sup>Martha received him into her house. And she had <sup>b</sup>John 11. 1; 12. 2  
 3.

our spiritual necessities. (3) Jesus in our humanity, coming to our rescue, and granting us all needed grace. But even here we must beware how we press the analogy too far.

Some refer to the fact that a short time previous to this the Jews had angrily said to Jesus, "Say we not well, that thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil?" John 8 : 48. If the passage is at all suggestive in this connection, it seems only to be that the parable can by accommodation be used to illustrate the different modes of treatment which a conscious sinner received from the religious leaders of the Jews and from Jesus. While priests and Levites neglected, with cold indifference, poor sin-stricken souls, Jesus was laboring among publicans and sinners, seeking to save the lost. But while many harmless illustrations can thus be drawn from the passage, yet to suppose that the parable was designed to teach these implies a principle of interpretation which would be exceedingly dangerous if applied universally to Scripture.

38-42. JESUS AT THE HOUSE OF MARY AND MARTHA. This was at Bethany, and probably soon after the seventy had returned from their mission, about the middle of November, A. D. 29.

38. **Now it came to pass.** The note of time is indefinite. There is nothing in the language to indicate whether the incident here related took place immediately after the parable of the good Samaritan, or whether some little time intervened. **As they went, as they were going,** journeying. As Jesus and the twelve were proceeding on their excursions whither the seventy had already gone. The seventy, having performed their mission, return from the scene, and we hear no more of them. Jesus now is prosecuting his work, attended, as we would naturally expect, by the twelve, or a portion of them.

**He entered.** *He* in the original is emphatic. He may have entered the village alone, while his disciples were

performing duties allotted them. But, whether attended or unattended, it is *his* visit which is at once brought prominently to view. **A certain village.** "Bethany was the town of Mary and her sister Martha," John 11 : 1; Matt. 21 : 17. The characters of the two sisters as here presented agree with those described in John. That Lazarus is not named may be explained by the fact that Luke had no occasion to mention him, his design being merely to present these two sisters with their different traits and their relations to Jesus. It is strange, therefore, that some have thought them not to have been the sisters of Lazarus, and others, while admitting it, have thought they had a residence in Galilee. It is sometimes easy to make a difficulty where no difficulty exists. The most natural and obvious conclusion is that this village was Bethany, which was situated less than two miles from Jerusalem, on the eastern slope of the Mount of Olives.

**A certain woman named Martha.** Martha is generally known as sister of Mary and Lazarus. She here first appears in history, and this seems to have been the first visit of the Saviour at her house. The next account of her is at the death and raising of Lazarus, John 11 : 1 ff. She last appears at the supper and anointing at Bethany, and again as "serving," John 12 : 2. "The old character shows itself still, but it has been freed from evil. She is no longer cumbered, no longer impatient. Activity has been calmed by trust. When other voices are raised against her sister's overflowing love, hers is not heard among them."—DR. WILLIAM SMITH'S *Dictionary, Amer. Ed.* It has been conjectured that she was the wife of "Simon the leper," at whose house, according to Matthew (26 : 6) and Mark (14 : 3), the supper and anointing occurred. Simon may have been her husband or her father. There is nothing in the word *women* here used to decide whether she had a husband or not. She was very probably the older sister, as she was the head and manager

a sister called Mary, 'which also 'sat at Jesus' feet,  
 40 and heard his word. But Martha was 'cumbered  
 about much serving, and came to him, and said, Lord,  
 dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve  
 41 alone? Bid her therefore that she help me. And

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. 7. 32, etc.  
<sup>2</sup> ch. 8. 35; Deu. 33  
 3; Ac. 22. 3.  
<sup>3</sup> ch. 12. 29; John  
 6. 27.

of the household, and she received, welcomed to hospitality, Jesus into her house. It seems a natural inference that this was the first visit of Jesus to the family. Some suppose that Martha possessed the house in right of her husband. The family seems to have been of some prominence, as many Jews came from Jerusalem to comfort them after the death of Lazarus, John 11 : 19.

39. She had a sister, probably her only sister. Mary, the sister of Lazarus, like her sister Martha, appears only three times in gospel history—here, where she sat listening eagerly for every word from the divine Teacher; at the mourning and the raising of her brother (John 11), where she exhibited the same deep and quiet devotion and piety, and the same strong faith; and at the supper at Bethany, where in the anointing of her Lord she showed a deeper insight into the nature of his sacrificial work than did the other disciples (John 12 : 7), and which was to make her name memorable throughout the whole world, Matt. 26 : 13. The traditions concerning the after-history of Martha and Mary are entirely undeserving of credit.

Which, who, also, as well as his disciples, sat at Jesus' feet, or (probably correct text) at the Lord's feet, as a learner. Pupils were accustomed to sit at the feet of their teachers. Thus Paul sat and learned at the feet of Gamaliel, Acts 22 : 3. The expression need not be pressed farther than that Mary sat near in a loving and teachable spirit for the purpose of hearing his word, his discourse on things pertaining to his kingdom. She is described as sitting in John 11 : 20, in contrast to the active Martha. In Mary we see a quiet, childlike, and contemplative spirit, eagerly seeking after and drinking in the truth. The good Samaritan presents us an example of active love; Mary, of devoted and receptive love.

40. In contrast to Mary at her Master's feet is Martha bustling amid anx-

ious cares and overburdened with much labor. Was cumbered, perplexed, over-occupied. About much serving, with her domestic duties in preparing for the table and the entire entertainment. She gave herself up wholly to this work, was all-absorbed and overwhelmed with it, even to sacrificing the privilege of listening to the heavenly instruction of Jesus. Here was her mistake. It was her duty to provide suitably for the Saviour's bodily wants, but it should not have been the sole absorbing subject of her thoughts, nor should it have led her to treat his instructions as of secondary importance.

And came to him. Came with some haste to Jesus into the room where he was sitting, for so the original would seem to imply. Lord. She addresses him with reverence; for her hurried and anxious cares resulted from her high conceptions of the dignity of her guest. Yet with this feeling of reverence she mingles a spirit of impatience bordering upon rudeness. Dost thou not care, is it no concern to thee? The question was the outburst of over-anxious feelings to provide a worthy entertainment for Jesus, and implies that it surely was and should be a care to him. It was something like the complaining prayer of the disciples who came and awoke him in the storm, saying, "Teacher, carest thou not that we perish?" Mark 4 : 38. She went with her care to Jesus, which was right, but she showed a murmuring, fretful disposition, and her impetuous words bordered almost upon censure. Hath left me to serve alone. Implying that Mary had been aiding her either before or a little after the coming of Jesus. It seems that Mary felt that the spiritual truth he uttered was the all-important thing, and she probably rightly conceived that he cared rather to impart this than to receive a splendid entertainment, and that, having assisted Martha as far as she thought necessary, she had repaired to the room where he was teaching and sat as a learner by the

Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, <sup>w</sup> ch. 8. 14; Phil. 4  
<sup>v</sup> thou art careful and troubled about <sup>x</sup> many things: <sup>6.</sup> Mt. 6. 25-34.  
 42 but <sup>y</sup> one thing is needful; and Mary hath <sup>z</sup> chosen <sup>7</sup> Ps. 27. 4; John  
 17. 3; 1 John 5. 11, 12. <sup>a</sup> Deu. 30. 19.

disciples. She could have entered into the meaning of Jesus' words on another occasion, "I have food to eat that ye know not of," "My food is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work," John 4 : 32, 34.

**Bid her.** Martha feels that her words at this time would not be properly heeded by her deeply-interested sister. She would have Jesus on her side. His word would have all the authority of law to Mary, who would also be happy to do anything that he should bid her. **Therefore.** Since she has left me alone, and there is much to be done, and thou must have some care about this matter. **That she help me, that she give me a helping hand.**

41. **Martha, Martha.** An impressive and emphatic repetition, calling her attention to the important truth he was about to utter. The tender and solemn repeating of her name would not only arrest her attention, but tend to calm her mind and prepare her to receive his gentle reproof. **Thou art careful,** distracted with cares and anxieties. The verb refers to her inner anxieties. **Troubled, disturbed,** with special reference to the outward bustle and confusion. **About many things,** the manifold cares in providing for his entertainment. The reproof has reference not so much to the entertaining him as to her state of mind; not to the mere providing for the company, but to her needless solicitude and restless agitation of spirit, which could well have been spared on that occasion. "Thou art solicitous and disquieted (as the waters when agitated by the violent storms) about a variety of interests comparatively unworthy of regard. Christ condemns not her hospitality, but her solicitude and superfluity, her distraction and perplexity."—DR. A. NEVIN.

42. **But one thing is needful,** or necessary, or of one thing there is need, a necessity, in contrast to the many things of the preceding verse. Some have strangely supposed that the contrast here was between many dishes and

one dish. But this is not only a low view, but also fails to harmonize with "the good part" which immediately follows. The contrast is not only in regard to number, but also in regard to kind. Martha was absorbed with the physical and earthly, Jesus points to the spiritual and heavenly. The remark of Dr. Oosterzee is worthy of notice: "The explanations of this expression would have been far less divergent if the distinct inquiry had been proposed, Needful for what? The answer can, according to the connection, only be this: 'To receive the Lord aright;' for this was, after all, the main thing in Martha's feelings, and even Mary also, little occupied as she appeared, must have been anything but indifferent." While this is true as far as it goes, we must not stop here, for Mary was intent on receiving not only Jesus aright, but also the truth he uttered. *The one thing needful* implies a proper state of heart for receiving the Saviour, and also the receiving of him and his truth.

"It is one of the peculiarities of our Saviour's discourses that they often in a few words say all that is necessary to bring everlasting truth, in some special view of it, home to all times and circumstances. Standing at the very heart and centre of the spiritual world, he without violence entwined the minutest and least important circumstances of the present with the loftiest eternal realities. In the efforts of the two sisters the Lord brings the nothingness of all love and care for the creature into close comparison with care for what is everlasting. The one thing must be so laid hold of by the soul that no striving at anything else may similarly rouse it; and having begun with one thing, it will be able to deal not merely with many things, but with all things else, in such a way . . . that it shall itself bear sway and bring every act into harmony with the highest end of life. This pure and holy effort after the one and the eternal portion had Mary chosen."—OLSHAUSEN.

It may also be added that it is not by

that good part \* which shall not be taken away from her.

\* Ps. 73. 24-26; John 4. 14; 10. 27, 28; Phil. 1. 6; 1 Pet. 1. 4, 5.

one thing, but by many, that persons are distracted. With proper attention to the *one thing needful*, Martha as well as Mary could have done well in attending to her household duties. **Mary hath chosen**, referring to her voluntary choice. **That good part, the good part or portion**, with special reference to that part in Christ's kingdom which to the individual soul can pre-eminently be styled *good*. This was the one thing needful. It was by faith in Jesus that Mary was receiving into her soul the blessings of eternal life, of which she could never be deprived, John 6 : 53, 54; 17 : 2, 3. Commentators have not failed to see in the word *part* that which is *portioned out* or *assigned* by the sovereign grace of God. God's sovereignty and man's free agency are brought into mutual harmony.

**Which shall not be taken away from her.** The crowning excellence of this good part to Mary individually, and to all who have it. Heathen authors have been quoted in this connection Thus, Hierocles says, "It is not in the power of any man to deprive us of a virtuous habit." And Cicero says, "If a happy life can be lost, it cannot be happy," and again, "While all other things are uncertain, fading, and movable, virtue alone is fixed with very deep roots, so that she can never by any violence be overthrown or removed from her place." This is especially true of religion and eternal life, Ps. 73 : 25, 26; John 16 : 22; 1 Cor. 3 : 22; 1 Pet. 1 : 4; John 10 : 28, 29.

It is not necessarily implied in this narrative that Martha had not chosen the good part, and therefore was destitute of true religion. The welcome she now gave to Jesus and her desire to honor him indicate that she had some true conception of his character and love for him, and that in her general conduct she was not neglecting the one thing needful. Her mistake seems to have been in regard to the true way of honoring Christ, in placing external above spiritual service. Her views, however, appear to have been carnal, like those of many of the disciples; and this incident probably led her into

a deeper experience. But whether we regard her now as possessed of true religion, or as a mistaken seeker after the true righteousness, we know that not long after this she gave marked evidence of vital piety, John 11 : 21-27.

"There is here none of that exaltation of the contemplative over the active life which Roman Catholic writers have seen in this passage, and on which they are so fond of dwelling. Either may be necessary, both must be combined. Paul, as has well been said, in his most fervent activity, had yet the contemplative and inward calm of Mary; and John, with the most rapt spirit of contemplation, could yet practice the activity of Martha. Jesus did not mean to reprobate any amount of work undertaken in his service, but only the spirit of fret and fuss, the want of all repose and calm, the ostentation of superfluous hospitality, in doing it; and still more that tendency to reprobate and interfere with others which is so seen in Christians who are as anxious as Martha, but have none of Mary's holy trustfulness and perfect calm."—DR. FARRAR, *Life of Christ*, vol. ii., p. 143.

#### REMARKS.

1. Reformers in different ages have come in pairs, ver. 1—Moses and Aaron, Ex. 4 : 29; Caleb and Joshua, Num. 14 : 6, 30; Elijah and Elisha, 1 Kings 19 : 16, 21.

2. An increase of ministers and earnest laborers in the great harvest-field must be sought by earnest prayer. We may expect that they will be sent forth in proportion to our faith and prayers, ver. 2; Matt. 9 : 37, 38.

3. Christians, and especially ministers and teachers, should be lamblike in their dispositions, inoffensive in their deportment, and confiding at all times in the supreme Shepherd, ver. 3; Matt. 10 : 16; 1 Pet. 2 : 25; 5 : 4.

4. We should do our work for Christ with earnestness and despatch, ver. 4; 1 Sam. 21 : 8; Acts 12 : 7; 22 : 18, 21.

5. The gospel is a proclamation of

peace through the blood of Jesus, ver. 5; Rom. 5 : 1; 10 : 15; 14 : 17; 1 Cor. 7 : 15; Eph. 2 : 14, 15, 17.

6. The peace which the gospel professes, like the dove from the ark, finds a resting-place or returns, ver. 6; ch. 19 : 9; Ps. 35 : 13; Isa. 55 : 11.

7. Ministers should go forth to their work in humble dependence on God for a supply of their temporal wants, ver. 7; 1 Cor. 9 : 8-11; 3 John 7.

8. It is the duty of Christians to make a practical acknowledgment of the truth that the laborer is worthy of his hire by giving ministers a liberal support, vers. 7, 8; 1 Cor. 9 : 13, 14; 2 Cor. 11 : 7, 8; 3 John 8.

9. They must also bring the gospel into the family, to children and domestics as well as parents—to all, indeed, that are able to understand its claims. The piety of parents, however, does not include that of their children, nor their right to baptism, the Lord's Supper, and church membership, ver. 13; ch. 3 : 7-10; Prov. 9 : 12; Ezek. 18 : 20.

10. They who do not receive the ministers of the gospel as Christ's ministers, withholding from them the welcome of their hearts and the support that is their due, and especially those who reject their message, are guilty of greater sin, and exposed to a more fearful punishment, than are the inhabitants of Sodom, vers. 14, 15; also ver. 10, 40.

11. Though the kingdom of God may come nigh to us, yet we may be far from it, and the separation may be eternal, ver. 11; Matt. 7 : 21-23.

12. A day of judgment and future punishment are plainly taught in our Saviour's woes against the cities of Galilee, vers. 12-15.

13. There will be degrees of punishment in the future world according to the light and privileges enjoyed and the unbelief and ingratitude manifested in this life, vers. 13-15; ch. 12 : 47, 48; Matt. 5 : 21, 22; Rom. 2 : 12.

14. Even while the sinner is living, the woe that seals his everlasting doom may be pronounced upon him, vers. 13, 15; 2 Pet. 2 : 6, 12-17.

15. Nations receive their punishment in this world; individuals in the next, vers. 13-15.

16. Christians are Christ's representatives. Especially are his ministers, ver. 16; Matt. 25 : 40; 2 Cor. 5 : 20.

17. The success of the gospel in overcoming the powers of darkness is an occasion of true rejoicing, yet to us personally there is a higher joy, vers. 17-19; Ps. 4 : 6, 7; 1 Thess. 2 : 19, 20.

18. Satan is already defeated; his cause has received its death-blow, vers. 18, 19; Ps. 68 : 18; Eph. 4 : 8; Rom. 16 : 20.

19. It is the privilege of Christians to have the assurance that their "names are written in heaven," and to rejoice in the glorious fact, ver. 20; Phil. 4 : 3, 4; 2 Tim. 1 : 12; 4 : 8.

20. Christ's joy on earth over the conversion of souls was a foretaste of that joy he now has in the triumphs of his kingdom in the hearts of men, ver. 21; Heb. 12 : 2.

21. Only the humble, teachable, and childlike are fitted for the reception of the gospel, ver. 21; 1 Cor. 1 : 27, 28; 1 Tim. 6 : 20; Isa. 28 : 9.

22. God has the best and wisest reasons for all his dealings with men, ver. 21; Rom. 9 : 14, 19, 20; 11 : 22, 33, 34.

23. Correct views of God's character can only be learned from Christ. There is no true religion apart from him, ver. 22; John 14 : 6.

24. Let us realize the glorious privileges which we enjoy and thankfully improve them, vers. 23, 24; Ps. 89 : 15; 1 Pet. 1 : 10-13.

25. No question is more important than that of the lawyer, yet how differently asked! ver. 25; ch. 18 : 18; Acts 16 : 30.

26. He readeth the law aright who is led to the discovery that by the deeds of the law he cannot be justified, and that the only way of salvation is through faith in Christ, who is "the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth," ver. 26; Gal. 3 : 21-24.

27. Supreme love to God is in harmony with true self-love and true brotherly affection, and these should regulate all acts, words, and opinions, ver. 27; Rom. 13 : 10; 1 John 4 : 7.

28. The law was intended for life, but sin has made it result in death. It promises life to the holy, but pronounces death upon the sinner, ver. 28; Rom. 7 : 10; 10 : 5; Gal. 3 : 12.

29. The law is unable to give life to the sinner, but prepares the way for the gospel, which points to eternal life

*Jesus teaches the disciples to pray.*

## XI. AND it came to pass, that, as he was praying in a

through faith in Christ, ver. 28; Gal. 3 : 21-24.

30. Learn the folly of attempting to justify ourselves on the ground of our benevolence, ver. 29; Rom. 3 : 20.

31. Neither a theoretical knowledge of religion nor engagement in holy occupations will open the eyes and hearts of the self-righteous, vers. 30-32.

32. We are to do good to all men as we have opportunity, vers. 33-37; Gal. 6 : 10.

33. We must distinguish between general love to our neighbor and Christian love to *brethren*, John 13 : 34; 1 John 3 : 16. The love of Christ is the standard of the latter; love of one's self is the standard of the former, vers. 33-37.

34. The love which the law requires is founded on the relation of men to men and their common relation to God, vers. 33-37.

35. "Love has no limit but its inability to go farther. Love forgets all antipathies at the sight of another's woe," vers. 33-37.

36. If we would exercise true love to our neighbor, we must begin with true love to God, vers. 27, 37.

37. Let us look to Christ and seek his grace, so that love to God and man may become the ruling principle of our lives, ver. 37; John 4 : 7-10.

38. Christ not only exemplified, but far surpassed, the benevolence of the true Samaritan, vers. 33-37; Rom. 5 : 6-8.

39. The highest position and the greatest privilege which we can have on earth is to sit at the feet of Jesus. It is not enough to welcome Jesus to our houses; we must welcome him to our hearts, vers. 38, 39.

40. We must beware lest we become so absorbed in domestic and worldly affairs as to forget our higher and spiritual interests, vers. 40, 41; Rom. 12 : 11; Matt. 5 : 31-34; John 6 : 27.

41. We should tell Jesus all our cares and sorrows—not impatiently or dictatorially, but humbly and inquiringly, ver. 40.

42. There are dangers both in a life of outward activity and in one of inward contemplation. We must take

the temperament of individuals into account in judging of their religious characters, vers. 40, 41.

43. How great the folly of neglecting the one thing needful! ver. 42. "The 'many things' belonging to the outward service of God may sometimes so absorb the thoughts and distract the feelings of even loving and faithful Christians as to interfere with that teachable and devout spirituality which is 'the one thing needful' to all acceptable and profitable service."

44. The true Christian's possession shall never be taken from him. Let it be our highest aim, ver. 42; Rom. 8 : 35-39; 1 John 2 : 17; 2 Pet. 3 : 11, 13; Rev. 21 : 4, 23-27.

45. There are times when it is proper to neglect all other things and devote our whole attention to the one thing needful, vers. 40-42; Matt. 6 : 33.

## CHAPTER XI.

This chapter opens with our Lord at prayer, and his instructions to his disciples, in which he gives a model of prayer, teaches importunity therein, and urges motives for it, vers. 1-13. Having cast out a demon, some accuse him of being in league with Satan and others demand a sign, 14-16. The former he refutes (17-28), the latter he refers to the sign of the prophet Jonah; he teaches the high privileges and great guilt of that generation, and admonishes them in regard to the light that is in them, 29-36. After this Jesus dines with a Pharisee, when he utters further woes upon Pharisees and lawyers (37-52), and they seek to draw from him words which may form a ground of accusation, 53, 54.

1-13. JESUS TEACHES HIS DISCIPLES HOW TO PRAY, AND ENCOURAGES THEM THERETO. PARABLE OF THE FRIEND AT MIDNIGHT. Compare Matt. 6 : 9-13; 7 : 7-11, where it appears that Jesus uttered some of these truths on a previous occasion.

1. As he was praying in a certain place. Luke frequently takes notice of our Lord at prayer, ch. 9 : 18.

certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples.

<sup>b</sup> Ps. 103. 13; Is. 64  
8; Mt. 6. 9-13  
John 20. 17; Gal.  
4. 6.

2 And he said unto them, When ye pray, say, <sup>b</sup> Our

Where, we are not told. As the preceding account took us to Bethany, it is possible that this was in its neighborhood, possibly on the Mount of Olives. **When he ceased.** It was not while he prayed, but afterward, that one of the disciples made the request. There seems to have been something about the manner and the matter of his prayer which deeply impressed those that heard. There was a solemn stillness; the disciples felt that, in comparison, their supplications could hardly be called prayer. In deep reverence, **one**, as spokesman for the rest, breaks the silence. Who this *one* was is left unknown, whether an apostle, one of the seventy, or one of his other faithful disciples. Jesus appears to have been in a retired place, and the disciple was one of those with him, and hence admitted into near relations to him. Whether he was a recent convert, or had heard the sermon on the mount without properly understanding it and applying it, can only be conjectured. It, however, seems more likely that he was one of those Judean disciples who had not attended our Lord's ministry in Galilee, and hence had not heard that sermon. **Teach us**, showing that he asked for others as well as himself. He does not ask for any prescribed form of prayer, but for particular instruction in regard to the very exercise **to pray**.

**As John taught.** He may have been one of John's disciples. This is the only allusion made to John's teaching his disciples to pray. From ch. 5: 33 we learn that the disciples of John were accustomed to fast often and make prayers. It is very probable that John prescribed prayers of confession, petition, and thanksgiving for various occasions. Doubtless the prayer which Jesus gave stood in marked contrast for its simplicity and comprehensiveness. Jewish teachers also gave their disciples various forms of prayer. And Tertullian says that John brought in a new order and method of prayer and gave his disciples some instructions and directions much better than the Jews had.

2. *The Lord's prayer* here given is briefer than that in Matthew (6: 9-13), and this is what we would naturally expect. We should look for the first and original form to be the fuller and the repetition briefer. Both fit admirably in their places. There is no necessity nor any good reason for supposing that the sermon on the mount is a collection of sayings spoken on different occasions, and that thus the Lord's prayer found its place in it. Our Lord, like all great teachers, found it necessary to repeat his instruction. The changing multitudes, different places and audiences, new disciples, and the slowness of his disciples to understand spiritual truth rendered this necessary.

**When ye pray, say.** This is more definite, yet with the same general meaning as the direction in Matthew: "After this manner, therefore, pray ye." That our Lord did not give this as a form of prayer to be strictly and of necessity used by his followers appears, 1st, He nowhere intimates any such purpose; 2d, This form in Luke is equally authoritative with that in Matthew, yet it has important variations and omissions, showing that it is not an unyielding mould, but rather a guide as to the manner and matter of our spontaneous petitions; 3d, We do not find an instance where Jesus used this prayer or any other as a form; 4th, John 16: 23, 24, is against the supposition; 5th, In none of the recorded prayers of the apostles do we find a single repetition of this prayer; 6th, We find no trace of its use among the primitive churches. Tholuck remarks, "It does not occur in the Acts nor in any writer before the third century."

There is no good ground for saying, with some, that our Lord took most of this prayer from Jewish forms. Doubtless it embodied petitions, in essence, of saints in previous ages, yet Jesus needed not to select from these, but could draw from the richness of himself, in whom were all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

Several passages in the Talmud have

Father ° which art in heaven, ° Hallowed be thy name. ° 2 Chr. 20 : 6; Is.  
 ° Thy kingdom come. ° Thy will be done, ° as in heav- 57. 15.  
 3 en, so in earth. Give us day by day our ° daily bread. ° Ex. 20. 7; Ps.  
 111. 9.

° Ps. 2. 6-8; Is. 2. 2-4; Rev. 11. 15. ° Mt. 7. 21, Ac. 21. 14; Eph. 6.  
 6; Heb. 13. 21. ° Ps. 103. 20, 21. ° Ex. 16. 16-30; Job 23. 12; Pro.  
 30. 8; 1 Tim. 6. 8.

led some to assert that Christ drew his teachings from it. But it was not written till long after the time of Christ, not being completed before the sixth century. If it is replied, however, that it previously existed in an oral form, it may be answered this is admitted, but how can it be shown that the Talmudists have not rather drawn from Christ?

There is a prayer in the Talmud that holds a place in Jewish worship similar to that held by the Lord's Prayer in the English liturgy. It is said to be as old as the captivity. It is highly prized, and its repetition is regarded as having great efficacy. While several expressions of the Lord's Prayer are found here, they are amid a superfluity of words, like little grains of gold in a heap of common earth. How unlike are the two in simplicity, compactness, and beauty! It is very ancient, no doubt, but it has been more or less changed, as is evident by comparing the prayer-books of different countries, and it is evident that it may have been derived from the prayer of Christ.

The Lord's Prayer as given by Luke consists of five petitions and may be divided into two classes, the first class relating to God, his name, his kingdom, the second to ourselves, our daily want and dependence on the divine bounty, our sins and need of pardon, our dangers and need of protection. The use of the plural teaches us to pray for others as well as for ourselves. It is a striking feature of this model prayer that it begins with God's glory and then passes to the wants and necessities of the suppliant himself. The latter should ever be subordinate to the former.

**Our Father.** *Our* should be omitted, according to the highest critical authorities. As Creator (Mal. 2 : 10; Isa. 64 : 8), as Preserver (Ps. 145 : 16), by adoption (Rom. 8 : 15; Eph. 1 : 5), he is the Father of the whole race (Acts 17 : 26), and especially of all his spiritual children, Isa. 63 : 16. This relation between God and his people,

though recognized in the Old Testament, is more fully revealed in the New, Rom. 8 : 17. Whoever truly utters this prayer acknowledges these great truths. **Who art in heaven.** These words should also be omitted, according to the oldest manuscripts. The *paternal* and *filial* relation is here presented. In Matthew we have the *fraternal* and the *celestial*. **Hallowed be thy name.** Sanctified, revered, held sacred, in the thoughts of our hearts (1 Pet. 3 : 15), by the words of our lips, and by the works of our hands; everywhere and by all, 1 Cor. 10 : 31. By name is meant not merely the appellation by which God is known, *Jehovah*, but also his *being*, which his name represents, as revealed in his word. Let thy whole being, thy revealed perfections, be held in holy reverence. Compare the same petition differently expressed by Jesus himself, "Father, glorify thy name," John 12 : 28.

Closely connected with the last petition is the one that follows. In the answer to it the name of God is hallowed. **Thy kingdom come.** The *reign* of God, the *administration* or *kingdom* of the Messiah. See ch. 4 : 43. This petition embraces the full accomplishment of the kingdom of God, which has its seat in the heart, and also all the events which are necessary to this glorious result. The kingdom of grace here and of glory hereafter, in all the successive steps till God shall be all in all, 1 Cor. 15 : 28. The meaning of this petition varies, therefore, according to the state and progress of Christ's kingdom.

**Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth.** This should also be omitted, according to the oldest manuscripts and the highest critical authorities. It would seem that this and the preceding interpolations were early added to Luke to make this prayer conform to that in Matthew.

2. **Day by day,** each day, every

4 And <sup>1</sup>forgive us our <sup>1</sup>sins; <sup>2</sup>for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us. And <sup>1</sup>lead us not into temptation; but <sup>m</sup>deliver us from evil.

<sup>1</sup>Mt. 18. 21, etc.;  
Ex. 34. 7.  
<sup>2</sup>ch. 7. 40-42; Mt.  
6. 12.

<sup>1</sup>Mt. 6. 14, 15. <sup>1</sup>ch. 22. 40, 46; 1 Cor. 10. 13; 2 Cor. 12. 7-9; Rev. 3. 10. <sup>m</sup>1 Chr. 4. 10; Ps. 121. 7; John 17. 15.

day. **Our daily bread.** The food, sustenance, required day by day. The word translated *daily* is a difficult word, as it is found nowhere in the entire Greek language except here and in the parallel passage, Matt. 6 : 11. The meaning is not materially different if we translate, with some, "Give us day by day our *needful* bread," that which is necessary to our existence. But the translations of some others, "Give us to-day the *bread of to-morrow*," or "our *future bread*," are founded on very doubtful philological grounds. The translation *daily* has the sanction of the earliest versions from the Greek. The Lord gave daily manna to the Israelites, Ex. 16 : 4, 21. Compare Agur's prayer, "Feed me with food convenient (sufficient) for me," Prov. 30 : 8, 9. *Bread* here refers primarily to nourishment for the body; yet as we are made up of body and soul, we should not restrict it to material food, but extend it also to the bread of eternal life (John 6 : 34), to heavenly and spiritual nourishment. Compare Dr. Conant's able note on *Matthew*, etc., p. 30.

3. **And forgive us our sins.** In Matthew sin is represented as a *debt*, and forgiveness as debts remitted. Here the word *sins*—voluntary departures from right, duty, and law—is somewhat stronger. Sin includes "transgressions of the law" and "unrighteousness." Compare 1 John 5 : 17, and Paul's use of the word, Rom. 7 : 8; 3 : 9. It is implied here that all are sinners, and that we need to pray daily for forgiveness. **For we also.** Emphatic, *for we ourselves*, sinners as we are. This is urged as a reason for divine forgiveness, not on the ground of merit, but as denoting a proper state to be forgiven. **Forgive every one that is indebted to us.** Here the idea of *debt* is introduced. For we ourselves forgive those who fail to meet their moral obligations to us. It is the duty of every one to love his neighbor as himself. In so far as he fails of this he is a debtor, a delinquent. Thus are

we taught to ask that God would bestow forgiveness upon us in like manner as we exercise the spirit of forgiveness toward others. If we are unforgiving, what is the petition but asking God to withhold forgiveness from us? but if we find a readiness within ourselves to forgive the faults and shortcomings of others, then may we feel the assurance that God for Christ's sake will also forgive us.

4. "As the prayer for daily bread raises us above care for *to-day*, and the prayer for forgiveness of sins is meant to quiet us concerning the past, so is the prayer against temptation a weapon for the uncertain future."—VAN OOSTERZEE. **Temptation** means originally *trial*, and is particularly applied to moral trial or to the test of a person's character or faith (1 Pet. 4 : 12), and in a stronger sense to the trial of one's virtue, a direct solicitation to sin, Luke 4 : 13; 1 Tim. 6 : 9. In the latter sense, God is said to tempt no man (James 1 : 13), yet he may be said to *do* that which he *permits* (compare 2 Sam. 24 : 1 and 1 Chron. 21 : 1); but in the former senses he does tempt or prove men, and especially his children, Gen. 22 : 1; Ex. 15 : 25; Deut. 13 : 3. *Temptation* here means those trials which may lead to the commission of sin; and hence the prayer, **Lead us not, or bring us not**, for this is the meaning of the word elsewhere in the New Testament, ch. 5 : 18, 19; Acts 17 : 20; 1 Tim. 6 : 7; Heb. 13 : 11. Permit not Satan (Job 1 : 12; 2 : 6) nor others to do it, but so arrange circumstances as not to involve us in such peril. But whatever the temptations God in his providence may permit to come upon us, he will give a way of escape, 1 Cor. 10 : 13. This prayer, like all others, is to be offered in submission to the will of God, Matt. 26 : 39.

**But deliver us from evil.** This should be omitted, according to the best critical authorities. The closing doxology is wanting here, and is also wanting in the best and oldest manuscripts of Matthew. This and the omissions

- 5 And he said unto them, Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight, and say  
 6 unto him, Friend, lend me three loaves; for a friend of mine in his journey is come to me, and I have  
 7 nothing to set before him? And he from within shall answer and say, Trouble me not: the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot  
 8 rise and give thee. I say unto you, <sup>a</sup> Though he will

<sup>a</sup> ch. 18. 1, etc.; Ge 32. 26; Mt. 15. 22-23.

and variations already noticed confirm the view taken, that this prayer is a guide rather than a rigid form of prayer.

5. Having given an example of prayer (ver. 1), and a brief but comprehensive model of prayer, Jesus enforces importunity by an illustration, commonly styled the parable of THE FRIEND AT MIDNIGHT.

Jesus draws this illustration from human experience in daily life. **At midnight.** A most inconvenient and unlikely time for obtaining help. In the summer travellers in the East often prefer the cool of the evening and of the night for journeying. Such a one has come; you have risen, opened your door, and received him to your hospitality. But your bread is exhausted, and you go to a neighbor and say, **Friend, lend me three loaves**, one for your guest, one for yourself, and one for hospitality, in order that he may have it should he be very hungry. Loaves were usually round cakes of different sizes and about one half an inch thick. It was common for Jews to borrow bread of one another, and certain rules were laid down for so doing. The people of the East generally prepare only food enough for the day, so that a person arriving at night would be likely to find the house without bread. In this case the man knew that his neighbor had bread in his house, and he preferred to borrow, rather than grind the grain and bake it.

6. A twofold reason is given. His visitor had come unexpectedly, and he had nothing to set before him. **For a friend of mine**, he pleads the duty of hospitality. Since we are neighbors and friends, my friends are in a sense thy friends. As a friend you should help me, in my present difficulty, to discharge the duty of hospitality. **In his journey.** More exactly, *from a journey*; to stop with me over night, or for a longer time.

7. Notice that the one of whom the favor is sought is styled, not *friend*, but simply, **he from within**, and that in his answer he omits the courteous appellation, *friend*, thus betraying selfishness and ill-humor. It is implied also that he did not come to the door to converse with his friend. **Trouble me not**, do not disturb me. He is short and sharp. **The door is now shut**, with the additional idea of being locked, barred, or fastened. Hence he would have the trouble of unbarring it, or removing the fastenings. **And my children are with me in bed.** Literally, *and the little children with me have gone to bed and are now there.* We need not suppose that the children were in the same bed with their father, though probably in the same room, the sleeping-chamber. It is not uncommon in the East for a whole family in humble life to sleep in the same room, each, it may be, having a bed or mattress upon the floor or the ground. **I cannot rise and give thee.** His *inability* arose from his reluctance and disinclination to rise, disturb his children, and open the door. He was unwilling to put himself to so much trouble.

The interrogation point should be at the end of this verse, rather than at the end of ver. 6. The question commences with ver. 5, "Which of you," etc. The interrogative form calls special attention to the case stated, and aroused thought in regard to the position in which they were placed. What will you now do? Will you give up your attempt, and let your visiting friend go unfed? No; you will still entreat. You know where bread can be found, and you will still make effort to discharge the sacred duty of hospitality.

8. Jesus waits not for an answer, and indeed he expects no answer. As if he had said, I know what you would do. You would be urgent and persevere in pressing your case in behalf of your

not rise and give him, because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him as many as he needeth. And I say unto you, <sup>o</sup> Ask, and it shall be given you; <sup>p</sup> seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For <sup>q</sup> every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.

<sup>o</sup> 1 Ki. 3. 5; Ps 145. 18, 19; Jer. 33. 3; Mt. 21. 22; John 4. 10.  
<sup>p</sup> Is. 55. 6; Heb 11. 6.  
<sup>q</sup> ch. 23. 42, 43; 2 Chr. 33. 1, 2, 19; Pro. 8. 17; Jer. 29. 12, 13; Lam. 3. 57.

friend. And in view of such a course of action, Jesus affirms strongly, **I say unto you, though, etc.** *Though he will not give him, having arisen, bringing prominently to view his reluctance to arise and disturb his family. Because he is his friend. A reason strongly put. The fact that he is his friend should have been sufficient; but though this fails, **his importunity** succeeds. The word translated *importunity* literally means *shamelessness*, and is used in both a good and a bad sense. It here includes that freedom from bashfulness, that assurance, and that urgency which would lead a modest man to press his case even after being refused. It is an *unweariedness*, an *importunity* that will not be repressed. **He will rise,** his reluctance will be overcome. **As many,** loaves. Not merely *three*, but as many as he may need. "Even so," it has been remarked, "when the heart which has been away on a journey suddenly at midnight—*i. e.*, the time of greatest darkness and distress—returns home to us—that is, comes to itself and feels hunger—and we have nothing wherewith to satisfy it, God requires of us bold, importunate faith."*

The force of this illustration or parable is evident both from what precedes and from what follows. If persevering entreaty overcomes a selfish man and obtains its request under most unfavorable circumstances, surely persevering and importunate prayer will prevail with God, who is infinitely righteous and good, who is ever willing to bestow his blessing, and to whom every time is alike propitious. There is a similarity between this parable and that of the unjust judge, ch. 18 : 1-8. But in this one asks for another; in that, for one's self. In this *unwillingness* is overcome; in that an *unjust* man is prevailed upon. That this is not, however, to be limited to *intercessory* prayer is evident from the general

application that follows. Moreover, we must not so misinterpret the parable as to suppose that God is ever unwilling to answer the prayers of those who truly come to him aright. Nor are we to draw from it a rule to guide us in our intercourse with our fellow-men. The parable is founded upon the familiar customs of Oriental society. Nor are we to suppose that each part of the parable teaches some spiritual truth—for example, that the guest is the heathen world; the host, the disciples of Jesus; the loaves, the Bread of Life, or the three choicest graces, faith, hope, and love. Jesus had a single object in view, as appears from the context. When we go farther than this, we are in danger of spiritual trifling. For further illustrations of importunate prayer, see Gen. 18 : 23-33; 32 : 26; Ex. 32 : 32; Mark 10 : 47, 48.

9. From the lifelike illustration just given, Jesus enforces prayer. That it is earnest, persevering prayer is implied from what precedes, and also from the threefold command, **Ask, seek, knock.** This threefold repetition presents prayer under different aspects, and forms a climax. To *ask* is making known our desires to God; to *seek* is earnestly to implore; and to *knock* is to persevere in our requests. These commands and promises must of course be restricted and explained by the conditions which are elsewhere put upon prayer. It should be made in the name of Christ (John 14 : 13, 14), in faith (Mark 11 : 24), and in accordance with the will of God, 1 John 5 : 14.

10. The truth of the preceding verse is here repeated in still stronger terms, not as a promise to be fulfilled in the future, but as a present reality. **Every one that asketh receiveth.** Mark the change from the future tense in the last verse to the present in this. Not only do they who ask receive in the future, but they actually receive it now. It is a fact in their present and constan<sup>t</sup>

11 \*If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish,  
 12 will he for a fish give him a serpent? or if he shall  
 13 ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? If ye then,  
 \*being evil, know how to give \*good gifts unto your  
 children; how much more shall *your* heavenly Father  
 give \*the Holy Spirit to them that ask him? \*Mt. 7. 9.  
 \*Ge. 8. 21; Job 15.  
 14-16; Ro. 3. 9,  
 10.  
 \*Ps. 84. 11; Hos.  
 14. 2.  
 \*Pro. 1. 23; Eze.  
 36. 27; John 4.  
 10.

experience. **Shall be opened.** The future is resumed, pointing to the certain answer of prayer, especially of persevering prayer. All who ask aright receive either what they ask or else something better in its place, 2 Cor. 12 : 7-9.

11. That prayer will be answered is evident not only from actual experience, but also from the paternal character of God. This is shown by an analogy from the workings of parental affection in fallen man. The argument is from the less to the greater. If human love in the sinful earthly parent will lead him to do good rather than evil to his children and grant their requests, much more will the pure and divine love of your heavenly Father lead him to answer the prayers of his children and bestow upon them good things. The argument is rendered the more forcible by being made interrogatory. **If a son ask,** etc. The meaning is, There is no man among you, however wicked he may be, who, if his son ask bread, would give him a stone, etc. **Bread.** Doubtless the round cake or loaf, such as is now used in the East, and which bore some resemblance to a round, flat **stone.** Some kinds of **serpents** also resemble some kinds of **fish.** To a hungry child a stone would be useless and a serpent poisonous. There is thus a gradation in the questions. The most hardened and depraved parent would not deceive his crying, hungry child with a stone, much less with a serpent, which would take his life. Instead of practising a cruel deception, he would endeavor to satisfy the cravings of his child.

12. A third example is given, found only in Luke, and is an emphatic enlargement upon the two preceding ones, which are also given in Matt. 7 : 9, 10. **Egg, scorpion.** Both could be grasped in the hand. On *scorpion*, see ch. 10 : 19. Its sting is very painful, and sometimes causes death, Rev. 9 :

5. Old writers speak of the white scorpion, which, when rolled up, resembles an egg. "A scorpion for an egg was probably a proverbial expression. According to Erasmus, the Greeks had a similar proverb."—DR. WILLIAM SMITH'S *Bible Dictionary*. No parent would think of doing so cruel an act to a supplicating child. The application now follows.

13. **If ye then, being evil,** fallen, sinful, and hence selfish. **Know how,** from actual experience, and have the disposition, **to give good gifts to your children, how much more,** indeed, infinitely more, will **your heavenly Father,** who is supremely good and merciful, give the **Holy Spirit,** the sum of all spiritual blessings, to those that ask him!

It is worthy of notice that the argument for persevering prayer increases. First from a friend, then from a father, who is more than a friend, and now from the relation of heavenly Father, who is infinitely more than an earthly father. Notice that no conditions are put upon giving the Holy Spirit. Many things our heavenly Father may withhold for our good, but the Holy Spirit is a saving gift, and that he gives to all who ask in faith.

14-36. **JESUS HEALS A DUMB DEMON-  
 NIAC. SOME REVILE; OTHERS DEMAND A SIGN. JESUS ANSWERS IN ORDER.** Compare Matt. 12 : 22-45; Mark 3 : 19-30. This is one of the most difficult passages in gospel chronology and harmony. It is very similar to Matthew 12 : 22-45, which is parallel with Mark 3 : 19-30. Were it not for Mark's account, which is generally chronological, we might suppose it was the same as this, and that Matthew, from his habit of classifying miracles and discourses, had given it in connection with others of an earlier date. Indeed, it is not absolutely impossible that both Matthew and Mark, for reasons unknown to us, have done

*Jesus casts out a demon; is accused of being in league with Satan; and a sign demanded; to which he replies in order.*

14 <sup>v</sup> And he was casting out a devil, <sup>w</sup> and it was dumb. v Mt. 12. 22.  
w Mt. 9. 32.

this. And so it might be said that it is barely possible that Luke, who usually writes an orderly and chronological narrative, has for some reason seen fit to put in this portion of his Gospel a brief account of things which occurred earlier. But even if this were the case, I should be far from imputing ignorance to this evangelist, or of supposing that he "was not informed as to the exact period at which they took place, and that he therefore placed them at the end of his narrative of our Lord's work in Galilee and before his journey through Perea." If so, why did he not put them after ch. 9 : 50, just before he left Galilee as a permanent place of residence? Did we know more of the circumstances connected with the incidents, all would be plain. But in our ignorance of these circumstances it seems best, with Gresswell and Ellicott, to regard the passage as different from that in Matthew and Mark for the following reasons:

1. The incidents here related fit naturally in their place, and what follows and what precedes both point to Christ's ministry in Judea, while the incidents in Matthew and Mark have in each a like natural position, and their connection points to Christ's ministry in Galilee.

2. The dissimilarities are sufficient to furnish a reasonable ground for the opinion that the events are not the same. In Matthew it is a blind and dumb demoniac, the only blind demoniac mentioned in the Gospels; in Luke it is simply dumb. In the former some scribes and Pharisees make the charge and demand a sign; in the latter some of the multitude. The former represents the demand to have been made after the charge had been refuted; the latter presents the charge and demand as made at once, but by different persons. In Matthew and Mark, Jesus speaks of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit; in Luke he makes no reference to it. In the former this was especially proper when speaking to the scribes and Pharisees, the learned and intelligent leaders of the people; in the latter

it was not so much demanded when discoursing to the less intelligent multitude. Matthew also has 12 : 33-37, which is not in Luke, and Luke has 11 : 27, 28, 33-36, not in Matthew. The discourse in Matthew and Mark was delivered in a house (Matt. 13 : 1; Mark 3 : 19), and while speaking his mother and brethren desired to speak with him, Matt. 12 : 46; Mark 3 : 31. But this in Luke appears to have been delivered in the open air; and while speaking a Pharisee asks him to dine with him, and "he went in and sat down to meat," ch. 11 : 37.

3. The similarities are in harmony with the supposition that different events are related. Dumb demoniacs appear to have been common; at least three are mentioned as healed, Matt. 9 : 32; 12 : 22; Mark 9 : 17. The frequency of this kind of possessions, thus indicated, renders the supposition that this one in Luke is the fourth not only allowable, but in its connections extremely probable. The charge, too, that Jesus was in league with Satan in casting out demons was made at least twice, Matt. 9 : 34; 12 : 24. Why not, then, suppose that Luke in this place gives another repetition of the charge? Would it not have been perfectly natural for this charge to have been frequently repeated by his opposers after it had been first made by the Pharisees? And when Jesus saw fit to answer it, is it surprising that he followed a line of argument so convincing and unanswerable? And was not the refutation of the charge in Galilee worthy to be repeated in Judea? Compare author's *Harmony*, §§ 107, 108, and notes.

14. **And he was casting out a devil, or *æmon*.** When or where we are not informed. The most natural supposition is that it was during the period which Luke is now narrating, not long after the preceding incidents at Bethany, and in one of the places whither Jesus had come after the return of the seventy. The meaning is, on a certain time and in a certain place he was casting out a demon. **It was dumb.** The dumbness was the result

And it came to pass, when the devil was gone out, the  
 15 dumb spake; and the people wondered. But some of  
 them said, <sup>x</sup>He casteth out devils through Beelzebub  
 16 the chief of the devils. And others, tempting *him*, <sup>y</sup>  
 17 <sup>z</sup>sought of him a sign from heaven. <sup>2</sup>But he, <sup>a</sup>know-  
 ing their thoughts, said unto them, Every kingdom

<sup>x</sup> Mt. 9. 44; 12. 24  
<sup>y</sup> Mt. 12. 38; 16. 1.  
<sup>z</sup> Mt. 12. 25; Mk. 3.  
 24.  
<sup>a</sup> John 2. 25; Rev.  
 2. 23.

of the demoniacal possession. Hence the case was complicated: a possession and a consequent disease. **The dumb spake**, showing that the demon was expelled and a complete cure effected. **The people**, or *the multitudes*, **wondered**. The greatness of the miracle excites their astonishment; and this leads to the charge and the demand in the next two verses. The charge and demand of "some" show that the multitudes were disposed to regard this wonderful miracle as an evidence that he was a teacher sent from God, and that probably many of them were ready to look upon him as the Messiah.

15. **Beelzebub.** *Beelzebub*, a name applied to Satan, and immediately explained as **chief**, or *prince, of devils*, ruler, presider over demons, ch. 9 : 34. He is also called "prince of this world" (John 12 : 31; 14 : 30; 16 : 11), and "prince of the power of the air," Eph. 2 : 2. Christ's opposers were compelled to acknowledge superhuman power, but in their hatred they would not acknowledge it as the power of God. They choose, therefore, the fearful alternative of ascribing it to the powers of darkness and alleging that he was in league with the devil, the prince of demons.

16. **And others.** Like the "some" of the preceding verse, the expression is silent as to who they were. It is evident, however, that they were bitter opposers. It is not necessary to suppose them leading scribes and Pharisees, as in Matthew (12 : 38) and Mark (3 : 22); at this later period some of the people of less note would very likely catch up and repeat the thoughts which their leaders had originally suggested. This not only shows the widening and deepening of the opposition, but also that in Judea his ministry was attended with the same growing hatred as in Galilee. **Tempting him**, envious of his growing influence, and unbelieving, they would *put him* to the test, so that either **his inability** might be made manifest

or that he might do something which they could use against him.

**Sought of him a sign from heaven.** Miracles were called *signs* (see on ch. 4 : 33-37); but the sign here demanded was *from heaven*—not merely one on earth, or possibly from hell, but from heaven. Many of the ancient prophets had given such signs: Moses (Ex. 9 : 22-24; 16 : 4), Joshua (Josh. 10 : 12), Samuel (1 Sam. 7 : 9, 10; 12 : 16-18), Elijah (1 Kings 18 : 36-38; 2 Kings 1 : 10), Isaiah, Isa. 38 : 8. If prophets gave them, surely, they might reason, the Messiah should give them. That they expected something of the kind is evident from the frequent demands for a sign from heaven, Matt. 16 : 1; John 6 : 30, 31. This expectation may also have been strengthened by Dauiel's prophecy (Dan. 7 : 13) of the glorious coming of the Messiah, to the fulfilment of which Jesus himself refers when he speaks of "the sign of the Son of man in heaven," Matt. 24 : 30. Though he refused these demands, his life was remarkable for such signs: at his birth (ch. 2 : 13, 14; Matt. 2 : 2); baptism (ch. 3 : 22); transfiguration (ch. 9 : 34, 35), while discoursing to certain Greeks (John 12 : 28), on the cross (ch. 23 : 44, 45), at his resurrection (Matt. 28 : 2-4) and ascension, Acts 1 : 9-11. They were having signs from heaven and other evidences enough. Jesus could not consistently yield to their dictation, nor pass by their caviling spirit without reproof. Hence the answer which follows in vers. 29-32.

17. **Knowing their thoughts**, by his omniscience. The charge had been made (ver. 16), not in his hearing, but to some of the multitude. But Jesus knew their words and their thoughts, their malignant feelings, intentions, and purposes. He replies to the infamous charge first by showing its absurdity. Satan would not fight against himself, and destroy his own power and kingdom. A kingdom must have unity, or it will be destroyed. If it is divided

divided against itself is brought to desolation; and a  
 18 house *divided* against a house falleth. If Satan also  
 be divided against himself, how shall his kingdom  
 stand? because ye say that I cast out devils through  
 19 Beelzebub. And if I by Beelzebub cast out devils,  
 by whom do your sons cast *them* out? <sup>b</sup> Therefore <sup>b</sup> Job 15. 6.  
 20 shall they be your judges. But if I <sup>o</sup> with the finger <sup>o</sup> Ex. 8. 19.  
 of God cast out devils, no doubt the kingdom of God  
 is come upon you.

against itself, rent by internal strifes, it will, such a state of things continuing, be brought to desolation. It would be arrayed against its own existence, and hence it must fall. **And a house divided against a house falleth.** In like manner families cannot stand when rent by internal feuds. Some translate, *and house falls upon house*, the figure in the preceding clause being continued. When a kingdom is brought to desolation, everything in it shares its ruin, and houses are dashed against houses. There is much in favor of this latter rendering and variation from Matthew.

18. So if Satan is divided against himself, he is destroying his own power; then the kingdom of darkness has lost its unity against the kingdom of light; Satan is opposing and fighting against himself. It is here recognized that Satan has a kingdom; but being a usurper, he is never called a king. Hatred and strife indeed prevail in his kingdom, but there is among the devil and all his subjects a unity in their enmity to God and men, and neither he nor they will deliver any from their cruel tyranny. Should Satan turn against himself, he would lose his distinctive character and be for God and man, and not against them. **Because ye say**, an ellipsis which may be thus supplied: *I ask this because ye say*, in your hearts and to one another, *that I cast out devils through Beelzebub*; and thus you suppose Satan to be arrayed against himself. Here is another variation from Matthew's account.

19. Jesus proceeds to a second argument derived from a similar power, which some of them professed to exercise, by which their base charge is made to recoil upon themselves. **Your sons.** Not the apostles, for they professed to derive their power from Jesus, and his

opposers would naturally refer their power to the same agency as that of their Master. But rather the Jewish disciples, the Jewish exorcists, who pretended to expel evil spirits by certain incantations, prayers, and ceremonies. The terms *father* and *children* were applied respectively to teachers and pupils, and this may be the application of the word *sons* here. See 2 Kings 2: 3, 12; 13: 14. Yet probably some of their own *sons* professed to exercise this power. In Acts 19: 13-17 we have an account of some of these exorcists at Ephesus, among whom were the seven *sons* of one Sceva, a Jewish chief priest. From Josephus (*Antiq.* viii. 2, 5, and *Jewish War*, vii. 6, 3) we also learn that there were among the Jews persons who professed to cast out demons by the use of a certain root, and by certain formulas and incantations which were ascribed to Solomon as their author. The language of Jesus does not necessarily imply that they really did cast them out. The argument is, Your sons profess to cast out demons as well as I; why ascribe my power to satanic influence, and not theirs? If I cast out demons by Beelzebub, do not your own sons and exorcists also? They therefore shall be **your judges**—shall convict you of injustice and maliciousness in ascribing to me collusion with Satan, when you ascribe no such thing to them.

20. Having shown the absurdity of their charge and their inconsistency and maliciousness in making it, Jesus now presses home the only remaining alternative—that he cast out demons through the power of God. **Finger of God.** These words are emphatic in the original. But if I with the *finger of God*, through the actual power of God himself. Compare Ex. 8: 19. Since it is evident that I do not cast out demons

- 21 <sup>d</sup>When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his <sup>d</sup>Mt. 12. 29; Mk.  
 22 goods are in peace: but <sup>e</sup>when a stronger than he <sup>e</sup>3. 27.  
 shall come upon him and overcome him, he taketh <sup>e</sup>Is. 49. 24, 25; 53.  
 from him all his armor wherein he trusted, and di- <sup>e</sup>12; Col. 2. 15.  
 23 videth his spoils. <sup>f</sup>He that is not with me is against <sup>f</sup>Mt. 12. 36.  
 me: and he that gathereth not with me scattereth.  
 24 <sup>g</sup>When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he <sup>g</sup>Mt. 12. 43.  
 walketh through dry places, seeking rest; and find-

through the prince of demons, therefore I must cast them out through the King of heaven; and if so, then the kingdom of God is come upon you, or rather, *is come near to you*, with an implied idea of suddenness and surprise. Jesus cast out demons with a word, not with incantations, roots, and ceremonies, as the exorcists professed to do. His opposers were compelled to acknowledge a superhuman power, and by the argument of Jesus could not escape the conclusion that it was through the power of God. Such manifestations of divine power and presence were an evidence that the Messiah-kingdom was already present among men, however sudden and surprising it might be to them.

21. Jesus gives another illustration, which still further clinches the conclusion at which he had arrived, showing from the nature of the case that he was the opposer of Satan and superior to him and all his hosts. In this illustration we see a pleasing variation from that used in Matthew (12 : 29) and Mark, 3 : 27.

**When a strong man armed**, implying great strength. This is an illustration drawn from life and from among men. **Keepeth his palace**, implying watchfulness and completeness of defence. **His goods are at peace**, are safe, secure.

22. **A stronger than he**, whoever he may be. **Come upon him and overcome him**. It is taken for granted that, being the stronger, he overcomes. The idea running through the whole is that only the stronger overcomes the strong, and that he who overcomes is the stronger. **He taketh from him all his armor**, etc., which he used for defence. Thus the stronger comes upon the strong, notwithstanding his vigilance; overcomes him, notwithstanding his strength and armor; and being rendered defenceless, he **divideth his**

**spoils**, the booty which he had taken. So Jesus, if he had been in league with Satan, would have left him to keep his power over men in peace. But by his casting out demons he shows that he is an enemy to Satan and superior to him—that he had himself overpowered Satan and conquered him.

23. This being the case, there being a conflict between Jesus and Satan, there could be no neutrality. **He that is not with me is against me**. A proverbial saying, and probably often repeated by our Lord. It was suited to the various classes of his hearers, many of whom were secret enemies or undecided and wavering or timid friends. There can be no middle ground. **Gathereth not . . . scattereth**, an allusion to harvesting. Christ and his disciples gather the harvest of souls, while all who gather not with them, like ravagers of fields, scatter the harvest abroad from Christ. He that does not take part with Christ must take part with Satan. And thus is the truth brought home to these opposers of Jesus that they rather than Jesus are those really in league with Satan. The converse of this saying is also true, ch. 9 : 50; Mark 9 : 40.

24. Jesus illustrates and foretells the final and fearful condition of those who turn away from the truth and reject him by a reference to a return of demoniacal possessions, which, doubtless, sometimes occurred. When a demon goes out of a man involuntarily or through supernatural influence, he passes through **dry places**, unwatered, desert places, such places being represented as the abodes and haunts of evil spirits, Isa. 13 : 21, 22; 34 : 14; Rev. 18 : 2. So the later Jews thought, as appears from the Apocrypha, Tobit 8 : 3; Baruch 4 : 35. The wanderings of demoniacs through desert places (compare ch. 8 : 27) would strengthen his

ing none, he saith, I will return unto my house  
 25 whence I came out. And when he cometh, he find-  
 26 eth it swept and garnished. Then goeth he, and  
 taketh to *him* seven other spirits more wicked than  
 himself: and they enter in, and dwell there: and  
<sup>b</sup>the last *state* of that man is worse than the first.  
 27 And it came to pass, as he spake these things, a  
 certain woman of the company lifted up her voice,  
 and said unto him, <sup>1</sup>Blessed is the womb that bare  
 28 thee, and the paps which thou hast sucked. But he  
 said, Yea, <sup>2</sup>rather, blessed are they that hear the word

<sup>b</sup> John 5. 14; Heb.  
6. 4; 10. 26; 2  
Pet. 2. 20.

<sup>1</sup> ch. 1. 28, 48.  
<sup>2</sup> ch. 8. 21; Mt. 7.  
21; John 13. 17;  
Jam. 1. 22-25.

this opinion, and forms an argument that demons do really prefer scenes of barrenness, desolation, and woe. **Seeking rest, and finding none.** Restless and discontented, he wanders in misery, seeking in vain for repose.

**I will return unto my house,** my previous abode, the body and soul of the man I once possessed.

25. And coming, he finds it **swept and garnished**, or set in order—that is, for his use. He finds it empty of the Spirit and good influences, swept and clean of all impressions and hindrances to his entrance, and set in order for his use and occupancy.

26. **Then**, finding his abode in readiness, he goes forth in search of a strong reinforcement, so that he may hold his house more securely and permanently. **Seven.** A round, full number. It may mean the definite number *seven*, or, as it is often used, it may refer to an indefinite number, *several*. **More wicked.** Some evil spirits are more wicked than others. **Worse than the first.** This last state or condition is at least seven times worse. A relapse is generally worse than the first sickness. So, doubtless, some of his hearers could refer to cases, like the one here described, of a return of demons after real or apparent cure by Jewish exorcists, with fearful aggravations, a hopeless, fatal issue. So moral, spiritual relapses are more aggravated and fearful than the first stages of sin.

Thus does he warn them against a mere temporary and superficial reformation. And at the same time he portrays the last state of all those who reject Christ. It will be worse than the first, whatever that may have been.

27. The effect of the discourse on one of his hearers is vividly presented. It

is as if related by an eye-witness whose memory was fresh with the time and place where it occurred. **A certain woman**, who was probably herself a mother, filled with admiration at the sayings and doings of Jesus, gives vent to her womanly and motherly feelings in expressing the happiness of the mother of Jesus in having such a son. While she may have caught some spiritual perception of his character and mission and of the truth he uttered, her exclamation is for the most part to be attributed to her wonder and astonishment, produced at hearing and seeing Jesus. The scene is perfectly natural and lifelike, it being common in Oriental countries to implore blessings or imprecate curses upon the parents of friends or enemies. Compare 1 Sam. 20:30. **Of the company, from the multitude.** **Lifted up her voice**, speaking in loud tones, so as to be heard all about her. **Blessed**, happy in her condition, her relations, and destiny. **That bare**, better, *that carried thee*. This touching incident is related only by Luke. The expression is Oriental, and indicates the highest admiration.

28. Jesus replies, guarding her and all that heard him against a mere admiration of his deeds and sayings, without a living and active faith in the word of God. **Yea, rather.** *Yes, indeed, but rather.* He does not deny the fact, but he corrects it. It was a great happiness to have been his mother, and he would not reprove the motherly feeling which prompted her utterance, but he would point her to a higher honor and happiness attainable by every one who would not only admire, but obey. **Blessed, happy**, as in the preceding verse. **Hear the word of**

29 of God, and keep it. <sup>1</sup>And when the people were gathered thick together, he began to say, This is an evil generation: they seek a sign; and there shall no sign be given it, but the sign of Jonas the prophet.

30 For as <sup>m</sup>Jonas was a sign unto the Ninevites, <sup>n</sup>so

31 shall also the Son of man be to this generation. <sup>o</sup>The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with the men of this generation, and condemn them: for she came from the utmost parts of the earth to hear

<sup>1</sup>Mt. 12. 38; 16. 1-4; Mk. 8. 11; John 2. 18; 4. 48; 1 Cor. 1. 22.

<sup>m</sup>Jon. 1. 17; 2. 10. <sup>n</sup>Mt. 12. 40; 17. 23; 27. 40, 63, 64.

<sup>o</sup>1 Ki. 10. 1-13; 2 Chr. 9. 1; Mt. 12. 42.

**God**, give heed to it, receiving it in their hearts by faith, **and keep it**, obey and practise its precepts. Alford calls attention to the humility of Jesus in not saying *my word*, but *the word of God*.

This passage is in direct opposition to the veneration which has been claimed for our Lord's mother as invested with an honor which Jesus himself places below that which every believer enjoys. Mary herself was pronounced *happy*, in that she believed the things told her from her Lord, ch. 1:45. Compare Matt. 12:43, 50, where Jesus declares that his true followers are his nearest and dearest relatives. Mary's union with Jesus as her Saviour was higher and more honorable than her mere relation as mother. It seems that these words were uttered and recorded under the guidance of the Spirit, not merely for that day and time, but for future ages.

29. Jesus now notices the demand for a sign from heaven. **When the people were gathered thick together**, in crowds. They gathered to hear his wonderful words, and possibly looking for some wonderful sign. **This is an evil generation**, a wicked people, a perverse race. In their departure from God, in their rejection of Jesus, the God incarnate, and in their spiritual idolatry (see Ezek. 14:3), they were indeed a perverse generation. **No sign be given**, no sign to them. His signs were not for such insolent cavillers and blasphemous opposers. Yet there would be one sign given them, the greatest of all miracles—namely, his resurrection, which they could not attribute to Beelzebub, and which they would find it impossible by any argument to meet, Matt. 28:11-15. **But the sign of Jonas the prophet**, as if to remind them that all the prophets did not give

signs from heaven. Here was one with a sign from beneath. So the Son of man shall give a similar one—one of which that of the prophet Jonah was a type. The best text omits *the prophet*.

30. This verse is not in Matthew. **As Jonas was a sign to the Ninevites**, his deliverance from the fish. This he recounted to the Ninevites. The report by the crew of the ship concerning his being cast forth may have spread abroad and preceded his coming to Nineveh. His presence among them after such a wonderful experience arrested the attention of the people and gave a peculiar power to his preaching. If such a judgment came upon him for disobedience, what might they expect if they heeded not the message which he brought to them from God? The Ninevites believed the sign and the message and repented. **So shall also the Son of man be**, etc., by his resurrection, which should be a proof to that generation that he was the Messiah, and that his message was from God. Compare Matt. 12:40. Jonah came forth from the sea-monster to preach to the Ninevites; Jesus from the heart of the earth to send forth the gospel to every creature. Jonah prophesied a destruction in forty days; Jerusalem was destroyed after about forty years.

31. **The queen**, etc. Rather, a *queen of the south*, referring more specially to her character, a heathen queen, a mere barbarian. The queen of Sheba, 1 Kings 10:1. *Sheba* is supposed to be the southern part of the Arabian peninsula, Arabia Felix, which abounded in spices, gold, and precious stones. It is called here **the uttermost parts of the earth**, the extremes or ends of the earth, a Greek and also a Hebrew phrase denoting a great distance. See Jer. 6:20, where Sheba is called "a far country." The Arabians call this queen

- the wisdom of Solomon; and, behold, a greater than  
 32 Solomon *is* here. <sup>1</sup>The men of Nineveh shall rise up  
 in the judgment with this generation, and <sup>2</sup>shall con-  
 demn it: for <sup>3</sup>they repented at the preaching of Jo-  
 nas; and, behold, <sup>4</sup>a greater than Jonas *is* here.  
 33 <sup>1</sup>No man, when he hath lighted a candle, putteth *it*  
 in a secret place, neither under a <sup>2</sup>bushel, but on a  
 candlestick, that they which come in may see the  
 34 light. <sup>3</sup>The light of the body is the eye: therefore  
 when thine eye is single, thy whole body also is full

<sup>1</sup> Mt. 12. 41.

<sup>2</sup> Jer. 3. 11; Eza.  
16. 51, 52; Ro. 2.  
27; Heb. 11. 7.

<sup>3</sup> Jon. 3. 5-10.

<sup>4</sup> Mt. 3. 17; 12. 6,  
41; John 1. 14.

<sup>1</sup> ch. 8. 16; Mt. 5.  
15; Mk. 4. 21.

<sup>2</sup> Mt. 5. 15.

<sup>3</sup> Mt. 6. 22, 23.

Balkis. Josephus, however, represents her as a queen of Egypt and Ethiopia, with which modern Abyssinian tradition agrees, the latter calling her Maqueda, and supposing her to have embraced the Jewish religion in Jerusalem. She was more probably from Arabia Felix, which was bounded east by the Persian Gulf, south by the ocean between Africa and India, and west by the Red Sea, not far from the present Aden. **Wisdom, etc.** She *came* to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and was filled with admiration. But they came not to him, but he to them, not as a mere man, but as a divine teacher, speaking as never man spake; yet they despised both him and his wisdom. **Behold, a greater than Solomon.** This was peculiarly strong to the Jews, who regarded Solomon as the embodiment of human wisdom and the wisest among inspired teachers.

32. Jesus passes on in his discourse, and contrasts that generation of religious formalists with Ninevites, whom they despised as heathen and Gentile sinners. **Men**, without the article, inhabitants of that proud and wicked city of Nineveh, **shall rise up in the judgment**, in company with this generation, for trial at the bar of the Judge, and shall condemn it by their example, as it shall be remembered and there recounted. They will be witnesses to the unreasonableness of the impenitence of this generation, and will condemn its wicked unbelief; for they repented at the preaching of Jonah, who only made them a transient visit and performed no miracles. And behold, this generation reject **a greater than Jonas**, the preaching and gospel of the Messiah with the Messiah himself. See Jonah 3: 5, 10. Jonah preached to the Ninevites about B. C.

840. Their city was finally destroyed about B. C. 606.

By comparing with Matthew 12: 39-41 it will be seen that in that discourse Jesus contrasted the Ninevites before the queen of the south. The climax is here the greater. It was more terrible to be condemned by the Ninevites than by the queen of Sheba.

33. In this verse and the three that follow, Jesus declares his determination to continue his work, and urges the admission of the light he was dispensing. Almost the same words are found in Matt. 5: 15; 6: 22, 23. See also ch. 11: 33. They are here used in special application of the preceding discourse. Such sayings our Saviour would be likely to repeat.

**A candle.** Rather, *a lamp*. **A secret place**, a vault, covered passage, or concealed place. **Under a bushel**, *the bushel*, indicating a familiar household utensil, as the common grain measure, holding about a peck. **But on a candlestick**, on the *lamp-standard*, the support on which the lamp was placed, in order that it might give light to all in the house. See on ch. 8: 16. As the lamp illuminates, so Jesus diffuses the knowledge of spiritual truth. As Solomon and Jonah were a light to the queen of Sheba and the men of Nineveh, so the Son of man was a light to this generation, John 3: 19; 8: 12.

34. Jesus enforces the receiving and dispersing of the true light by a popular illustration of the eye. **The light**, rather, *the lamp*, **of the body is thine eye**. The light is not the eye itself; but receiving the light, the eye lightens and guides the body. So the moral sense of the soul receives light from above for the enlightenment and guidance of the soul, Eph. 1: 18. **Single**. An eye that does not *see double*,

of light; but when *thine eye* is evil, thy body also is  
 35 full of darkness. \*Take heed therefore that the light  
 36 which is in thee be not darkness. If thy whole body  
 therefore be full of light, having no part dark, the  
 whole shall be full of light, as when the bright shin-  
 ing of a candle doth give thee light.

\* Pro. 16. 25; Is. 5.  
 20, 21; 50. 10, 11;  
 John 9. 39-41; 1  
 Cor. 3. 18-20.

that has a single, distinct, *clear* vision. Then, as a consequence of this singleness of vision, the eye fully performing its office, **thy whole body is full of light.** Rather, *is enlightened.* But when *thine eye is evil*, is bad, not clear, distinct, single in its vision, but double, confused, and dim. **Full of darkness.** This is more expressive than the original. More correctly translated, *Thy whole body also is dark;* not totally dark, but obscured and dimmed by want of singleness and clearness of the eye.

35. In view, then, of the truth just brought to view in the preceding verse, Jesus utters a caution. **Take heed**, see to it, **that the light**, etc. More correctly translated, *Lest the light in thee is darkness.* The strong implication is that the inner light is actually darkness, that his hearers were actually in the state against which he was cautioning them. Lest the light of nature and of revelation which they had enjoyed had been perverted, and their moral and spiritual being, their heart and conscience, their reason and understanding were all in darkness.

36. This verse is found only in Luke. **If thy whole body therefore be full of light**, rather, *is light*, as stated in ver. 34—that is, if thy reason and conscience are enlightened and thy heart is thus right in the sight of God—**having no part dark**, or unenlightened, then **the whole shall**, etc. Rather, then the result or benefit will be that *it shall be all light, as when a lamp gives the light with its brilliance or bright shining.* It shall be light within thee and about thee. Truth and duty will be plain, and thou shalt walk in security and not in darkness. Or the passage may mean, *it*, thy whole body, thy whole being, *shall be luminous, as when a lamp gives thee light with its bright shining.* He shall be spiritually luminous within and without, sending forth light also upon others, Phil. 2: 15. This verse is not, therefore, tauto-

logical, as some suppose. The first part has reference to the state of the soul enlightened by the truth; the second, to the illuminating influence which this truth exerts upon the whole man, his character, duties, relations, and life.

“When we turn next to the interpretation of these verses in the metaphorical or figurative sense, we find them fraught with deep and important instruction. If we put the understanding instead of the eye and the soul instead of the body, we have at once the key to the spiritual meaning. We then say, taking the understanding in the most enlarged sense and as including thought, reasoning, and conscience, the light or the eye of the soul is the understanding. What light is to the body, that knowledge is to the soul; and as the eye is the organ by which light is received for the guidance of the body, so the understanding is the faculty by which knowledge is received for the guidance of the soul. Therefore, when the understanding is single—that is, clear, sound, sound in itself and sound in its actual exercise on the subject of religion, correctly apprehending and really receiving gospel truth—then the whole soul is full of light; the truth influences the whole sentiments, affections, and conduct.

“But when the understanding is evil, when it is unsound, when it is warped by prejudice or passion, and when it thus leads to false conclusions, the soul is full of darkness—is in a state of spiritual ignorance, error, and depravity. It concerns a man, therefore, to take heed that the light that is in his soul be not darkness—that the principles he has adopted be not erroneous; for if they be, he is more ready to go far astray in that state of fancied illumination than if he were brought to a stand in conscious ignorance; and the more steadily and extensively he follows out these false principles, the farther he wanders from truth and duty

*Jesus dines with a Pharisee; the sins of the Pharisees exposed and denounced.*

37 And as he spake, a certain Pharisee besought him to dine with him; and he went in, and sat down to

into the mazes of delusion and wickedness."—REV. JAMES FOOTE, *Lectures on Luke*.

37-54. JESUS DINES WITH A PHARISEE. HE EXPOSES THE HYPOCRISY OF THE PHARISEES, AND PRONOUNCES WOES AGAINST THEM. There is such a similarity between this discourse and the larger portion of that recorded in the 23d chapter of Matthew that some have supposed the latter to have been given at this time, while others have regarded Luke as giving the discourse in Matthew out of its chronological order. It is better to regard them as separate discourses, and as examples of our Saviour's habit of repeating solemn and weighty truths. That in Matthew bears the marks of a continuous discourse, spoken just before leaving the temple for the last time, Matt. 24 : 1. This is not only implied in the context, but the discourse itself seems eminently fitted to the place and occasion. So also the discourse in Luke fits naturally to the time and circumstances. The evangelist gives the things that called it forth, the place where he uttered it, and the circumstances that preceded and followed it. It has the mark of a regular narrative in its chronological position. It seems arbitrary, therefore, to disturb the order of either Matthew or Luke. It is better to suppose that Jesus in his last discourse to the Jews, in Matthew, utters more publicly, fully, and comprehensively what he had said on previous occasions, and that he there gives a final and closing summary of all his woes against the scribes and Pharisees.

37. **And as he spake, as he was speaking,** to the people, as just related. This incident and discourse is thus most naturally connected with what had just preceded. **A certain Pharisee besought.** More exactly translated, *a Pharisee asked him.* **To dine,** to take the morning meal, the early midday lunch, generally partaken after the morning sacrifice at about ten o'clock, the principal meal being late in the afternoon or early in the evening.

"Not only the inhabitants of the East generally, but the Greeks and Romans also, were in the habit of taking a slight dinner about ten or eleven o'clock of our time, which consisted chiefly of fruits, milk, cheese, etc. Their principal meal was about six or seven in the afternoon; their feasts were always appointed at supper-time, for the burning heat of noon in Eastern climates diminishes the appetite for food."—JAHN, *Archæol.*, § 145. "There are indications that the Jews rather followed the custom that prevails among the Bedouins and made their principal meal after sunset, and a lighter meal at about nine or ten o'clock in the morning," Gen. 19 : 1-3; Ruth 3 : 7; Ex. 16 : 12. "In the later biblical period we have clearer notes to the same effect: breakfast took place in the morning (John 21 : 4, 12), on ordinary days not before nine o'clock, which was the first hour of prayer (Acts 2 : 15), and on the Sabbath not before twelve, when the service of the synagogue was completed (Joseph., *Life*, § 54); the more prolonged and substantial meal took place in the evening" (Joseph., *Life*, § 44; *Jewish War*, i. 17, 4).—DR. WM. SMITH'S *Dictionary of the Bible, Meals*.

A Pharisee had before invited Jesus to eat with him, ch. 7 : 36. Whether he was better disposed toward Jesus than most Pharisees, or whether it was his design in a more private company to ensnare him, we are not informed. What follows, however, shows the spirit of the Pharisees toward Jesus, and doubtless his host joined with the other Pharisees in their wordy assault upon Jesus, vers. 53, 54. Yet his astonishment at a ceremonial omission of Jesus (ver. 38) would seem to imply that he was somewhat surprised at this, and may suggest that he himself was not designing evil against him. But while this may be said of the host, it cannot probably be said of others present. The severity of his discourse would seem to indicate that prejudice and malice were aroused in the hearts of some present. Jesus was now alone among

38 meat. And when the Pharisee saw it, he marvelled <sup>7 Mk. 7. 2-5.</sup>  
 39 that he had not first washed before dinner. And <sup>8 Mt. 23. 25.</sup>  
 the Lord said unto him, Now do ye Pharisees make

his opposers, for it does not appear that his disciples dined with him.

And he went in, and sat down to meat, and immediately upon entering reclined at table, according to the custom at meals, ch. 5 : 29.

38. When the Pharisee saw it, that he at once reclined at table, without any of the customary ceremonies before meals. He marvelled, he wondered that so noble a teacher should disregard one of the traditions of the elders, which they put on a level with the commands of God. He probably gave some manifestation or expression to his surprise, which called forth our Lord's discourse. See on ch. 7 : 39, 40, for the way in which Jesus treated the silent reasoning of a Pharisee.

That he had not first washed. Literally, that he did not first immerse himself, or bathe. The Greek word here used is *baptizo*; its signification, construction, and the connecting circumstances demand the idea of dipping or immersing himself, thus taking a bath. See on ch. 3 : 3, 7. The learned Lutheran commentator, Dr. Meyer, on this passage says, "They expected that he would first purify himself by immersion—that is, by a bath (compare on Mark 7 : 4) before the meal." So Sophocles and others.

The usages of the Jews were in harmony with the meaning of this passage. "For 'if the Pharisees touched but the garments of the common people, they were defiled . . . and needed immersion,' and were obliged to it. Hence, when they walked the streets, they walked on the sides of the way, that they might not be defiled by touching the common people" (*Maimonides*, *Mishn. Chagiga*, 2, 7; *Hilch. Abot Tu-maot*, 13, 8).—DR. JOHN GILL.

Frey, a converted Jew, relates, on the authority of *Maimonides*, that "when they had been to the market, where they mixed with Gentiles, whose touch they considered polluting, they always immersed themselves before they took their food. Not knowing what part of the body had come in contact with a polluting Gentile, the Jew thought it

necessary to immerse himself, that he might be certain of being cleansed. Every family that could afford it was furnished with a bath. I appeal to my Jewish brethren and to the learned reader for the correctness of this statement."—*Work on Baptism*, p. 106.

"They cleansed themselves more carefully from defilement contracted at the market; to wit, by not only washing their hands, but even by immersing their body."—GROTIUS *On Mark* 7 : 4. "Before every meal the washing of the hands; but after the return from the market, where there was so much danger of coming into contact with unclean men, the bath was used as a washing of the whole body."—LANGE *On Mark*. At the present day "the Jews of Tiberias bathe often on the Sabbath."—DR. FARRAR, *Life of Christ*, vol. ii., p. 121.

In view of the above the meaning is plain: Jesus had been in a crowd (ver. 29), and he might have touched some unclean person; hence the punctilious and superstitious Pharisee wondered that he should recline at table without first purifying himself by bathing his whole person, according to the custom. Jesus omitted it for the best reasons: he was weary, or he had not the time, or he did not need it; especially, he would not sanction this superstition of the Jews.

The means of bathing and the supply of water in tanks (reservoirs) within and around Jerusalem were abundant. Synagogues at the present day in Jerusalem and other parts of the East are furnished with large bathing-rooms. Compare John 13 : 10: "He that is washed," or bathed, "needeth not save to wash his feet," referring, doubtless, to bathing, especially before partaking of the passover meal.

39. The severity of our Lord's conversation and discourse indicates that the Pharisee had given expression to his surprise, and that the others had pernicious and malicious thoughts in their hearts. The Lord said unto him, yet without making it personal to him. Ye Pharisees, referring to

clean the outside of the cup and the platter; but  
 your inward part is full of ravening and wickedness.  
 40 <sup>b</sup>Ye fools, <sup>c</sup>did not he that made that which is with-  
 41 out make that which is within also? <sup>d</sup>But rather

<sup>a</sup>Tit. 1. 15.

<sup>b</sup>Mt. 23. 17.

<sup>c</sup>Ge. 1. 26, 27; 2. 7.

<sup>d</sup>ch. 12. 33; Is. 58. 7; Dan. 4. 27.

the class to which his host belonged, and including also the Pharisees at the table, who may have joined in expressions of wonder, and perhaps of dis-

approval. . . . Fanatical, bigoted, intolerant, quarrelsome, and in truth irreligious, with them the outward observance of the ceremonial law is everything, the moral law little binding, morality itself of no importance. Such is the testimony of a Jew" (Frankl, *Jews of the East, E. Tr.*, ii., 27).—DR. FARRAR.



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approval. Make clean the outside of the cup and platter. You are careful about your external deportment, and attend to mere outside righteousness. But your inward part. Your heart. The figure is dropped, and the fact stated plainly. Is full of ravening, rapacity, robbery, and wickedness, evil, malice, iniquity. They were full of secret dishonesty and vicious indulgence.

"The modern representatives and continuers of the Pharisaic sect are called *Perushim*. 'They proudly separate

themselves from the rest of their co-religionists. . . . Fanatical, bigoted, intolerant, quarrelsome, and in truth irreligious, with them the outward observance of the ceremonial law is everything, the moral law little binding, morality itself of no importance. Such is the testimony of a Jew" (Frankl, *Jews of the East, E. Tr.*, ii., 27).—DR. FARRAR.

40. **Ye fools.** Simply fools. An expression of reproach rather than of reproach, meaning *without mind or understanding*, unwise, thoughtless. It was unwise and foolish in them, indicating a lack of spiritual understanding, to attend merely to the external. This is shown by the question, **did not he that made that which is without**, etc. Did not he who created the body create the soul also, and does he not also require purity of heart? Does he not, therefore, condemn that impurity of heart and life which you endeavor to conceal beneath an outward show of holiness?

41. **But rather**, etc. Omit rather. Some suppose that Jesus spoke this in irony, thus exposing the perverse teaching of the Pharisees: "Give alms of what ye have, and then say all things are clean unto you!" But this is not the most natural construction, and it is hardly admissible grammatically. It is better to translate and interpret, *Give what ye have in alms*; instead of your secret and dishonest gains, exercise a spirit of true benevolence and minister to human woes by giving what ye possess (compare ch. 3 : 11; 10 : 37; 18 : 22), **and, behold, all things are clean unto you**; then you can lawfully use and enjoy all things, ch. 19 : 8, 9; Rom. 14 : 14; 1 Tim. 4 : 4, 5; Tit. 1 : 15. I

give alms of such things as ye have; and, behold, 42 °all things are clean unto you. 'But woe unto you, Pharisees! for ye tithe the mint and rue and all manner of herbs, and pass over judgment and the love of God: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the

° Ro. 14. 14-16; 1  
Tim. 4. 4, 5. Tit  
1. 15.  
' Mt. 23. 23.

prefer, however, a more literal translation, *Give that which is within in alms*—that is, give yourselves to the service of God and man (compare *your inward part*, ver. 39), and, behold, all things are clean to you; nothing external shall defile you, for purity of heart is proof against external defilement. In other words, outward things become to us just what the state of our own hearts makes them, Tit. 1 : 15; Matt. 15 : 11.

42. In view of the conduct of the Pharisees, so opposite to that which he had just enjoined, he exclaims in compassionate yet righteous condemnation, **Woe unto you, Pharisees!**

**Ye pay tithe.** Ye pay a tenth part to the priests and Levites for the service of God. "Of the yearly products of the land, the first-fruits were first deducted; out of the rest, the tenth part was taken for the Levites (Num. 18 : 21); of the nine remaining parts, another tenth part is to be taken and brought to Jerusalem, and there eaten by the owners (Deut. 12 : 6), though this second tithe was every third year distributed to the poor, Deut. 14 : 28." —PROF. BUSH on Lev. 27 : 30. The Mosaic law did not define strictly what things were subject to the tithe, but extended it generally to vegetables and animals, Lev. 27 : 30-32. The Jewish canons applied the law to everything that was eatable in the field, embracing the smallest garden-herbs and aromatic plants. Hence, tithe was paid of the *mint*, garden or spearmint; *rue*, a shrubby plant about two feet high, and doubtless a garden-plant in the days of our Lord. Mr. Tristram collected four species in Palestine. **All manner of herbs, every herb.** **Pass over,** neg-

lect. **Judgment**, the distinguishing between right and wrong; the determining according to the principles of right and law, Luke 12 : 57. They



RUE.

neglected justice and equity toward others. **Love of God**, love to him, which would result in a life of devotion and obedience. Compare Mic. 6 : 8; Hos. 12 : 6. **These ought ye to have done.** These great moral requirements ought to have been observed; the internal and spiritual observance of the law ought to have been specially regarded. And at the same time the smaller matters of the law should not be neglected. Jesus censured the Pharisees, not for strictly keeping the latter, but for con-

- 43 other undone. <sup>a</sup>Woe unto you, Pharisees! for ye love the uppermost seats in the synagogues, and
- 44 greetings in the markets. <sup>b</sup>Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! <sup>c</sup>for ye are as graves which appear not, and the men that walk over *them* are not aware of *them*.
- 45 Then answered one of the lawyers, and said unto him, Master, thus saying thou reproachest us also.
- 46 And he said, Woe unto you also, *ye* lawyers! <sup>d</sup>for ye lade men with burdens grievous to be borne, and ye
- 47 yourselves touch not the burdens with one of your fingers. <sup>e</sup>Woe unto you! for ye build the sepulchres of
- 48 the prophets, and your fathers killed them. Truly ye

<sup>a</sup>Mt. 23. 6, 7; Mk 12. 38, 39.

<sup>b</sup>ch. 20. 46; Mt. 23 27, 28.

<sup>c</sup>Ps. 5. 9.

<sup>d</sup>Is. 10. 1; Mt. 23 4.

<sup>e</sup>Mt. 23. 29-36.

necting with this a neglect of the former, which in themselves were the more important.

43. **Uppermost seats in the synagogues**, *the first seats*, the foremost row, nearest the reading-desk and the ark, where the sacred books were kept. They loved positions of honor. They also loved reverential salutations, titles of honor, and praise of men. **Greetings**, deferential and complimentary salutations. **Markets**, the chief places of public concourse.

44. **Scribes** are now named, who were mostly Pharisees. See on ch. 5 : 30. **Hypocrites**, they who, like stage actors, put on masks and assume characters that do not belong to them—dissemblers, base pretenders. But *scribes*, *Pharisees*, *hypocrites*, are omitted by the highest critical authorities; supposed to have been taken from the similar passage in Matthew. The illustration that follows is most striking. They are like *graves* or *tombs* that are hidden from view by age or the growth of grass and weeds, and men passing over are defiled. So men were spiritually polluted by these hypocrites, whose pretended righteousness hid from view their depraved characters. A similar yet very dissimilar illustration is found in Matt. 23 : 27. There the sepulchres are *whitened*, and the ostentation of the Pharisees is reproved; here the tombs are not seen, and their inward, secret wickedness is condemned.

45. **One of the lawyers**, one skilled in the Mosaic law, a teacher and interpreter of the divine law. See on ch. 7 : 30. **Master, Teacher**. Thus saying, *saying these things*. **Thou reproachest us also**. The lawyer was very

probably a Pharisee, and he felt that the denunciations applied with force to leading and learned Pharisees. He may have felt his dignity wounded. Perhaps he would overawe the Saviour by reminding him that he was speaking, not merely against the great mass of the Pharisees, but against the learned class among them. Beware! this thou canst not do with safety. If so, the lawyer soon found that Jesus faithfully reproved wickedness, whether found in high or low stations.

46. **For ye lade, load, men**. Jesus shows how they said and did not. **Burdens**. By their interpretation of the law they placed oppressive rites and observances upon the people. They rigidly explained the letter rather than the spirit. They made the law thus to be heavy, oppressive, and **grievous to be borne**, irksome and intolerable. The language is especially applicable to their interpretations of the law. In addition, it may be applied to their traditional requirements, which were even more burdensome and intolerable. **Ye yourselves touch not**, etc. Much less will they *bear* them. **With one of your fingers**. Much less will they take them with the hand and place them upon *their own shoulders*. They make not the slightest attempt to give the law a true spiritual obedience, Acts 15 : 10; Rom. 2 : 17-23; Gal. 6 : 13.

47. **Ye build the sepulchres**. Sepulchres among the Jews were often caverns, or were hewn in rocks on the sides of hills and the entrance decorated with ornaments, Gen. 23 : 9; Isa. 22 : 16. **And your fathers killed them**, the prophets. Jesus did not condemn the mere fact that the Pharisees built the sepulchres

bear witness that ye allow the deeds of your fathers: for they indeed killed them, and ye build their sepulchres.

49 Therefore also said the wisdom of God, <sup>1</sup>I will send them prophets and apostles, and *some* of them they shall <sup>1</sup>Mt. 23. 34.  
50 slay and persecute; that the blood of all the prophets,

and adorned the tombs of the martyrs of preceding ages. By thus doing they recognized and bore testimony to the goodness and fidelity of righteous men of old. All this would have been well had they not been base hypocrites and manifesting a tendency to creature worship directly opposed in doctrine and practice to these old prophets, and in sympathy with their murderers.

48. **Truly, therefore, so then. Ye bear witness,** to the fact. By your own works you are witnesses to the deeds of your fathers and that you are the sons of persecutors and murderers. **That ye allow,** etc. Rather, *And ye approve or assent to the deeds of your fathers*; by not following the teachings of the prophets, and by rejecting the Messiah whom they foretold, you resemble your fathers in disposition and life, and give evidence to yourselves that you are their sons or descendants *spiritually* as well as naturally, and that nothing they did will be too bad for you to do.

Dr. Thomson speaks of the prevalent superstitions and idolatrous reverence in Oriental countries of the tombs of prophets: "So fanatical are they in their zeal that they would tear any man to pieces who should put dishonor upon these sacred shrines. It was for rebuking this and other kinds of idolatry that 'the fathers killed the prophets'; and those who built their tombs would in like manner kill any one who condemned *their* idolatrous reverence for these very sepulchres. Thus the Pharisees, by the very act of building these tombs of the prophets and honoring them as they did, showed plainly that they were actuated by the same spirit that led their fathers to kill them; and to make this matter self-evident, they very soon proceeded to crucify the Lord of the prophets because of his faithful rebukes."—*Land and Book*, vol. ii., p. 493. This shows one phase of resemblance between them and their fathers. Some of the oldest and best manuscripts end this verse thus, and

*ye build*, omitting the words **their sepulchres**.

49. Having pronounced upon them these terrible words, Jesus proceeds to tell how they would fill up the measure of their fathers by committing their deeds, and even forming a climax of all preceding generations in respect to their sins, guilt, and punishment.

**Therefore**, on account of what had just been affirmed. Since such is your character, and you imitate your fathers, you shall have opportunity to show your malignant wickedness. **The wisdom of God**, God in his wisdom has said, or God in his wisdom by me has said. Wisdom of God is supposed by many to mean Christ as he then was. But then he would have said, *I will send you*, instead of *I will send them*. Some regard it as a quotation from some ancient prophecy. Perhaps there is an allusion to 2 Chron. 24:18-22. Yet Christ was empowered to declare what the counsels of divine wisdom had determined, without regard to any ancient prophecy. **I will send them**, I send them as messengers of salvation, but in the end they will prove swift witnesses of destruction against you on account of your treatment of them. Christ may indeed (see above) be regarded as the wisdom of God, the sender of prophets, and the great Prophet of prophets. The objection above cannot be urged against God in Christ having thus determined and declared in the past. **Prophets and apostles**, John the Baptist, ch. 3:2; the apostles, ch. 9:1, 2; the seventy, ch. 10:1; and other preachers of the gospel, such as Stephen, Acts 6:5. **Some of them ye shall slay and persecute**. You shall inflict upon them all manner of indignities, even unto the most cruel death. The Acts of the Apostles is a general witness to the sufferings of Christians at the hands of the Jews, Acts 5:40; 7:59; 8:3; 12:2; 13:50; 14:19, etc.

50. **That**. The idea is not merely that this is to be the *consequence*, but that it enters into the divine *design*. *That*

- which was shed from the foundation of the world,
- 51 <sup>m</sup> may be required of this generation; <sup>n</sup> from the blood of Abel unto <sup>o</sup> the blood of Zacharias, which perished between the altar and the temple: verily I say unto
- 52 you, It shall be required of this generation. <sup>p</sup> Woe unto you, lawyers! for ye have taken away the key of knowledge: ye enter not in yourselves, and them that were entering in ye hindered. <sup>r</sup> Mt. 23. 13.
- 53 And as he said these things unto them, the scribes and the Pharisees began <sup>q</sup> to urge *him* vehemently, <sup>q</sup> Ps. 22. 14. ,2
- 54 and to provoke him to speak of many things: laying

is equivalent to *in order that*. It was the design of God that this generation should be, as it were, the focus of the world's wickedness and punishment. **The blood of all the prophets**, the punishment for shedding it. The sins of the fathers should be visited upon the children (Ex. 20 : 5), especially of that generation which sanctions the sins of the past, and even went beyond them.

51. **Abel, Zacharias.** Abel was the first righteous martyr, and the first recorded in the Bible, and Zachariah, the son of Jehoiada, is the last one recorded, according to the Jewish arrangement of the Old Testament, 2 Chron. 24 : 20-22. His last words were, "The Lord look upon it and *require it.*" **Between the altar and the temple**, in the court of the priests, between the temple proper, the sanctuary, and the altar of burnt-offering. See on ch. 1 : 9. **This generation.** About forty years from this time Jerusalem was destroyed. It was, therefore, within the lifetime of many then living.

52. **Ye have taken away the key of knowledge**, rather, *ye took away*, by their false teaching, vain traditions, and hierarchical influence. The doctors or teachers of the law are said to have received a key upon entering their office, symbolical of their province and ability to open the treasures of divine knowledge to others. Yet they had not used these themselves nor allowed others to use them. By their traditions and methods of interpreting Scripture they had hid or put a wrong meaning upon those passages which speak of the Messiah; and thus they **entered not** in themselves, and **hindered** those that were entering into the Messiah's kingdom. The sin is common in every **age**.

53. **And as he said these things to them.** The reading of this clause varies much in ancient manuscripts. According to some of the oldest manuscripts and many high critical authorities, it should be, *and when he had gone out thence*, from the house of the Pharisee, ver. 37. This reading has internal probability. The effect of his discourse upon the scribes and Pharisees was doubtless great; but Jesus departing they soon recover, and plotting they seek him, in order to carry out their malicious designs. **Began to urge him vehemently.** Some translate, *began to be very angry, or intensely embittered against him*, which is allowable. From what follows, however, it seems better to render as above, *urge him vehemently, press him greatly*. Doddridge renders, *began fiercely to fasten upon him*. **And provoke him to speak.** Literally, *to mouth it out*. Dr. Farrar (*Life of Christ*, vol. i., p. 467) thus graphically describes the scene: "The feast broke up in confusion. The scribes and Pharisees threw off the mask. From fawning friends and interested inquirers they suddenly sprang up in their true guise as deadly opponents. They surrounded Jesus, they pressed upon him vehemently, persistently, almost threateningly; they began to pour upon him a flood of questions, to examine, to catechise him, to try and force words out of him, lying in ambush, like eager hunters, to spring upon any confession of ignorance, on any mistake of fact—above all, on any trace of heresy on which they might found that legal accusation by which before long they hoped to put him down."

54. **Lying in wait for him**, like an enemy lying in ambush. Malignantly and craftily lying in wait and laying snares

wait for him, and <sup>r</sup> seeking to catch something out of <sup>r</sup> Mk. 12. 13. his mouth, that they might accuse him.

for him in their assault of questions and words. Compare Heb. 12 : 3 ; 1 Pet. 2 : 23. **And seeking** is omitted by some eminent authorities, but there is much in favor of simply omitting *and* and reading *seeking*. **To catch**, to lay hold of, catch, as in hunting, **something**, some word or expression, **from his mouth**. This is in harmony with the figure of the preceding verb, "lying in wait." Compare Mic. 7 : 2 ; 1 Sam. 26 : 20 ; Lam. 4 : 18. **That they might accuse him** ; omitted in the best text, but doubtless their object.

We have here one of the darkest pictures of Jewish opposition. We have no information concerning the answers of Jesus, or whether he answered at all. From the following chapter we learn that an immense multitude gathers, and then he speaks to them of the Pharisees.

#### REMARKS.

1. Christ teaches us to pray by his example, words, Spirit, and providential dealings, ver. 1 ; ch. 22 : 32, 40 ; 24 : 49.

2. If we desire above all things the glory of God, the advancement of his cause, and the accomplishment of his will among men, deliverance from sin and temptation ; if we feel our daily dependence on God for both temporal and spiritual supplies, and exercise a spirit of forgiveness,—then our prayers are acceptable to God through Christ, and will be answered, vers. 2-4 ; Ps. 115 : 1 ; 1 John 5 : 14.

3. It is not only proper, but it is also our duty, to pray for daily food, ver. 3, Gen. 28 : 20, 21 ; Prov. 30 : 8 ; 1 Tim. 6 : 8.

4. An unforgiving or a revengeful spirit closes the door of mercy, but a forgiving spirit indicates a proper state for receiving forgiveness, ver. 4 ; Matt. 3 : 14, 15.

5. If we seek God's guidance, our trials, temptations, and the evils to which we are exposed shall result in our highest good, ver. 5, Job 23 : 10 ; Rom. 8 : 28 ; 1 Cor. 10 : 13 ; James 4 : 7.

6. "Midnight beggars are God's delight, Isa. 26 : 9 ; Sol. Songs 3 : 1."—AUGUSTINE. Night devotions have been early in the world, God often appeared to man by night. Before day Abraham arose to sacrifice his son. In the night Jacob wrestled with God and obtained the blessing. In the night God led the Israelites out of Egypt. Samuel cried unto the Lord all night. David 'watered his couch with tears' in the night."—W. H. VAN DOREN. Vers. 5, 6 ; Ps. 6 : 6 ; 42 : 8 ; 77 : 6.

7. Learn the duty of hospitality not grudgingly but cheerfully given, vers. 5-8 ; Heb. 13 : 2.

8. We must pray for others as well as for ourselves, vers. 5-7 ; Job 42 : 10 ; 1 Tim. 2 : 1 ; Gen. 18 : 23-33 ; Ex. 32 : 31-33 ; Rom. 10 : 1.

9. While God promises to answer prayer in general, he promises to answer importunate prayer in particular, vers. 8-11 ; ch. 18 : 7, 8 ; Deut. 4 : 29 ; James 5 : 16-18.

10. Yet even importunity in prayer may sometimes seem to fail. God grants, indeed, prompt and speedy answers, but sometimes he tests his people and develops their faith by delays, vers. 9, 10 ; ch. 18 : 8 ; 12 : 12 ; Isa. 65 : 24 ; Mark 7 : 29 ; Matt. 10 : 19.

11. Let us not mistake obstinacy in our requests for importunity in prayer, vers. 5-10 ; 1 Sam. 8 : 19 ; Isa. 1 : 15 ; Jer. 5 : 31.

12. The parental character of God an encouragement to prayer, vers. 11-13 ; Rom. 8 : 32.

13. The sum of all our blessings is the Holy Spirit, and this is unconditionally promised to the prayer of faith through Christ, ver. 13 ; ch. 24 : 49 ; John 16 : 7, 24.

14. The devil makes his subjects dumb in regard to the soul, God, and eternity, ver. 14.

15. Infidels and opposers of Christ will ascribe his works and the success of his gospel to any other cause rather than the true one, ver. 15 ; Matt. 9 : 34 ; 12 : 24 ; John 7 : 20.

16. Many profess unbelief from want of evidence, and others are seeking greater evidence, when that which God

has given them is all-sufficient, ver. 16; 1 Cor. 1 : 22.

17. Ascribing the work of God to the devil is peculiarly offensive to God and dangerous to men, vers. 17-20; Mark 3 : 29, 30.

18. There are two opposing kingdoms in this world, of Christ and of the devil, vers. 17-22; John 8 : 8-10.

19. Jesus, who cast out demons, will at last cast out the devil and his angels, vers. 21, 22; Rev. 20 : 1-3.

20. There can be no neutrals in these kingdoms. We must be either for Christ or against him, ver. 23; Matt. 6 : 24.

21. Christians should seek unity in faith, practice, and in the promulgation of the truth. Let them learn a lesson from the kingdom of darkness, which will not divide against itself, so as to destroy itself, vers. 17-23; John 17 : 17, 20-23.

22. Resisting the influences of the Spirit and the impressions of truth, opposing the gospel and its evidences, or seeking for a mere outward reformation to a neglect of an inward change, will tend to a greater hardness of heart and blindness of mind, and will put the soul more and more into the power of the devil, ver. 13; ch. 23 : 15; 2 Pet. 2 : 21, 22; 2 Tim. 3 : 13.

23. There is no safety but in a thorough change of heart. Satan must not only be cast out, but the Holy Spirit must take his place. Christ must dwell in the heart by faith, vers. 24-27.

24. How often does the religion of men expend itself with the sweeping and garnishing of hypocrisy or formality! vers. 24-27.

25. How fearful the state of spiritual relapse! vers. 24-27; Rom. 1 : 28; 2 Pet. 2 : 21.

26. Pious children are a joy and a blessing to their parents, ver. 27; Prov. 15 : 20.

27. A new heart and a new life are a greater honor than the mere motherhood of Christ, ver. 27; ch. 2 : 34.

28. It is common to judge of persons by their external relations and privileges, but God judges by the state of the heart, vers. 27, 28; 1 Sam. 16 : 7; John 7 : 24; 2 Cor. 5 : 12; 10 : 7.

29. A certain preparation of heart is necessary to a right perception of the evidences of Christ and the gospel, ver.

29; Matt. 13 : 14-16; Luke 24 : 25, 45; 1 Cor. 1 : 24.

30. Wicked men often think there are no evidences to gospel truth, because they are too blind to see them, ver. 29; John 7 : 17; Acts 28 : 27.

31. The resurrection of Christ was the greatest of his miracles and the crowning evidence of his divine mission, ver. 30; 1 Cor. 15 : 12-18.

32. "Many from the remotest regions of the earth, who, by some faint report of the gospel, have been led to inquire after Christ and his salvation, will rise up against unbelievers of this age and nation."—SCOTT. Vers. 31, 32; Matt. 8 : 11, 12.

33. The great end in all good works should be the glory of God. Christ is the light of the world, ver. 33; John 8 : 12.

34. If we would have the single eye, our spiritual sight must be enlightened by the Holy Spirit and fixed on Christ by faith. It is impossible to have two objects of supreme good at once, ver. 34.

35. There is great danger of men holding as religious truth pernicious error, because men love darkness rather than light, ver. 35; John 3 : 19; Jer. 5 : 31; Col. 2 : 8.

36. "If thy inner man be light, everything will be full of light, for all will be illuminated by the light of Christ," ver. 36.—W. H. VAN DOREN.

37. Jesus improved meal-time for religious instruction. The meals for the body may be turned into banquets for the soul, ver. 37; ch. 7 : 39-47.

38. They who lay great stress on forms and ceremonies, the commandment of men, should beware lest in so doing they censure Christ, ver. 38; Matt. 15 : 7-9.

39. "Let us seek to be pure in heart if we would be vessels sanctified and made meet for the Master's use," vers. 39, 40; Matt. 5 : 8; Heb. 12 : 14; James 4 : 8.

40. "The heart may be a temple of God or a grave, a heaven or a hell."—STIER. Vers. 39, 40; Matt. 12 : 15; Eccl. 9 : 3; Jer. 17 : 9; Rom. 3 : 12-16; 1 Cor. 3 : 16.

41. Give first thy heart, be consecrated to God; and nothing can hurt thee, ver. 41; Ps. 51 : 17; Rom. 12 : 1; Matt. 5 : 8; Tit. 1 : 15.

42. Careful attention to outward observances with neglect of internal duty is an evidence that men are deceivers or deceived, ver. 42; Matt. 5 : 7; 9 : 13; Hos. 4 : 1; Rom. 16 : 18; 2 Cor. 11 : 13-15.

43. No external performances can stand in the place of moral and spiritual service, vers. 42, 43; ch. 18 : 11-14.

44. A religion that seeks a mere outward appearance, and has for its motive the applause of men, is not only destitute of the power of godliness, but an enemy to it and its graces, ver. 44; Matt. 6 : 1, 5, 16; 2 Tim. 3 : 2-5; 2 Pet. 2 : 3; 3 John 9.

45. They who are satisfied to *appear* what they *should be* are *inwardly* what they *should not be*, ver. 44; Matt. 6 : 1; 7 : 21; 25 : 5-12.

46. How valuable must pure religion be, which men are at so much trouble to counterfeit! vers. 42-54; 1 Tim. 4 : 8.

47. The true character of men is to be learned from their conduct rather than from their words, ver. 45; Matt. 7 : 15-21.

48. Legalists and false teachers impose upon men heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, but in contrast the yoke of Christ is easy and his burden is light, ver. 46; ch. 11 : 28-30; Acts 15 : 10, 28, 29; Gal. 5 : 1.

49. The glorification of martyrs may be carried so far as to amount to creature-worship, manifesting principles and a spirit directly opposed to that of the martyrs themselves, vers. 47, 48; John 8 : 39, 40.

50. The sins of men and nations often accumulate from generation to generation, vers. 49, 50; Ex. 20 : 5.

51. Men are sinning against the accumulated light of the past; and if lost, must suffer a corresponding punishment, ver. 51.

52. How often by false doctrine and wicked influence is Christ as a Saviour hid from the people! Thus Rome hides the key by her Latin prayers and suppressed or misinterpreted Bible, ver. 52.

53. When men are convicted and not converted, they often show their increased hatred to Christ and the truth, vers. 53, 54.

54. Wicked men by their treatment of Christ and the gospel prove the truth of Scripture, vers. 53, 54; 1 Tim. 4 : 1, 2; 1 John 2 : 18, 19.

## CHAPTER XII.

This chapter seems closely connected with the preceding. While Jesus is engaged in controversy with the Pharisees, who use every means to entrap him in his words, the multitude gathers in vast numbers, and he discourses in their hearing to his disciples, vers. 1, 2. He warns them against hypocrisy (2, 3); against concealing their religious character and views for fear of men, 4-7. He will reward those who confess him and punish those who deny him, and especially those who blaspheme the Spirit, and promises help in their trials before men, 8-12. Refusing to be a judge in dividing an inheritance, he warns them against covetousness (13-15), and illustrates it by the parable of the rich fool (16-21), and enforces the duty of not being unduly solicitous about the body, its food and raiment, but to bestow special care upon the soul, 22-31. He gives a word of encouragement, exhorts them to a self-denying and whole-hearted service (32-34), to diligence and watchfulness, from illustrations of faithfulness and unfaithfulness on the part of stewards and servants, 35-48. Jesus then announces a most singular object or result of his mission, foretells the divisions which the gospel shall produce in the world (49-53), and finally, reproving their want of spiritual discernment, he exhorts them to improve their season of grace and salvation and seek immediate reconciliation, 54-59.

Much in this discourse is recorded by Matthew in connection with other events. On the one hand, it seems an act of injustice to Luke to conform him to Matthew, and, on the other, of folly to adjust Matthew to Luke. It is better to regard each as presenting separate discourses containing various weighty truths such as Jesus sometimes repeated, and other truths similar to them. Compare author's *Harmony*, note on § 109.

1-12. JESUS WARNS HIS DISCIPLES AGAINST HYPOCRISY, AND EXHORTS THEM FEARLESSLY TO CONFESS HIM BEFORE MEN. Compare Matt. 10 : 19, 26-33; 12 : 32. Van Oosterzee remarks, regarding the first thirty-four verses of this chapter, that in vers. 1-12 the tone of warning predominates, in vers. 13-

*Jesus warns his disciples against hypocrisy, and exhorts them to confess Christ.*

XII. IN \*the mean time, when there were gathered together an innumerable multitude of people, inso-much that they trode one upon another, he began to say unto his disciples; First of all, \*beware ye of the 2 leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy. \*For there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; 3 neither hid, that shall not be known. Therefore whatsoever ye have spoken in darkness shall be heard in the light; and that which ye have spoken in the ear in closets shall be proclaimed upon the housetops.

\* Mt. 16. 6; Mk. 9 15.

\* Mt. 16. 12; 1 Co 5. 7, 8.  
\* ch. 8. 17; Mt. 10. 26, 33; Mk. 4. 22.

21 the tone of instruction, and in vers. 22-34 the tone of encouragement.

1. **In the mean time, during which.** While the Pharisees were plotting and assailing Jesus with ensnaring questions, ch. 11 : 53, 54. Whatever reading we adopt in ch. 11 : 53, it is not necessary to suppose Jesus still at the table. It was, however, soon after. **Innumerable multitude, the multitude in myriads or tens of thousands.** This is an expression denoting indefinitely a very large multitude. **Gathered together, hastily.** The plotting and angry attack of the Pharisees may have called the crowd together suddenly. **Insomuch that they trode one upon another.** It was a time of excitement. All wanted to see and hear the great Teacher. The anger of the Pharisees increased the desire. There was a great crowding among the multitude, each one eager to see and get a good position. Naturally there would be some treading one upon another. **First of all.** Some would join these words with what follows, *first of all, beware.* This is hardly admissible; it is better to join it with *his disciples.* He began to speak *first to his disciples*; afterward he spoke to all the multitude, ver. 13. It is especially worthy of notice that while the Pharisees are giving vent to their rage, Jesus addresses neither them nor the multitude, but his disciples in the hearing of all. He thus exhibits great self-control and forbearance.

**Beware, take heed to yourselves.** Jesus warns his disciples against the leading sin of the Pharisees. The language implies that the disciples were more or less under its influence, and

that it was one against which they would find it necessary to watch carefully. **Leaven** is a figure of diffusive and assimilating power, generally, though not always, used in Scripture to represent that which is corrupt and evil. See on ch. 13 : 21. The leaven of the Pharisees denoted their false doctrines (Matt. 16 : 12) or pernicious instruction, the pervading spirit and essence of which was **hypocrisy.** See on ch. 11 : 44. Hypocrisy was the great sin of the Pharisees, which, like leaven, had permeated their hearts, lives, conduct, and teaching. The disciples would, of course, guard against the openly vicious, but not always against such great pretenders to holiness and religious knowledge. Hence the necessity of the warning.

2. **For** introduces the reason for giving special heed against falling into this leading sin of the Pharisees. **There is nothing covered, etc.,** a proverbial saying, implying that both truth and error, though covered up and hid for a time, should be brought to light. Hypocrisy would be unmasked, truth would be displayed and vindicated. Nothing which had been taught in secret was to be withheld, but all announced publicly. The secret designs, too, of their enemies would also be made known, exposed to the light of truth, and condemned at the judgment, Eph. 5 : 13 ; 1 Cor. 4 : 5.

3. The principal thought of the preceding verse expanded and specially applied to their words. **Whatsoever ye have spoken in darkness, etc.,** privately, secretly, as in the darkness of night. **That which ye have spoken, whispered, as it were, in the**



- 7 <sup>b</sup> but even the very hairs of your heads are all numbered. Fear not, therefore: <sup>c</sup> ye are of more value than many sparrows.
- 8 Also I say unto you, <sup>d</sup> Whosoever shall confess me before men, <sup>e</sup> him shall the Son of man also confess
- 9 before the angels of God: <sup>f</sup> but he that denieth me before men shall be denied before the angels of God.
- 10 And <sup>g</sup> whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but unto him that blasphemeth against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven.

<sup>b</sup> ch. 21. 18; 1 Sam. 14. 45; 2 Sam. 14. 11; Ac. 27. 34.  
<sup>c</sup> Mt. 6. 26; 12. 11.  
<sup>d</sup> Ps. 119. 46; Mt. 10. 32; Ro. 10. 9, 10; 2 Tim. 1. 8; 1 John 2. 23.  
<sup>e</sup> Mt. 25. 34; Rev. 3. 5.  
<sup>f</sup> ch. 9. 26; Mt. 20. 70-75; Mk. 8. 38; 2 Tim. 2. 12, 13; 2 Pet. 2. 1.

<sup>g</sup> Mt. 12. 31, 32; Mk. 3. 28; 1 John 5. 16.

Jerusalem, and crevices of the city walls, are very numerous. In some of the more lonely streets they are so noisy as almost to overpower every other sound." Matthew (10 : 29) says *two sparrows for a farthing*, thus presenting a pleasing variety and illustrating a law of trade, that the price of an article decreases according to the number sold.

7. **But even the very hairs of your head,** etc. A proverbial expression, showing in the most forcible language the special providential care of God over his children. Their very hairs, and the smallest things that pertain to them, are precious; and they are watched over and cared for. How much **more value than many sparrows** are they who have an intelligent and immortal nature, and have been redeemed by such a costly price as the precious blood of Christ! 1 Pet. 1 : 18, 19. The argument is from the less to the greater, very similar to that in Matt. 6 : 26. Compare 1 Sam. 14 : 45; ch. 21 : 18; Acts 27 : 34.

8, 9. Yet another reason for encouragement and boldness amid persecution: Fidelity will be approved and rewarded; the unfaithful and the deniers of his name shall be rejected and punished. **Whosoever.** The application is made general: *Every one.* **Confess me before men.** Shall acknowledge me as the Messiah, his Lord and Teacher. **Him shall the Son of man confess,** acknowledge as his disciple, **before the angels of God,** as their Intercessor, as their Judge, and in the glories of the heavenly kingdom. But he that **denieth** him, refuses to own him as his Lord and Teacher, the Messiah, he will also **deny,** reject, and disown as his at the

judgment, before the holy angels. The confession must be true and genuine, indicative of the state of the heart as united in a spiritual, living union with Christ. So also the denial must be indicative of a heart that really refuses to receive Christ and acknowledge him as Lord. Hence "the Lord will not confess the confessing Judas, nor deny the denying Peter."—ALFORD.

10. From denials Jesus proceeds to blasphemy. He brings the two kinds of blasphemy into prominence, since they are especially connected with the new dispensation. **Shall speak a word against.** The language here is to be interpreted by the connection, and evidently refers to blasphemy. It must be borne in mind that the word translated *blaspheme* primarily means *to speak evil of*, to rail at, to slander. And it is worthy of notice that this sin against the Spirit is always connected with speaking, oral utterance—that malignity which finds vent in blasphemous language. **Son of Man.** The Messiah, the second person of the Trinity, veiled in human flesh and in humiliation, Phil. 2 : 6-8; see ch. 5 : 24. His divine character might be more easily overlooked than after his resurrection. Blasphemy against him was therefore less heinous than now. But the same is true of blasphemy against the Spirit; for his power was also less manifest before the day of Pentecost than since. As the truth then uttered was intended not merely for that particular occasion, but for the whole gospel dispensation, we must regard it as referring to Christ and the Holy Spirit, the second and third persons of the Godhead.

**Blasphemeth, to speak evil.** Among

11 <sup>a</sup> And when they bring you unto the synagogues, <sup>b</sup> ch. 21. 14; Mt. 10. 17-20; Mk. 13. 11.

the heathen, speaking evil of their gods, as well as of their fellow-men, was common and scarcely thought worthy of blame. But among the Jews, reviling the one true God was regarded as a terrible and capital crime. Hence the word in Scripture, when applied to God, took upon itself the stronger meaning to *blaspheme*, to speak irreverently and impiously to God, or of God, or of sacred things. As reviling a fellow-man presupposes a malicious purpose, so blasphemy presupposes an impious intention to detract from the glory of God, and to alienate the minds of others from the love and reverence of God. Wherever it is spoken of in Scripture it is also connected with oral utterance. An idea of this sin may be gained from Lev. 24 : 10-16, where the son of an Israelitish woman blasphemed the name of Jehovah, vented against him abuse and imprecations, and he was stoned to death. It was a most heinous sin, and amounted to treason under the theocracy. Another instance is recorded in 2 Kings 18 : 28-35; 19 : 1-6, where Jehovah and his perfections are maliciously reviled. See also Rev. 16 : 10, 11.

We may conceive a gradation of blasphemy, the highest being that against the Holy Spirit, as God convicting, renewing, and sanctifying. Next to this is that against the Son (Matt. 12 : 32), as God manifested in the flesh, engaged in the work of redemption. Then that against the Father, or God, the great original source of love and mercy, or, as Whedon styles him, the original background of Deity. And lowest of all, speaking reproachfully of sacred things.

What, then, is it to **blaspheme against the Holy Spirit?** It cannot be mere continued opposition to the gospel, obstinate impenitence, or final unbelief, for this is not specific enough; and besides, on the same principle by which this is regarded as unpardonable, every sin might be styled unpardonable if the individual continues to indulge in it. The sin, however, was of a specific kind, and seems to have been wilfully maligning and vilifying the Holy Spirit. This

seems evident from Matt. 12 : 24-32. The Pharisees had attributed the power of Jesus to his being a colleague with Satan, and had used the contemptuous and opprobrious term *Beelzebub*, and had also said, "He hath an unclean spirit," Mark 3 : 30. They were guilty in this of blasphemy against the Son, and especially his divine nature. He warns them, therefore, that but a step further and their sin would be unpardonable. The sin, however, implies a *state of heart*, malignant and wilful opposition to the Spirit. Thus the Pharisees, surrounded with abundant evidence that Jesus was the Son of God, exercised a malignant and wilful opposition to him. Their abusive language, under these circumstances an index of the malignity within, was blasphemy against the Son. So in regard to blaspheming against the Spirit, there must be a knowledge and a full intention. It can be committed, therefore, only where a person is surrounded with the evident manifestations of the Spirit, and under his influence; where he knows and is convicted that it is the Spirit, and yet in his opposition maliciously and wilfully maligns and traduces the Spirit. Compare 1 Tim. 1 : 13, where we learn that Saul of Tarsus, the *blasphemer*, obtained mercy because he did it ignorantly in unbelief. The sin is more aggravated than grieving the Spirit (Eph. 4 : 30); it is the extreme and highest form of resisting the Spirit, Acts 7 : 51. It is without doubt the sin unto death (1 John 5 : 15), and in an aggravated form is referred to in Heb. 10 : 29 as doing despite unto the Spirit of grace. Compare Heb. 6 : 4-8; 2 Tim. 3 : 8; Jude 4, 12, 13.

Since God comes to the hearts of men only as the Holy Spirit, sins against the Spirit are the most heinous, being the most directly against God, and blasphemy against him the extreme of all sin. It is an insult which always oversteps that line between God's patience and his wrath, which results in incorrigible hardness of heart and in the departure of the Spirit for ever. Hence it is a sin which, both from its nature and the consequent final departure of the Spirit, can **never be forgiven.**

and unto magistrates, and powers, take ye no thought how or what thing ye shall answer, or what ye shall say: <sup>1</sup>for the Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour what ye ought to say.

<sup>1</sup>ch. 21. 15; Ac. 4  
8; 7. 2, 55.

*Cautions against covetousness; and exhortations to confidence in God, and to watchfulness.*

13 And one of the company said unto him, Master, speak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance  
14 with me. And he said unto him, <sup>1</sup>Man, who made

<sup>1</sup>Ex. 2. 14; John  
8. 11; 16. 36.

To the question, *Can this sin be now committed?* it must be answered, Most assuredly. The Holy Spirit is in the world among the followers of Christ, convicting the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment. He can be thus opposed and blasphemed. He comes in contact with men, and under the light of the gospel they have all the knowledge necessary for committing so terrible a sin. The great anxiety of many, however, especially of those under deep convictions of sin, lest they have committed the unpardonable sin, is unnecessary. Their anxiety is an evidence that they have not committed it, for their convictions show the presence and the striving of the Spirit, who still says, "Come." The spiritually blind and insensible, they who discover no compunctions of conscience and no striving of the Spirit, are the ones to be alarmed. And to all who are trifling with the Spirit, the fact that this sin may be committed should be a warning. Their trifling may grow into a resistance which shall be so intentional, so malicious, and so outspoken as to constitute this extreme of all sin.

11, 12. Jesus goes on to assure his disciples that in the hour of peril the Holy Spirit would be present with them to assist in their confession and defence. They would be brought before all kinds of tribunals: **synagogues**, which exercised certain judicial powers and punished by scourging; **magistrates**, tribunals either Jewish or heathen; **and powers**, *authorities*, all who are in authority. But at such times **take no thought**, etc. Be not unduly solicitous; be not anxious. See on ver. 22. **How**, the manner, **what**, the matter, of your defence. **For**, etc., giving the reason why they should not be anxious. Words would be given

them at the exact time needed—the **same hour**. See Acts 4: 8–12. And even more than this, they should be specially inspired and completely under the control of the Spirit as instruments, so that it should not be they that spake, but the Spirit of their Father speaking in them. We have here the inspiration of the apostles on certain occasions stated in the strongest possible terms. The promise of our Saviour gave them, however, no encouragement to preach generally without any forethought or previous preparation. It cannot be used to support any such practice.

13–21. **JESUS REFUSES TO DIVIDE AN INHERITANCE. THE PARABLE OF THE RICH MAN.** Related only by Luke.

13. **One of the company.** Evidently not a disciple, but some hearer who had been impressed with our Lord's wisdom and authority. In his earthly troubles he thought Jesus was just the one to set his matters right, and perhaps regarding him as the Messiah, he supposed it a part of his legitimate work. Just at this point Jesus very likely paused briefly in his discourse, and the man, with a mind full of his earthly troubles, gives vent to his request. **Master, teacher** **Speak to my brother**, who was probably standing by among the attentive listeners. **That he divide**, that he share with me. **The inheritance**, the patrimonial estate. According to the Mosaic law the oldest son had two shares, and the rest of the children had equal portions, Deut. 21: 17. Compare ch. 15: 12. It was, doubtless, the older brother against whom the complaint was made. This request shows that the people generally paid great deference to his word.

14. **Man.** Neither this word nor

15 me a judge or a divider over you? And he said unto them, <sup>k</sup>Take heed, and beware of covetousness: <sup>l</sup>for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.

16 And he spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully: and he thought within himself, saying, What

<sup>k</sup> Ex. 20. 17; Col. 3. 5; 1 Tim. 6. 7; Heb. 13. 5.  
<sup>l</sup> Pro. 15. 16; 16. 16; Ecc. 4. 6; Mt. 6. 25, 26.

the question that follows exhibits personal displeasure or disrespect; but there being a nobler word for man in Greek (Acts 1 : 11, 16; 2 : 14, 22, 29, 37), the less noble is here chosen as more consistent with the reproof contained in the question, Rom. 2 : 1, 3; 9 : 20.

**Who made me a judge, etc.** This question is almost the same as that of the Hebrews who rejected the arbitration of Moses, Ex. 2 : 14. *Who constitute me a judge*, in temporal affairs to give sentence, or a *divider*, a *distributor* of goods? The word translated *divider* is found only here in the New Testament. Some take it to mean a *private arbiter*, in distinction from the *judge* as a public officer. It seems better, however, to regard *divider* as explanatory of *judge*. Not only as a judge to give sentence, but as an umpire or arbitrator to apportion and distribute. **Over you**, implying superintendence and power over. *You* in the plural refers here to men in general. Jesus intimates in this answer that he had not been appointed to exercise temporal power, or to administer civil justice, or to settle family disputes. The interrogative form gives it emphasis, and it contains a reproof for such a misconception of his office and work. His kingdom was not of the world, but in the realm of truth, John 18 : 36, 37.

The principle here taught is consistent with arbitration and settlement of difficulties among brethren, 1 Cor. 6 : 1-6.

15. Jesus improves this opportunity by warning the people against covetousness, and by showing in a parable that a man's life does not consist in worldly possessions, however abundant. These words he addressed neither to the man nor his brother in particular, but to **them**, the people generally; yet doubtless they were in a measure fitted to them both. They contain a warning against a common sin, and a suggestion of man's true treasure.

**Take heed and beware.** A very full and strong expression: *See to it and be on your guard against.* **Covetousness.** According to the most ancient manuscripts, *all covetousness*; all kinds and degrees of *greediness* or *grasping for gain*. Covetousness is greedily keeping one's own as well as desiring and grasping for the things of others. It takes the affections and the heart, which belong to God (1 Col. 3 : 5), and unites with it trust in uncertain riches, 1 Tim. 6 : 17. One and perhaps both of these brothers were guilty of this sin; certainly he who was holding on to the disputed inheritance. Possibly the other also had manifested a desire to obtain more than his part.

**For** introduces a reason why they should be on their guard. **A man's life for time and eternity, consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.** It is not in his possessions, however abundant; it is of God. These cannot save his natural life, and his higher spiritual life may be lost through them. His life in no sense is dependent upon them. The following parable shows that abundance did not save the rich man, and its application in verse 21 brings to view what is necessary to man's true and higher life, to be "rich toward God."

16. **A parable.** See on ch. 8 : 4. **The ground**, with the idea of largeness. *The tract*, the large farm. It would appear that this man has become rich in the most commendable of all ways, through bountiful harvests. "It was *by God's blessing* that he became thus rich, which might have been a *real blessing* if he had known how to use it."—ALFORD. **Brought forth plentifully.** This in the original does not refer to harvests from year to year, but to one large crop, which much more than filled his barns.

17. **He thought within himself**, *he deliberated, reasoned within himself.* It was not an impulsive, hasty thought,

- shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow  
 18 my fruits? And he said, This will I do: <sup>m</sup> I will pull  
 down my barns, and build greater; and there will I  
 19 bestow all my fruits and my goods. And I will say  
 to my soul, <sup>n</sup> Soul, thou hast much goods laid up <sup>o</sup> for  
 many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, *and* be merry.  
 20 But God said unto him, *Thou fool*, this night <sup>p</sup> thy soul

<sup>m</sup> Ps. 17. 14.  
<sup>n</sup> Pro. 18. 11; Ecc  
 11. 9; 1 Cor. 15  
 32; Jam. 5. 5.  
<sup>o</sup> Job 14. 1; Pro. 17.  
 1; Jam. 4. 13-16.  
<sup>p</sup> Job 20. 22; 27 8;  
 Ps. 52. 7; J.-m  
 4. 14.

but anxious and careful deliberation in view of present necessities of the case and the prospects of the future. **Saying**, in his thoughts, perhaps uttered half aloud to himself, **What shall I do?** etc., a perfectly natural question. Abundance brings anxiety and labor. God often puts men into a position where they must ask and answer a similar question. Happy are they if they answer it aright. **I have no room to bestow**, etc. *to stow my fruits*, grains of various kinds. "Thou hast barns—the bosom of the needy, the houses of widows, the mouths of orphans."—AMBROSE. His idea was to hoard them up in safety. **My**. Notice how frequently this word is used in this and the next two verses. He does not remember God nor recognize his right in his property. He reserves all for himself, and makes it his portion without once thinking that death may put an end to all his expectations.

18. **This will I do**. These words express a deliberate purpose. His wrong and fatal conclusion could not be attributed to haste or impulse. **I will pull down my barns**, *storehouses, granaries*. The conclusion of a worldly man, inflated with prosperity and looking no farther than this life. **And build greater**, satisfied with their present site he would erect others more capacious in their place. **There will I bestow**, gather in, store. **Fruits**, not the same word as that translated fruit in the preceding verse, the *produce* of the field. **Goods**, in general, including those eatables which would not fall under the term fruits of the field. *Goods* may also have reference to those things which he had already in store. It was the custom to lay aside the fruits and grains for many years. Compare Gen. 41 : 35, 36, 49. In this conclusion there is no acknowledgment of God as the giver, no recognition of his personal responsibility and of duties to God and his fellow-men, but an ex-

hibition of selfishness. It is "my barns," "my fruits," "my goods."

19. In his base selfishness his thoughts are turned only upon himself and his own gratifications. **I will say**, exhibiting a spirit of vaunting pride and self-complacency. **To my soul**, to myself; that soul which was capable of being lowered into the basest servitude to the flesh, or developed and elevated in all its powers, and through the Spirit delivered from all bondage and raised into fellowship with God. *Soul* is here most fitting, being a sort of middle word between body and spirit.

**Thou hast much goods laid up for many years**. He boasts himself not merely of to-morrow but of many years. The self-deceit and confidence of a false hope. He had *many goods*, not only the abundant harvest of that year, but the accumulated stores of previous years; and then his fields would continue to yield. **Take thine ease, cease toiling and rest, eat, drink, and be merry**, the merriment or sensuous delight connected with feasting. Instead of seeking intellectual and spiritual enjoyments, he proposes to satisfy his sensuous and animal nature with pleasures. Compare 1 Cor. 15 : 32; Isa. 22 : 13, "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die." The Epicureans uttered many such sentiments of reckless sensualism. Yet this planning for future indulgence from overabundance is what most worldly men would do, and think it their right.

20. **But God said**. What a striking contrast to this man's soliloquy! This is a most vivid stroke of the parable. "How awfully do these words of God peal forth, as thunder from the bosom of a dark cloud, blackening the heavens which but a few moments previous were glowing with the splendors of the noon-day sun."—J. J. OWEN. We can only surmise how God spoke, whether by revelation, sudden presentiment, alarm of conscience, or by mortal sickness

- shall be required of thee: <sup>¶</sup>then whose shall those  
 21 things be, which thou hast provided? So is he that  
 layeth up treasure for himself, <sup>¶</sup>and is not rich toward  
 God.
- 22 And he said unto his disciples, Therefore I say unto

¶ Job 27. 15, 17; Ps.  
 39. 6; 49. 17-19.  
 Jer. 17. 11; 1 Tim  
 6. 7.  
 ¶ ver. 33; ch. 6. 24;  
 Mt. 6. 19, 20; 1  
 Tim. 6. 17-19;  
 Jam. 2. 5.

Whatever it was, God in effect said this. In the language of parable, God may be represented as saying what he does. **Thou fool.** Literally, *fool!* The pronoun weakens the deep scorn of the epithet. The Greek word means *without mind*, sense, or understanding. Compare Luke 11 : 40. What this man, and worldly men generally, might call worldly prudence, God regarded as sinful and fatal folly, Ps. 49 : 10-12.

**This night.** It was in the night that he formed his plans for future ease and enjoyment, vers. 18, 19. *This night* stands opposed to *many years* in the preceding verse. **Thy soul**, not only thine personally, but thine as it is, debased to mere sensual enjoyments. **Shall be required of thee**, thou shalt die. The soul demanded, given up, and judged, is in striking contrast to the soul in the preceding verse, taking its ease, eating, drinking, and making merry. Literally, *require thy soul of thee*; some supply *they* as the subject (*they shall require*, etc.), referring to the death-angels, or even to robbers and murderers, who may have come upon him that night. Yet if this verb be employed in the impersonal sense, *thy soul is required of thee*, the indefinite subject is implied. How and by whom required is left to conjecture. Sudden deaths frequently occur at night, Job 27 : 19, 20. His ponderings, enthusiastic plannings, and overwhelming joy during the night-watches may have brought on apoplexy, or some other cause of sudden death.

**Then, rather, and. Whose shall those things be which thou hast provided, or didst provide?** The interrogative form gives emphasis to the fact that his fruits and goods will be his no longer. Whose shall they be? Thine? Nay; thine no longer! They can afford thee no comfort in the grave. Growing out of this idea is that of the uncertainty to whom after death his possessions would come. Compare Job 27 : 16-19; Ps. 39 : 6; Eccl. 2 : 18, 19, 26.

21. Jesus applies the parable. **So, or thus, is he**, such is the folly and end of him who **layeth up treasures for himself**, as this rich man did, **and is not rich toward God**, or *in respect to God*. "There is a force and propriety in this phrase (translated *toward God*) which our language will not exactly express. It represents God as a depository, in whose hands the good man has lodged his treasure; and who has, as it were, made himself accountable for it in another and better world. Compare Prov. 19 : 17."—DODDRIDGE. God is the Christian's banker. *Rich*, in faith, in acts of charity and piety, 1 Tim. 6 : 18; James 2 : 5; Rev. 2 : 9. The trust and the aims of this rich man, and of all like him, terminated upon himself, and not upon God. What an enforcement of the exhortation, "Beware of covetousness" (ver. 15), is this parable and its application!

22-34. JESUS EXHORTS THEM TO TRUST IN GOD AND LAY UP HEAVENLY TREASURES. Compare 6 : 25-33, where the same things are taught with slight variations. The ever-changing audiences of our Lord needed the same and similar truths. The connection is close, and the discourse most natural. Since the very essence of covetousness was selfishness, and it was connected with and excited by distrust in God, it was most fitting for Jesus to turn the minds of his disciples away from themselves to an ever-watchful and loving Father, in whom they could trust and from whom they could receive unailing treasures.

22. **He said unto his disciples.** Having addressed the multitude (vers. 13, 15), he now turns again to his followers. **Therefore**, closely connecting the discourse with what precedes. *On account of this, or since this is so*, that earthly riches are unsatisfying, unreliable, and often fatal to man's highest interests. According to many manuscripts **you** is emphatic. *Therefore to you*, my disciples, in contrast to

- you, "Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat ; \*Mt. 6. 25-33.  
 23 neither for the body, what ye shall put on. The life  
 is more than meat, and the body *is more than raiment.*  
 24 Consider the ravens: for they neither sow nor reap ;  
 which neither have storehouse nor barn ; and 'God †Job 38. 41; Ps  
 feedeth them: "how much more are ye better than 147. 9.  
 25 the fowls? And which of you with taking thought = Mt. 10. 31.  
 26 can add to his stature one cubit. If ye then be not

the multitude, I, your teacher with authority, **say take no thought**, take not thought, be not concerned about **your life**, etc. Dr. Fish, who visited Palestine in 1874, relates an incident beautifully illustrating this expression. His daughter, who had been left sick at Jerusalem while he journeyed northward, in a day or two sent the following telegraphic dispatch: "Do not be anxious; I am better. I go to Joppa to-morrow." The telegram was received at Shechem in Arabic, and translated into English it read: "Don't you think; I am well. I go, etc." At first he pondered over the first clause, when suddenly the words of our Saviour, "Take no thought for your life," rendered plain its meaning. *Don't you think, or take no thought*, be not troubled, anxious or solicitous. And such he found to be a very common expression in Arabic at the present day. The idea of our Lord's expression is at once plain. Make not your physical and temporal wants the special and great objects of thought and care. The precept has special reference to a concern for the *future*, as is evident from verse 33 and from the context. The practice of it should be coupled with prayer (ver. 11; Phil. 4: 6), and with a faith in God that "all these things shall be added," ver. 31. Godliness, instead of involving the loss of food and raiment, has the promise of the life that now is as well as that which is to come, 1 Tim. 4: 8. Diligence, industry, foresight, and the use of those means which God in his providence puts in our hands, are not condemned; **but** those questions and that concern which imply distrust and unbelief in our heavenly Father.

23. **The life is more than meat** (*food*). The argument is from the greater to the less. He who gives us life will sustain it; he who made the

body will clothe it and provide for it. Life is more important than food. The body is of more value than raiment.

24. Jesus proceeds and draws an argument from God's care for the inferior creation, first in regard to food (vers. 24-26) and second in regard to raiment, vers. 27, 28. Arguing from the less to the greater, he shows that he who cares for the birds and the flowers will most assuredly provide for his intelligent creatures, and especially his spiritual children. **Consider**, regard with attention. **Ravens**, heavier and of greater sagacity than the crow, black with gleams of purple passing into green; solitary in their habits. Noah sent forth a raven from the ark, Gen. 8: 7. They fed Elijah, 1 Kings 17: 4. Not allowed for food by the Mosaic law, Lev. 11: 15. Their solitary habits and their restless flying about in search for food to satisfy their voracious appetites may be the reason why they are mentioned as objects of God's providing care, Job 38: 41; Ps. 147: 9. **Neither storehouse**, for fruits and goods, **nor barn**, for grain. Though the birds neither sow nor reap, yet they build their nests and seek their food. The exhortation of our Saviour is not against labor and industry, but against an undue solicitude in regard to our future support. **God feedeth them**, Job 38: 41; Ps. 147: 9. **Better**. More valuable. **Fowls**, rather *birds* in general.

25. By a pointed question our Lord shows the weakness of men, and hence the importance of trusting God for food, after, like the birds of the air, doing their part. **Stature**. The word in the original means primarily *age*, and secondly *stature*, and may be translated by either. If by the latter, then the meaning is, you are not able to add anything to your height, or to promote

able to do that thing which is least, why take ye  
 27 thought for the rest? Consider the lilies how they  
 grow: they toil not, they spin not; and yet I say unto  
 you, that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed <sup>v 1 Kl. 10. 5-17, 33.</sup>  
 28 like one of these. If then God so clothe the grass,

your growth; God has charge of this, and regulates the size of your body without any purpose or direct agency of your own. Why then take thought and be concerned about your food, and thus distrust your heavenly Father? It seems better, however, to translate *age*. It agrees better with the context. Jesus is speaking of life, and of food as necessary to sustain it. It is also an objection to the interpretation, *stature* of the body, that a cubit to one's height is a very great addition, whereas in the next verse it is described as "that which is least." *Age*, as noted above, is the primary meaning of the word, which is so translated in John 9 : 21, 23, and Heb. 11 : 11. To the objection that *cubit*, a standard of measure from the elbow to the tips of the fingers, usually reckoned a foot and a half, more or less, was a measure of *space* and not of *time*, it may be replied that terms of length are sometimes applied to time; as in Ps. 39 : 5, "Thou hast made my days as a handbreath." We also speak of "an inch of time." The allusion here is doubtless to life as a journey or pilgrimage, to which a cubit would be a very insignificant addition. The meaning then is, Who, by taking thought, can make the smallest addition to his appointed pilgrimage on earth? Since, then, you cannot do that which is the least, be not unduly solicitous about the rest, but trust your heavenly Father, and devote yourselves wholly to him.

26. **If ye then be not**, etc. The argument is from the less to the greater. To add a little to life is a small thing with God, but to give life and to sustain it year after after, to give the fruits of the field and the animal creation for food, these are **the rest**, and require far greater exercise of infinite power. Why, then, should you distress yourselves about the greater when anxieties about the less can accomplish nothing? **Why take ye thought?** Why are ye anxious?

27. Jesus now passes from food to riment. He might have drawn his

illustration here also from the animal creation, but he descends to the vegetable, and by so doing presents his subject in a more striking light. **Consider**, observe attentively. **Lilies**. Several varieties of this flower are found in Palestine, usually red, orange, and yellow. They grow wild in the fields, and are noted for their beauty and fragrance, Sol. Songs 2 : 1, 16; 5 : 13; 6 : 2, 3. The *kind* of lily here intended has given rise to much speculation. "The Huleh lily is very large, and the three inner petals meet above and form a gorgeous canopy, such as art never approached and king never sat under even in his utmost glory. And when I saw this incomparable flower in all its loveliness among the oak woods around the northern base of Tabor and on the hills of Nazareth, where our Lord spent his youth, I felt assured that it was this to which he referred. We call it the Huleh lily because it was here that it was first discovered."—DR. THOMSON, *Land and Book*, vol. i., p. 393. The *toiling* and *spinning* has reference to sowing, and the gathering of the flax, and the preparing it for clothing. This the lilies cannot do, but God does that for them which they are unable to do themselves.

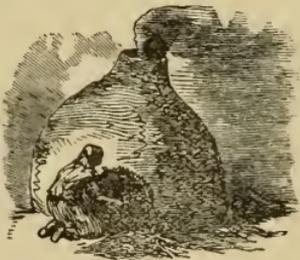
**Solomon in all his glory**, the external splendor of his reign (2 Chron. 9 : 15-23), and especially his royal state and dress as he sat upon the throne of ivory, 1 Kings 10 : 18. **Like one of these**. Even any one of these is clothed in greater beauty and splendor than was Solomon, who was regarded by the Jews as the highest type of human glory. Thus the work of God in nature exceeds the art of man. God clothes the flowers better than it is possible for man to clothe himself. What confidence should this inspire in us toward our heavenly Father!

28. **So clothes, or adorns, the grass**, herbage generally. The wild flowers grow profusely in the fields of Palestine and are cut down with the grass. **To-day—to-morrow, ex-**

which is to-day in the field, and to-morrow is cast into the oven; how much more *will he clothe* you, \*O ye of little faith? \* Mt. 8. 26.

29 And \*seek not ye what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, neither be ye of doubtful mind. For all these things do the nations of the world seek after: and your Father knoweth that ye have need of these 31 things. † But rather seek ye the kingdom of God; † Phil. 4. 6; 1 Pet 5. 7.  
† Mt. 6. 33; 1 Tim 4. 8; 6. 6

presses their brief existence. Under a strong east wind the grass in Palestine withers in two days, and often a south wind causes the herbage to fade in a day. **Is cast into the oven.** Dried grass and the stalks of flowers were used for fuel. The Jews had a kind of earthen or iron oven, shaped like a large pitcher, open at the top, in which they made a fire. When it was well heated, they made a paste of mingled flour and water and applied it to the outside, where it was quickly baked and taken off in thin pieces. Ovens were also made by digging a cavity in the ground and lining it with cement. A fire was built on the floor of this oven, and when the sides were sufficiently heated, thin cakes were stuck upon them and soon baked. "The scarcity of wood in Palestine is very great, especially in the southern part, so that the people are obliged to resort to the use of almost everything that is capable of being burnt, in order to procure the means of warming their



AN OVEN.

houses in winter and of preparing their daily food. They not only cut down for this purpose the shrubs and larger kinds of grass, but gather the withered grass itself and the wild flowers, of which the fields display so rich a profusion."—DR. HACKETT, *Illustration of Scripture*, p. 139.

**How much more will he clothe**

**you?** The argument is from that of less to that of greater value. If God so beautifies the vegetable kingdom, whose life is so brief, how much more will he provide sufficient covering for you, his servants and his children, since your life on earth is so much longer and your nature and interests are so much higher and more glorious! **Ye of little faith.** Ye so prone to distrust God, and be careful for your daily food. Having little confidence in God.

29. The application of the argument from the two illustrations just given of God's care over the birds of the air and the lilies of the field. Be not, therefore, unduly solicitous about your food and raiment. **Seek not, with anxiety.** A strong expression. **Neither be of doubtful mind.** Be not in suspense, wavering, unsettled in mind, fluctuating between hope and fear. Exercise a calm hopefulness and trust in God.

30. To be thus anxious is heathenish and dishonoring to God. **Nations of the world,** all besides the Jews, the heathen nations. An essential feature of heathenism is living for the present. Ignorant of God's perfections, and of his paternal care, and of the privileges of his children, they naturally seek after earthly things. Here the pharisaic Jew and the formal and worldly Christian unite with the heathen in their views and practices. But let it not be so with you, for God is **your Father**, and ye are not ignorant of his goodness, infinite knowledge, and almighty power; and he knoweth that you have **need of these.**

31. Having shown what we should not do—be unduly concerned about even the necessary things of life—he shows what we should do—**seek the kingdom of God, or his kingdom,** let it be supreme; make all things subordinate to this—and thus, whether we eat or

32 and all these things shall be added unto you. Fear not, <sup>a</sup>little <sup>b</sup>flock; for <sup>b</sup>it is your Father's good pleasure to give you <sup>c</sup>the kingdom. <sup>d</sup>Sell that ye have, and give alms; <sup>e</sup>provide yourselves bags which wax

<sup>a</sup> Jam. 2. 5; 1 Pet. 1. 3-5; 2 Pet. 1. 11. <sup>d</sup> Mt. 19. 21; Ac. 2. 45; 4. 34, 35. <sup>e</sup> ch. 16. 9; Hag. 1. 6; Mt. 6. 19, 20; 1 Tim. 6. 17-19.

<sup>b</sup> Mt. 7. 14; 20. 16; <sup>c</sup> Is. 40. 11; 41. 14; <sup>d</sup> John 10. 26, 27. <sup>e</sup> ch. 10. 21; Mt. 11. 25, 26; Eph. 1. 5-9.

drink, or whatever we do, do all to the glory of God. In the sermon on the mount (Matt. 6 : 33) Jesus says, "Seek first," etc. The command is here absolute, but amounts to the same. This will be indeed laying up treasures in heaven, ver. 33. Seek the spiritual blessings of the gospel, and that *righteousness*, that conformity to the divine will which God requires, Matt. 6 : 33; Micah 6 : 5, 8. By thus seeking their highest good in God, and striving to do his will and promote his cause, they would receive those very things for which they were so prone to be anxious. **All these things shall be added to you.** Omit *all*, according to the highest critical authorities. All such things as you may need will God bestow. Wealth is not promised, but those things necessary for food and raiment. He who seeks the kingdom of God can cast all his care on God, and leave his worldly things, as well as all things, to the will of God. Compare 1 Kings 3 : 9-13, where Solomon asks only for wisdom, and riches are added, and 1 Tim. 4 : 8; 6 : 8; Mark 10 : 30.

32. Jesus encourages them in exercising faith in God and seeking his kingdom. **Fear not**, foes, dangers, difficulties, such as had already been mentioned (vers. 4, 11, 22), and any others which might arise in seeking the kingdom of God. **Little flock**, in contrast to the multitudes who were not his disciples, and at the same time expressive of the tender regard of the good Shepherd, John 10 : 11 ff. *Little flock* in the original is a double diminutive giving emphasis to their small numbers, and also expressing his tender feelings and his confidential relations to them; the two ideas are brought out in two expressions, *very little flock*, *my little flock*. **For**, introducing the great reason for casting aside fear, etc. **It is**, *it was* and it continues to be, **your Father's good pleasure**, or it hath pleased your Father to give you the kingdom. Thus is brought to view the

benignant purpose of God and his great delight in forming and carrying it out. Compare Eph. 1 : 5; Phil. 2 : 13; 2 Thess. 1 : 11. Hence his protection was not one of uncertainty, but the sure result of his unchangeable purpose and love. **The kingdom**, the Messianic kingdom with its privileges and blessings. See on ch. 4 : 43. He had commanded them to seek it (ver. 31), and now declares it the will and pleasure of God to give it.

33. A strong direction in regard to almsgiving. Substantially the same is expressed negatively in Matt. 6 : 19. **Sell that ye have and give alms.** So the converts on the day of Pentecost did, Acts 2 : 44, 45. But the command may be obeyed in spirit as well as in the letter, according to the times and circumstances in which we live. Hoard not up for yourselves, but dispense with a liberal hand. Regard not property as yours, but God's; trusting in him as your Father, use it in doing good. See ch. 11 : 41. "We are not to look upon this injunction as giving any countenance to the idea of a man's voluntarily denuding himself of all his property, and reducing himself to poverty and beggary, as if that were in a remarkable degree acceptable to God. What more absurd or unchristian than the Popish toleration and encouragement of mendicant friars—lazy, useless, self-righteous beggars? What our Lord here says, is to be considered in connection with what goes before. Instead of worldly anxiety and an undue desire to accumulate, he enjoins not only trust in Providence, but liberality to the poor. He teaches his followers, instead of resembling the rich fool, in laying up all their fruits and goods for themselves, they should sell what was not needful for themselves in order that they might have wherewithal to assist those who were in need."—J. FOOTE.

In thus doing they would insure true wealth to themselves. **Provide bags, purses** (see on ch. 10 : 4), **which wax**

not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth.

34 'For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

<sup>f</sup> Mt. 6. 21; Col. 3. 2

<sup>e</sup> 1 Ki. 18. 46; Eph

6. 14.

<sup>h</sup> Mt. 5. 16.

<sup>i</sup> Mt. 25. 1-13.

35 ¶ Let your loins be girded about, and <sup>h</sup> your lights  
36 burning; and ye yourselves <sup>i</sup> like unto men that wait  
for their lord, when he will return from the wedding;  
that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open  
37 unto him immediately. <sup>j</sup> Blessed are those servants,

<sup>j</sup> Mt. 24. 45-47; 2  
Pet. 3. 14.

**not old**, of such enduring material as never to wear out or become rotten. **A treasure**, not merely precious metals, but stores of all kinds, pointing to that spiritual treasure in heaven which alone **faileth not**. **Where no thief approacheth** to break through and plunder, **neither moth corrupteth**, consumes, destroys. The injunction is: let your highest aims and your chief good be in heaven. Be "rich toward God" (ver. 21); live by faith in the enjoyment of the divine favor, and in a living hope of an eternal inheritance (1 Pet. 1 : 4); rich in good works, and laying up for yourselves a good foundation against the time to come, 1 Tim. 6 : 18, 19. The contrast is between the perishable treasures *on earth* and the imperishable ones *in heaven*. Seek the latter; for, though the enjoyment of them begins on earth, they are beyond this world and this life, and are not subject to change or decay.

34. **Where your treasure is.** The treasure and the heart must go together. Here is another reason showing that our chief good should be in God. What we value we love. Our hearts will be fixed supremely on our highest good. If our treasure, then, is in this world, our affections are fixed upon it; we have nothing in the future world to engage our love. At death we must leave the decaying treasures of earth, and our hearts be comfortless. But not so if our treasure is in heaven. It is not only imperishable, but the soul enjoys foretastes here, and enters upon its full enjoyment hereafter. The heart and its treasure will be brought together in heaven.

35-48. **JESUS EXHORTS HIS DISCIPLES TO WATCHFULNESS AND FIDELITY.** Compare Matt. 24 : 42-51. We have here further illustration of our

Lord's repetition of weighty and important truths. The passages here, and also in Matthew, suit the connection. It is very arbitrary to suppose that the language in either is quoted out of its connection. Authors may sometimes bring together and arrange detached and independent truths; but to arrange a discourse and represent that it was spoken at a given time, when it was really uttered at another time, is both unnatural and dishonest.

35. **Let your loins be girded about.** There is reference to the custom of binding up the long flowing robes about the loins with a girdle or sash when about to engage in active exercise. Thus Elijah girded his loins to run, 1 Kings 18 : 46. Compare John 13 : 4; Eph. 6 : 14; 1 Pet. 1 : 13. To be girded denoted preparedness, activity. **Your lights, lamps, burning**, thus watch and be in readiness. The imagery is derived from the marriage custom of being in readiness with burning lamps to join the procession, or here, to receive it as it approached the house. See next verse, and compare Matt. 25 : 1-13. They were not only to be girded, ready for active service, but their lamps were to be burning, prepared for immediate use. While they were not to be anxious about food and raiment, they were to do their duty to their Master in faithful watching and service.

36. In the preceding verse constant readiness is enjoined; in this, constant watchfulness to receive their Lord. **Ye**, emphatic, in distinction from the girded loins and burning lamps. **That wait for their Lord.** The virgins in Matthew (25 : 10) were waiting to join the marriage procession, these *men-servants* to receive their lord, who is the bridegroom, on his return from **the wedding**. **Immediately**, at once, at the very moment of knocking.

- whom the lord when he cometh shall find watching. Verily I say unto you, <sup>k</sup>that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come  
 38 forth and serve them. <sup>l</sup>And if he shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find  
 39 *them* so, blessed are those servants. <sup>m</sup>And this know, that if the good man of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched, and not have suffered his house to be broken through.  
 40 <sup>n</sup>Be ye therefore ready also: for the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not.  
 41 Then Peter said unto him, Lord, speakest thou this

<sup>k</sup> John 13. 4, 5; 1 Cor. 2. 9; Rev. 7. 17.

<sup>l</sup> 1 Thes. 5. 4, 5.

<sup>m</sup> Mt. 24. 43; 1 Thes. 5. 2; 2 Pet. 3. 10; Rev. 3. 3; 16. 15.

<sup>n</sup> ch. 21. 34, 36; Mt. 24. 44; 25. 13; Mk. 13. 33; 1 Thes. 5. 1-6; 2 Pet. 3. 12.

They should be ready to receive Christ, the Lord, at the first signal, whether at his second coming or at death and the judgment.

37. **Blessed, happy.** See on ch. 1: 45. Jesus encourages watchfulness by describing the happy condition of **those servants** who shall be thus found at his coming. **Verily, I say unto you, Amen, truly I say,** etc. Jesus uses this emphatic and authoritative expression in uttering momentous truths. He is the *Amen*, the faithful and true Witness, Rev. 3: 14. **He shall gird himself**, even as he had commanded his disciples to be girded. Now he will reward their fidelity and in turn serve them. **Make them sit down, make them recline at table**, the language conforming to the customary posture in eating.

Notice how great the condescension! 1. Girding himself; 2. Causing them to recline at table; 3. Coming forth to **serve them**, to minister to their wants and wait upon them. He shall treat them, not as servants (ch. 17: 8), but as most honored guests. We find no parallel to this in mere human history. Jesus alone has given us a parallel in washing the disciples' feet, John 13: 4-8. Compare Rev. 3: 20, 21.

38. **Second watch, third watch.** According to the Roman custom, the Jews now divided the night into four watches of about three hours each. See Mark 13: 35. At an earlier period they had divided the night into three equal parts, or watches, of about four hours each, called "the first watch" (Lam. 2: 19), "the middle watch" (Jud. 7: 19), "the morning watch," 1 Sam. 11: 11.

The first and fourth watches are

probably not mentioned here because the marriage is supposed to take place in the former, and their return to take place before the latter. **Find them so doing**, in readiness and watching; or, *find it so* (Bible Union Version), find such a state of readiness to receive him.

39. Jesus illustrates the necessity of constant readiness and watchfulness by a case of theft. This and the seven following verses are almost identical with Matt. 24: 43-51. **Good man of the house**, master of the house, or householder, as in Matt. 20: 11. The head of the family is intended. **Broken up**, literally, *dug through*. Eastern houses were built of stone or clay. The word shows how houses were often plundered by stealthily opening a passage through the wall. It came, however, to be applied to any mode of forcing an entrance, and hence may here be rendered *broken through*. Compare Rev. 3: 3; 16: 15.

40. **Be ye therefore ready also.** As, like the householder, you know not the time, so be always ready; for as he knew not the time of the thief's coming, so ye know not when the Son of man will come. As after death comes the judgment, and as at death we pass into the state of retribution, so death is virtually to individuals what the coming of Christ will be to those then living. To all, the exhortation may therefore be given.

41. The discourse of Jesus was of such general application that Peter was in doubt whether it was intended for the disciples or spoken **even, also, to all**. **This parable** refers specially to the illustration just given. When Jesus uttered these truths on the Mount of Olives (Matt. 24: 44, 45), there was no

- 42 parable unto us, or even to all? And the Lord said, °Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom his lord shall make ruler over his household, to give  
 43 them their portion of meat in due season? ¶ Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall  
 44 find so doing. °Of a truth I say unto you, that he  
 45 will make him ruler over all that he hath. ¶ But and if that servant say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; and shall begin to beat the men-servants and maidens, and to eat and drink, and to be drunken;  
 46 the lord of that servant will come in a day when he looketh not for him, and at an hour when he is not aware, and will °cut him in sunder, and will appoint  
 47 him his portion with the unbelievers. And †that ser-

• Jer. 3. 15; Mt. 24. 45; 25. 21; Ac. 20. 28; 1 Cor. 4. 1, 2; 2 Tim. 2. 2; Heb. 3. 5.  
 † Mt. 24. 46; Phil. 1. 2-23; 2 Tim. 4. 6-8; Rev. 16. 15.  
 ° ch. 22. 29; Mt. 24. 47; 25. 21, 23; 1 Pet. 5. 4.  
 † Eze. 12. 27; Mt. 24. 48.  
 ° Mt. 24. 51.  
 † Num. 15. 30; Deu. 25. 2, 3; John 9. 41; 15. 22; Ac. 17. 30; Ro. 2. 12; Jam. 4. 17.

occasion for asking such a question, for no multitude was present.

42. Jesus does not reply directly to Peter's question, yet it is implied that his words are specially applicable to his disciples. He still further enforces watchfulness and a constant readiness for his coming by the parabolic case of a servant left in charge of his master's house. **Who, then, is that faithful?** Rather, *Who, then, is the faithful?* etc. The interrogative form makes the sentence the stronger, and leads every hearer and reader to more reflection and to a personal application. **Shall make ruler.** Rather, *Whom his lord will set over his household* to provide meat, that is, food. This language especially illustrates the duties and responsibilities of the apostles and all ministers of the gospel, 2 Tim. 2 : 15; 2 Pet. 5 : 2-4.

43. **Blessed, happy.** See on ch. 1 : 45. **So doing,** discharging his duties faithfully.

44. **Ruler over all that he hath,** rather, *over all his possessions or goods.* As a reward of faithfulness he promotes him to a high post of honor, just as Potiphar made Joseph head steward in his house (Gen. 39 : 4), and a little later Pharaoh set him over all the land of Egypt, Gen. 41 : 39-41. Compare Gen. 24 : 2. Such shall be the reward of the faithful pastor and teacher. Compare Matt. 25 : 21; Rev. 2 : 26; 3 : 21.

45. **But and if, but if,** on the contrary. Jesus contrasts that servant doing badly. **Say in his heart.** This wickedness commences in his heart, and shows itself in unbelief and

presumption, then in overbearance and oppression, in gluttony and dissipation.

**Begin to beat the men-servants.** Every hierarchy has persecuted the disciples of Jesus. Formal Christianity has ever been proud, insolent, and oppressive. It is the glory of Baptists that they have always held to the rights of conscience, and hence have never been persecutors.

46. **Will come in a day when he looketh not for him, or it.** But Christ shall come suddenly and unexpectedly to popes, priests, to unfaithful leaders and their followers, and bring upon them swift and terrible destruction.

**Cut him in sunder, asunder.** Cutting in two, or sawing asunder, was a terrible punishment inflicted on great criminals, 1 Sam. 15 : 33; Dan. 2 : 5; 3 : 29; Heb. 11 : 37. Figuratively, it expresses sudden and terrible punishment. That it does not express annihilation, or extinction of being, is evident from what follows, "Appoint him his portion with the unbelievers." **The unbelievers, the faithless, or unfaithful.** The very opposite of the faithful in ver. 42. In connection with the fact that this is a reply to Peter's question (ver. 41), "it is remarkable how the spirit of this whole warning pervades the epistles of Peter. See 1 Pet. 5 : 3; 2 Pet. 3 : 3."—VAN OOSTERZEE. What weighty warning, too, to those who claim to sit in the chair of Peter!

47. In this verse and the next Jesus lays down the general principle by which punishment will be inflicted on different persons. Men shall be treated

vant, which knew his lord's will, and prepared not *himself*, neither did according to his will, shall be  
 48 beaten with many *stripes*. <sup>u</sup>But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few *stripes*. <sup>v</sup>For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more.

49 <sup>w</sup>I am come to send fire on the earth; and what

<sup>u</sup> Le. 5. 17; Jon. 1  
 11; Ac. 17. 30  
 1 Tim. 1. 13.  
<sup>v</sup> Mt. 25. 14-29;  
 Jan. 3. 1.

<sup>w</sup> vers. 51, 52; Mal.  
 3. 2.

according to their opportunities and the light which they have. Compare Matt. 25 : 14-30. **Prepared not himself**, was not in readiness. *Himself* is superfluous. **According to his will**, as it was made known to him. **Many stripes**, intimating severe punishment, and also degrees of punishment. According to the Mosaic law, stripes were proportioned to the offence, but could not exceed forty, Deut. 25 : 2, 3. Compare James 4 : 17; Amos 3 : 2.

48. **And he that knew not**. Even ignorance of what a person should know is a sin, for it becomes him to find out what is required. The law recognized the sin of ignorance, yet it was a sin, Lev. 5 : 17. And they who are without the law will be judged without the law. But the ignorance of men is only comparative. The heathen have a conscience and the light from the works of creation, Rom. 1 : 19, 20; 2 : 14, 15. **Did commit things** which, in themselves and in the light he enjoyed, were **worthy of stripes**, Lev. 5 : 19. **Few stripes**. His punishment, in comparison with the other, will be light.

**For** introduces a principle which must be admitted at once and by all as just. He to whom **much is given**, in opportunities, privileges, and religious blessings, of him shall **much be required**. It will be expected that he shall make a wise improvement of them, that his pound shall have increased to five or ten pounds, ch. 19 : 16, 18, 23. He to whom men **have committed much**, as a deposit, **of him they will ask the more** than of others to whom less had been committed.

49-59. JESUS REFERS TO HIS OWN WORK AND THE DIVISIONS IT WOULD PRODUCE AMONG MEN, AND EXHORTS THE PEOPLE TO IMPROVE THE TIME

THAT REMAINED. Compare Matt. 10 : 34-36; 5 : 25, 26. Here it seems to be plain that he utters truths which he had spoken before.

49. What Jesus had just said of the necessity of watchfulness leads him to refer to one object of his coming, to the sufferings he should endure, and the effect of the gospel in producing divisions among men.

**I am come to send fire**. Rather, *I came*, etc. What is meant by *fire*? A very ancient view regards it as the *Holy Spirit*. Another quite ancient view refers it to a *preached gospel*. Others refer it to *persecution* for the faith. Persecution is, indeed, one of the results of Christ's coming. But if that were intended here, why should it be repeated in verse 51, and there presented as if it were a new thought in the discourse? It seems better to refer it to something in Christ's kingdom which was to be quickening, refining, and discriminating in its influence. Hence Olshausen makes it denote "*the higher spiritual element of life* which Jesus came to introduce into the earth." But it seems better still to refer it to *the truth and the accompanying Spirit*, which were to soften and quicken, harden and destroy, be a savor of life and a savor of death. For (1) Jesus is the great Author and Witnesser of the truth, and the gift of the Holy Spirit is the crowning result of his death and resurrection, John 14 : 6; 16 : 7, 13; 17 : 19; 18 : 37. (2) This was specially to be desired (last part of this verse)—much more naturally an object of desire than persecution. (3) The descent of the Spirit and the connected triumphs of truth were to take place after his baptism in sufferings, ver. 50; John 16 : 7. (4) This is confirmed by the form of expression in many manuscripts, *send fire into the earth*. The

50 will I, if it be already kindled? But <sup>¶</sup>I have a baptism to be baptized with; <sup>¶</sup>and how am I straitened  
 51 till it be accomplished! <sup>¶</sup>Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; <sup>¶</sup>but rather  
<sup>¶</sup>Mt. 20. 17-25, Mk. 10. 38.  
<sup>¶</sup>Ps. 40. 8; John 4. 34.  
<sup>¶</sup>ver. 49; Mt. 10. 34-36; 24. 7-10.  
<sup>¶</sup>Mic. 7. 6; John 7. 43; 9. 16; 10. 19.

re is not of the earth; it is from heaven, sent *into the earth* among men; or, according to other manuscripts, *upon the earth*. (5) The Holy Spirit works, in connection with the truth, in the regeneration and sanctification of men, John 17 : 17; James 1 : 18. (6) Fire in Scripture is sometimes an emblem of both the word and the Spirit of God, Jer. 23 : 29; Acts 2 : 3.

And what will I, etc. A difficult phrase. Some translate, *And what do I wish?* *Would that it were already kindled!* But such a question seems rather artificial in this connection, and unlike the usual discourses of Jesus. Others render, *And what will I, what have I to wish, or what wish I more if it is already kindled?* But ver. 50 seems to imply that it was not yet kindled. Hence a third rendering may be preferred, *And how I would, or, And how I wish it were already kindled!* The expression is one of deep emotion and of strong desire. How would I that my work were already accomplished and this fire already kindled! How remarkably were these words accomplished on the day of Pentecost! And how has the fire spread through all succeeding ages, refining and consuming!

50. **But**, before it is kindled. Such seems to be the most natural train of thought. **I have a baptism.** The reference is to the overwhelming suffering which Jesus was soon to endure. The Greek word *baptizo* means figuratively *whelm* or *overwhelm*, which is in harmony with, and grows out of, its literal meaning, *immerse, plunge, dip*. See on ch. 3 : 3, 7. Dr. George Campbell, the distinguished Scotch Presbyterian scholar, translates the phrase, "I have an immersion to undergo." In the Greek, and, indeed, in all languages, may be found such expressions as these: Plunged in affliction, immersed in suffering, overwhelmed with sorrow. Compare such Scriptural expressions for calamities and sufferings as "All thy waves and billows have gone over me"

(Ps. 42 : 7); "I am come into deep waters where the floods overflow me" (Ps. 69 : 2); "We went through fire and through water" (Ps. 66 : 12). The idea of our Saviour's language is, I have to be overwhelmed in the sufferings of death. "I shall shortly be bathed, as it were, in blood; and plunged, as it were, in the most overwhelming distress."—DODDRIDGE. "The figurative expression, *baptism*, involves at once the idea of a painful submersion (a dying to that which is old) and also a joyful rising (a resurrection in that which is new), as Rom. 6 : 3 ff. shows. Such a path of suffering, in order to his being made perfect (Heb. 5 : 8, 9), our Lord declared (Luke 12 : 50) stood yet before himself."—OLSHAUSEN on Mark 10 : 38.

**How am I straitened, constrained** and *pressed*, as it were, on every side with anxiety and longing, **till it be accomplished**, fully completed. "Hence we have then, as Stier expresses it, . . . the first utterance of that deep anguish which afterward broke forth so plentifully, but coupled at the same time with holy zeal for the great work to be accomplished."—ALFORD. Some have endeavored to illustrate this state of mind by that of the Christian, shrinking instinctively from the pains of death, yet longing for the future glories of heaven; and also by John 16 : 21. Compare Phil. 1 : 23. But all human comparisons seem feeble when brought beside this soul-struggle of the Son of God.

51. Jesus further teaches that *strife* and *persecution* are to be expected as a necessary consequence of his coming, and the proclamation of the gospel.

**Suppose ye**, do ye entertain the mistaken idea that I am come to establish a temporal kingdom, diffusing prosperity, tranquillity, and peace upon the earth? **That I am come to give peace.** Or, *that I came*, etc. Jesus answers most emphatically, **I tell you, nay.** The interrogative form is equivalent to a strong affirmative. **There**

- 52 division: <sup>b</sup>for from henceforth there shall be five in  
 one house divided, three against two, and two against  
 53 three. <sup>c</sup>The father shall be divided against the son,  
 and the son against the father: the mother against  
 the daughter, and the daughter against the mother;  
 the mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law, and  
 the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law.
- 54 And he said also to the people, <sup>d</sup>When ye see a  
 cloud rise out of the west, straightway ye say, There  
 55 cometh a shower; and so it is. And when ye see <sup>e</sup>the  
 south wind blow, ye say, There will be heat; and it  
 56 cometh to pass. <sup>f</sup>Ye hypocrites, ye can discern the

<sup>b</sup> Mt. 10. 34-36.<sup>c</sup> Zec. 13. 3.<sup>d</sup> 1 Ki. 18. 44, 45;  
Mt. 16. 2.<sup>e</sup> Job 37. 17.<sup>f</sup> Mt. 16. 3.

can be no peace between truth and error, light and darkness. The mission of Christ was aggressive, and so also is the gospel aggressive. It has for its object the overthrow of the kingdom of darkness and the rescuing of men from the power of sin and Satan. The thought is progressive, and an advance on ver. 49. The truth, the word of God, is indeed the sword of the Spirit, sharper than any two-edged sword (Heb. 4 : 12), and wherever proclaimed will separate and cause divisions, conquering and making friends or arousing the hostility of obstinate foes, a savor of life unto life to the one and a savor of death unto death to the other, 2 Cor. 2 : 16. The ultimate object of the gospel is *peace*—peace with God, and then peace among men. But in a world of sin like ours, this can only be attained through conflict. Strifes and divisions are, therefore, necessary results, arising from the aggressive nature of holiness and the cruel and rebellious nature of evil. Hence the expression is a strong one, **but rather division, naught but division, or only division.** Compare 2 Tim. 3 : 12.

52, 53. The idea of the preceding verse expanded. The separating power of the *sword* (Matt. 10 : 35) would be seen in cutting asunder the tenderest relations and setting at variance members of families. **Five.** Father, son, mother, daughter, and daughter-in-law. There is no significance in the number *five*. It is convenient for showing the numbers **three against two**, so well suited for divisions. "From Matt. 10 : 35 it would seem that the son, the daughter, and the daughter-in-law are the representatives of Christ. It has not inaptly been suggested that these special terms have been selected because the younger mem-

bers and the female portion of households were commonly first to embrace the gospel."—LANGE. **Daughter-in-law, bride,** young wife. The words of our Saviour here strikingly correspond with Micah 7 : 6, and are regarded by some commentators as a quotation.

54. Jesus now addresses **the people** (ver. 1) and reproves them for not discerning the signs of the times, which he had just been intimating. He had stated that *from henceforth* (ver. 52) there would be divisions; and now he asks, How is it that in the stirring up of strife and opposition, produced by my mission, ye do not discern the sign of this time? ver. 56. Compare a similar passage in Matt. 16 : 2, 3, with a somewhat different application. **A cloud rise out of the west**, from the direction of the Mediterranean Sea. "As in ancient time, the west wind brings rain and the north drives it away."—THOMSON'S *Land and Book*, vol. i., p. 131. Compare 1 Kings 18 : 43-45.

55. **The south wind . . . heat**, great or intense heat. "The south wind, which traverses the Arabian peninsula before reaching Palestine, must necessarily be extremely hot, Job 37 : 17; Luke 12 : 55."—SMITH'S *Dictionary of the Bible*. "The writer faced the simoom at the Petrified Forest, in the Arabian desert, during six hours. The flesh seemed all inflamed, as with a fever; the voice hoarse; eyes inflamed; and the entire system prostrated. Three days elapsed before the painful effects passed away."—W. H. VAN DOREN. The actual simoom, however, is not carried into Palestine itself.

56. **Ye hypocrites**, pretending to be what ye are not. See on ch. 6 : 42. This title points back to the beginning

face of the sky and of the earth; but how is it that  
 57 ye do not discern this time? Yea, and <sup>a</sup>why even of  
 yourselves judge ye not what is right? <sup>b</sup>Deu. 32. 29; 1  
 Cor. 10. 15; 1  
 58 <sup>b</sup>When thou goest with thine adversary to the mag-  
 istrate, <sup>1</sup>as thou art in the way, give diligence that  
 thou mayest be delivered from him; lest he hale thee  
 to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer,  
<sup>b</sup>Pro. 25. 8; Mt. 5  
<sup>1</sup>Ps. 32. 6; Is. 55. 6.

of the discourse, ver. 1. **Ye can discern**, distinguish and judge, from the appearance of the sky and of the earth, rather, of *the earth and of the sky*, concerning changes in the weather beforehand. **How is it that ye do not discern this time?** Of the Messiah. According to some of the oldest manuscripts, *how is it that ye know not how to discern or judge?* etc. How is it that in the spiritual world ye do not discern the great moral commotions which indicate that *this time* is that of the Messiah? See on ver. 54.

The confusion and strife in the moral world were connected with other signs; and the reference may be extended to these also, such as, *First*, the fulfilment of prophecy. The sceptre had departed from Judah and the lawgiver from between his feet, the government of the country being then in the hands of the Romans, which Jacob had foretold should not be till Shiloh—that is, the Messiah—should come, Gen. 49 : 10. Daniel's seventy weeks (*heptads*) of years was drawing to a close when the Messiah should appear, Dan. 9 : 24-27. The predicted forerunner of the Messiah had come in the person of John the Baptist, Matt. 3 : 3; 11 : 10-14. Prophecy concerning the Messiah was being fulfilled in the life of Jesus, as frequently noticed in Matthew, chs. 1 : 23; 2 : 6, 15, 23; 4 : 15-17; 8 : 17; 12 : 18-21; 13 : 35. *Second*, wonderful heavenly phenomena: the star at his birth, the song of the angels, the descent of the Spirit upon him, and the voice from heaven at his baptism. And *third*, his wonderful miracles were evidences of his Messiahship. Years before, Simeon and Anna had observed some of these signs and had believed, ch. 2 : 34-38.

57. Jesus advances in the thought, and comes down to their own reason and judgment, independent of these moral commotions of which he had

been speaking. **Yea** should be omitted. **Even of yourselves**, irrespective of these signs. Why not use your common sense, your reason and judgment, in this as well as in other matters? Why not even of yourselves, without following external guides and without my warnings and directions as to the signs of the times, **judge**, discern, **what is right**, true and just, exercise right judgment regarding me? As if he had said, Even without these signs you might discern my Messiahship from my doctrines and character, and learn your true condition, and repent. Tertullian infers from this passage the right of private judgment in religious matters.

58. Jesus exhorts them, by a judicial illustration, to immediate repentance during the short season of grace and salvation. **When**, rather, *For*, you regard it as prudent *when you go with your adversary*, the *adverse party in a suit*, your *creditor*, one who has just claims on you. **As thou art in the way**. According to the Hebrew law no accusation could be listened to by a judge except in the presence of the accused party. According to Roman custom, the accusing party could compel the accused to go with him before the praetor, unless he agreed by the way to settle the matter. The language of our Saviour can be explained by either custom. What thou doest thou must do quickly. **Give diligence**, do thy utmost, **that thou mayest be delivered from him**, from his demands and from any further danger of prosecution. **Lest he hale thee**, *haul or drag thee*, **to the judge**, the magistrate who, finding you accountable, will give judgment, and deliver you to the **officer**, the *exactor*, a Roman official who collected debts, fines, penalties, and taxes. And the exactor, finding thee unable to pay the debt and the expenses of the trial, will **cast thee**

59 and the officer cast thee into prison. I tell thee, thou shalt not depart thence, till thou hast paid the very last mite.

J Mk. 12. 42.

**into prison.** This illustration was true to life and derived from the practice of the times. So a person who rejects the Messiah is summoned and on his way to the judgment; if he does not repent and become reconciled, he shall be condemned and cast into perdition. The *adversary, judge, exactor*, are terms which need not be very strictly pressed into definite meanings. In general, we might refer *adversary* to God, *judge* to Christ, the *exactor* to angels (Matt. 13 : 39, 49; 1 Thess. 4 : 16), and the *prison* to perdition.

59. **The very last mite.** The Greek word is the same as that in the account of the widow's mite (ch. 21 : 2; Mark 12 : 42), in value equal to about two mills. In the Græco-Roman coinage of Palestine the mite was the smallest coin. Our Lord uses strong language, meaning that the guilty one should suffer the full measure of his punishment—that as in the future world he should have nothing to pay, so his punishment should have no end. See Matt. 18 : 30, 34, 35.

It is possible, as Alford suggests, that the request about the inheritance, which began the discourse to the people, was an occasion of our Saviour's illustration here. It was fitting that he should in conclusion turn their minds to more weighty matters pending in the court of heaven, and that he should urge upon all to settle their accounts with God by repentance and faith in his Son.

#### REMARKS.

1. "Hypocrites have been classed under four kinds: (1) The worldly hypocrite, who professes godliness from worldly motives. (2) The legal hypocrite, who resigns his vicious practices to win heaven, but has no love to God. (3) The evangelical hypocrite, whose religion is an acknowledgment of sin, but with no desire to love God. (4) The enthusiastic hypocrite, who, with an imaginary notion of the Saviour, relies on impulses and feelings, and yet clings to vicious deeds."—W. H. VAN

DOREN. Ver. 1; Num. 23 : 10 and 2 Pet. 2 : 15; 2 Sam. 15 : 7, 10; Matt. 26 : 65; Acts 5 : 3; 8 : 21; 2 Cor. 4 : 2.

2. The gospel is intended to be preached openly; its truth is not to be kept in darkness, vers. 2, 3; ch. 24 : 47, 48; Matt. 5 : 16; 28 : 19.

3. God is to be feared rather than men, ver. 4; Isa. 8 : 13; 51 : 12; Acts 4 : 19; 5 : 29.

4. Both body and soul of the finally lost will suffer in hell, ver. 5; Matt. 10 : 24; 2 Cor. 5 : 11.

5. God exercises a particular providence over all his creatures, especially his children, ver. 6, 7; Ps. 34 : 7; 56 : 8.

6. The market value of a sparrow is given, but how shall we estimate the value of a soul redeemed by the blood of Christ? ver. 7; 1 Pet. 1 : 18, 19.

7. Christ's treatment of men in the coming world will correspond to their treatment of him in this world, vers. 8, 9; 2 Tim. 2 : 11-13.

8. If for every idle word we must give an account, beware of an idle silence, vers. 8, 9; Rom. 10 : 10; Matt. 25 : 25-28.

9. Beware of all blasphemy, since the lowest tends to the highest, which can never be forgiven, ver. 10.

10. If the apostles were inspired to speak in their own defence, how much more to write for Christians of every age! vers. 11, 12; Acts 4 : 8; 1 Cor. 11 : 23; Eph. 3 : 3; 1 John 4 : 6.

11. We are not to expect the same aid from the Spirit on common occasions as we do in great emergencies, neither are we to expect it to take the place of diligence, study, and prayer, vers. 11, 12; Deut. 23 : 25; Ex. 4 : 10-12; Isa. 6 : 6; Jer. 1 : 6-9; 1 Tim. 4 : 13-16.

12. How many hearers of the gospel forget the heavenly inheritance for the earthly! vers. 13, 18, 19.

13. How often do earthly riches gender strifes! ver. 13; Prov. 18 : 19.

14. Jesus is the Redeemer from sin, and whoever accords him less than that dishonors him, ver. 14; John 8 : 15-19; 2 Cor. 5 : 16.

15. How rich and yet how poor a man may be!—rich in earthly but poor in heavenly treasures; or poor as to this

world, but rich in faith, ver. 15; Ps. 37 : 16; James 1 : 11; 2 : 5.

16. How often does wealth increase only to produce care, anxiety, and discontentment! ver. 16; Prov. 1 : 32; Eccl. 5 : 12.

17. It is not the *possession* nor the *use* of property, but its *abuse*, that is sinful, ver. 17; Deut. 30 : 9; Ps. 62 : 10; Isa. 5 : 8.

18. In providing for happiness, we should act not merely for time, but for eternity. Then, when called from earth, we shall go, not from our treasures, but to them, ver. 18, 19; Matt. 6 : 19, 20.

19. Multitudes are doing just what that rich man did. The principles on which he acted are in accordance with the highest wisdom of this world. The body and the things of time absorb the attention, vers. 18, 19; Ps. 49 : 11; James 4 : 13, 14.

20. God does not say "Enjoy thyself," but "Deny thyself;" not "Eat, drink, and feast," but "Watch, pray, strive," ver. 19; ch. 13 : 24; Matt. 16 : 24; 26 : 41.

21. How often, while the worldling is cheering his heart, does God decide his eternal doom! ver. 20; Ps. 49 : 11-13; Dan. 5 : 5, 26-28; Acts 12 : 23.

22. Let each one see that he possesses the true riches, even the "unsearchable riches of Christ," ver. 21; Rev. 3 : 18; 1 Tim. 6 : 17, 19; Eph. 3 : 8.

23. If a man makes riches or any earthly object his treasure, then it takes the place of Jehovah and becomes his god, and he becomes an idolater, vers. 21, 22; Col. 3 : 5.

24. It is our duty and privilege as children of a heavenly Parent to depend on God for our daily supplies, vers. 22, 23; Ps. 37 : 25; 55 : 22; Isa. 33 : 16.

25. God's care over the animal and vegetable portions of creation should dispel all distrust from his children, vers. 24-28; Ps. 50 : 11; Phil. 4 : 6; Rev. 19 : 8.

26. Spiritual ignorance, unbelief, and worldly anxiety go together, vers. 29, 30; John 8 : 19, 24.

27. The only way to have both earthly and heavenly treasures is to seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, ver. 31; Matt. 19 : 29; 1 Tim. 4 : 8.

28. Christ's people are his flock by the appointment of God through his

atonement work, and by actually bringing them into his fold, ver. 32; Ezek. 34 : 23; Isa. 53 : 6; John 10 : 15, 16; Acts 20 : 28.

29. Christ's people are a little flock, both in comparison with a world lying in wickedness and with what it will be, ver. 32; 1 John 5 : 19; Rev. 11 : 15.

30. Christ's people should fear neither afflictions and calamities of life, nor spiritual foes, nor death, nor coming short of heaven, ver. 32; Ps. 118 : 6; 23 : 4; Rom. 16 : 20; John 10 : 27-29.

31. Salvation is of free sovereign grace, ver. 32; Acts 13 : 48; Rom. 6 : 23; Eph. 2 : 5-8.

32. No earthly investments can compare, except by contrast, with investments in heaven, ver. 33; Hag. 1 : 6; Heb. 11 : 10; 1 Pet. 1 : 4.

33. We may determine our character by the objects of our love. The heart identifies itself with our treasure, ver. 34; ch. 16 : 13; Tit. 1 : 16; James 4 : 4.

34. What more becoming or more beautiful than an active, watchful Christian? ver. 35; Sol. Song 5 : 2-5.

35. How necessary to be constantly ready! Life is short and uncertain, death will not tarry, Christ comes to judgment, and the world to come is eternal, ver. 36; Matt. 13 : 30; Zech. 9 : 12; 1 John 2 : 28.

36. How great the honor bestowed upon faithful servants! The order of human arrangements will be inverted. The Redeemer will serve the redeemed, the Master his servants, the King his subjects, ver. 37; Sol. Song 5 : 1; Rev. 19 : 9.

37. Unexpected providences and sudden deaths are often tests of the fidelity of Christ's people; so also will be Christ's second coming, ver. 38; 2 Pet. 1 : 10, 11; 3 : 10, 11; Rev. 16 : 15.

38. Nothing can be more certain than the coming of Christ and the fulfilment of his word, vers. 35-37; Isa. 54 : 10; Luke 16 : 17; 1 Pet. 2 : 24, 25; 2 Pet. 1 : 19; 3 : 9, 10.

39. It is best for us to be ignorant of the time both of our death and of Christ's coming, vers. 36, 37; Acts 1 : 7.

40. The coming of Christ will be a time for separating the righteous from the wicked—a day joyous to the former, but terrible to the latter, ver. 39; 1 Thess. 4 : 17; 5 : 1-3; 2 Thess. 1 : 7-10

*Concerning the murdered Galileans; parable of the barren fig tree.*

XIII. THERE were present at that season some that

41. Watchfulness is a trait of a faithful and wise disciple; slothfulness of a worldly and formal professor, vers. 41-46; 1 Cor. 6 : 20; 1 Thess. 5 : 5-7.

42. Fidelity to the Master will be gloriously rewarded, ver. 42; Rev. 2 : 7, 11, 17, 26-28; 3 : 5, 12, 21.

43. Let us beware of the secret and common persuasion that God will not soon call us to an account, vers. 40-46; Eccl. 8 : 11; 2 Pet. 3 : 3, 4.

44. The false professor shall meet with a terrible doom, especially if he has held high offices or positions of trust, vers. 46, 47; Matt. 22 : 13.

45. The responsibilities of men correspond with their light. Future punishment will correspond with each one's guilt, vers. 47, 48; ch. 19 : 23.

46. Sinners are guilty of wilful ignorance, ver. 48; John 7 : 17; 5 : 40.

47. What effect has the fire that Christ kindles upon thee? Does it draw thee or repel thee? ver. 49.

48. How wonderful our Saviour's longings for his sufferings! vers. 49, 50; ch. 22 : 15; John 12 : 27, 28; Heb. 12 : 2.

49. How did the shadow of the cross overhang our Saviour's life, and how does his love for it condemn our timidity! The salvation of the world was his ruling passion, vers. 49, 51; 2 Cor. 5 : 14; Heb. 5 : 7-9.

50. Though many households are saved through the individual faith of their members (Acts 10 : 33, 44; 16 : 15, 34, 40), yet the gospel is a divider of many, vers. 51-53.

51. The faithful preaching of the gospel results in bringing men to Christ or in arousing a more decided opposition against him, ver. 53.

52. Love to Christ must be supreme; indred, friends, and life itself must be subordinate. Failure here will result in losing the soul, vers. 51-53.

53. It is the duty of Christians to discern the signs of the times. They point to duty, and often present opportunities which, if neglected, will occasion irreparable loss, vers. 54-57; ch. 19 : 44; 1 Kings 18 : 43, 44; 1 Chron. 12 : 32.

54. Religion is a personal matter;

sinners are condemned on their own account, ver. 57; John 3 : 19.

55. There is a suit against thee which cannot be avoided, vers. 58, 59; 2 Cor. 5 : 10.

56. Repentance is most reasonable and most important, vers. 58, 59; ch. 13 : 3, 5, 8, 9.

57. Christ is ready to settle the debt, vers. 58, 59; Matt. 18 : 26, 27; 1 John 2 : 1.

58. If the debt be not settled here, there will be no settlement hereafter, ver. 59; 1 Pet. 4 : 18; Heb. 2 : 3; Matt. 25 : 46.

#### CHAPTER XIII.

This chapter appears to be closely connected with the preceding one. Certain calamities which had befallen others being mentioned, Jesus warns his hearers of their danger, except they repented, and illustrates it by the parable of the barren fig tree, vers. 1-9. After this, while teaching on a certain Sabbath, he heals a woman who had a spirit of infirmity, and vindicates his conduct (10-17), and then repeats the parables of the mustard and the leaven, 18-21. Having gone into Perea, Jesus journeys toward Jerusalem, 22. He answers a question as to the number to be saved (23-30), and replies to the Pharisees, who warn him respecting Herod, 31-35.

1-9. THE SLAUGHTER OF CERTAIN GALILEANS, AND THE DISCOURSE OF JESUS THEREON. THE PARABLE OF THE BARREN FIG TREE. Recorded by Luke alone. Judea was a fitting place for this scene and parable. The Jews of Judea prided themselves over those of Galilee, John 7 : 52. Galilean sinners were regarded as specially notorious. From these he passes to "men that dwelt in Jerusalem," ver. 4. The exact time cannot be ascertained. The slaughter is generally supposed to have occurred at one of the feasts. This is not, however, a necessary supposition, because an insurrection or a tumult may have occurred which suddenly called Pilate to Jerusalem; and these

told him of <sup>†</sup>the Galileans, whose blood Pilate had <sup>†</sup>Ac. 5. 37. 2 mingled with their sacrifices. And Jesus answering

Galileans may have brought special sacrifices to the temple.

1. **There were present.** Some translate, *There came to him*, but the common translation is to be preferred. **At that season**, or *time*, ch. 12 : 1-59. Jesus had just finished his discourse, or there was an interruption in it. He had exhorted men to immediate repentance, without which punishment in full would be inflicted. There were those present—perhaps they had joined the multitudes but a little before—who were ready to apply the discourse to others rather than to themselves, and who at once thought of those Galileans who had been slaughtered by Pilate as persons suffering the judgment of God. They wished also to hear the views of Jesus upon the matter. They therefore **told**, *brought him word concerning, the Galileans*, certain persons of Galilee, etc. See on ch. 1 : 26. The word is not used here as the name of a sect. The slaughter here mentioned seems to have been of recent occurrence. It looks as if the news had just reached Jesus and his company.

**Pilate.** See on chap. 3 : 1. He was the cause of frequent commotions. Dr. Smith, *Dict. of Bible*, says : " One of his first acts was to remove the headquarters of the army from Cæsarea to Jerusalem. The soldiers of course took with them their standards, bearing the image of the emperor, into the Holy City. No previous governor had ventured on such an outrage. Pilate had been obliged to send them in by night, and there were no bounds to the rage of the people on discovering what had thus been done. They poured down in crowds to Cæsarea, where the procurator was then residing, and besought him to remove the images. After five days of discussion, he gave the signal to some concealed soldiers to surround the petitioners and put them to death unless they ceased to trouble him; but this only strengthened their determination, and they declared themselves ready rather to submit to death than forego their resistance to an idolatrous innovation. Pilate then yielded, and the standards were by his orders brought down to Cæsarea.—JOSEPH., *Ant.* xviii. 3, § 1, 2, B. J. II. 9, § 2-4.

On two other occasions he nearly drove the Jews to insurrection; the first when, in spite of this warning about the images, he hung up in his palace at Jerusalem some gilt shields inscribed with the name of deities, which were only removed by an order from Tiberius (PHILO, *Ad Caium*, § 38, II. 589); the second when he appropriated the revenue arising from the redemption of vows (CORBAN; comp. Mark 7 : 11) to the construction of an aqueduct. This order led to a riot, which he suppressed by sending among the crowd soldiers with concealed daggers, who massacred a great number, not only of rioters, but of casual spectators.—JOSEPH., B. J. II. 9, § 4. To these specimens of his administration, which rest on the testimony of profane authors, we must add the slaughter of certain Galileans."

**Whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices**, with the blood of their sacrifices. They appear thus to have been in the court of the temple, near the great altar, and very probably their sacrificial victims were being slain. How they were slain is not stated, but the tower of Antonia had been so built as to command the temple, and here Roman soldiers were garrisoned who could rush down a flight of steps and at once put down all tumults and seditions. A shower of arrows upon these Galileans would cause their blood and that of their sacrifices to flow in the same stream. The massacre was specially atrocious, for to slay one at the altar was regarded inhuman, but more so when engaged in his devotions. Compare the murder of Zachariah between the temple and the altar, 2 Chron. 24 : 20; Matt. 23 : 35.

What was the particular provocation which called forth such summary measures is unknown. That the Galileans were peculiarly inclined to popular tumults is not sustained by historical evidence. It appears from Josephus, however, that after Archelaus was deposed, A. D. 6, and Judea was reduced to a province, Judas, a Gaulonite of the city of Gamala, headed a revolt against the payment of tribute to Rome. He is referred to in Acts 5 : 37, and is called "Judas of Galilee" because the

said unto them, Suppose ye that these Galileans were sinners above all the Galileans, because they 3 suffered such things? <sup>1</sup>I tell you, Nay: but, <sup>m</sup>ex- <sup>1</sup>Job 37. 13.  
4 cept ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish. Or <sup>m</sup>Mt. 3. 2, 10-12.

insurrection may have had its rise in Galilee, though it had reference only to Judea, and its seat was there. Josephus represents him as founding a sect the very opposite to the party of the Herodians. In addition to Pharisaic doctrines, they held that paying tribute to the Romans was slavery, and their watchword was, "God alone is our Lord and Master." Judas, however, perished and his followers were dispersed. But the Gaulonites, or Galileans as his followers were termed, continued, and to the influence of their doctrines Josephus attributes the subsequent insurrection of the Jews and the final destruction of Jerusalem, JOSEPHUS, *Antiq.*, xviii. 1, § 1, 6; *Jewish War*, ii. 8, § 1. It would seem very probable that the Galileans here mentioned by Luke were persons of such views, and hence specially odious to Pilate.

That Josephus makes no reference to this massacre is not strange, since riots often occurred at Jerusalem, and summary bloodshed was common under Pilate. Examples of this are quoted above. This passage in Luke is confirmed by and throws light upon ch. 23:12, where it is stated that "Pilate and Herod were made friends, for before they were at enmity between themselves." For this enmity would either lead Pilate the more willingly to slaughter these Galileans, or this slaughter of the subjects of Herod may have given rise to the enmity between them.

2. **Jesus answering.** Jesus takes advantage of this terrible incident to teach spiritual truths. It is a peculiarity of this Gospel, from the middle of the ninth chapter to the middle of the nineteenth, that incidents and discourses which follow are closely connected, the former introducing the latter and giving them additional force. Compare ch. 11: 37-41; 12: 1, 13; 13: 23; 14: 1, 7; 15: 1, 2; 16: 14, etc.

**Suppose ye, or think ye.** Jesus saw what they *thought*, but did not utter. They appear to have distorted the truth

that all suffering is the result of sin, and in some cases the direct result of particular sins, into a common error that every calamity was a proof and punishment of some flagrant sin, Gen. 42: 21; Job 4: 7; John 9: 2; Acts 28: 4. Jesus does not deny that those Galileans were sinners, but that they were pre-eminently so, **above all the Galileans.** Were other Galileans less guilty? Instead of **they suffered**, translate *they have suffered*, the idea being vividly present in the minds of his hearers as a distinguishing historic fact in the case of those Galileans. There were very likely some Galileans in his audience, perhaps also among those who brought the news.

3. Jesus gives his authoritative and most emphatic denial to such erroneous views. **I tell you, Nay.** You are not to regard them as sinners above thousands of other Galileans on account of their bloody and cruel death. And thou as a wise counsellor he turns their attention to their own danger and their immediate duty. **But except ye repent.** Whoever you may be, Galileans or Judeans. The word *repent* means to *change one's mind*. It expresses an inward change of views and feelings, and implies a sorrow for sin (Matt. 11: 21; 2 Cor. 7: 10), a turning to God (Acts 3: 19; 26: 20), and a change of conduct or outward reformation as the fruits, Matt. 3: 8; Acts 26: 20. Another word translated *repent* occurs in the New Testament a few times. Unlike the former and more common word, it does not denote a change of mind that is deep, durable, and productive of consequences, but rather a feeling of regret, of sorrow, or remorse for something done. See Matt. 27: 3; 2 Cor. 7: 8; Matt. 21: 29, 32.

**Ye shall all** (none are excepted, all must repent) **likewise perish**, rather, *in like manner perish*. Not merely shall ye perish as well as they, but there shall be a resemblance between your ruin and theirs. Ye shall perish as certainly and as terribly. Forty years later Galilee was subdued by Roman

those eighteen, upon whom the tower in Siloam fell, and slew them, think ye that they were "sinners" <sup>ch. 11. 4; Mt. 18 24.</sup> 5 above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem? "O I tell you, •Is. 28. 10.

arms, and thousands perished; and it is a remarkable fact that in the destruction of Jerusalem the temple was frequently the seat of war, and multitudes of priests were slain while offering sacrifices, and their blood mingled with that of their victims. Yet the language of Jesus is not to be so pressed as to limit it to the idea of sameness, "in the same manner." The idea is that of *likeness* or strong resemblance, and emphatically represents certain and irretrievable ruin coming upon them, and points not so much to temporal calamity and physical death as to that retribution which shall overtake the finally impenitent in the world to come. It should, however, be borne in mind that the terrible judgments which came upon the Jewish nation were types of the final doom of the ungodly.

4. Jesus passes from sinners of Galilee to those of Judea and Jerusalem. **Those eighteen.** Who these were, is unknown. Stier suggests that they were eighteen prisoners who had been confined in the tower of Siloam by the Jewish Sanhedrim. But there is no proof of this. There is, however, a noticeable difference between this example and the preceding one. The former was death by the hand of man, this directly by the hand of Providence. The two present a complete and comprehensive view of the relation of calamities to the punishment of sin.

**The tower in Siloam.** The word *tower* may mean a part of the city wall built higher than the rest for purposes of defence. Or it may be applied to any high isolated edifice. See below. The name Siloam, or Siloah, is found only four times elsewhere in Scripture, and is applied to a pool or its waters, Isa. 8 : 6; Neh. 3 : 15; John 9 : 7, 11. According to Josephus, this pool was just south-east of Jerusalem, at the meeting of the valleys of Jehoshaphat and the Tyropœon. From him we also learn that it was "without the city," and that at this pool the "old wall took a bend eastward," *Jewish War*, v. 6, § 1; 9, § 4. Close by sloped the saddle-shaped declivity of the temple hill supposed to

be Ophel. "There were fortifications hard by, for of Jotham we read, 'on the wall of Ophel he built much' (2 Chron. 27 : 3), and of Manasseh that 'he compassed about Ophel' (2 Chron. 33 : 14); and in connection with Ophel there is mention made of 'a tower that lieth out' (Neh. 3 : 26); and there is no unlikelihood in connecting this *projecting* tower with the tower in Siloam, while one may be almost excused for the conjecture that its *projection* was the cause of its ultimate *fall*."—SMITH'S *Dictionary of the Bible*. The expression "in Siloam" may have been used because the pool was surrounded with buildings, or Siloam may have been applied to the immediate vicinity of the pool.

The modern village *Silwan*, an Arabic modification of Siloam, occupies the site of an old quarry at the base of Ophel and opposite along the foot of Olivet. There are also a few ancient tombs, which are used as houses. The place is small and its condition most miserable. It is not mentioned in ancient times, and perhaps did not exist.

**Think ye, or suppose ye,** the same word as that used in ver. 2. **Sinners,** a different word from that used in ver. 2. There the word points to those who had turned away from the truth, who were living in sin, sinful, wicked. Here the word, meaning literally *debtors*, points to sinners as moral debtors to God. According to an Aramæan conception (the Aramæan was the vernacular language of Jews in our Saviour's day), *sin* is here represented as a *debt*. The supreme love and service of our hearts belongs rightfully to God. So far as we come short of this are we debtors to God and guilty of a breach of moral obligation. Divine justice has claims upon us, and we are exposed to the penalty, which we must bear unless satisfaction is made to God either by discharging the obligation and repairing the wrong done, or by an atonement which is acceptable to him as an infinitely just and holy Being. The idea of sin as a debt compares well with ch. 12 : 58, 59. **Above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem,** because they

¶ Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.

6 He spake also this parable; ¶ A certain man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came and sought fruit thereon, and found none. Then said he unto the dresser of his vineyard, Behold, these three

¶ Ps. 80. 8-11; Is. 5 2-4; Mt. 21. 19.

¶ Le. 19. 2<sup>o</sup>

were thus singled out by Providence for destruction. Having passed from Galileans and included all in his audience (ver. 3), he next came to the highly-favored inhabitants of Jerusalem. This was most fitting to an audience in Judea. On Jerusalem see ch. 2 : 22.

5. The repetition of the emphatic application of ver. 4 to all his hearers, showing its importance, and the more solemn to his Judean audience from his reference to the sudden death of certain Jerusalemites. **Likewise, in like manner,** as in ver. 4. The same general application to certain and irretrievable ruin is evident. Not by falling walls and towers, but by famine and sword, did the Jews at the siege of Jerusalem perish. Yet probably but a small minority of those who heard Jesus lived to see that catastrophe. But without repentance they perished. The utter ruin of those eighteen men is made a type of that which shall befall the finally impenitent in the world to come. Thus Jesus teaches that such an accident as that at Siloam should not be used as an occasion of harsh judgments upon the sufferers, but rather as a motive to repentance.

6. Jesus proceeds to illustrate and enforce the truth he had so emphatically uttered, "Except ye repent ye shall all in like manner perish," by the PARABLE OF THE BARREN FIG TREE. This is its *grand design*. Its *centre of comparison* is between the treatment of a fruitless fig tree by its owner and that which wicked men shall receive from God. In it is strikingly illustrated the goodness and severity of God.

**Parable.** See on ch. 8 : 4. **A fig tree . . . in his vineyard.** At first it may sound strange that a fig tree should be planted in a vineyard, but it was not uncommon. The two words frequently occur together in the Old Testament, Joel 2 : 22; Mic. 4 : 4. *The fig tree* was one of the most common and valuable trees of Palestine (Deut.

8 : 8), and was a symbol of peace and plenty, 1 Kings 4 : 25. It grows to a height of about twelve feet, with spreading branches and large dark-green leaves. The fruit is purple when ripe, with sweet pulp and abundance of small seeds. A vineyard is a simile often used in Scripture, Ps. 80 : 8-16; Isa. 27 : 2-7. See especially Isa. 5 : 1-7. The Jews planted their vineyards most commonly on the sides of hills and mountains, Ex. 15 : 17; 2 Chron. 26 : 10; Jer. 31 : 5. It is common to make *the fig tree* in this parable represent the Jewish nation and *the vineyard* the world. But since Jesus had just enforced repentance as the personal duty of every one of his hearers (vers. 3, 5), it is better to regard *the fig tree* as representing every individual. The *vineyard*, then, in its more restricted sense, would represent the house of Israel, as in Isa. 5 : 7, and in its more extended sense the whole world. **A certain man,** who planted the fig tree, represents God, as in John 15 : 1, "My Father is the Husband man."

**Sought fruit . . . found none** The tree was barren, like that which he cursed, Mark 11 : 13. This represents one who fails to bring forth good fruit. Thus had it been with Israel both as a nation and as individuals, Isa. 5 : 2, 7; Jer. 2 : 21. The fact that bad fruit often is found instead of good fruit is not taken into account here. There was an entire absence of the good. God's people bring forth the fruit of the Spirit, and are like a tree planted by the rivers of water that bringeth forth his fruit in his season, Ps. 1 : 3; John 15 : 2.

7. As the fig tree was proving worthless, the husbandman addressed the **dresser of his vineyard, the vine-dresser,** who most aptly represents Christ. Some would make the dresser represent the Holy Spirit, but Christ is the more fitting as the intercessor. He may be regarded as the chief vine-

- years I come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and find none: 'cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground?'
- 8 And he answering said unto him, 'Lord, let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it, and dung it:
- 9 and if it bear fruit, *well*: and 'if not, *then* after that thou shalt cut it down.

'ch. 3. 9; Mt. 7. 19; John 15. 2-6.  
 \* Ex. 32. 10-13;  
 Num. 14. 11-20;  
 Jer. 14. 7-9; Ro. 2. 4; 2 Pet. 3. 9.  
 \* Ezra 9. 13-15; Is. 5. 5-7; Mt. 3. 10.

dresser, and prophets, apostles, and ministers as laborers under him.

**Behold**, calling attention to an important fact. **These three years**, etc. Differently interpreted. Augustine understands that the times of the natural law, of the written law, and of grace are here represented; Theophylact that Christ had come by Moses, by the prophets, and last in his own person, or, if applied to the individual, childhood, manhood, and old age. Others regard Jesus as referring to his own ministry, of which this was the third year. All of these are well illustrated by the language of the parable. The time, however, I think, is used to represent the long-suffering of God. One year after the fruit might be expected—and some fig trees began to bear the third year—might be regarded as too short a time to wait, but three years would be abundantly long. How long had God waited for Israel before Christ's coming! Prov. 1 : 22; Hos. 10 : 12.

**Cut it down**, it is worthless and fit only for fuel, Matt. 7 : 19. The axe is laid at the root of the tree, Matt. 3 : 10. **Why**. Rather, *why also*, in addition to its uselessness. **Cumbereth**. Why does it also *despoil or impoverish the ground*? Not only occupying room, but intercepting the sun and drawing moisture and richness from the earth. So a wicked man or a false professor occupies stations in vain, exerts a bad influence, and discourages the pious. Compare Rom. 2 : 24; Matt. 23 : 13, 15. The blessings which he misimproves would be improved by the righteous.

8. The vine-dresser pleads for the tree, and would, if possible, avert its doom, and plainly represents the Son of God as the Intercessor for men, Zech. 1 : 12; Heb. 7 : 25. In accordance with the spirit of Christ, Moses, Joshua, Jeremiah, Elijah, and Daniel offered up successful intercessory prayers, Ex. 32 : 9-14; Josh. 7 : 7, 10; Jer. 32 : 16, 37; Dan. 9 : 5, 20; James 5 : 18. **Lord, let it alone**. The forbearance of God

is made prominent in this parable. The whole history of the world is a witness to his forbearance. **This year also** represents a time longer or shorter, according to circumstances. The judgments against the Jewish nation came forty years later.

**Till I shall dig about it, and dung it**, or *cast in manure*. This remedy for barren trees was common then, as now, in the East. "Those who expect to gather good crops of well-flavored figs are particularly attentive to their culture, and not only plough and dig about them frequently and manure them plentifully, but they carefully gather out the stones from the orchards, contrary to their general slovenly habits."—DR. THOMSON, *Land and Book*, vol. i., p. 539. This represents the various means used to lead sinners to repentance, and implies that nothing is left undone. The Jewish people had the Pentecostal season, the preaching of the apostles and early Christians. We are here taught that prayer for the conversion of sinners ought to be accompanied by actual efforts for their conversion.

9. This verse intimates that God's forbearance has a limit beyond which nothing but inevitable ruin remains to the impenitent. **And if it bear fruit, well**. The fruits which God expects are repentance, faith, and obedience. *Well* is not in the original. The sentence is unfinished, the conclusion being left to be inferred by the hearer or reader. Such abruptness is sometimes found in earnest and impassioned discourses. Similar examples are found in Ex. 32 : 32; Mark 7 : 11; Acts 23 : 9. The thought to be supplied here is, *it is well*, or *let it stand*. The idea of deferring judgment to give men time and opportunity to repent, runs through Scripture. One hundred and twenty years was fixed before the deluge (Gen. 6 : 3); forty days was given to Nineveh (Jon. 3 : 4); a day of visitation to Jerusalem (Luke 19 : 44); and Christ's

*Healing of a woman on the sabbath; parables of the mustard seed and the leaven.*

10 And he was teaching in one of the synagogues on  
11 the sabbath. And, behold, there was a woman which  
had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, and was bowed

coming to judgment is delayed through God's long-suffering, 2 Pet. 3 : 9, 10.

**And if not**, if it does not bear fruit after such careful and earnest attention, **then after that**, rather, *hereafter*, **thou shalt cut it down**. The expression is indefinite. After one year more of trial there would be no further effort to stay the axe of the husbandman. If it was still unfruitful, it would surely be cut down; it might be at the end of the year or it might be still later; but however that might be, its doom was certain. So sinners, when they pass the line between God's patience and his wrath, are doomed. They may live for a time, but their destruction is sure, ch. 19 : 42-44. How awful to think that the great Intercessor will let the sentence of condemnation take its course!

This parable may also be used to illustrate God's dealings with a formal or fruitless professor. Thus Bunyan uses it: "1. By the man in the parable is meant God the Father, Luke 15 : 11; 2. By the vineyard his church, Isa. 5 : 7; 3. By a fig tree a professor; 4. By the dresser the Lord Jesus; 5. By the fig tree's barrenness the professor's fruitlessness; 6. By the three years the patience of God that for a time he extendeth to barren professors; 7. This calling to the dresser of the vineyard to cut it down is to show the outeries of justice against fruitless professors; 8. The dresser's interceding is to show how the Lord Jesus steps in and takes hold of the head of the Father's axe to stop or at least to defer present execution of a barren fig tree; 9. The dresser's desire to try to make the fig tree fruitful is to show how unwilling he is that even a barren fig tree should yet be barren and perish; 10. His digging about it and dunging it is to show his willingness to apply gospel helps to this barren professor, if haply he may be fruitful; 11. The supposition that the fig tree may yet continue fruitless is to show that when Christ Jesus hath done all there are some professors who

will abide barren and fruitless; 12. The determination, upon this supposition, at last to cut it down, is a certain prediction of such professor's unavoidable and eternal damnation."

10-21. JESUS HEALS AN INFIRM WOMAN ON THE SABBATH; HIS DISCOURSE THEREUPON. Found only in Luke. There is a sufficient break in Luke's narrative between the 9th and 10th verses of this chapter to allow our Lord's attendance at the feast of dedication and a few incidents that preceded it, recorded in John 9 : 1-10, 39. This seems probable from a careful comparison of the Gospels of Luke and John, and from the fact that the journeying toward Jerusalem in ver. 22 applies admirably to our Lord's journey to Bethany when he raised Lazarus. See author's *Harmony*, part vi., introductory note, and note on § 115.

10. **And he was teaching**, etc. Time and place indefinite, except that upon a certain occasion he was teaching on the Sabbath. Jesus had probably retired beyond the Jordan after the incidents related in the preceding verses, John 10 : 40-42. That this miracle was performed in Perea may be inferred from ver. 22. We thus have in this miracle on the Sabbath in Perea the counterpart of healings on the Sabbath in Galilee and Jerusalem, ch. 4 : 31-37; John 9 : 1-14. It was now probably January, A. D. 30. **Was teaching**, as was his custom, in **one of the synagogues**. Every city and village had them. See on ch. 4 : 15, 16.

11. **A woman**, probably a pious woman, for Jesus does not say, Thy sins be forgiven thee, but calls her a daughter of Abraham (ver. 16), and it is said that she glorified God, ver. 13. **A spirit of infirmity**, or *weakness*, a spirit causing debility of long standing, **eighteen years**, and resulting in deformity, ver. 16. This must be distinguished from a demoniacal possession, for it is not called a possession, nor is it really so implied. Moreover, **Jesus** healed her with a touch, as in **cases of**

- 12 together, and could in no wise lift up *herself*. And when Jesus saw her, he called *her to him*, and said unto her, <sup>¶</sup>Woman, thou art loosed from thine infirmity. <sup>¶</sup>And he laid *his hands* on her: and immediately she was made straight, <sup>¶</sup>and glorified God.
- 14 And the ruler of the synagogue answered <sup>×</sup>with indignation, because that Jesus had healed on the sabbath day, and said unto the people, <sup>∇</sup>There are six days in which men ought to work: in them therefore come and be healed, and <sup>\*</sup>not on the sabbath day.

¶ Ps. 107. 20.  
 ∇ ch. 4. 40; Mk. 16  
 13; Ac. 9. 17.  
 ¶ Ps. 116. 17.  
 \* ch. 6. 11.  
 ∇ Ex. 20. 9.  
 \* ch. 6. 7; Mt. 12  
 10; Mk. 3. 2.

disease, and not with a simple word, as in the case of demons. The power of evil spirits to produce disease is shown in the case of Job, Job 2 : 7. An evil spirit also troubled Saul, 1 Sam. 16 : 14. Compare 2 Cor. 12 : 7. **Bowed together**, bent together, or, as we say, *bent double*. The spine appears to have been diseased—so much so that she could in no wise, was not able to, raise herself up, into an upright posture. Hence she very likely did not see Jesus. Her appearance was a picture of misery and infirmity. Yet notwithstanding this, she attended religious services.

12. **And when Jesus saw her, and Jesus seeing her.** His compassion was aroused (Matt. 9 : 36), and he called her to him. He waits not to be asked, as in the case of Bartimeus. Her pious soul had doubtless feasted upon our Saviour's teaching (ver. 10), and was ready to accept in faith whatever he proclaimed.

**Woman**, thus addressed in kindness and respect. **Art loosed**, already. She was set free from Satan's power (ver. 16), which for eighteen years had rendered rigid the muscles of her back. Even as Jesus spoke, and before he spoke, her faith in his power was sufficient to the breaking of Satan's power. It was now accomplished, and declared accomplished. She only needs now strength to exercise her muscles.

13. **He laid his hands on her**, for the strengthening and confirming her faith, and for the sake of those present, that they might recognize his power. **Immediately**. In an instant divine power produced its effect. **She was made straight**. Receiving strength, she stood erect. "It would be, in such a case, one thing to be loosed from the stiffening of years (ver. 12),

and another to have strength at once conferred to stand upright."—ALFORD. **Glorified God**, recognized the divine power in Jesus and gave praise to God. This was the culmination and the outgushing expression of her faith.

14. The effect of the miracle on the ruler of the synagogue. His command to the people. **Ruler of the synagogue**. See on ch. 8 : 41. **Answered**, a response to what had just occurred. That was the occasion. So the word is often used, ch. 1 : 60. *With indignation*, etc. Rather, *being indignant because Jesus had healed*, etc. We see the animus of his speech. He stops not to reason, but gives vent to prejudice and rage. He speaks as if filled with holy anger at the violation of the Sabbath, but the cause of his indignation was rather his dislike to Christ himself. His words and his manner showed him a hypocrite. **Unto the people**, he exhibits fear and cowardice in addressing neither Jesus nor the woman. Yet he speaks so as to be heard by them.

**There are six days**, etc., referring to the fourth commandment. This he misapplies, and also misrepresents the whole transaction. He intimates that the healing was **work**, servile labor, instead of the result of supernatural power, when Jesus had really done no act of labor, and the people also had done nothing; that they had **come to be healed**, when they had come for worship, and no one, not even the woman, had asked for healing. His stupid advice could only mean, "If any one wants to heal you on the Sabbath, you must decline."

The Jews of Palestine to this day greatly resemble their Pharisaic predecessors. "I have no heart to dwell on their absurd superstitions, their in-

15 The Lord then answered him, and said, *Thou hypocrite, doth not each one of you on the sabbath loose his ox or his ass from the stall, and lead him away to*

\* ch. 14. 3-6; John  
7. 21-24.

tense fanaticism, or their social and domestic institutions and manners, comprising an incredible and grotesque medley of filth and finery, Pharisaic self-righteousness and Sadducean licentiousness. The following is a specimen of puerilities enjoined and enforced by their learned rabbis: *A Jew must not carry on the Sabbath even so much as a pocket-handkerchief except within the walls of the city.* If there are no walls, it follows, according to their perverse logic, that he must not carry it at all! To avoid this difficulty here in Safed, they resort to what is called *eruv*. Poles are set up at the ends of streets and strings stretched from one to the other. This string represents a wall, and a conscientious Jew may carry his handkerchief anywhere within these strings. . . . The last time I was here they had abandoned this absurdity, probably to avoid the constant ridicule it brought upon them."—DR. THOMSON, *Land and Book*, vol. ii., ch. xix.

There was a design in the many miracles which Jesus wrought on the Sabbath. He would correct false views of that day, showing that it is a season, not only for devotions and religious instruction, but also for works of mercy and necessity. So also by running so directly across their superstitious notions and traditions, he gave them the opportunity to manifest their hatred, which culminated in his crucifixion.

From comparing the gospel narratives it is evident that our Lord's miracles were one of the principal causes of Pharisaic opposition. It was several months before this, in Galilee, that the first organized movement against Jesus, among the Pharisees and Herodians, was occasioned by the healing of a withered hand on the Sabbath, ch. 6 : 11; Mark 3 : 6. "However much it might be manifest that the spirit of Christ and the spirit of the Pharisee were inalienably opposed to each other, yet up to this point the enemies of Jesus were unable to ruin his influence or check his work. To forgive, with the same word which healed the diseases,

the sins by which they believed all diseases to be caused—to join in social festivities—to associate with publicans and sinners,—were not and could not be construed into offences against the law. But a weightier charge, more persistently reiterated, more violently resented, remained behind—a charge of distinctly violating the express laws of Moses by non-observance of the Sabbath. This it was which caused a surprise, a madness, a thirst for sanguinary vengeance, which pursued him to the very cross. For the Sabbath was a Mosaic—nay, even a primeval—institution, and it had become the most distinctive of all the ordinances which separated the Jew from the Gentile as a peculiar people. It was at once the sign of their exclusive privileges and the centre of their barren formalism."—DR. FARRAR, *Life of Christ*, vol. i., p. 431.

15. Our Lord's rebuke. He lays open the heart of this ruler and his sympathizers. **The Lord.** The title accords with the authority which Jesus exercises. **Thou hypocrite.** According to the oldest manuscripts, *hypocrites*; the ruler and the class he represented. That others present were with him in feeling is evident from ver. 17, "All his adversaries were ashamed." Their common acts on the Sabbath showed them hypocrites, that they were not what they professed and what the language of the ruler would indicate. This kind of argument was just to these Pharisees and the Pereaans.

**Loose his ox,** as if suggested by his declaration, "Thou art loosed," ver. 12. Jesus describes in detail this labor of theirs on the Sabbath. **From the stall,** or rather, *from the manger*, as in ch. 2 : 7, 12, 16. **Lead him away,** etc. This was much more than the mere saying, "Thou art loosed," etc.; and all this to a brute.

By a pointed question Jesus shows that their own practice was against them and in his favor. There was not a man among them but watered his ox or ass on the Sabbath. From the rabbins also we learn that this was lawful.

- 16 watering? And ought not this woman, <sup>b</sup>being a daughter of Abraham, <sup>c</sup>whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the sabbath day?
- 17 And when he had said these things, all his adversaries <sup>d</sup>were ashamed. <sup>e</sup>And all the people rejoiced for all the glorious things that were done by him.
- 18 <sup>f</sup>Then said he, Unto what is the kingdom of God

<sup>b</sup> ch. 3. 8; 19. 9; Mt. 12. 12; Ac. 13. 26.  
<sup>c</sup> Job 2. 6, 7; Ac. 10. 38.

<sup>d</sup> Ps. 132. 18.  
<sup>e</sup> ch. 18. 43.

<sup>f</sup> Mt. 13. 31; Mk. 4. 30-32.

16. **And ought not, etc.** This *ought* is a condescending answer to the arbitrary *ought* of ver. 14. The argument is from the less to the greater, conclusive, and condemnatory of the inconsistency of the Pharisees in applying a rule publicly to Jesus which they did not apply privately to themselves. They made an exception in favor of a dumb animal; much more ought they to allow Jesus to make an exception in favor of a diseased woman. A person's life and health were surely far more important than the mere watering of an ox or an ass.

**Being a daughter of Abraham.** What is a beast in comparison to a human being, and especially to one of God's chosen people? The expression is emphatic. She is not only by descent, but also spiritually, a daughter of Abraham, ch. 19 : 9; Gal. 3 : 7. This is confirmed by the facts that Jesus asks nothing about her faith, does not say "Thy sins be forgiven thee," and she is immediately healed and glorifies God. *Satan* means *adversary*, the prince and leader of inferior evil spirits or demons. See further on ch. 4 : 2. Compare 1 Cor. 5 : 5; 1 Sam. 6 : 14; Job 2 : 7; Heb. 2 : 14. **Hath bound, lo,** or *behold*, calling attention to her long and fearful bondage, from which she had been released, as vividly before his eyes. **These eighteen years.** What a contrast! The animal must not be confined for a single day without watering, though under the kind care of his master; and must not this woman, a daughter, too, of Abraham, be released from Satan, who for eighteen years held her bound as her deadly foe? The cold-hearted Pharisee might have said, If she has been bound eighteen years, surely she might wait one day longer. But Jesus makes this fact an argument for affording instant relief; for he who loves his neighbor as himself would say, Let her not suffer a

moment longer if help can be obtained. Who with true compassion would forbid a cure? **On the sabbath.** Much more than that an ox should be watered. The propriety of being released from Satan's power on the Sabbath is also implied. What work more fitting?

17. The effect of our Lord's answer to the ruler of the synagogue. **All his adversaries, or opposers,** those who sided with the ruler in his rebuke to the people. See on ver. 15. **Were ashamed.** The verb in the original is intense, *thoroughly ashamed*, perfectly confounded. And this, too, in the eyes of the people as well as their own. So every mouth will be stopped at last, Rom. 3 : 19; Dan. 12 : 2.

But the effect on **all the people, or the multitude**, was the reverse. Their mouths were opened; they **rejoiced**, not momentarily, but it took possession of them. They were rejoicing for **all the glorious things** that were being done by him. Other miracles seem to have been performed.

18, 19. **PARABLE OF A GRAIN OF MUSTARD SEED.** The expansive power of truth. It is given somewhat more fully in Matt. 13 : 31, 32, and Mark 4 : 30-32. There is no necessity for supposing that Luke put this and the parable that follows (vers. 20, 21) in this place without chronological order. They fit admirably here. The circumstances point to them as spoken both at the seaside in Galilee (Mark 4 : 1) and here in Perea. They appear to have been favorite illustrations with our Lord.

18. **Then said he.** According to the highest critical authorities, *He said therefore*, availing himself of this opportunity and in view of what had just occurred. A great triumph had been achieved over his adversaries. He was increasing in favor with the people. So his kingdom would increase, overcoming all opposition. He embraces

19 like ; and whereunto shall I resemble it? <sup>¶</sup>It is like <sup>¶</sup>See Ps. 72. 16; Eze. 17. 22, 23.  
 a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and cast into his garden ; and it grew, and waxed a great tree ; and the fowls of the air lodged in the branches of it.

the opportunity to illustrate this by two parables.

In order to arrest attention, and for the sake of emphasis, he uses the form of questions: **Unto what is the kingdom of God like?** To what is the reign or dispensation of the Messiah like? On *kingdom of God*, see ch. 4 : 43. The questions denote no perplexity or uncertainty in the Saviour's mind, but serve to give vividness to the subject and to arouse the attention of his hearers. **Whereunto, to what, shall I resemble, or liken, it?**

19. We may well suppose that Jesus paused a moment as if waiting a reply, and then he answers, **Like a grain of mustard seed.** This is popularly described as less than all seeds, Matt. 13 : 32 ; Mark 4 : 31. It was the smallest seed-grain used in Jewish husbandry, and in proportion to the plant it produces it was the smallest of all domestic garden-seeds. In Jewish proverbial language it was used to denote the smallest thing, Matt. 17 : 20.

**Which a man took and cast.** Literally, *which a man taking or handling cast*. Great minuteness and fullness in the description. There may be reference to the smallness of the seed, which required the most careful taking up and holding, lest it should be lost. **His garden**, a select spot, or an enclosed place for herbs and fruit trees. With pictorial minuteness Jesus continues, **and it grew and waxed**, or *became*, **a great tree**, so that the **fowls**, rather, *the birds*, of the air came **and lodged**, lighting upon and finding shelter among its branches.

Dr. Royle (art. "Sinapi," *Kitto's Encyc.*) supposes that Jesus refers to the mustard tree, the *Khardal roomee*, or Turkish mustard, called by botanists *Salvadora Persica*, found in India, Arabia, and Syria, which grows abundantly, as he says, on the very shores of the Sea of Galilee, where our Saviour spake the parable of the mustard seed. It is more natural, however, to suppose the mustard *plant* to be intended, since Jesus speaks of it as sowed in "a garden,"

and by his language implies that it is an *herb* (Mark 4 : 32)—that is, a garden-plant. The matter of wonder also is not that a *tree*, but that a *plant* from so small a seed, should grow to such a size.

"It may have been perennial, and have grown to a considerable tree, and there are traditions in the country of such so large that a man could climb into them; and after having seen the *red pepper* bushes grow on year after year into tall shrubs, and the *castor bean* line the brooks about Damascus, like the willows and the poplars, I can readily credit the existence of mustard trees large enough to meet all the demands of our Lord's parable."—DR. THOMSON, *Land and Book*, vol. i., p. 101.

The common mustard plant is not only found in Palestine in a wild state, but is cultivated in gardens. Dr. Hooker (Hackett's *Smith's Dictionary*, p. 2042) says, "Of the mustard plants which I saw on the banks of the Jordan, one was ten feet high." Dr. Hackett, while riding across the plain Akka on the way to Mount Carmel, examined an extensive field of this plant. "It was in blossom at the time, full grown; in some cases, as measured, six, seven, and nine feet high, with a stem or trunk more than an inch thick, throwing out branches on every side. It might well be called a tree, and certainly, in comparison with its tiny seed, 'a great tree.' Still, the branches or stems of the branches were not very large, and to the eye did not appear very strong. Can the birds, I said to myself, rest upon them? Are they not too slight and flexible? Will they not bend or break beneath the superadded weight? At that very instant, as I stood and revolved the thought, lo! one of the fowls of heaven stopped in his flight through the air, alighted down upon the branches, which hardly moved beneath the shock, and then began, perched there before my eyes, to warble forth a strain of the richest music."—HACKETT'S *Smith's Dictionary*, p. 2043.

20 And again he said, Whereunto shall I liken the  
 21 kingdom of God? It is like leaven, which a woman  
 took, and hid in three <sup>b</sup>measures of meal, till the <sup>b</sup> See Mt. 13. 33.  
 whole was leavened.

INTERPRETATION. The grand *design* of this parable is to show the expansive and growing power of the gospel under the kingdom or reign of the Messiah. Its *centre of comparison* is between the power of growth as exhibited in the mustard seed and that manifested in gospel truth. The *grain* of mustard represents the word of God, the truth. The *man* that sowed, Christ or one of his servants. The *seed* in the soil *becoming a plant*, the individual believer. The *idea* of growth and of gradual development is vividly presented. A seed of gospel truth is lodged in the heart, a little word or a single idea. To human view it is indeed small, but it germinates into a new and growing life, begotten "with the word of truth," James 1 : 18. Thus it has pleased God "through the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe," 1 Cor. 1 : 21. The believer now grows in grace, his spiritual strength increases, his graces appear, and his powers are developed, going on from one degree of strength to another, till he becomes a full-grown man in Christ, Eph. 4 : 13. He has now the size, appearance, strength, and activities of a man. But growth includes not only internal development, but also accretion from without through food, air, water, etc. So the Christian in his growth feeds upon the bread of life. The *birds of the air* are introduced to represent the strength and blessing of this matured and developed state. Christians individually and collectively are indeed a source of blessing and safety to the world, Gen. 18 : 23-33; Deut. 9 : 19, 20; Isa. 1 : 9.

But this parable also illustrates the power and growth of the gospel generally in the hearts and lives of men. Jesus was indeed "the Word," the gospel *seed*, the babe of Bethlehem, the man of sorrows, despised of men, but planted of his own free will by his death, springing up in his resurrection, and bearing fruit in the thousands and the millions of his followers, John 12 : 24. The spiritual kingdom, commen-

cing with himself, has been constantly augmenting. The gospel from small beginnings has become extensive and powerful. See a prophecy of this kingdom in Dan. 2 : 44, 45; and compare Dan. 7 : 13, 14; Ezek. 17 : 22-24.

20, 21. PARABLE OF THE LEAVEN. Compare Matt. 13 : 34, where it is given in almost the same words. The assimilating power of truth.

20. **And he said again.** Indicating that he uttered this immediately after the parable of the mustard. **Whereunto, etc.** *To what shall I liken, etc.* Compare on ver. 18.

21. **Leaven, yeast, sour dough. Three measures.** The measure here meant was one-third of an ephah; three measures, or an ephah, seems to have been the quantity commonly used for one baking. See Gen. 18 : 6; Judg. 6 : 9; 1 Sam. 1 : 24. Jerome says a *measure* is equal to a Roman *modius*, or about a peck and a half. **Meal, flour, fine meal;** probably wheat-flour.

In interpreting this parable, the question arises at the outset whether it is intended to illustrate the leavening power of gospel truth or of false doctrine. Starting with the fact that leaven was forbidden at the passover and in all offerings made by fire unto the Lord (Ex. 12 : 15; Lev. 2 : 11), and that it is generally used in Scripture in a bad sense to symbolize evil (ch. 12 : 1 and 1 Cor. 5 : 7), some commentators refer this parable to the corruptions of doctrine and practice which have crept into the church, making the woman to represent the apostate church exemplified very strikingly by the papacy. A fatal objection to this view is that it is *the kingdom of God* that Jesus says is like unto *leaven*. If leaven be error, then is it represented as overcoming the truth, and wholly leavening with corruption either the kingdom of the Messiah or its individual members, both of which are contrary to God's truth and to fact, ch. 16 : 18; John 10 : 27, 28. It may also be well to note that Paul calls the *bad* leaven the *old* leaven (1 Cor. 5 : 7), and that in offering the

*Journeying toward Jerusalem; answer to a question as to the number to be saved.*

22 <sup>1</sup>And he went through the cities and villages, teaching, and journeying toward Jerusalem. <sup>1</sup>Mt. 9. 35; Mk. 6. 6.

first fruits unto the Lord, the loaves were to be "baken with leaven" (Lev. 23 : 17), and offerings not burnt upon the altar, but eaten by the priests, might contain leaven, Lev. 7 : 13-16. The true state of the case seems to be that leaven is a figure of diffusive and assimilating power; and although generally used in Scripture to represent that which is corrupt and evil, it may also be used to illustrate this power connected with truth. Thus *lion* is applied to Satan and our Lord (1 Pet. 5 : 8; Rev. 5 : 5), and *serpent* is used to illustrate the good as well as the bad, Matt. 10 : 16; Rev. 12 : 9.

The grand *design* of this parable, therefore, seems to be the diffusive and assimilating power of the gospel under the kingdom of the Messiah. The centre of comparison is between the pervasive power of leaven and that of gospel truth. The leaven represents the truth; the woman the Holy Spirit; the meal the human heart; the leaven pervading the three measures of meal the individual Christian under the renewing and sanctifying influence of the Spirit. The three measures may aptly refer to *body, soul, and spirit*, 1 Thess. 5 : 23. Thus, the Holy Spirit in connection with the truth begins the work of grace in the heart (James 1 : 18; John 16 : 8-11), and carries it on till the power of the whole man is pervaded by his influence, assimilated and fully subjected to Christ, John 17 : 17. And whereas it is said that the woman *took* and *hid* the leaven, so the inner principle of life comes from *without* (John 1 : 13), and the influence of the Spirit and truth in regeneration and sanctification is indeed hidden, silent, and secret in its workings. Thus, as the parable of the mustard seed illustrates the expansive power of truth by the principle of growth, that principle being in itself, this parable illustrates its pervading power by the principle of assimilation, that principle acting on a foreign mass till it is wholly pervaded and assimilated.

This parable may also illustrate this

power of truth generally in Christ's kingdom. The meal in that case is the world, and the three measures may represent the world as inhabited by the descendants of the three sons of Noah. The leaven *taken* and *hid* in the meal, the kingdom of Christ as not of the world, but spiritual, a kingdom of truth, reigning in the hearts of its subjects, coming not with "observation," but quietly pervading humanity, and drawing men to the truth and conforming them to the image of Christ. This work is to go on till the *whole is leavened*, till the kingdom is completely triumphant and the kingdom of the world has become our Lord's and his Christ's, Rev. 11 : 15; Dan. 7 : 17.

22-30. JESUS JOURNEYS AND TEACHES. AN IDLE QUESTION SERIOUSLY ANSWERED. This is peculiar to Luke, yet similar expressions are found in Matt. 7 : 13, 22, 23; 8 : 11, 12; 19 : 30.

22. *Went through the cities*, etc. According to the highest critical authorities, *went through cities and villages* of Perea. According to the most natural arrangement, Jesus had previously gone beyond—east of—Jordan, where John first baptized, John 10 : 40. See on vers. 10-22. The fact that Jesus was under the jurisdiction of Herod (ver. 32) points also to Perea. The break between this and the preceding verse implies a change in the narrative and admits a little interval of time, perhaps two or three weeks. It was probably the latter part of January or early in February, A. D. 30.

*Journeying toward Jerusalem*, as the point of destination. Not the journey recorded in ch. 9 : 51, for that was through Samaria, but this through Herod's territory, ver. 32. That was hasty, this leisurely; that also was probably to the feast of tabernacles, and private (John 7 : 2-10) and soon accomplished (ch. 10 : 1), but this was most public, and it is not implied that it was immediately accomplished. As Jesus probably remained in Judea between the feast of tabernacles and the feast of dedication, about December 20, A. D.

23 Then said one unto him, Lord, are there few that  
 24 be saved? And he said unto them, <sup>1</sup>Strive to enter in  
 at <sup>2</sup>the strait gate: for <sup>3</sup>many, I say unto you, will

<sup>1</sup>Mt. 7. 13, 14. <sup>2</sup>Is. 58. 2-4; Eze. 33. 31; Mk. 6. 20; John 7. 34; 8. 21; 13. 33; Ac. 26. 28; Ro. 9. 31-33; 10. 3; Heb. 12. 17.

<sup>3</sup>Ge. 32. 25, 26; Mt. 11. 12; Col. 1. 29; Heb. 4. 11; 2 Pet. 1. 10.

29, and as he went into Perea soon after (John 10 : 40), it is most natural to place this journeying just previous to the news of the sickness of Lazarus, John 11 : 3. Thus he reached Bethany in his journeying toward Jerusalem, but did not reach Jerusalem until he entered it five days before his last pass-over (John 12 : 1, 12), unless he may have privately visited the city after the raising of Lazarus.

23. **Then said one**, rather, *and a certain one said to him*. The language is indefinite as to time and place, it being only implied by the connection that the incident related took place while Jesus was journeying toward Jerusalem. The inquirer was probably one of the multitude, and at the most only an external follower of Jesus, for the answer of our Saviour rather implies that he was not sufficiently in earnest for his own salvation.

**Are there few that be saved**, *are saved*, or *are being saved*, by being received into the Messianic kingdom, or through the blessings of the Messianic kingdom? Reference to spiritual salvation, and not to temporal, seems evident. The present tense points particularly to what was then going on, yet by implication it may have a universal application. The present also is used to represent a general truth, embracing the past, present, and future. The reference of this question in the mouth of a Jew would naturally be limited to the Jewish nation.

Why he should have asked this question can only be conjectured. Perhaps the parables of the mustard and of the leaven (vers. 18-21), which had suggested the growth and extensiveness of Christ's kingdom, had led him to ask it. The question was a familiar one. The doctrine of "a remnant to be saved" was discussed by Jewish rabbins, some maintaining that all Israelites were saved by birthright, others denying it. The small number of those who had as yet become Christ's disciples may have led him to think on the

subject, and to desire to learn the opinion of Jesus himself. That it was not mere curiosity nor hypocrisy may be inferred from the answer, which contains no direct reproof. Thus a variety of circumstances and motives may have led to the question. The inquirer appears to have been sincere, and to have had no question about his own salvation. In security regarding himself, he asks about others. But whatever may have led to it, his question was idle and unimportant when compared with the personal salvation of himself and of the multitude. Jesus therefore only answers it by exhorting them to earnest and immediate effort for salvation, with the intimation that many who think themselves entitled to enter heaven will be thrust out.

**And he said unto them**, to the people present. It was not strictly an answer to the question, but an exhortation suggested by it, and of such general importance that he addressed it to all.

24. **Strive**, *agonize*, *put forth your utmost strength*, *strain every nerve*. The kingdom of God must be entered as if by violence, Matt. 11 : 12. The term is taken from Grecian contests, where they wrestled and ran the race in order to win the crown of laurel. The exhortation is similar to that in Matt. 7 : 13, 14, but more emphatic, bringing out more fully the necessity of immediate and most intense earnestness. **To enter in at** (literally, *through*); the idea is that of struggling through the **strait gate**, *the narrow door*, as of a house, according to the best text. This puts the door at the end of the way, as in the next verse. In Matt. 7 : 13 it is first the *gate* and the *way*. Here the way of humility, repentance, and self-denial is implied first, and then the *door* into heaven. Salvation (last verse) is conceived of as within the banqueting house, which could be entered only through the narrow door, at the end of the struggle, Matt. 24 : 13. **Strait**—that is, *narrow*, the opposite of *wide*, which in Matthew is applied to the way to destruction, the

25 seek to enter in, and shall not be able. <sup>m</sup> When once the master of the house is risen up, and <sup>n</sup> hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, <sup>o</sup> Lord, Lord, open to us; and he shall answer and say unto you, <sup>p</sup> I know you not  
 26 whence ye are: <sup>q</sup> then shall ye begin to say, We have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast

<sup>m</sup> Ps. 32. 6; Is. 55.

<sup>n</sup> 6; Heb. 3. 7, 8, 15.

<sup>o</sup> Ge. 7. 16; Mt. 25. 10-12.

<sup>o</sup> ch. 6. 46.

<sup>p</sup> Mt. 7. 23; 25. 12.

<sup>q</sup> Mt. 7. 22.

thought being implied here. The narrowness of the gate is a reason for earnest effort to find it and press through it. "I have seen these strait gates and narrow ways, 'with here and there a traveller.' They are in retired corners, and must be sought for, and are opened only to those who knock; and when the sun goes down and the night comes on, they are shut and locked. It is then too late."—DR. THOMSON, *The Land and Book*, vol. i., p. 32; Phil. 2 : 12; 1 Pet. 4 : 18. See remarks 24, 25, at the end of the chapter.

**For** introduces the important reason for such earnest and persistent endeavor. To give emphasis and assurance to the startling declaration he was about to make, he joins his solemn attestation, **I say unto you**, I solemnly declare to you. **Many shall seek**, etc. True, many shall not agonize; they may be said to be only half-hearted seekers, or they seek in some wrong way. But is that the meaning here? Hardly; for Jesus immediately expands the idea in the next verse, and speaks of the entreaties of some when the door shall be shut. Besides, the word translated seek is generally used in the New Testament of earnest seeking. Compare Matt. 2 : 13; 6 : 33; 7 : 7, 8; Luke 2 : 45, 48, 49; 11 : 9, 10; 12 : 31, etc. And such a meaning is applicable here. Many shall earnestly seek to enter in, but it shall be too late; the door will be shut. The words **shall not be able** imply earnest effort. Notwithstanding their importunate endeavor, they cannot enter after the door is shut. The exhortation of Jesus is for immediate performance of duty, and against procrastination. Be truly in earnest *now*; soon it will be too late, ch. 14 : 17, 24; Heb. 4 : 7. Notice that while Jesus says nothing about *few* being saved, he intimates that *many* will be lost.

25. In parabolic language Jesus illustrates his statement. Indeed, to the end of ver. 30 he enforces the exhorta-

tion of ver. 24. **When**. Literally, *From the time that*, closely connected with what precedes. **The master of the house**, the head of the family. The figure is that of a feast at which a man entertains the members of his family—that is, children, servants, and inmates of his house. **Is risen up**, from his seat, or the place where he was reclining at the banquet, the time allotted for the assembling of the guests having expired. **Shut to the door**. In the light of the preceding verse, we may regard this door as a narrow wicket, by which only one at a time could enter, and now this is shut, and none are to be admitted afterward.

**Ye begin to stand without**. This marks the beginning of active efforts when it is too late. Notice the vivid climax. They shall stand without, then knock, then call, then appeal to former intercourse and discipleship, but all in vain.

**Lord, Lord**. The repetition shows great urgency and importunity. But according to some of the oldest and best manuscripts, it should not be repeated. **I know you not whence ye are**. I do not recognize you as members of my family, or as having any relationship with me. I have no spiritual acquaintance with you nor with the place from whence ye are. Ye are the workers of iniquity (ver. 27), and between us there can be no real acquaintance. "The Lord knoweth the way of the righteous," Ps. 1 : 6. "He hath respect unto the lowly, but the proud he knoweth afar off," Ps. 138 : 6; John 10 : 14; 1 Cor. 8 : 3.

26. **Then** commences the second member of the sentence, which begins with ver. 25, "When once," etc. Before this they exercised the confidence of self-delusion, but now they **begin** to plead former intimacy. **We have eaten**, etc. More correctly, *We ate and drank . . . thou didst teach*, etc. Many of his hearers had, doubt

- 27 taught in our streets. <sup>r</sup> But he shall say, I tell you, I know you not whence ye are; <sup>s</sup> depart from me, all  
 28 ye workers of iniquity. <sup>t</sup> There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, <sup>u</sup> when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the king-  
 29 dom of God, and you yourselves thrust out. <sup>v</sup> And they shall come from the east, and from the west, and from the north, and from the south, and shall sit down  
 30 in the kingdom of God. <sup>w</sup> And, behold, there are last which shall be first, and there are first which shall be last.

<sup>r</sup> ver. 25; Mt. 7  
 23; 25. 41.  
<sup>s</sup> Ps. 6. 8; Mt. 25. 41.  
<sup>t</sup> Mt. 8. 12; 13. 42;  
 24. 51.  
<sup>u</sup> Mt. 8. 11.  
<sup>v</sup> Ge. 12. 3; 22. 13  
 28. 14; Ps. 22. 27;  
 Is. 2. 3; 11. 10;  
 Mal. 1. 11; Mk.  
 13. 27; Ac. 10.  
 45; 11. 18; 14.  
 27; Ro. 15. 9, etc.;  
 Eph. 3. 6.  
<sup>w</sup> Mt. 19. 30; 20.  
 16; Mk. 10. 31.

less, eaten with him at their houses and elsewhere, and perhaps at one of the miraculous feedings. But to eat and drink with any one also expresses the idea of familiar intercourse, companionship, or acquaintance. So also his having taught in their streets, their broad ways or thoroughfares, which the people frequented, points to the cities and villages where he had so often been attended with crowds, and also presents the idea of common and friendly intercourse. But notwithstanding all this, their qualifications, being merely external, were insufficient. They were entirely deficient in the qualifications of the heart. They are, therefore, most emphatically turned away and reminded of their true character, ver. 27.

27. **I tell you.** Giving emphasis to the repetition. I tell you your sentence is fixed: you are not of mine. **Depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity,** ye whose daily business or occupation is to work in the service of *unrighteousness*, Ps. 6 : 8. On **I know you not,** etc., see ver. 25.

28. Jesus describes the lamentation and remorse of those who shall find themselves for ever excluded from his heavenly kingdom through their own procrastination and neglect. **There** and then. With the idea of place some idea of time seems to be implied. Their disappointment and misery are vividly represented by their **weeping and gnashing,** grinding and grating, **of teeth.** More correctly, *the weeping and the gnashing of teeth,* referring to something well known, the misery of the lost. **When ye shall see Abraham,** etc., the patriarchs and **all the prophets** of succeeding ages, in the possession and enjoyment of the **kingdom of God,** as it shall be finally

consummated above, Rev. 19 : 6-9. On *Abraham and prophets* compare ch. 1 : 55, 70. **Yourselves thrust out,** implying that they attempted to enter, and not only were not able, but they were cast out "into outer darkness," Matt. 8 : 12. Thus did Jesus teach them that not all the Jews should be saved.

29. And not only this. Salvation shall be extended to the Gentiles. **From the east and from the west.** From the Gentiles, not only those near, but also those most distant; from all parts of the earth, Isa. 45 : 6; 49 : 6. **Sit down.** Rather, *recline at table,* according to the custom of the time of reclining upon beds or couches at their feasts or banquets. The blessings of the Messiah's reign had been represented in prophecy by a feast, Isa. 25 : 6. To recline at table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the fathers of the nation, was to the Jewish mind a representation of the highest honor and the greatest happiness. "According to Jewish notions, splendid banquets with the patriarchs formed part of the happiness enjoyed in Messiah's kingdom." —MEYER. Many Gentiles shall become spiritual descendants of the fathers in faith (Heb. 11 : 8-10), participators of the **kingdom of God,** both below (Col. 1 : 13) and above, 2 Pet. 1 : 11. Compare ch. 14 : 15-24.

30. Jesus repeats a proverbial saying, which he uttered on various occasions with somewhat different applications, Matt. 19 : 30; 20 : 16; Mark 10 : 31. The idea here is that not only shall those who are first in privileges at last occupy a less honored place than many less highly favored, but that many of them shall be actually excluded. Doddridge brings out the idea in the follow-

*The Pharisees' warning respecting Herod; our Lord's reply.*

31 The same day there came certain of the Pharisees, saying unto him, Get thee out, and depart hence:  
 32 for Herod will kill thee. And he said unto them, Go ye, and tell that fox, Behold, I cast out devils, and I

ing paraphrase: "And behold, this shall be the case not only of a few, but of great numbers, for *there are* many who are now *last* in point of religious advantages *that shall* then *be first* in honor and happiness; and *there are* many who now appear *first that shall* then *be found last*, and on account of their abused privileges shall appear the most infamous and miserable of mankind." The absence of the article renders the proverb indefinite, and makes it mean that there shall be those of the first, not all of them, who shall be last, and the reverse.

31-35. THE PHARISEES WARN JESUS OF HEROD'S ENMITY. HIS REPLY. LAMENTATION OVER JERUSALEM. Luke alone records the incident in vers. 31-33. The lamentation is similar to that in Matt. 23 : 37-39. But so naturally does each fit in its place that the conclusion seems irresistible that Jesus repeated it; and this is confirmed by the diversity of the language in the two. The scene of this account was Perea. The time about the beginning of February.

31. **The same day**, or *in that hour*, when Jesus answered the question, "Are there few that are saved?" ver. 23. **Pharisees**. See on ch. 5 : 17. **Get thee out, and depart hence**, with all possible speed. The two verbs make the advice emphatic, giving the idea of urgency. **For Herod**, Antipas. See on ch. 3 : 1. As Jesus was in Herod's dominion, yet not in Galilee, he must have been in Perea, east of Jordan. **Will kill thee**. Rather, *wishes or desires to kill thee*. Yet really it was the Pharisees who desired to kill Jesus, and Herod to see him (ch. 9 : 7 ; 23 : 8), though just now he may have desired him to depart. He had doubtless suffered too much in his conscience on account of beheading John the Baptist to really desire to kill another religious teacher. Herod, however, agitated with superstitious fears, was probably anxious that one whose fame was daily spreading

should quit his territory. He finds the Pharisees willing tools to urge Jesus to quit a region where his life was comparatively safe for one where it would be in the greatest danger. Some able expositors suppose that this report was invented by the Pharisees to frighten Jesus away from Herod's territory to Judea and Jerusalem, where they could seize him and destroy him. Stier also suggests that they desired to see if they could awaken his fears, which, if they did, would lower him in the estimation of the people and raise the courage of his enemies. But it is not to be supposed that Jesus would have sent a message to Herod if Herod was not the instigator of the report, nor especially would he have styled him "that fox," ver. 32. We must, therefore, with Meyer, Alford, and others, regard the message as originating with Herod, though the form and manner of presenting it may have been left somewhat to the Pharisees. It is probable that the latter put the case as strong as it was allowable, and doubtless also assumed the garb of friendship, as if anxious for the Saviour's safety.

32. The answer is for the Pharisees, but the message is for Herod, thus pointing to the latter as the instigator. **Go ye**, the same word as that translated "depart" in the preceding verse. Thus a contrast is presented, exhibiting the boldness of Jesus. Ye say, *Go* out from this region; but I say, *Go* yourselves to Herod with my message, while I remain and finish my work. **Tell that fox**, that crafty, sly fellow. For thirty years, as a ruler, Herod had shown himself a crafty politician. The fox is noted for subtlety and treachery, and is an emblem of a cunning, crafty, or deceitful person. Thus Jesus at once showed the Pharisees that he saw through the character and message of Herod, and that he feared neither them nor him. Those who regard this report as a fabrication of the Pharisees are compelled to look upon the epithet *fox*

do cures to-day and to-morrow, and the third *day* \* I  
 33 shall be perfected. Nevertheless, † I must walk to-  
 day, and to-morrow, and the *day* following: for it

\* John 17. 4, 5;  
 Heb. 2. 10; 5. 9.  
 † John 9. 4; 11. 54;  
 12. 35.

as spoken *ironically*, and as really designed to designate their own crafty efforts. A very unlikely supposition. While the epithet reveals Christ's wonderful knowledge and lays open the man and the men with whom he was dealing, there was nothing discourteous in his message to Herod.

**Behold.** In this message to Herod Jesus intimates that he had a fixed purpose to pursue, that he had nothing to fear from him, and that it was at Jerusalem that his labors and sufferings are to be consummated. **I cast out devils, demons,** in your territory, etc. "Intentionally the Saviour speaks, not of his words, but of his miraculous deeds, because these had most strongly excited the uneasiness of Herod, ch. 9 : 9."—VAN OOSTERZEE. At the same time he implies that his work was not political, but benevolent, relieving the miseries of the people.

**To-day and to-morrow, and the third day.** There is no evidence whatever that this expression is proverbial. Yet if the notes of time are used rhetorically, definite for indefinite short periods of time (compare Hos. 6 : 2), then they may refer to his present stay in Perea, the journey afterward through Galilee and Perea (ch. 17 : 11 ; 18 : 35), and the final visit to Jerusalem, where he completed his labors and sufferings. The time, however, is definitely marked, and is held to mean *three literal days* by Meyer, Alford, and others; and if so, then we may have here an incidental coincidence between Luke and John. It was in this locality that Jesus received the tidings of Lazarus' death, after which "he abode two days;" the third day he went into Judea, and on the fourth day he would arrive at Bethany, where he found Lazarus "four days dead," John 11 : 6, 7, 39. Compare author's *Harmony*, § 116.

**I shall be perfected.** Meyer and some others take the verb in the present tense of the middle voice, and translate, *I end* or *finish* my work here—that is, in Perea. While admitting that such a construction may be possible, it

is certainly quite unexampled and improbable. The most natural construction is the present passive. So Alford, Ellicott, and others. It may then be translated, *I am ended, finished, done*, so far as it respects you and your country. My miracles in your territory will end upon the third day. Or, perhaps, better, *I am consummated, perfected*, including the idea of his suffering and death, which meaning is sustained by the regular usage of the word in the Epistles, Phil. 3 : 12 ; 2 Cor. 12 : 9 ; Heb. 2 : 10 ; 5 : 9. The present tense here points to something soon to be commenced, and also to be continued. So that if three literal days are meant, it is not necessary to suppose the consummation to be completed on that day. It might rather mean that after remaining two days in Perea he would on the third day commence that journey which, recommenced from Ephraim (John 11 : 54), would be the last to Jerusalem and consummated in his death as a sacrifice for the sins of the world.

As ch. 9 : 51 marks an era in our Lord's history in respect to Galilee, so does this passage in respect to Perea. The former points to the end of his residence and of his mighty workings in Galilee; the latter to his departure from Perea, after which we read no more of his sojourning there, nor of any miracles performed there. After this he merely passed through Perea, as he probably did through Samaria and a portion of Galilee (ch. 17 : 11), just previous to his last passover at Jerusalem.

33. **Nevertheless,** though I have nothing to fear from you, **I must walk, go** (the same verb translated *depart* in ver. 31 and *go* in ver. 32), **to-day, and to-morrow, and the day following,** attending to my work and advancing leisurely toward the end of my journey. I must proceed in my work, connecting these three days' labor with my departure from Perea, for it is at Jerusalem, that slaughter-city of the prophets, that I must die. Notice that the *going* or *journeying* in his work is connected with all the three days, and that it was necessary to **go**

- cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem.
- 34 <sup>a</sup>O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and <sup>a</sup>ye would
- 35 not! Behold, <sup>b</sup>your house is left unto you desolate: and verily I say unto you, Ye shall not see me, until the time come when ye shall say, <sup>c</sup>Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.
- <sup>a</sup> comp. Mt. 23. 37-39.  
<sup>b</sup> Ne. 9. 30.  
<sup>c</sup> Le. 26. 31, 32; Ps. 69. 25; Is. 1. 7; Jer. 12. 7; 22. 5; Dan. 9. 27; Mic. 3. 12.  
<sup>d</sup> ch. 19. 38; Ps. 118. 26; Mt. 21. 9; Mk. 11. 10; John 12. 13.

(to Jerusalem impliedly), for only there was it that he should suffer.

For it cannot be, it is not admissible or allowable, that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem. It was at Jerusalem where the prophets generally had perished. John, who was slain at Machærus in Perea, was an exception, yet he did not fall as a victim of the unbelief of the Jews. Besides, the great Jewish council at Jerusalem, the Sanhedrim, was the court to try a prophet; and according to Jewish law, no one, even though he were a wicked man, could be put to death unless he had first been condemned by the Sanhedrim.—JOSEPHUS, *Antiq.* xiv. 9. § 3. How was the wickedness of Jerusalem displayed, and how must our Lord's words have sounded upon the ears of the Pharisees who assumed the defence of the theocracy!

34. This verse and the next are closely connected with the preceding, and were suggested by, and follow naturally after, the last clause of verse 33. Turning from himself to that doomed city where he was soon to suffer, he utters a tender lamentation over it. **Jerusalem.** The repetition gives emphasis to the tenderness and sorrow with which he uttered the words. Jerusalem was indeed the representative and the personification of the Jewish race and theocracy in its then present and past history. **Killest the prophets.** Their sins, which call forth both lamentation and vengeance. The present tense is used in vivid discourse. At a single glance Jesus saw their whole history, in which the persecution of prophets was common and often repeated. As a race they were the murderers of the prophets, and the stoners of the messengers of God. **How often would I.** As a hen gathers her brood under her wings in maternal love, and for safety and protection

against birds of prey, or anything that may injure them. Hens are now very common in Palestine. **Children.** The inhabitants, the Jewish people. **Ye would not.** Their sins were voluntary. They were free moral agents. Freedom of the will is in harmony with God's sovereignty and divine decrees.

35. **Your house.** Your temple, left by the Messiah, forsaken by God, no longer his house, but *yours*. Its destruction and desolation are vividly spoken of as present. **Desolate** is omitted by many of the oldest manuscripts. It is forsaken and left to you for a time. A little later (Matt. 23 : 38) he announced its destruction. Compare Matt. 21 : 13; 2 Chron. 6 : 2; Ps. 26 : 8. Some suppose that by *your house* reference is made to the city, their dwelling-place, Ps. 69 : 25. **And verily I say unto you.** According to the highest critical authorities, *and I say to you.*

**Ye shall not see me until.** He was going to Bethany, and after the raising of Lazarus would retire to Ephraim, and would not enter Jerusalem until he had performed his last journey thither, and should be acknowledged by the multitude as the Messiah by their shouting, **blessed is he**, etc., ch. 19 : 38; Matt. 21 : 9. The language, however, is not to be limited to that one event. Like other prophecies, it rather points to a series of events fulfilling one prediction. Compare ch. 9 : 27. The future history of Jerusalem was vividly before his mind. He was the only salvation of the people, the only safety of the city and temple. His leaving them was their certain and utter destruction. But while his language implied the destruction of the city and temple and the scattering of the Jews, it pointed forward over a long period to the general conversion of the Jewish people in the last days, when

their descendants should acknowledge him. Hos. 3 : 5 ; Zech. 12 : 10 ; Rom. 11 : 25-28.

"Marvellously has that word been fulfilled. Every Jewish pilgrim who enters Jerusalem to this day has a rent made in his dress and says, 'Zion is turned into a desert, it lies in ruins!' Saphir, the Jewish poet of Wilna, addressed Dr. Frankl thus: 'Here all is dust. After the destruction of the city, the whole earth blossoms from its ruins; but here there is no verdure, no blossom, only a bitter fruit—sorrow. Look for no joy here, either from men or from mountains.' A wealthy and pious Jew came to settle at Jerusalem; after two years' stay he left it with the words: 'Let him who wishes to have neither the pleasures of this life nor those of the life to come live at Jerusalem.'—DR. FRANKL, *Jews in the East*, vol. ii., pp. 2, 9, 120."—DR. FARRAR, *Life of Christ*, vol. ii., p. 96.

#### REMARKS.

1. Beware of rashly judging others, vers. 1, 2; Job 4 : 7 ; Matt. 7 : 1, 2.

2. Afflictive dispensations of Providence are not to be interpreted as marks of divine displeasure. God sometimes comes out in judgment, but oftener in mercy, vers. 1, 2; Heb. 12 : 4-12; Rev. 3 : 19.

3. We should improve the calamities of life, and especially sudden deaths. Let them lead to self-examination, repentance of sin, to watchfulness and prayer, vers. 3, 5; ch. 21 : 34-36; 2 Pet. 3 : 9.

4. Repentance is a personal duty and necessary to salvation, vers. 3, 5; Acts 2 : 38; 3 : 19; 17 : 30.

5. The most fearful calamities which may befall the wicked are only emblems of what shall come upon them if they remain impenitent, vers. 1-5; ch. 11 : 32; Rev. 21 : 8.

6. God demands of us, not only negative, but also positive goodness, vers. 6, 7; ch. 6 : 43; Phil. 2 : 15.

7. God is long-suffering toward the sinners, and gives them an opportunity to repent, vers. 6, 7; Nah. 1 : 3; Rom. 9 : 22; 1 Tim. 1 : 16.

8. Sinners but cumber the ground, being not merely useless, but pernicious to the world, ver. 7; Eccl. 9 : 18.

9. The sinner will in due time, after fair trial, be cut down, vers. 8, 9; Prov. 29 : 1; Amos 4 : 12.

10. It is because of Christ, the Intercessor, that sinners are not at once destroyed, vers. 8, 9; Job 33 : 24; Heb. 7 : 25.

11. Let none abuse God's mercy by presuming on the future, but improve present opportunities and be in constant readiness for death, vers. 7-9; Hos. 10 : 12; Rom. 2 : 4.

12. In the healing of the infirm woman we have an illustration of the sovereign grace and mercy of Christ in the salvation of the sinner, vers. 10-13; 2 Cor. 5 : 19.

13. We also have an illustration of his treatment of his weak and afflicted followers, vers. 10-13; Ps. 146 : 8; 27 : 14.

14. Many are opposed to actual good, because it is not done in their way or according to their views, ver. 14; Prov. 12 : 15; 21 : 2; Gal. 2 : 4, 12-14.

15. Work for Christ has often been opposed under the garb and sanctity of religion. Thus revivals, missions, and Sunday-schools are sometimes opposed from a professed regard for religion, ver. 14.

16. Doing good, visiting the sick, and deeds of love and mercy are proper on the Sabbath, vers. 15, 16; Matt. 12 : 3-12.

17. If arguments for Christianity or for any Christian doctrine or practice do not convert, they may at least put to silence, our adversaries. All the adversaries of our Redeemer will be put to shame and confounded at last, ver. 17; Dan. 12 : 2; Rom. 3 : 19.

18. The triumph of Christ and his cause brings joy to his people and to those who seek him, ver. 17; ch. 15 : 32; Ps. 86 : 12, 13.

19. The word of God is a living seed, not returning unto him void, vers. 18, 19; Isa. 55 : 11; John 6 : 63.

20. In the work of the Lord we should not despise the day of small things, but rather expect great endings from small beginnings, vers. 18, 19; Isa. 41 : 14-16; 51 : 1-4; 60 : 22.

21. Christianity has a hidden power in renewing and transforming the character and lives of men and the state and condition of the world, vers. 20, 21; Ps. 119 : 11; Dan. 2 : 44, 45; Mark 4 : 26-29; 2 Cor. 3 : 18; 1 Pet. 1 : 3, 4.

22. The parables of the mustard and the leaven find illustration in the past history of Christianity, and give encouragement for the future, vers. 18-21; Rom. 10 : 18.

23. Jesus ever kept in view the great object of his mission; so should we all imitate his fidelity and courage, ver. 22; ch. 2 : 49; 1 Cor. 11 : 1; 1 Pet. 2 : 21.

24. Learn from Jesus to give a practical turn to speculative questions, vers. 23, 24; John 21 : 21, 22; Acts 1 : 6, 7.

25. There are great difficulties in the way to heaven, ver. 24; Heb. 4 : 1; 1 Pet. 4 : 18.

These difficulties arise—*first*, from our *natural* state. We are *ignorant* of the way to heaven, and often unconsciously ignorant, Eph. 4 : 18. There is also pride, prejudice, unbelief, and distrust of God. Then there is an aversion from good and a propensity to evil—a loving darkness rather than light, Heb. 3 : 19; John 3 : 19. *Second*, from the *nature* of religion. It is spiritual, and demands self-denial and the forsaking of all for Christ. The gate is *narrow*, for sin must be renounced and forsaken; the love of the world must be left behind, 1 John 2 : 15, 16. *Third*, from the opposition of spiritual enemies, Satan, and the world, Eph. 6 : 12.

26. These difficulties can only be overcome by faith in Christ and whole-hearted effort, ver. 24; Phil. 2 : 12; Col. 4 : 12; 1 Tim. 6 : 12; 1 John 5 : 4. Christ says, "I am the door" (John 10 : 9); "I am the way," John 14 : 6.

27. Improve the present; if we delay, the door may be shut, vers. 24-27; ch. 16 : 24, 28; Matt. 25 : 10.

28. Let us beware of trusting in outward privileges and an outward profession, vers. 25-28; Jer. 7 : 4-7; Rom. 9 : 32; Heb. 12 : 14.

29. There will be a thorough and final separation between the righteous and the wicked. Let this lead us to choose the path of righteousness and turn from the way of transgression, vers. 27, 29; Prov. 1 : 24; Matt. 25 : 41; Gen. 49 : 6.

30. Religion is the first thing and most important to be attended to, vers. 23-29; ch. 12 : 31.

31. As we are among the first in respect to our privileges, let us see to it that we are not last in our improvement

of them and in our reward, ver. 30; Matt. 8 : 10.

32. Christians and Christ's cause are opposed by crafty and cunning foes, ver. 31; Prov. 26 : 25; Eph. 4 : 14.

33. Christians are safe in the hands of God; wicked men can do nothing against them except what he shall permit, vers. 31, 32; John 7 : 30; 8 : 20.

34. We should do our duty fearlessly, and not be deterred by the threatenings of enemies or the misgivings of timid friends, vers. 32, 33; ch. 12 : 50; Dan. 3 : 18; Acts 21 : 13; 25 : 11.

35. How consistent and beautiful the example of Christ! vers. 31-33; John 4 : 34; 17 : 4; Heb. 10 : 14; 12 : 2.

36. How great the guilt and danger of resisting the invitations of so tender and compassionate a Saviour! vers. 34, 36; Ezek. 33 : 11; Isa. 5 : 4; John 5 : 40.

37. Let us welcome Jesus to our hearts; then shall we welcome him in his second coming, vers. 34, 35; Tit. 2 : 13; 1 Thess. 4 : 15; Rev. 22 : 20.

## CHAPTER XIV.

In a connected narrative Luke proceeds to relate a miracle which Jesus wrought upon the Sabbath in the house of a chief Pharisee, and his vindication of the act (vers. 1-6); he rebukes a love of distinction in the guests, and teaches his host what is true hospitality, 7-14. One of the guests makes a pious reflection (15), which leads Jesus to utter the parable of "The Great Supper," showing how the invitations of the gospel would be received, 16-24. He then announces to the multitudes which follow him the terms of discipleship and the necessity of counting the cost, 25-35.

1-24. JESUS DINES WITH A CHIEF PHARISEE ON THE SABBATH; HEALS A DROPSICAL MAN. PARABLE OF THE GREAT SUPPER. Recorded only by Luke. We may suppose that this occurred on one of the two days that Jesus remained in Perea, according to the most natural interpretation of ch. 13 : 32, 33. Perhaps this was the "tomorrow" of that passage, and that the day following he continued his journey, crossing the Jordan, and on the fourth day reached Bethany. This is the fifth and last case of healing on the Sabbath

*In a Pharisee's house Jesus heals on the sabbath and addresses the guests.*

XIV. AND it came to pass, as he went into the house of one of the chief Pharisees to eat bread on the sabbath day, that they watched him. And, behold, there was a certain man before him which had the dropsy.

recorded by the evangelists. The others were the healing at Bethesda (John 5 : 10), healing of the withered hand (Luke 6 : 6-11), of the blind man at Siloam (John 9 : 14), and of the infirm woman, Luke 13 : 10-13.

1. **One of the chief Pharisees**, *one of the rulers or chief men of the Pharisees*. This seems to be the general title, implying some leadership or pre-eminence in the sect. The Pharisees had no official rulers of their sect. They had, however, their own leaders, who were of great influence, such as Hillel, Schammai, Gamaliel, Nicodemus, and others. This man seems to have obtained some such leadership in his sect. He may, of course, have been ruler of a synagogue and member of the Sanhedrim, but the title does not limit to either or definitely specify either.

**To eat bread on the Sabbath.** To take a meal, etc. It would appear from the rabbinical writings that the Jews generally spread better tables on the Sabbath than on other days, and that they frequently made feasts on that day, Neh. 8 : 9-12. No cooking was done on the Sabbath (Ex. 16 : 23); but these feasts must have necessitated considerable labor, which shows how inconsistent were the Pharisees in regard to Sabbath observance. Others were at this time bidden beside Jesus (ver. 7), though we need not suppose a large public banquet. It was quite likely a social family meal, at which a number of friends were invited, ver. 12. The occasion, doubtless, suggested our Lord's conversation and parables; it was not a "wedding" (ver. 8), nor a "great supper," ver. 16. Neither does the narrative demand that we apply to it even the name of "feast," ver. 13. **They**, the Pharisees. Emphatic in the original. **Watched him**. Some suppose that Jesus was invited from a treacherous design. Such a supposition, however, is unnecessary. It was customary for men in position to invite to

their table those who were religious teachers, and especially strangers. Yet it was but in keeping with the conduct of the Pharisees that they watched him in order that they might accuse him.

It is one of the peculiarities of Luke to show us Jesus at the social table, thus beautifully presenting his humanity, ch. 7 : 36; 10 : 40; 11 : 37; 19 : 5. How Jesus improved his visit is seen by what follows. He performs a miracle with a vindication of the act (vers. 2-6); addresses the guests (7-10); then the host (11-14); and finally all, vers. 15-24. "Those who cannot, like Christ, render a Sabbath social gathering a profitable occasion might better absent themselves." As the world is watching, Christians should be most careful.

2. **And behold** introduces something extraordinary or unexpected, the presence of a dropsical man. He was not a guest, ver. 4. He appears to have come in or to have been there while the guests were assembling, ver. 7. When or how he came there is not recorded. That he had faith at the time of the cure is probable; and it may be that his faith in Christ's power, or perhaps the faith of his friends, induced him to come or be carried into a position **before** Jesus, where he could not fail to be noticed. It hardly seems that the Pharisees had purposely placed him there in order to entrap Jesus. There is nothing in the narrative that implies it; and had they done it, we might have expected some rebuke from our Lord similar to ch. 11 : 40; 13 : 15. "He stood there, but dared not ask a cure because of the Sabbath and the Pharisees, but simply showed himself that Jesus might see and pity him."

**Dropsy**, an unnatural accumulation of water in various parts of the body, very distressing and accompanied by a burning thirst. As it is often incurable, it may be presumed that this man despaired of help from any other source.

- 3 And Jesus answering spake unto the lawyers and Pharisees, saying, <sup>d</sup>Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath day? And they held their peace. And he took *him*,  
 4 and healed him, and let him go; and answered them, saying, <sup>e</sup>Which of you shall have an ass or an ox fallen into a pit, and will not straightway pull him out on
- <sup>d</sup> Ps. 37. 32; Is. 29. 20, 21; ch. 13. 14-16; Mt. 12. 10; Mk. 3. 4.  
<sup>e</sup> Ex. 23. 5; Deu. 22. 4.

3. **Answering.** According to a common use of this word in Scripture (ch. 5 : 22; 7 : 40; Matt. 11 : 25), it introduces and indicates a response to what were and would be the feelings of the Pharisees in regard to working a miracle on the Sabbath, ch. 13 : 14. **The lawyers and Pharisees.** See on ch. 5 : 17 and 7 : 30. The union of lawyers and Pharisees under one article seems to indicate that the latter are here mentioned in a somewhat professional sense. The former were skilled in and expounders of the law; the latter, both from their professions and from their close observance of the law, were regarded as well versed in it, and their opinion had great weight. Hence Jesus addressed them both as those who could answer questions on the law, and the latter not so much as of the sect of the Pharisees as recognized and professed interpreters and observers of the law. These lawyers were very probably of the Pharisaic sect.

**Is it lawful?** etc. *May one? Is it permitted? Is it right?* etc. Compare almost the same question in ch. 6 : 9. What wisdom does Jesus show in his questions! If they had answered Yes, it would have been sanctioning this miracle and Jesus as a prophet; but to have answered No would have showed inconsistency and a want of love, and might put them in an unfavorable light among the people.

4. They therefore prefer silence, and **held their peace.** They doubtless expected that the miracle would, in any event, be performed. This they could use against him at the proper time, but they wished to save their influence. As they are silent, he without further remark heals the man and lets him go. Thus does he spare those with whom he reclines at table till after the departure of the man, and then he vindicates the act, which he knows they silently condemn. In this matter their silence showed their disapproval, and

not to approve, was an implied condemnation.

**He took him, laid hold of him.** Thus, as in so many of his miracles, there was the outward contact both for the good of those who saw and for increasing or confirming the faith of the man himself. **Let him go.** He therefore was not a guest, but was doubtless there that he might be healed. What a contrast between the heartless silence of these lawyers and Pharisees and the compassionate and prompt action of Jesus!

5. **Answered them,** their thoughts, as in ver. 3. According to several of the oldest manuscripts and the Bible Union version, this should read, *and to them he said. Which of you, etc.,* a pointed question, which was really an appeal to and an argument from their own practice, showing that it was lawful to heal upon the Sabbath. There was not a man among them that would not on the Sabbath lay hold and lift out an ass or an ox from a **pit**, a *well* or *cistern* dug in the earth for the providing of water. Wells were often large enough for oxen or asses to fall into. Thus, Jacob's well at Shechem is nine feet in diameter, and the largest well at Beersheba is twelve feet. Instead of **an ass**, the majority of the oldest manuscripts read *a son*. Internal grounds, such as the association of a son and an ox together, and the bringing in a disturbing and weakening element into an argument from the less to the greater, are against this reading. Yet if it be preferred, then it is as though he said, You put forth effort on the Sabbath to save your own; why, then, are ye not willing to make efforts to save others, and why find fault with me? Or the passage may be read climactically: *Who is there of you whose son, or even whose ass, shall fall into a pit?* etc. **Straightway,** at once, without hesitation. **Pull him out,** requiring the united effort of several

- 6 the sabbath day? 'And they could not answer him 'Ac. 6. 10.  
again to these things.
- 7 And he put forth a parable to those which were  
bidden, 'when he marked how they chose out the 'Mt. 23. 6.  
8 chief rooms; saying unto them, When thou art bid-  
den of any *man* to a wedding, sit not down in the  
highest room; lest a more honorable man than thou  
9 be bidden of him; and he that bade thee and him  
come and say to thee, Give this man place; <sup>b</sup>and <sup>b</sup>Pro. 11. 2.  
10 thou begin with shame to take the lowest room. 'But 'Pro. 25. 6, 7.  
when thou art bidden, go and sit down in the lowest  
room; that when he that bade thee cometh, he may

persons. Jesus simply asks the question; the inference is obvious. If you do as much as this on the Sabbath, surely you cannot consistently condemn me. Nay, rather, you must approve of what I have done. Compare ch. 13 : 15, 16; Matt. 12 : 11, 12.

6. **And they could not**, etc. To the question in verse 3 the lawyers and Pharisees *would* not answer, but to that in the preceding verse they *could not* reply. **Answer him again**, or answer him back in respect to these things. The meaning is, They were confounded; they could neither contradict nor meet Christ's reasoning. Yet they had not the candor to admit the truth. **Him** is wanting in some of the oldest manuscripts; the authority against it is, however, not decisive.

7-11. In parabolic language Jesus teaches the guests how to conduct themselves at a feast and attain true exaltation.

7. **He put forth a parable.** Rather, *he spoke a parable*, uttered a comparison containing grave advice, derived from human life and experience. See on ch. 8 : 4. In connection with parabolic language Jesus makes the application as he goes along. **When he marked**, observed. They watch him (ver. 1), and he notices them—they to do him injury, he to do them good. **How they chose out.** *How they were then choosing.* From this and what follows we learn that it was customary for guests to choose their respective places at table. **Chiefrooms**, chief or first reclining-places at table, the middle place in each couch, which was the most honorable. Or according to others, the couches were ordinarily

arranged on three sides of a square, the fourth being left open for the servants to wait on the table. The couch on the right was called the highest, the others respectively the middle and lowest couch. From this verse we may infer that there were quite a number of guests, and doubtless a number of couches. Without doubt Jesus chose for himself a humble place.

8. **Thou.** Though Jesus speaks to all of the guests present, yet he makes his words direct, emphatic, and personal to each one by the use of the singular number. **Of any man**, *by any one*, whoever he may be, whether an intimate friend or a comparative stranger. **A wedding.** Thus by not naming a feast or a social meal Jesus delicately avoids needless personality. **Sit not down in**, *recline not*, according to their custom at meals, *in the first place at table*, the position of the principal and most honored guest. **A more honorable man.** A person of more consequence, and held in higher esteem.

9. **Him**, the more honorable one. **Give**, etc. Notice the host does not address him as "Friend," as the one in ver. 10. Jews often quarrelled about the honors and chief places at feasts. The phrase then used would be, "Give this man place." **Thou begin**, vividly presenting the reluctant beginning, **with feelings of shame to take**, not a mere lower, but **the lowest**, place of all.

10. **Go readily and recline in the lowest place.** This is to be done without any mock humility. **That when**, etc., expresses not the mere result, but rather the purpose. Conduct thyself humbly, *in order that thou mayest be exalted when the proper time comes.* A proper

- say unto thee, Friend, go up higher: then shalt thou have worship in the presence of them that sit at meat with thee. <sup>11</sup> For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.
- <sup>12</sup> Then said he also to him that bade him, When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor thy rich neighbors; lest they also bid thee again, <sup>\*</sup> and a rec-

<sup>1</sup> ch. 18. 14; Job 22. 29; Ps. 18. 27; Pro. 29. 23; Mt 23. 12; Jam. 4 6; 1 Pet. 5. 5.

<sup>\*</sup> ch. 6. 32-36.

desire for respect and honor is lawful and right. **Friend.** An affectionate appellation. **Go up higher.** Notice, he does not say the highest or first place, but to a more honorable place, being thankful for whatever attention or honor the host may bestow. **Then** introduces the result or consequence of the act. **Worship,** rather, *honor.* When our common version was made, the word worship was not restricted as now; it was applicable to men as well as to God; and when referring to men, it meant to *honor*, to treat with civil reverence. Compare Matt. 2 : 2; 18 : 26; Mark 15 : 19.

<sup>11.</sup> **For** introduces the reason for such results as those he had just stated. It is upon the principle by which exaltation or abasement is ensured. And this principle is applicable alike in the affairs of men and in the kingdom of God. Jesus doubtless intended to direct their minds, not merely to abasement and exaltation among men, but also, in a higher, spiritual sense, in his kingdom and before God. **Exalteth himself.** Like the scribes and Pharisees. **Shall be abased.** In Christ's kingdom and by the divine condemnation. **Humbleth himself.** Before God and as a servant of his brethren. **Exalted.** By the divine favor and the honor that comes from God. Somewhat similar to this is Ezek. 21 : 26, "Exalt him that is low, and abase him that is high;" and the rabbinical sentiment, "My abasement is my exaltation, and my exaltation my abasement." This favorite maxim, which Jesus announced on this and several other occasions (ch. 18 : 14; Matt. 23 : 12), is, however, superior to all similar ones as a universal principle of God's government, and as embracing man's agency in his exaltation or abasement: "Shall exalt *himself*; shall humble *himself*," Prov. 16 : 18. As an illustration of

self-exaltation see Isa. 14 : 13-15; of self-humiliation, see Phil. 2 : 5-11.

<sup>12-14.</sup> Jesus addresses the host, warns him against making a feast to obtain the favor of men, and teaches him what is true hospitality. The language is somewhat parabolic, as in the preceding discourse to the guests. It may be styled an applied parable; in it Jesus but carries out and applies the principle which he had laid down for the guests. As they should show their humility in selecting the lowest places, so the host should show his condescending and humble love by inviting the poorest.

<sup>12.</sup> **Then said he also.** Jesus thus rebukes the selfish and heartless courtesies of the day, as exhibited in ostentatious feasts, where friends and kin, the grand and rich, were invited, their favor courted for selfish ends and to get a return. He may have noticed something of this spirit in his host and in the kind of guests invited. Yet it is not necessary to regard our Lord's words as especially personal to his host. Of the poor present Jesus himself was one, and perhaps also the person who made the exclamation in ver. 15.

**When thou makest,** etc. If you would improve what you have to the best advantage and attain true exaltation and the highest reward, spend it, not in luxury and magnificent display, but in charity. **A dinner,** taken about the middle of the day, **or a supper,** the principal meal, late in the afternoon or early in the evening. Bengel remarks that as the supper is alone usually mentioned, this may have been dinner. Both words here, however, are taken in the sense of a special entertainment. **Call not.** The verb here used means to *speak out loudly or clearly*, with reference, perhaps, to the loud and pompous summons with which the great were invited to feasts. **Lest they also bid thee again,**

13 ompense be made thee. But when thou makest a feast, call <sup>1</sup>the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind:  
 14 and thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee: <sup>m</sup>for thou shalt be recompensed at <sup>n</sup>the resurrection of the just.

*Parable of the great supper.*

15 And when one of them that sat at meat with him

<sup>1</sup>Deu. 14. 29; 16. 11; 2 Sam. 6. 19; Ne. 8. 10, 12; Job 29. 13; Pro. 14. 31; Is. 58. 7, 10; Ro. 12. 13.  
<sup>m</sup>Pro. 19. 7; Mt. 10. 41, 42.  
<sup>n</sup>ch. 20. 35, 36; John 5. 29; Ac. 24. 15; 1 Thes. 4. 16; Rev. 20. 4-6.

etc., and so pay you back, and thus you get your reward in this world and in mere temporal things. You thus really do no favor to others, but merely put them under obligation to do the same to you, and at the same time you foster the habit of high living at great expense of time and money. **Recompense, requital**, a giving back of favors or things received. **Neighbor**. See on ch. 10 : 29. Jesus does not mean to forbid the common courtesies of life; these are really presupposed. The idea is, call not only thy friends, but also and especially, etc. "It has been well remarked that the intercourse and civilities of social life among *friends* and *neighbors* are here *presupposed* (inasmuch as for them there takes place a *recompense*, and they are struck off the list by this means), with this caution, that our means are not to be *sumptuously laid out upon them*, but upon *something far better*, the providing for the poor and maimed and lame and blind."—ALFORD. "Christ did not intend to dissuade us from anything courteous, but merely to show that acts of civility which are customary among men are no proof whatever of charity."—CALVIN.

13. **When thou makest a feast**, a *reception, an entertainment*, the same word as that used in ch. 5 : 29. Some suppose that a religious feast is here meant, as that of weeks (the feast of the second sort of first-fruits), of which, according to the Mosaic law (Deut. 16 : 11-14), servants, widows, orphans, and Levites were to be made free partakers. This may serve to illustrate, but the word should not be limited to any one kind of entertainment. Compare Neh. 8 : 10. **Call**, not the loud and formal call of ver. 12, but the more quiet invitation which becomes an ostentatious and humble spirit. **The maimed**, the crippled, deprived of some member

of the body, or of the use of it. "Our Lord was introducing by this the method of his grace in the gospel, which so encourages humility and scorns pride."—JACOBUS. So Jesus, in ch. 6 : 35, exhorts to "do good and lend, hoping for nothing in return," though our "reward shall be great," and we shall be "sons of the Highest."

14. **And**, as a result, **thou shalt be blessed, happy. Happy shalt thou be**, Bible Union version. On the word here translated *blessed*, see on ch. 6 : 20. **For**, because of the fact that they cannot, have not the means to, **recompense thee**. Thou shalt be happy in that very fact that they are incapable of returning the favor. **For thou shalt be**, etc. *For* introduces the reason of their happy condition and destiny.

**The resurrection of the just**, or *the righteous*. Some regard this as designating the class to which the person here spoken of would belong, and that only the righteous will rise to a blessed resurrection of recompense. Such an interpretation is possible. But it is more natural and more probable to regard the *resurrection of the just* as used in distinction from that of the *unjust*, Acts 24 : 15; John 5 : 29. And this is confirmed by the teaching of Paul, that believers shall rise first (1 Thess. 4 : 16), and of John concerning the first and second resurrection, Rev. 20 : 5, 6.

15. The exclamation of one reclining with them at table. Two things are evident from reading this passage: *First*, that this ejaculation was occasioned by what Jesus had just said. *Second*, that it indicated mistaken views concerning the nature of the Messiah's kingdom, which Jesus corrects by the parable which follows. **When one . . . heard these things**, with deep interest, bordering on joyful enthusiasm. To suppose, with Stier, that the pious

heard these things, he said unto him, °Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God.

16 ¶Then said he unto him, A certain man made a  
17 great supper, and bade many: and °sent his servant at supper time to say to them that were bidden, Come;

• ch. 13. 29; 22. 30  
Rev. 19. 9.  
¶ Mt. 22. 2-10; Rev  
19. 7, 9.  
¶ Pro. 9. 1-3, 5; Is  
55. 1, 2; 2 Cor. 5  
20.

reflection here recorded was but the vague wish of an indolent man, who desired to say something when religion was the subject; or, with Oosterzee, that he merely wished to turn the conversation, which was unpleasant to the host, is most unsatisfactory. Rather, he seemed so deeply impressed with what he heard that he gave vent to his feelings.

**Blessed is he, Happy is he**, as in ver. 14. **Eat bread**, etc. *To eat bread*, according to a Hebrew idiom, means to partake of a repast, whether at an ordinary meal or at a sumptuous banquet. **Kingdom of God**. See on ch. 4: 43. The Jews believed that the Messiah's kingdom would be ushered in with a magnificent festival, at which all the members, the Jews, should be guests. And this guest seems to have understood Christ's last words to refer to the resurrection-kingdom, when the Messiah would come, and when the Jews expected to live in peace along with the risen saints of the Old Testament, the earth being restored to its Eden state. With worldly and mistaken views of Christ's kingdom, he uttered the exclamation, evidently supposing that he and all present would be guests. "This man longs for it as if afar, yet the very Bread of Life was reclining before him."—AUGUSTINE. To correct such false views Jesus utters the following parable.

16-24. **THE PARABLE OF THE GREAT SUPPER**. Recorded only by Luke. This parable is supposed by some to be the same as that of the marriage of the king's son, in Matt. 22: 1-14. An examination of the two shows that they were different in time, place, occasion, and design. That in Matthew was spoken in the temple only a few days before the crucifixion, occasioned by the hostility of the scribes, chief priests, and elders, and their demand as to his authority (Matt. 21: 15, 23, 46), and was designed to show the terrible judgments which should come upon the Jewish people on account of their re-

jection of the Messiah, and the final punishment of mere nominal professors. But this in Luke was spoken earlier in our Saviour's ministry in the house of a Pharisee, occasioned by the remark of a guest, who, putting a wrong interpretation on the words of Jesus, supposed him to refer to the great opening festival of Messiah's kingdom, when he as a Jew would be certainly admitted; and this parable in reply was designed to correct the false views which he held in common with the Jews generally, showing that comparatively few of those who presumed upon the enjoyment of the Messiah's kingdom would be really prepared to receive and value it when offered to them. That in Matthew also was a royal marriage-feast, and hence has the additional figure of a wedding garment, while this was merely a great supper. In that, the guests treat the invitation with the utmost contempt and insolence, and are destroyed for their conduct; in this, the invited guests show at least enough courtesy to excuse themselves, and are debarred from tasting the supper. That is severer, and relates more especially to the judgment of the Jewish people as the rejecters of Christ; this is milder, and relates more especially to the graciousness of the gospel invitations. Each was peculiarly adapted to the special occasion and to the feelings manifested by the Jewish leaders.

16. **A great supper**, the principal meal, at the close of the day, and often prolonged to a late hour. This was great in the abundance of preparation and provisions. **Bade, invited, many**, this also shows the greatness of the feast. The invitations were given beforehand, in order that the persons invited might get ready to attend. Their excuses are thus vain and wicked.

17. **Sent his servant**, the second and final summons, the invitations having been previously given. Compare Esth. 5: 8; 6: 14. **At supper time**, or *at the hour of supper*, when everything was in a state of readiness

- 18 for all things are now ready. And they all with one consent began to make excuse. The first said unto him, <sup>\*</sup>I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it: I pray thee have me excused.
- 19 And another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them: I pray thee have me excused.
- 20 And another said, <sup>\*</sup>I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come. So that servant came, and showed

\* ch. 8. 14; 13. 24;  
Mt. 13. 22; 22. 5;  
1 Tim. 6. 9, 10;  
2 Tim. 3. 4; 1  
John 2. 15, 16.  
\* 1 Cor. 7. 29—31.

Dr. Thomson speaks of the custom still prevailing in Lebanon: "If a sheikh, bey, or emeer invites, he always sends a servant to call you at the time appointed. The servant often repeats the very formula mentioned in Luke 14: 17, 'Come, for the supper is ready.' The fact that this custom is mainly confined to the wealthy and to the nobility is in strict agreement with the parable, where the certain man who made the great supper and bade many is supposed to be of this class. It is true now, as then, that to refuse is a high insult to the maker of the feast. It is pleasant to find enough of the drapery of this parable still practiced to show that originally it was, in all its details, in close conformity to the customs of this country."—*The Land and Book*, vol. i., p. 178. From what follows it would seem that the supper was in the day-time.

18. **All with one consent.** *Consent* is not in the original. It is better to supply *mind*, spirit, or accord. All were one in spirit, or temper of mind, though their excuses were various. All were one in not wishing to go, in resolving not to go, and in their preference to attend to their own matters. There was no prearrangement, yet they were of one accord, as if preconcerted. **To make excuse**, rather, *to excuse themselves*.

The first is a man of landed estate, who pleads necessity. **I have bought**, rather, *I bought*, referring to an act in the past. **I must needs go**, *I am now under the necessity of going out or away into the country to see it*, in order, perhaps, to complete the sale, or perhaps he had bought the land on certain conditions which required his presence and examination. So with some humility, politeness, and earnestness he entreats, **Have me excused**, or *let me be excused*. The excuse of this man seems the best of the three; yet it

could not stand. He might have arranged this business for another time if he had been in earnest and fully determined. Some suggest that it was pride in having great possessions which urged him on in adding land to land.

19. **Another**, a man of business, pleads a bargain he had made. **Yoke**, two or more animals yoked together. There is no significance in the number **five**. **I go**. He pleads no necessity, though urgency is implied. *I am going* even now; his whole heart is in his business rather than in the supper. **To prove them**, *to test them*, *make trial* of them, as to their docility and strength, and perhaps to see if they are what they were represented to him to be. It is evident that if he had really purposed, he could have deferred this till after the supper. This one represents men in the excitement of business.

20. The third is a man of domestic enjoyment and pleasure. **I have married**, or *I married*, referring to an act as gone by, in contrast to a present action. **Therefore I cannot come**. But this was a mild form for *I will not*. An attendance upon this supper did not involve a violation of domestic duties, nor a neglect of his wife. He was simply indifferent about the supper, and deemed it of greater importance to remain at home. His late marriage would have been a reason for not going to battle, but it was not a reason for declining the feast. Yet so absorbed was he in his new wife that he utters the fact with great self-confidence, and deems a formal excuse not even necessary.

"It is to be noticed how these excuses are progressively disrespectful. The first excuse is alleged to be founded on necessity, *I must needs go*, etc. The second claims no such necessity, but is expressed in *I go*, denoting mere will or purpose. The third is blunt and decided, *I cannot come*."—J. J. OWEN.

his lord these things. Then the master of the house being angry said to his servant, Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind. 22 And the servant said, Lord, it is done as thou hast 23 commanded, 'and yet there is room. And the lord said unto the servant, "Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel *them* to come in, that my house 24 may be filled. For I say unto you, 'That none of

‘Mk. 16. 15; John 14. 2; Eph. 3. 8; 1 John 2. 2.  
 ‘Mt. 22. 9; 28. 19, 20; 1 Cor. 9. 19-23; 2 Cor. 5. 11, 20.  
 ‘Mt. 21. 43; 22. 8; Ac. 13. 46.

21. The servant reports his unsuccessful efforts and the various excuses. The master of the house is **angry**, showing his sincerity in giving the invitations, and implying the unreasonable and insulting nature of the excuses. **Go out quickly.** No time is to be lost. The supper was ready, provisions abundant and must not be wasted. Every place at table must be filled without delay. First, go into the **city.** **Into the streets,** the broader ways, where the better classes of the people would be passing to and fro; **and lanes,** the narrower streets or alleys, where the poor would naturally be found. **Bring in hither the poor,** etc. Prominence is given to the same classes as mentioned in ver. 13—those who would gladly and thankfully accept and appreciate the feast. **The halt, the lame,** as in ver. 13.

22. The order is speedily obeyed, and **yet there is room,** showing how large the house and the guest-room, and how ample the entertainment which had been provided. **Hast commanded,** more correctly, *didst command.*

23. The command is now extended to the country. **Go out into the highways,** the public roads without the city, **and the hedges,** in the narrow hedge-paths, the vineyards and gardens. "In addition to a stone wall, or a substitute for it, the Eastern vineyards have often a hedge of thorns around them. A common plant for this purpose is the prickly pear, a species of cactus, which grows several feet high and as thick as a man's body, armed with sharp thorns, and thus forming an almost impervious defence. The Saviour speaks of such a hedge as planted around the vineyard which was leased to the unjust husbandman, Mark 12 : 1. He refers to it also, though less directly, in the parable of

the supper. The lord said to the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges and compel them to come in—that is, Go out into the more public ways and the narrow paths which run between the hedges that separate the vineyards and gardens from one another."—HACKETT, *Scripture Illustration*, p. 174. Here would be found the miserably poor and the wayfarer, travelling or sheltering under trees and hedges.

**Compel them,** evidently by persuasion and moral force. Physical compulsion here is out of the question and contrary to all custom; besides, one servant could not have done it. Yet this passage has been used to defend and justify the compulsion of Gentiles. So Jesus is spoken of as constraining or compelling his disciples to go into the ship by his authoritative persuasion and command (Matt. 14 : 22), and Peter as compelling the Gentiles by his influence and example, Gal. 2 : 14; Compare 2 Cor. 12 : 11. In this case it was the sense of unworthiness and unfitness to come and sit at such an entertainment that needed to be overcome. Notice a gradation in the urgency of the calls. Simply, *say come*, ver. 17; *bring in* ver. 21; *compel*, ver. 23. **That my house may be filled.** "Nature and grace alike abhor a vacuum."—BEN-GEL. But God's grace is infinite and Christ's riches are unsearchable and inexhaustible.

24. According to Alford, Stier, and others, the parable closes with the preceding verse, and Jesus in this verse speaks in his own person and applies the parable to the company present and to others like them. But Olshausen, Meyer, French, and the majority of expositors regard this verse as the words of the householder and the conclusion of the parable. I prefer the

those men which were bidden shall taste of my supper.

latter view—(1) Because it is the most natural; (2) The expression "None of those men which were bidden shall taste of my supper" demands that we view it as the conclusion of the parable; (3) The only objection to this view worthy of notice is that the address, **I say unto you**, is made to more than one (*you* in the original being in the plural number), yet only one servant is mentioned throughout. But to this it may be replied that the address is made to one servant as the representative of several; or it may have been made in the presence of his whole household, or to the guests who had already been gathered in (vers. 21, 22), or to the whole or a part of these. Surely a plural which can be explained in so many ways should not decide against an otherwise natural interpretation.

**None of those men**, *not one* of those first invited, 16–20. The somewhat nobler word for *men* is used in the original—men of distinction. **Shall taste**, much less shall they eat, ver. 15. **My supper**. The form of the original (the article being before *supper*) points to the feast which the householder in the parable had provided.

THE INTERPRETATION OF THE PARABLE. The *grand design* of this parable was to show how the invitations of the gospel would be received by different classes—that it should be rejected by the highly-favored and self-righteous Jews; that the blessings of the Messiah's kingdom should be taken from them and extended to the less favored and to the Gentiles. Its *centre of comparison* is found in the several invitations given and in the treatment they received.

A *certain man* here represents God the Father, who gave his Son (John 3 : 16) and sent his Spirit, John 14 : 26; Acts 1 : 4. The *great supper*, the Christian dispensation, the blessings of the Messiah's kingdom. The *bidding many* represents the invitations to the Jews through the prophets, who foretold Christ and his kingdom, and through John the Baptist, the forerunner of Christ. The *supper-time* was "the fullness of time," when God sent forth his

Son, Gal. 4 : 4. The *servant* may represent Christ, who is styled "the servant of Jehovah" (Isa. 42 : 1; 52 : 13), and his ministers, who are ambassadors in his stead, 2 Cor. 5 : 20. Or perhaps the servant may represent the *one* inviting *voice* or *message* which is delivered by God's messengers. The *excuses* for not coming to the feast represent the treatment that the gospel received of the Pharisees and leaders of the Jews, and the various pretenses which men adopt for neglecting or rejecting the gospel. The *one consent* or *one mind* illustrates that selfishness and worldliness from which all these vain excuses proceed. The three classes of excuses find various illustrations among the neglectors of the gospel. The sending forth *the servant into the streets and lanes* of the city represents the gospel among the Jewish common people, the publicans and sinners. The converts on the day of Pentecost and afterward illustrate this. The going out into the *highways and hedges* points to the calling of the Gentiles, which began with Cornelius, Acts 10 : 34–48. The *compelling them* represents the urgency of love, of prayers and tears and entreaties, and the power of the Spirit in persuading men, 2 Cor. 5 : 11; 10 : 4; Acts 20 : 18–21. As those who *refused* to come to the supper were cut off from its benefits, so were the Jewish leaders and nation rejected (Rom. 11 : 8–11, 25), and so will all final rejecters of the gospel be cut off from all its benefits, Prov. 1 : 24–28; Matt. 25 : 11, 12, 41–45.

25–35. JESUS TEACHES THE MULTITUDE THE REQUIREMENTS OF DISCIPLESHIP. COUNTING THE COST. THE WORTHLESSNESS OF DEAD PROFESSORS. This discourse is recorded only by Luke. Compare similar declarations in Matt. 10 : 37, 38; 5 : 13; Mark 9 : 50. We have here another proof that our Lord repeated many of his sayings and interwove them into different connections and discourses. There appears to be quite a close connection between the preceding parable and this discourse. It very naturally comes in at the close of the same day, or early the day following, while the conversation and

*The multitude follow Jesus; the terms of discipleship.*

- 25 And there went great multitudes with him: and  
 26 he turned, and said unto them, "If any *man* come  
 to me, <sup>\*</sup>and hate not his father, and mother, and  
 wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, <sup>†</sup>yea,  
 27 and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. And  
<sup>\*</sup>whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after  
 me, <sup>\*</sup>cannot be my disciple.

<sup>\*</sup> Deu. 13. 5-10; 33  
 9; Mt. 10. 37, 38.  
<sup>\*</sup> Ro. 9. 13.  
<sup>†</sup> Ac. 20. 23, 24;  
 Rev. 12. 11.  
<sup>\*</sup> ch. 9. 23; Mt. 16.  
 24; Mk. 8. 34;  
 2 Tim. 3. 12.  
<sup>\*</sup> Mt. 13. 21.

parable at the dinner were still fresh in mind, and perhaps in the mouths of the people.

25. **And there went**, or journeyed. This may have been at sunset at the close of the Sabbath, or perhaps more probably the following day as he journeyed toward Jerusalem. **Great multitudes**, vast crowds. The opposition of the Pharisees, the sharpness of his words, as well as his miracles, would tend to increase the crowd about him. **He turned**, in compassion and in faithfulness, **and said unto them**. He was about to leave Perea, no more to abide there (John 10 : 40; 11 : 11), except a hasty journey through it a little later, just before his last passover, ch. 18 : 15-35. The time was near when discipleship would be put to the severest tests. The recent discourse had tended to turn the minds of men toward the Messiah's kingdom and reception into it. Jesus, therefore, tells the people plainly and frankly what is required of a disciple. Olshausen's remark is worthy of thought: "Crowds followed after him with undefined sentiments in his favor, yet irresolute and wavering. To them he turns with an earnest address, and summons them to a decision."

26. The requirement which he had announced at an earlier period only to the twelve (Matt. 10 : 37, 38) he now presents to the people at large, and even in a more emphatic and a severer form. **If any man come to me**, whoever comes to me, the Messiah and Saviour, to be my disciple. **Hate not his father**. Similar but stronger than that in Matt. 10 : 37 : "He that loveth father or mother more than me." *Hate* is to be taken in a comparative sense, and is here consistent with supreme love to God and love to our neighbor as ourselves, and to that love which the ties of relationship demand. It includes

that hatred which we are to have to sin, whether found in ourselves or in others, and to sinners as sinners, whether it be ourselves or our nearest friends, Matt. 6 : 24. Jesus could have enjoined no hatred but that which is holy. Yet the above does not express the whole idea. *To hate* is also sometimes used in Scripture as an emphatic expression for *to love less*. Thus in Gen. 29 : 33, Leah says that she was hated by her husband; while in ver. 30 the same idea is expressed by saying, "Jacob loved Rachel more than Leah." Compare Rom. 9 : 13. To say, however, that *to hate* merely stands for *to love less* is putting the idea very feebly. It is rather the most emphatic way of stating an inferior or less love—a most pointed declaration of the superiority and supremacy of love to Christ over every other affection. It is a love that would hate every earthly object rather than break away from Jesus—a love which involves a certain alienation from ourselves and from everything earthly. Such an alienation is, as Alford suggests, not only necessary to the highest kind of love, but it also makes a man the wisest and best friend, both for time and eternity. It is often necessary to remind ourselves, in interpreting the language of Scripture, that the conceptions of Eastern countries are warmer and more fervent than those to which we are accustomed in the West. **His own life**, his natural life, with its blessings and enjoyments. This is comparatively worthless when placed beside Christ and eternal life, Phil. 3 : 7, 8.

27. **And whosoever doth not bear his cross**, etc. In coming to Christ the disciple *takes* the cross, and in following him he *bears* it. Bearing the cross and following after are inseparable. The suffering of such trials and persecutions and the cutting asunder the tenderest ties were indeed a spiritual

28 For <sup>b</sup>which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he  
29 hath *sufficient* to finish it? Lest haply, after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all

<sup>b</sup>Pro. 24. 27; Mt. 20. 21, 22; John 16. 1-4; 1 Thes. 3. 4, 5.

crucifixion. The language of Jesus here is prophetic of his own sufferings. It was doubtless very expressive to his disciples when he uttered it, and was well fitted to prepare their minds for his sufferings and death. Yet that great event served to give an intensity of meaning to this and similar passages, and to throw new light on the self-denials and self-sacrifices, the inner and outer struggles, pertaining to the Christian life, John 12 : 16; Rom. 6 : 6; Gal. 2 : 20; 5 : 24. The language is an allusion to that severest and most disgraceful Roman punishment, in which the malefactor was often compelled to bear his own cross to the place of execution, thus vividly portraying the duty of Christ's disciples to follow him through all trials that his cause and truth should demand. Every one has his own cross, which he must take and bear willingly, and come after Christ, not after the world or any object of his selfish inclination. This is indeed a test of discipleship; for if he does it not, he cannot be his disciple. A wise man once, seeking to explain the cross, took two slips of wood, a long and a short one, and said, "The long piece is the will of God; the short piece is your will. Lay your will in a line with the will of God, and you have no cross; lay it athwart, and you make a cross directly." Compare on ch. 9 : 23.

28. Having announced publicly the requirements of discipleship, Jesus now proceeds to show the necessity of counting the cost of discipleship. As a first illustration Jesus takes a tower, which may mean a high building or castle, from which to view the surrounding country. The expression *which of you* naturally implies that the tower was not a public or military one, but that of a private individual. It would seem, however, to involve considerable expense, and hence it was palace-like or very high, combining beauty and utility. It was probably a watch-tower. "These towers are said sometimes to be square in form as well as round, and as high as forty or fifty feet. Those which

I examined had a small door near the ground and a level space on the top, where a man could sit and command a view of the plantation. I afterward saw a great many of these structures near Hebron, where the vine still flourishes in its ancient home, for there probably was Eschol, whence the Hebrew spies returned to Joshua, with the clusters of grapes which they had gathered as evidence of the fertility of the land. Some of the towers here are so built as to serve as houses, and during the vintage it is said that the inhabitants of Hebron take up their abode in them in such numbers as to leave the town almost deserted. A passage in one of the Gospels shows that the erection of the tower involved often great expense. 'Which of you,' says Christ, 'intending to build a tower,' etc. Luke 14 : 28. To say of a man that he 'began to build and was not able to finish' was equivalent to pronouncing him short-sighted, improvident, and reckless."—HACKETT, *Illustrations of Scripture*, p. 172.

**Intending**, not merely *wishing*, but *purposing*, to build. The wish takes the shape of a full determination in his mind. *Sitteth not down first*, implying a careful and leisurely consideration of what would be required to accomplish the undertaking. **Counteth**, literally *counteth* or *reckoneth by pebbles*, the cost or expense, referring to the ancient custom of reckoning by pebbles or counters. **Whether he have, hath**, etc. The object of his careful reckoning, to see whether he has enough to finish the projected tower. All this shows wise forethought in a worldly matter. A like care and wisdom should be exercised in religion.

Attention to religious matters is likened to a building, ch. 6 : 47-49; 1 Cor. 3 : 11-15.

29. **Lest haply**. Lest perhaps. **Not able to finish**. An unfinished tower like that of Babel (Gen. 11 : 1-9), but even less advanced; for in this case the man is spoken of as having only laid the foundation. **Mock**, scoff

- 30 that behold *it* begin to mock him, saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish.
- 31 Or what king, going to make war against another king, sitteth not down first, and consulteth whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand? Or else, while the other is yet a great way off, he sendeth an
- 33 ambassage, and desireth conditions of peace. So like

at, deride. While decided Christians may incur the hatred of men, they alone enforce their respect. Wicked men despise half-hearted Christians and those whose professions are at variance with their practice. At last false professors will be overwhelmed with shame. "Some shall awake to shame and everlasting contempt," Dan. 12 : 2.

30. **Saying**, to one and another, and perhaps in the hearing of this man. **This man**, etc. "In the third person the mockery is yet more delicate than if it were addressed in the second person directly to the imprudent tower-builder; compare Matt. 27 : 40-42."—VAN OOSTERZEE. This expression has grown into a striking proverb. What words can more fitly describe an entire want of common prudence and foresight? He who counts the cost of discipleship will learn his own weakness and the necessity of divine help.

31. Another parabolic illustration, showing even more pointedly the necessity of counting the cost. That Jesus should thus doubly enforce this duty shows how great its importance. The former illustration more particularly exhibits the *folly* of not counting the cost; this, the *danger*. That may refer more to what is seen, the profession; this, more to the real conflict. The application of the latter, however, is more difficult and doubtful than that of the former. See an interpretation, different from what follows, at the end of verse 33.

The two kings may refer to the person proposing to become Christ's disciple, and God, whose law he has broken and with whom he is at variance. **Going to make war**, etc. Marching out to encounter another king in war. Sinners are actively engaged in opposition to God. **Sitteth**, taking time for deliberation. **Consulteth**, considers and deliberates, in order to determine. **With ten thousand**, being his whole

available force. **With twenty thousand**, a force altogether superior, which by no means exhausts his resources. It is not implied that he brings his whole force, but only such a force as to ensure decisive and overwhelming victory.

32. **Or else**, if he finds himself too weak to contend against such an army, as he must, under such circumstances. **While the other is yet a great way off**. An act of prudence and foresight. While life and health are enjoyed the sinner should seek reconciliation with God. There is a verbal similarity with ch. 15 : 20. When the prodigal son "was yet a great way off," the father saw him, and with compassion ran to meet him. **Ambassage**, *embassy*, persons sent from one government to another to represent the interests of their country. We must not press here the drapery of the illustration. Kings did not usually go in person on such an errand, but sent an embassy to represent them. But sinners must come themselves to God, yet through Jesus Christ. **Desireth conditions of peace**. Sues for peace on such conditions as can be best arranged. In thus doing he acknowledges his inability to cope with the opposing king, his sincere and earnest desire to arrange a peace, and his willingness to submit to such terms as may be determined. So entire submission must be yielded to God, who is an enemy only to our sins, being desirous of our salvation (John 3 : 16; 2 Pet. 3 : 9), but in due time will be an enemy to the finally impenitent in their free and full identification with sin, Mal. 3 : 2, 5; Jude 14, 15.

33. **So likewise**. Rather, *so therefore*, introducing the conclusion of the two illustrations just given. Therefore, as the man who inconsiderately began to build, but brought upon himself the scoffs of others, because he was not able

wise, whosoever he be of you °that forsaketh not all °ch. 5. 11, 23; 18  
that he hath, he cannot be my disciple. 22, 23; 1 John 2  
15, 16.

34 4Salt is good: but if the salt have lost his savor, 4Mt. 5.13; Mk. 9.50.

to finish, and as the king who could expect nothing but defeat and ignominy except he submitted and sued for peace, so should you consider the cost of discipleship, self-renunciation, and a full submission to all my requirements. Jesus repeats emphatically, but briefly, the terms of discipleship which he had announced in ver. 26.

**Forsaketh not.** Does not take leave of and dismiss, as it were, from himself **all that he hath**, all that stands in the way of duty, and regard all that he hath as no longer his own, and hold himself in readiness to give everything up when called upon to do it. **He cannot be my disciple**, he may be professedly so, but he cannot be one in reality; for he lacks that essential element, supreme love to me, and he cannot endure those trials which none can go through except he prefers me above all besides.

“It must not be forgotten in all such parables as these that there is a human and a divine side on which they are to be examined. The man was to exhaust all his means upon the spiritual edifice, he was to call into exertion all his powers; but in that very act he was to renounce all dependence upon his own works, and look to the grace of God for the means of rearing the structure. See Eph. 2 : 10. So the king was to muster his forces and number them for the battle, but to remember at the same time that he who was coming against him would so outnumber his forces that he must renounce all dependence upon his own power to make war, and go forth and sue for peace and forgiveness. This twofold but coincident and harmonious action is expressed in the clearest and most emphatic terms in Phil. 2 : 12; and its recognition is not only essential to right views of personal efforts for salvation, but to the understanding of other truths which lie in its immediate vicinity.”—DR. J. J. OWEN.

A very ancient interpretation of the last parabolic illustration makes the two kings to be the person proposing to be Christ's disciple and Satan, the prince of this world, with his hosts

under him. He is to consider that with his own resources, his ten thousand, he cannot overcome him. If he depends on these, he must yield to the kingdom of darkness and suffer the fearful consequences. Knowing his own weakness, he must seek divine help and prepare his forces accordingly. Therefore he must renounce himself and forsake all human dependences; he must have the Spirit within him, in order to overcome in his spiritual warfare with the enemy of souls. “This explanation clears up the obscure point, how the Saviour should in these parables seemingly attribute to man the power of accomplishing a work so difficult as represented in vers. 26, 27. . . . In connection with what precedes, the parables thus virtually declare, ‘In wishing to follow me, ye undertake a contest which ye are unable to carry through. Attain first to the conviction of your own weakness, and seek the higher power of the Spirit; then shall ye be qualified for the kingdom of God.’”—OLSHAUSEN. Both of these interpretations have their difficulties, yet both illustrate facts in Christian experience and spiritual warfare. While I have given preference to the first, the second presents what may be an allowable use. Indeed, sometimes God's truth, like a two-edged sword, appears to cut both ways, and perhaps this may be a case in point.

34. Jesus further shows the uselessness of a false profession and intimates the end of false professors. He does this by using a proverbial saying which he had used on two previous occasions, Matt. 5 : 13; Mark 9 : 50. **Salt is good**, for purifying and preserving, 2 Kings 2 : 19-22. According to the highest critical authorities, *salt therefore is good*, thus connecting it with the preceding remarks as confirmatory and at the same time stating a fact as already known. Salt may represent divine grace, then the inward principle of divine grace in the heart, and also those who become partakers of divine grace, Matt. 5 : 13. **But if the salt have lost his savor**, or *becomes saltless*

35 wherewith shall it be seasoned? It is neither fit for the land, nor yet for the dunghill; *but* men cast it out. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

The Jews believed that salt would by exposure to the air become insipid and tasteless. Maundrell, in his travels, found it in this condition.—*Early Travels*, p. 512. Dr. Thomson saw in the East large quantities of spoiled salt thrown into the street. Dr. H. C. Fish brought with him from Palestine, A. D. 1874, specimens of this tasteless salt. As Christians are the salt of the earth, so had Israel been chosen as salt among the nations. But how had the Jews generally become as tasteless salt? According to the highest critical authorities, *but if even the salt*, etc., being the last thing which should become tasteless. Thus greater force is given to the supposition. **Wherewith shall it be seasoned?** Recover the saltness? The interrogative form is equivalent to a strong affirmative. If the salt has lost its saltness, it cannot be recovered by any means. If he who professes to be a partaker of divine grace remains or becomes unholy, there is no other means of purifying him. The remark is hypothetical. Jesus does not say that the preserving and sanctifying power of the gospel would lose its efficacy, even though as far as the formal professor is concerned it may not be exhibited, but that if it should, then there would be no other means of restoration and salvation. Neither does he say that the principle of divine grace within Christians will in any case become extinct; but if it should, then their case is hopeless. Jesus would especially direct the minds of his disciples to the necessity for this inward grace and the importance of watching over it. Compare Heb. 6 : 4 ; 10 : 26 ; 2 Pet. 2 : 15. Such warnings are part of the means used by the Spirit to keep the elect from entirely falling away. **Neither fit for the land, nor yet for the dunghill**, etc. Dr. Thomson (vol. ii., p. 44) speaks of salt becoming insipid and useless: "Not a little of it is so impure that it cannot be used at all; and such salt soon effloresces and turns to dust, not to fruitful soil, however. It is not only good for nothing itself, but it actually

destroys all fertility wherever it is thrown, and this is the reason why it is cast into the street. There is a sort of verbal verisimilitude in the manner in which our Lord alludes to the act: 'it is cast out,' and 'trodden under foot.' So troublesome is this corrupted salt that it is carefully swept up, carried forth, and thrown into the street. There is no place in the house, yard, or garden where it can be tolerated. No man will allow it to be thrown into his field, and the only place for it is in the street, and there it is cast to be trodden under foot of men."

**Cast it out.** In the original the language is strong and borders on the contemptuous, *out they cast it*, as utterly useless. So a professed follower of Christ who has lost his spirit is useless to the church here and is unfit for heaven. So will false and formal professors at last be cast out, with the protest, "I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity," Matt. 7 : 21-23. So also was the Jewish nation cast forth, as it were, among the nations and trodden under foot by men.

Having thus declared the requirements of discipleship and its necessity, the utter worthlessness of those who profess without the reality, and their certain, terrible, but merited end, Jesus calls the people to a most solemn and candid attention to the truths he had just uttered: **He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.** Whoever can hear, let him hear, understand, and accept these sayings, take warning and profit by them, for they are connected with the great truths and principles of my kingdom, and concern the salvation of the soul. Yet, alas! how often must God say, "Israel doth not know; my people doth not consider"! Isa. 1 : 3.

#### REMARKS.

1. The world takes note of what Christians do and say. Let us imitate Jesus in humility, patience, love, and good works, ver. 1; Matt. 5 : 13-16.

2. Works of mercy are becoming on

the Lord's Day, ver. 1-5; ch. 6 : 6-10; Mark 1 : 21-27; John 9 : 14.

3. The example of Jesus cannot be used to justify visiting and dinner-parties on the Lord's day. "If we can go *just as he did*, it is right. If when away from home, if we go to do good, if we make it an occasion of discourse on the subject of religion and to persuade men to repent, then it is not improper. Farther than this we cannot plead the example of Christ. And surely this would be the last instance in the world to be adduced to justify dinner parties and scenes of riot and gluttony on the Sabbath."—BARNES. Vers. 1-5.

4. In the man with the dropsy we have an illustration of the way in which the sinner should come and stand before Jesus, with full confidence in his power and willingness to save, vers. 1-4; Matt. 11 : 28-30; John 6 : 35.

5. Let us imitate Jesus in improving the common occurrences of life for spiritual instruction, vers. 5, 7, 12, 15, 16.

6. If we are bound to put forth exertions to save a neighbor's life, why not his soul, vers. 1-5; Ezek. 3 : 18-20; 33 : 6.

7. The judgment may be convinced, conscience may side for truth, and the tongue may be put to silence, yet the heart may remain unmoved and continue its opposition to Christ, ver. 6; ch. 20 : 26, 40.

8. Humility is becoming in the family and the social circle as well as in the house of God, vers. 7-10; ch. 22 : 24, 27; Prov. 13 : 10; 29 : 23.

9. True religion improves the manners of men, vers. 7-10; Gal. 5 : 22, 23; 1 Pet. 3 : 4.

10. Humility contributes to your own happiness and the happiness of others, and will commend you and the gospel to your fellow-men, vers. 7-11; Rom. 12 : 10; James 4 : 1; Matt. 20 : 24; 1 Pet. 2 : 15.

11. Study and practice Christ's true principle of exaltation, ver. 11; Gen. 13 : 9; Job 40 : 4; John 13 : 5; Phil. 2 : 5; 1 Tim. 1 : 15; James 4 : 6; 1 Pet. 5 : 6.

12. We should live in the practice of liberality and charity, vers. 12-14; Job 31 : 17; Neh. 8 : 10; Isa. 58 : 6, 7; Prov. 19 : 17; Acts 9 : 39.

13. Do good for goodness' sake and for God's glory rather than for any ex-

pected reward. Then our recompense will be correspondingly greater. "The humbler our brother is, so much the more does Christ come through him and visit us."—CHRYSOSTOM. Vers. 12-14; Matt. 6 : 3, 4; 10 : 40.

14. Only such friendship as is founded on religion will endure for ever, ver. 14; 2 Tim. 4 : 8; Rev. 20 : 6; 21 : 3, 4.

15. It is not enough to pronounce the godly happy and blessed; we must be godly ourselves, ver. 15; Num. 23 : 10; Ps. 32 : 1; Matt. 5 : 8.

16. Christ has prepared a banquet, and by his gospel invites us to come, ver. 16; Isa. 55 : 1; Matt. 11 : 28; John 6 : 37; 7 : 37; Rev. 22 : 17.

17. Jesus extends not merely general but special and personal invitations through his word, ministers, and Spirit; and these invitations demand present and immediate attention, ver. 17; 2 Cor. 6 : 2; Heb. 3 : 7, 8.

18. All excuses for not accepting the blessings of Christ and the gospel are vain and wicked, vers. 18-20; John 15 : 22; Rom. 1 : 20; 3 : 19.

19. Things that are innocent in themselves when they absorb the soul become sinful. There is nothing so innocent that it may not be perverted, vers. 18-20; Rom. 14 : 20-22.

20. Strive to use the ties of friendship and of relationship for Christ. Alas that even the marriage-tie, which ought to help toward salvation, often proves the greatest hindrance! ver. 20; 1 Cor. 7 : 16, 29.

21. How many despise the gospel feast! and, like Esau's birthright, it is forfeited for ever, ver. 21; Prov. 1 : 24; Heb. 3 : 11; 12 : 17.

22. The highly favored often forsake and despise their own mercies, while those less favored often welcome and improve the blessings of the gospel, vers. 22, 23; 1 Cor. 1 : 20, 26-29.

23. The gospel feast is so great that no numbers can exhaust it. "The Sunday-school teacher may say to his class, There yet is room; the parent to his children, There yet is room; the minister of the gospel to the wide world, There yet is room. The mercy of God is not exhausted; the blood of the atonement has not lost its efficacy; heaven is not full. What a sad message it would be if we were compelled to say, There is no more room! No matter what their

prayers, or tears, or sighs, they cannot be saved. Every place is filled, every seat is occupied. But, thanks be to God! this is not the message which we are to hear; and if there is yet room, come, sinners, young and old, and enter into heaven. . . . If any part of the universe is to be vacant, oh let it be the dark world of woe!"—BARNES. Ver. 22; Rev. 7 : 9; 22 : 17.

24. Be earnest for the salvation of others, and through prayer and the Spirit and the truth, with love and earnest entreaty, compel them as it were to come, ver. 23; 2 Cor. 5 : 11; 10 : 4.

25. Men in this life by their own acts exclude themselves from the feast of heavenly glory hereafter, ver. 24; Matt. 25 : 42, 43; John 5 : 40.

26. While Christ's service at this day rarely requires the sacrifice of one's life or friends, it does demand that which is scarcely more easy to be relinquished, such as property, time, worldly ease, sinful passion, prejudice, and pride, vers. 25, 26; Acts 21 : 13; Phil. 3 : 7, 8.

27. Cross-bearing is essential to discipleship. "No cross, no crown," ver. 27; Gal. 5 : 24; 6 : 14.

28. How many fail through a thoughtless, half-hearted, or lukewarm religion! vers. 28-30; Matt. 7 : 13; Rev. 3 : 16.

29. To what dangers are formal professors of religion exposed! and how certain and overwhelming will be their defeat! vers. 31, 32; Matt. 7 : 21-23; Jude 4, 11, 13.

30. "It is easier to die the death of a martyr than to live the life of a Christian," vers. 26-32; 1 Cor. 13 : 1-3.

31. He who builds or fights in his own strength will most certainly fail, vers. 28-32; John 15 : 5; 1 John 5 : 4.

32. We must surrender ourselves absolutely to God or we are lost, vers. 31-33.

33. Even a single cherished sin may ruin the soul, ver. 33; Ps. 66 : 18; Isa. 59 : 1, 2.

34. A profession of religion is a serious matter, and should not be made without careful self-examination and earnest prayer. "Yet if you are conscious of loving the Saviour and his cause, if, so far as you can honestly judge, you prefer the Saviour's cause to every other interest, and out of regard to that preference are willing to renounce earthly enjoyments and ease, you ought

not to be deterred by a sense of your weakness. 'He gives power' to them who feel that they 'have no might.' Your very sense of weakness will prove your strongest security, if it leads you to trust in the Lord; 'for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength.'"—RIPLEY. Vers. 28-33.

35. Christianity is good, to be a Christian is good. The gospel, like salt, exerts a preserving and purifying influence upon the world, ver. 34; Isa. 1 : 9; 2 Cor. 2 : 14.

36. How dangerous the situation of the formal professor! He is fit only for destruction, like salt, which, having lost its saltness, is fit for nothing, and is cast out as worthless, vers. 34, 35; Heb. 6 : 4-6, 8; 1 John 2 : 19.

## CHAPTER XV.

This chapter and the next are closely connected with what precedes, and consist principally of parables against the Pharisees. The latter murmur at his reception of publicans and sinners (vers. 1, 2); Jesus vindicates his conduct by three parables, showing God's love to the greatest sinners. First, the wandering sheep, sought, brought tenderly back, and rejoiced over, 3-7. *Second*, a piece of silver diligently sought and rejoiced over when found, 8-10. *Third*, the thankless, wayward and wasteful prodigal son, returning with penitence, is received with rejoicing, 11-32. These three parables appear to represent a gradation in sin, the prodigal son the most debased, the lost sheep representing the least. The increasing hopelessness of their recovery is thus exhibited. An increasing prominence and value are also presented by the proportion of the lost to those that remained. In the first it is one to ninety-nine; in the second one to nine; and in the last one is lost, and but one remains. A poor woman would also feel the loss of a piece of money more than a wealthy shepherd the loss of a single sheep, and the father incomparably more than either the loss of his son. The first two bring also into view the love of God in seeking after the sinner and bringing him to repentance; the third brings into prominence the sinner's wilful degradation and his own

*Parables of the lost sheep and of the lost piece of money.*

XV. THEN <sup>°</sup>drew near unto him all the publicans <sup>°</sup>ch. 5. 30; 7. 34; 2 and sinners for to hear him. And the Pharisees and <sup>°</sup>Mt. 9. 10. scribes murmured, saying, This man receiveth sinners, <sup>°</sup>Ac. 11. 3; Gal. 2. 'and eateth with them. <sup>°</sup>12.

agency in returning to God. The three thus present a complete whole. In the first, Christ, as a shepherd is mostly displayed in following, finding, and bringing back the lost. In the second, the Spirit's work is principally exhibited in connection with the truth and means of grace. And in the third, God, the Father, in Christ shows his work. So also it has been noted that the sinner is viewed from different sides. In the lost sheep we see the stupid, bewildered sinner; in the lost piece of money, the sinner with the stamped but marred image of God, lying lost, useless, and ignorant of his own worth; and in the prodigal son, the conscious and willing sinner.

1, 2. THE PHARISEES MURMUR AT JESUS FOR RECEIVING PUBLICANS AND SINNERS. The occasion of the three parables that follow. This occurred probably the next day after the dinner with the chief Pharisee (ch. 14 : 1), in Perea, near one of the fords of the Jordan, and not far from Jericho, where publicans were numerous on account of the balsam trade. The whole chapter is peculiar to Luke.

1. **Then drew near**, etc. *And at that time, after having finished the preceding discourse, all the publicans and the sinners were drawing near*, etc. The verb presents continued or progressive action, and declares what was going on at that time, which was indeed according to their usual custom. **Publicans**, tax-gatherers. See on ch. 3 : 12. **Sinners**, depraved characters or open transgressors of the law. The former were infamous among the Jews by their occupation, the latter as notorious offenders against the law. **All**, then present. *Were drawing near*, within hearing distance. Perhaps a feeling of unworthiness, and a perception of the contempt in which they were held by the Pharisees, kept them from pressing too close. **To hear him**, the object of their drawing near. It was not mere curiosity, but a sense of need

and a desire for instruction that prompted them to come. Jesus appears to have taught them.

2. **Pharisees**, see on ch. 5 : 17. **Scribes**, see on ch. 5 : 21. **Murmured**, were murmuring among themselves against him. The form of the verb in the original is intensive, implying frequency, or in groups among themselves, with mingled indignation. This is not, however, to be pressed too far, since in the Septuagint it is found in Ex. 16 : 7, 8; Num. 14 : 2. **This man**, uttered perhaps contemptuously, at least indignantly. **Receiveth**, to his presence, instruction, and favor. This was a general cause of objection. A particular one was, **and eateth with them**. Not only does he receive them, but he allows himself to be received and entertained by them. The Pharisees seem not here to refer to a habit of our Lord, but to a fact that had recently occurred. It is therefore probable that in the journey of the day Jesus had eaten with sinners. This fact also confirms the view taken above, that the parables that follow were not delivered upon the Sabbath, when Jesus dined with the chief Pharisee (ch. 14 : 1), but, at latest, upon the day following.

It is probable that this objection, on the part of some of the Pharisees, was the expression of malice and spite. But on the part of others, it is possible that it resulted from mistaken but exalted notions of what a prophet ought to be. They could not see how a great and righteous teacher should thus associate with wicked persons. The objection, at least, was plausible, and well calculated to have its influence upon the better classes. "Had our Lord's fellowship with these persons been this, that he descended to their level, that he held converse with them without rebuking their sins, *then*, indeed, the objection, 'this man receiveth sinners and eateth with them,' would be well founded." But such was not the case. He received them in order that they

- 3 And he spake this parable unto them, saying,  
 4 <sup>a</sup> What man of you, having an hundred sheep, <sup>b</sup> if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, <sup>c</sup> and go after that which is lost, until  
 5 he find it? <sup>d</sup> And when he hath found it, he layeth it  
 6 on his shoulders, <sup>e</sup> rejoicing. And when he cometh home, he calleth together *his* friends and neighbors, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found

<sup>a</sup> Mt. 18. 12, 13.  
<sup>b</sup> Ps. 119. 176; Isa. 53. 6.  
<sup>c</sup> Lk. 19. 10.  
<sup>d</sup> Eph. 2. 3-6; Tit. 3. 3-7.  
<sup>e</sup> Is. 53. 10, 11; Eze. 18. 23.

might truly receive him in their hearts, and be no longer sinners lost, but saved. He therefore proceeds to vindicate his conduct, showing that it was becoming not only to receive them for instruction and as returning prodigals, but to seek them out in their lost condition and lead them back by repentance. This is the third time that Jesus rebuked this self-righteous exclusiveness. The first was at Matthew's feast (ch. 5 : 30); the second at the house of Simon the Pharisee (ch. 7 : 39); a fourth occurred in the case of Zaccheus, ch. 19 : 7.

3-7. THE PARABLE OF THE LOST SHEEP. Found only in Luke. The design has already been spoken of, and is evident from the context and the parable itself. A similar parable, however, is found in Matt. 18 : 12-14, with a different application, showing that it is not the will of the Father that any of his little ones should perish.

3. Parable. See on ch. 8 : 4. **Unto them**, to the murmuring Pharisees and scribes in the presence and hearing of the publicans and the sinners, and also of his disciples, ch. 16 : 1. The first two parables of this chapter are less perfect than the third, and not so much in the narrative style. They both open with a parabolic question, followed by a narrative sentence, and close with an application.

4. **What man of you?** The interrogative form served to fix attention at once. He appeals directly to that natural human feeling which leads a man to seek that which is lost, and to rejoice over it when found. **A hundred sheep**, the size of his flock in round numbers, showing the man to be in comparatively good circumstances, and bringing to view the comparative smallness of the loss. **If he lose one of them.** Doubtless there were some owners of sheep and shepherds present who were reminded of similar incidents in their

own history. **Doth not leave the ninety and nine.** Jesus speaks of this as most certainly occurring under the circumstances. The people were familiar with such incidents in shepherd life, Ezek. 34 : 12. **In the wilderness**, an uninhabited and untilled region where pasture-lands abound, ch. 1 : 80; Joel 1 : 19; 2 : 22. Shepherds often pasture their flocks far from home, Ex. 3 : 1. In his concern for the lost one he loses sight for the time of those in the pastures, leaving them safely cared for perhaps by a boy and dogs (Job 30 : 1), and goes **after it**, diligently searching and persevering **until he find it**. Sheep, when they wander, seldom find their way back to the fold. Hence the necessity of seeking after them.

5. Having found it, he treats it with the greatest tenderness. He does not smite it or drive it harshly back, but **he layeth it on his shoulders**, Isa. 40 : 11. It is weary and weak from long wanderings, hunger, and thirst; he takes compassion upon it. Doubtless this was the usual treatment of a lost sheep by a shepherd. Besides, it would be difficult to drive a single lost sheep through a strange country, especially where there were few roads and no fences. Moreover, in his **rejoicing** he thinks nothing of the burden; nay, his joy finds expression in tenderly and fondly bearing it.

6. Returning home, he, for joy and for the purpose of rejoicing, calls his **friends and neighbors**, those who are bound to him by affection and those who live near him. The joy here manifested can only be fully appreciated by those who have been among shepherds in the East, and who have witnessed their tender attachment to their flock, each sheep of which they know by name. **Rejoice with me**, share my joy. It is running over; he would

7 my sheep <sup>1</sup>which was lost. <sup>m</sup>I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, <sup>n</sup>more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance.

ch. 16. 15; 18. 9-11; Pro. 30. 12; Ro. 7. 9; 1 Pet. 2. 10, 25.  
<sup>r</sup> ver. 10.  
<sup>s</sup> ch. 5. 32.

have others partake of it. He makes it a neighborhood and public affair. His joy over the one exceeds his gratitude over the quiet possession of the ninety and nine. **My sheep which was lost.** The form of the original indicates that the loss had become well known. And now the announcement is made that his search had been successful, and the people are called together to celebrate the event with joy. *My sheep*, indicating that it was *his*, though lost.

7. APPLICATION OF THE PARABLE. This Jesus now gives. Beyond what he says, or what is necessarily implied, we must advance with caution. The *lost sheep* represents the *sinner*, Isa. 53 : 6; 1 Pet. 2 : 25. Some refer to the characteristics of sheep as innocent, stupid, ignorant of dangers, weak, and helpless, thereby illustrating man, once unfallen in paradise, but now a stupid, silly wanderer, unconscious of his peril and utterly helpless. The sinner is lost to God, to holiness, and to happiness. *Jesus is the good Shepherd*, John 10 : 11-16; Ps. 23 : 1; 80 : 1; Ezek. 34 : 15, 16. He sought the sheep by coming to earth and bearing our sins (Isa. 53 : 6); and he still seeks them by his word, the Spirit, his ministers, and his people. So also, having suffered, having found sinners and saved them by his death, Jesus returns in triumph to heaven with the trophies he had won and the spoils he had taken from the great destroyer, Ps. 68 : 18; Eph. 4 : 8; Isa. 53 : 11; Zeph. 3 : 17; Heb. 12 : 2. Christ's seeking after lost men is brought prominently into view, Ezek. 34 : 11, 12. Many gems and relics of the early church, and paintings in the catacombs, represent the good Shepherd bringing home the lost sheep upon his shoulders; sometimes holding a seven-reeded pipe to show the attractions of divine love, or sitting down as if weary of the length of the way; and every soul saved brings renewed joy to Christ and the heavenly host.

7. **I say unto you.** *I*, the great Shepherd, *say unto you*, who murmur

and find fault. This parable was peculiarly adapted to the scribes and spiritual leaders of the Jews, who were under-shepherds (Ezek. 34 : 2), yet who were finding fault with Jesus for the very thing which they ought to have done themselves. Jesus shows them that the same principle which would lead a shepherd and his friends to such joy should lead him to seek the salvation of sinners, and that the Pharisees, instead of finding fault, should rejoice in his success.

**That likewise, that thus, or so,** on this wise and for the same reason. **Joy shall be in heaven,** in the presence of God and of his holy angels, ver. 10. Notice that the future is here used, referring, it may be, to the salvation of some sinner present, and also, perhaps, to the joy which he should soon taste in the heavenly mansions after his sufferings are over, John 14 : 2; Heb. 12 : 2. **Over one sinner.** The repenting sinner is represented as forming the object and ground of the angelic joy. **That repenteth.** This incidentally brings to view the human side in conversion. In repentance there is both divine and human agency. See on ch. 13 : 3. In a lost sheep the human side could not well be represented. Yet the stupid lost animal does well represent the lost sinner, in whom there are no beginnings of a *return to God* until sought after and wrought upon by the convicting Spirit.

**Ninety and nine just persons** etc. These are not the holy angels, for they are not the same in kind as men while the ninety-nine and the one were the same in kind, *all sheep*. They were, therefore, *men*. But whom? Some say self-righteous men, like the scribes and Pharisees. But such blinded creatures needed to repent and were objects of sorrow, while these needed no repentance and were objects of joy, though under the circumstances they called forth fewer emotions and manifestations of joy than the one. Others refer them to regenerate persons who have exercised repentance to the Lord

8 Either what woman having ten °pieces of silver, if °Mt. 18. 28.  
 she lose one piece, doth not light a candle, and sweep  
 9 the house, and seek diligently till she find it? And  
 when she hath found it, she calleth her friends and  
 her neighbors together, saying, Rejoice with me; for I

and faith in Christ. This is possible, for they have returned to God and to the great bishop or overseer of their souls. They no longer need that change of mind which is included in repentance, and that turning to God which is inseparably connected with it. Indeed, this seems to me the most natural interpretation; this also makes the *wilderness* represent this world. Yet they may be referred, if one so desires, to the spirits of just men made perfect; for these are indeed in the highest and strictest sense "just persons who need no repentance." Wilderness then must be the heavenly places, the abode of the righteous dead.

This language of our Saviour does not mean that God esteems one penitent sinner more than ninety-nine confirmed and established saints, but rather that for the time the interest and joy of heaven are specially concentrated on him. As a father peculiarly rejoices over a child that has been snatched from the jaws of death, while his other children, who are equally dear to him, are comparatively forgotten, so do the inhabitants of heaven rejoice over the salvation of a sinner, while those already saved and already rejoiced over are at the time as it were lost to their view. We must, however, remember that when human emotions are ascribed to God, they are to be taken in a high and holy sense, excluding all imperfection and all sensations which result from our animal nature.

8-10. PARABLE OF THE LOST PIECE OF SILVER. Recorded only by Luke. Similar in design to the preceding parable, but an advance upon it in presenting the lost condition of the sinner and the influences of the Spirit in seeking and finding him.

8. **Either, or**, connecting this with the preceding parable as illustrating the same facts and principles. **What woman**. Jesus appeals to human experience and to a course of conduct perfectly natural in those days. **Having ten pieces of silver**. The coins

here meant were the Greek *drachmas*, which at that time were worth about fifteen cents among the Jews and Romans. It must be recollected, however, that silver had about ten times its present value. These ten coins were all the woman possessed, and were therefore treasured up with care; and when she lost one-tenth of all she had, it was severely felt. The value of the sinner is thus brought out more strikingly than in the preceding parable. **If she lose one piece**. The sheep (ver. 4) was still wandering; the piece of money was lost from sight, and where it lay concealed was wholly unknown. The loss of the latter is thus presented as a more complete or absolute fact than that of the former.

**Doth not light a candle, a lamp**. This was necessary, since many of the houses had no windows, or only very small ones. The windows at the present day in Palestine are mere holes in the sides of the huts, often very small. Hundreds of houses now in Palestine have no windows at all. Such, too, is the case with many of the smaller houses among the remains of Pompeii, and the windows in those which have them are rather loop-holes, like those in our barns. **Seek diligently, carefully, till she find it**. The search was earnest, *careful*, persevering, and successful. It was also very thorough. She swept the house, in which the dust and dirt had accumulated, and perhaps covered the coin. "The sketch is vivid and lifelike. It is as though one saw the dust of the broom flying around in sweeping until she succeeds in discovering in a dark corner the lost piece, and immediately picks it up."—VAN OOSTERZEE.

9. **She calleth her friends and neighbors**. The feminine is used in the original. True to nature as well as to Eastern custom, she calls together her *female* friends and neighbors. Compare Ruth 4:14, 17. Her joy is so great that she makes it public. Her labor had been rewarded with success.

10 have found the piece which I had lost. Likewise, I say unto you, <sup>1</sup>there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner <sup>2</sup>that repenteth.

<sup>1</sup> Mt. 13. 10, 11; Ac. 11. 13; Phile. 15. 16.  
<sup>2</sup> ver. 7; ch. 13. 2, 5.

*Parable of the prodigal son.*

11 And he said, <sup>1</sup>A certain man had two sons. <sup>2</sup>Ro. 3. 29; 10. 12.

**The piece, the coin, the drachma,** ver. 8. The woman was already in her own house; nothing is therefore said about returning, as did the shepherd.

10. THE APPLICATION OF THE PARABLE. The application is substantially the same as that in ver. 7. Likewise, on this wise and for the same reason. The general design appears to be to show Christ's desire to save sinners and the joy which their salvation occasions. *The lost piece of money* represents the sinner lost to God, truth, and happiness. Some see in this figure the sinner's unconsciousness of danger and of his own real worth; the original dignity of his soul stamped with God's image (Gen. 1: 27); this image marred and its former lustre miserably tarnished (Lam. 4: 1; Isa. 1: 22; Jer. 6: 30); but himself still God's creature and capable of restoration.

*The woman* is made to represent the Holy Spirit, the church, or Christ by different expositors. Her sex does not necessarily decide anything regarding the interpretation. With her lighted lamp, sweeping and searching, she very aptly represents Christ with his word and Spirit, seeking to save that which was lost, Eph. 5: 13, 14. The *house* may represent the world. Yet we must be careful not to press into undue significance the mere drapery of the parable and suppose that every word has a deep and special meaning. Jesus has told us what he intended principally to illustrate.

**There is joy, not "joy shall be,"** as in ver. 7, but *joy is*, the statement of a present reality, a truth already existing. **In the presence of the angels of God,** wherever they may be, especially in heaven. Of course they must participate in the joy. Some suppose that because the words "in heaven" (ver. 7) are here omitted the meaning must be that the Spirit abides in the church and the angels are present in the church, 1 Cor. 11: 10. This is by no means a necessary inference.

Much better is it to regard these two verses (7 and 10) as mutually explaining each other. Besides, it is most natural to refer this language to heaven. **Over one sinner,** etc. The repetition gives emphasis to this glorious fact. The comparison with the ten is omitted, since in this case, after the ninety and nine, it would weaken the expression. The inference which Jesus would have his hearers draw is plain: Think it not strange that I labor to increase the joy of angels by seeking to save those whom you despise. You would not find fault with that woman; do not, then, find fault with me.

The joy and interest of angels in the salvation of men are here implied. Their deep interest in the work of redemption is brought to view in Scripture. They rejoiced at the Saviour's birth, ch. 2: 13, 14. Of the sufferings of Christ also and the glory that should follow, and of the preaching of the gospel the apostle said, "Which things the angels desire to look into," 1 Pet. 1: 11, 12.

11-32. THE PRODIGAL SON. Peculiar to Luke. This is the most beautiful of our Lord's parables. Stier styles it "the crown and pearl of all." It is simple, artless, and transparent as a chapter of human life. A silver lining of mercy gilds its scenery; it reveals many of the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven (Matt. 13: 11) and vividly presents the glad tidings of the gospel. It is, indeed, a mirror into which men can look and see themselves. Its main design is to show God's willingness to receive penitent sinners, and in addition a secondary design, to exhibit the injustice, selfishness, and unreasonableness of jealousy on that account. While the two preceding parables illustrate the divine side in the salvation of sinners, God by his Son, Spirit, word, and people seeking after them, this presents the human side, the sinner coming to a sense of his lost condition, reflecting, resolving, seeking, finding obtain

12 And the younger of them said to *his* father, Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to *me*. And

ing forgiveness and restoration. In treating this parable I shall depart from my more usual custom of interpreting at the end, and explain as we go along.

11. A **certain man**, of large means and of a condescending and tender heart. This represents God as the Father of mankind, who in Christ is reconciling the world unto himself, 1 Cor. 5 : 19. All nations are of one blood; all are his offspring, Acts 17 : 26, 28. The parable is fitting to Luke's Gospel, which was intended for the race.

**Two sons** denote two classes, the professedly righteous and the openly wicked. In their special application to Christ's hearers they denoted the scribes and Pharisees, those who professed to serve God and were not outwardly and openly wicked, and publicans and sinners, non-professors, outward and open transgressors of the law. In a wider application, in view of the fact yet to be brought out more clearly that the gospel was designed for all nations and to be preached to every creature, the two sons represent the Jews and the Gentiles. Jehovah is God both of Jew and Gentile, Rom. 3 : 28, 29. All men are, through creation and providence, sons of God. Like an ancient prophecy, this parable has a progressive application, foreshadowing and illustrating the experience of men in their relation to God in every age.

With this view of its application, we may also see in it a striking illustration of two classes of God's children—those who continue faithful and those who wander and backslide in heart, and, being filled with their own ways, return with penitence and are forgiven, and often honored of God to such an extent as to excite improper feelings in their Christian brethren toward them, Prov. 14 : 14; Jer. 3 : 12, 22; Ezek. 36 : 31, 32; Micah 7 : 10; Ps. 23 : 3; 85 : 8; Rev. 2 : 5.

12. In this verse and the four that follow we have the prodigal's sin and folly in departing from his father and living in a riotous manner, and the misery he brought upon himself. **The**

**younger son**, the one upon whom the father would naturally look with peculiar tenderness, Gen. 37 : 3. Youth, too, suggests lightness, frivolity, and the danger of being easily led astray. Weary of restraint and restless under the wise management of his father, the younger son would be his own master and live in a state of independence. So the sinner would live a carnal life of what he calls *liberty*. The language of his heart is, "Let us break his bands asunder and cast away his cords from us," Ps. 2 : 3. Or in thought and life they practically say unto God, "Depart from us, for we desire not a knowledge of thy ways. What is the Almighty that we should serve him? And what profit should we have if we pray unto him?"

**Said to his father.** This request amounted almost to a demand. It is strongly put in technical, almost *legal*, form. This shows that he had in heart already become alienated from his father and estranged from home. Thus sin begins in the heart, James 1 : 15.

**Give me the portion of goods, of the property, substance,** of whatever description, **that falleth to me,** that would be his at the death of his father. According to a Jewish law (Deut. 21 : 17), a father was to leave his estate equally among his children, except the eldest, who was entitled to two shares. The portion of the younger son, then, was one-third. Examples of distributing an estate during a father's lifetime have been adduced from some Eastern nations, but not from among the Jews. Abraham, however, during his lifetime, appears to have given most of his possessions to Isaac, and gifts or portions to the sons of his second wife, Keturah, Gen. 25 : 1, 5, 6. As Jesus derived his parables from real life, we may infer that such a division of property was not entirely unknown among the Jews, the father perhaps reserving a portion, which would at death fall to the eldest or to the one who remained at home. Thus the sinner wishes to be independent of God, to be a god to himself, and to live according to his own will and for his own pleasure, Gen. 3 : 5, 6. His

- 13 he divided unto them <sup>a</sup>his living. And not many days <sup>b</sup>after the younger son gathered all together, <sup>c</sup>and took his journey into a far country, and there <sup>d</sup>wasted his substance with riotous living. And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land; <sup>e</sup>and he began to be in want. And he went and

<sup>a</sup>Mk. 12. 44.  
<sup>b</sup>Job 21. 14-16; Ps. 10. 4-6; 73. 27.  
<sup>c</sup>Pro. 5. 8-14; 6. 26; Ecc. 11. 9, 10; Eph. 2. 2, 3.  
<sup>d</sup>John 8. 34.

proud and wilful determination, his claims to liberty to depart from his heavenly Father and to do as he pleases, find here illustration.

**He divided unto them**, to both sons, **his living**, his substance, with this distinction, that the younger son had full control of his portion, while the older one, in the house with his father, was substantially the owner of what remained, though it was still under the guidance of the father, ver. 31. So God bestows upon man his gifts, both spiritual and temporal, and a freedom to use them as he pleases—the righteous, as stewards and as sons, under the direction of their heavenly Father and in submission to his will; the wicked, on the contrary, according to their own desires and for their own ends. God allows them to use their freedom in sinning against him, and they learn by sad experience that in departing from him they lose true freedom and become slaves to their own lusts, to the world, and to the devil.

13. **Not many days after**, very soon after the distribution of the property. **Gathered all together**. The father may have divided the estate in such a manner as that the younger son could take all his property away with him if he desired. Or the son may have converted it into money and other valuables, so as to take all with him. He resolves and acts deliberately. **And took his journey**, not only from home, but, as the word literally means, *from his own people* or country; he *went abroad into a far country*. He wanted to be not only out of the sight, but beyond the influence, of his father. So far away was he in character and life, as well as in distance, that he was as one *dead*, ver. 24. What a picture of the natural man and of the natural heart that would live at a distance from God, and as far as possible “without God in the world!” Eph. 2 : 12.

**Wasted**, dissipated, squandered, his substance, or property, in riotous

**living**. One word in the original, and of very strong import, meaning, literally, *riotously, dissolutely*, with the idea of thus doing *in a self-destroying* manner. It was used to express the utmost abandonment of character. Bengel says that Aristotle (Eth. iv. 1) uses its corresponding adjective of one who is *ruined by himself*, and that its corresponding noun is used to denote prodigality joined to intemperance. The latter is used in Eph. 5 : 18; Tit. 1 : 6; 1 Pet. 4 : 4. He plunged recklessly into extravagance, dissipation, and dissolute living. Compare his elder brother’s estimate of his manner of life, ver. 30. Compare also ch. 12 : 45. So do the wicked squander the gifts of God—genius, intellect, attainments, affections, conscience, will, time, money, influence, and life itself, the means of grace and the blessings of the gospel—in the service of sin, Prov. 28 : 19; Gal. 5 : 19-21; Eph. 4 : 17-19; Isa. 55 : 2.

14. **When he had spent all**. For a while time passed merrily; he revels in plenty; but no property is so vast as not to be wasted by a life of extravagance and dissipation. At length all is gone. “Even so the sinner for a while may flatter himself that he is doing well at a distance from God; he discovers not all at once his misery and poverty, for the world has its attractions and the flesh its pleasures; his affections are not all at once laid waste, nor the sources of natural delight drawn dry in an instant. But this is the end whereunto he is more or less rapidly hastening. The time arrives when he has come to an end of all the satisfaction and joy which the creature can give him.”—TRENCH. The pleasures of sin are but for a season, Heb. 11 : 25.

**There arose a mighty famine**, as if through the righteous judgment of God upon him, *in that land, throughout that country*; it was very grievous and widespread, **and he began to be in want**. He suffers a twofold evil, poverty and famine. The

joined himself to a citizen of that country; and he 16 sent him into his fields to feed swine. And <sup>w</sup>he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat: and no <sup>x</sup>man gave unto him.

<sup>w</sup> Is. 55. 2; Ro. 6  
19-21.

<sup>x</sup> Ps. 142. 4.

former he brought upon himself; the latter overtakes him, and at its very commencement he began to suffer for the necessities of life. So do worldly and sensual pleasures perish with their using. The heart of the sinner is unsatisfied; the thirst for happiness unquenched. He has blasted hopes, shame, and remorse. With the discovery of his spiritual want he finds himself in a great spiritual famine—a famine of that which can alone nourish and satisfy the soul. “This *famine* the destitution of the only bread which satisfies, exists always *in that country*.”—STIER. Isa. 55 : 2; Jer. 2 : 19; 17 : 5, 6; Ezek. 7 : 19; Isa. 57 : 21; Rom. 1 : 21; 6 : 21.

Where now are the prodigal's gay companions who had feasted at his table? Why do they not now come forward and help? Alas! in his adversity they are friends no longer. They may now mock over his ruin; and if they would help him, they might be unable. The tender mercies of the wicked are cruel. The sinner is deserted and alone when he comes into extremity, and he reaps the bitter fruits of transgression, Eccl. 4 : 10.

15. Now indeed was a time for reflection, Eccl. 7 : 14. One would have supposed that in his adversity he would have turned his thoughts homeward. But he is not yet sufficiently humbled. Rather than even think of going back to his father, he will submit to the most servile state. So he went from the scene of his vice, dissipation, and want into what proved a still lower plane of degradation and misery. But rather than starve, he resolves to work. When the sinner begins to feel the burden of sin, he first endeavors to save himself, which only results in increased wretchedness. But even this is often necessary to lead him to despair of self and trust alone in Christ. **Joined himself**, as a servant. The verb in the original expresses the closest coherence; literally, he *glued himself*. Whatever contempt there may be in the expression is not in the word, but in the

character of the person to whom he gave (compare Rom. 12 : 9 and 1 Cor. 6 : 16): **to a citizen of that country**, a Gentile and a heathen. To become a servant of a Gentile was indeed degrading to a Jew. The Pharisees who heard this would naturally think of the publicans who were engaged in the detestable engagement of gathering taxes for a foreign power. **And he**, regarding him as a worthless creature and fit for no better position, **sent him . . . to feed swine**, to tend them and watch them while grazing or feeding. This was indeed a degrading employment among all nations, but especially among the Jews, to whom swine were an abomination, Isa. 65 : 3, 4; Deut. 14 : 8. Perhaps this rich heathen did this in contempt to his poor, miserable, and necessitous Jew. “Behold *the son* sunk into a swine-herd!” How are the mighty fallen, and how is human nature degraded by sin! First in the image of God, now a servant of sin—yea, a slave to the devil, John 8 : 34, 44. “Convictions and terrors seldom bring the wanderer at once to the door of mercy; he generally tries in succession several other methods, in order to obtain relief. See Isa. 9 : 10; Jer. 5 : 6; Isa. 57 : 10; Amos 4 : 6-10. As the prodigal attempted to keep body and soul together by the most desperate and loathsome expedients rather than throw himself on his father's compassion, so an alienated human soul, conscious of having offended a good God, and therefore hating deeply the holy One, will bear and do the will of the wicked one to the utmost extremity of misery rather than come home a beggar and be indebted for all to a Father's love.”—DR. A. NEVIN.

16. Disgraceful as his employment was, the prodigal could have probably endured it had he had sufficient and wholesome food. But the famine was severe, his master was hard-hearted, and bread was not furnished. Added to his disgrace and misery was that of starvation. **And he would fain**, *longed*, desired earnestly, *was eager to fill*, etc. Some

17 And when he came to himself, he said, How Jer. 31. 19; Eze. 13. 23, 28; Ac. 2. 37; Eph. 5. 14. Ps. 119. 59.

very able expositors take this to mean that he desired earnestly swine's fodder and was not able even to obtain that. "And no man gave unto him" therefrom. Whatever fare he had was so scanty or so bad that even the *Pods* which the swine were eating were the object of his craving appetite. But this was even denied him, perhaps by the steward under whom he served. He must, therefore, seek even worse food, if he could find it, to satisfy his hunger. This is an allowable view, and at first sight would seem more agreeable with the original. Yet the Greek may mean that, no one giving him anything better, *he was glad* to share the husks which the swine were eating. The clause **and no man gave unto him** appears to be a reason why he was driven to such an extremity. *And* with a Hebraistic use may mean *for*, and *anything* may be understood after *gave*. Compare ch. 6 : 30, where a similar object is understood. The clause then would read, *and for no one gave anything to him*. Besides, it would not have been easy to deprive him of the opportunity of eating some of these "husks." And the same word in the original is also found in ch. 16 : 21, "*was desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table,*" where it seems to be implied that Lazarus did eat of some of the crumbs.

**Filled his belly**, or *stomach*, a somewhat uncomely expression, but used designedly and with meaning. He could only fill himself and partially check his hunger without truly satisfying it, for the food of beasts could not appease the cravings of man. Though eager and glad to do it, he could not get enough to satisfy his hunger, ver. 17.

**The husks**, carob *Pods* or fruit. The word in the original signifies literally *little horns*, with reference to the extended and slightly curve-shaped pods of the carob fruit. The pods are from six to ten inches long and one broad. 'I have seen large orchards of this *charáb* in Cyprus, where it is still the fruit which the swine do eat. In Cyprus, Asia Minor, and the Grecian

islands you will see full-grown trees bending under half a ton of green pods."—DR. THOMSON, *Land and Book*, vol. i., p. 22. "It is a large tree, with a thick foliage and widespreading branches. I saw it growing on the Mount of Olives and elsewhere around Jerusalem. The fruit is a leguminous product, resembling the pod of our locust tree, but much larger; it has a sweetish pulp when tender, but soon becomes dry and hard, with small seeds which rattle in the pods when shaken. It emits a slight odor when first gathered offensive to those whom use has not accustomed to it. The poorer classes employ it as food in the countries where it is produced. I was told at Smyrna that it is in great request in some of the Greek islands as a nutritious article for fattening swine."—DR. HACKETT, *Illustrations of Scripture*, p. 137. The special point here is that he who was brought up in the midst of plenty is so reduced by want as gladly to welcome the meanest and scantiest fare.

What a picture of the fruitless attempts of the sinner seeking to satisfy the yearnings of his soul with the enjoyment of lusts and pleasures and the gratification of his appetite! They, indeed, feed on the wind (Hos. 12 : 1), or they feed on ashes (Isa. 44 : 20), growing worse and worse. In base indulgences, in sinful pleasures, or in more decent worldly pursuits they seek for satisfaction, but in vain. Worldly goods cannot satisfy the soul, and sin ruins both soul and body. The sinner can obtain no help from Satan, and the world; nay, both seek to plunge him deeper in ruin. God alone can "satisfy the longing soul and fill the hungry soul with goodness," Ps. 107 : 9. The soul cries not "It is enough" until it is "filled with all the fulness of God," Eph. 3 : 19.

17. In this and the three following verses we have an account of the prodigal's *penitence* and *return*. Thousands go on to eternal ruin, but here is one to whom, in his last extremity, afflictions are sanctified. In the calamities that overtook him and the trials to which he

many hired servants of my father's have bread enough  
 18 and to spare, and I perish with hunger! "I will arise  
 and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father,  
 19 <sup>b</sup>I have sinned <sup>a</sup>against heaven, and before thee, <sup>d</sup>and  
<sup>c</sup>Ps. 51. 4. <sup>d</sup>ch. 5. 8; Job 42. 6.

was subjected, we may see the hand of a heavenly Father seeking his wandering one. Compare 2 Chron. 33 : 10-13. **And when he came to himself,** literally, *and coming into or unto himself*, as <sup>3</sup> he had been out of mind. He had been beside himself; his reason, which had been dethroned and beclouded by the mad intoxication of sensual pleasure, now returns. Repentance begins in reflection, Mark 14 : 12; Ps. 119 : 59. He who returns to God must first return to himself. The sinner is prone to think the earnest seeker or the Christian mad (Acts 26 : 24) when he himself is mad, Eccl. 9 : 3.

**How many hired servants,** and he a *hired servant!* But what a contrast in their condition! These were the lowest of his father's servants; above them were others mentioned in ver. 26; and highest, those in ver. 22. **Of my father's,** of my father. He contrasts his miserable condition with that of the meanest servants at home. They had **bread enough and to spare,** a *superabundance of bread.* Bread, the staff of life and the food of man, stands in striking contrast to the miserable food of brutes, on which he had been living. **And I perish,** etc. According to the highest critical authorities, *and I perish here with hunger.* And I, a son, am actually starving, and am not even thought worth my food by the master to whom I have hired myself. "Before his leaving home it had been *drudgery* to be a son. Now it would be *freedom* to be a servant."—JACOBUS. So the repenting sinner perceives his miserable condition in contrast to the happy condition of the humblest of God's servants. And so, also, he must feel how hopeless is his case before he will turn to Christ for salvation.

18. Now comes the second step in his penitence—a resolution to return to his father. As he reflects he remembers his father's kindness, and while pierced with shame hope springs up in his heart, the germs of faith in a father's compassion begin to manifest themselves

in a purpose. **I will arise.** "We may picture him to ourselves as having sat long upon the ground revolving the extreme misery of his condition; for the earth becomes the natural throne of the utterly desolate, Job 2 : 8, 13. But now he gathers up anew his prostrate energies as a better hope wakens in his bosom: 'Why sit I here among the swine? *I will arise and go to my father.*'"—TRENCH. In going to his father, his old associates, bad habits, and former course of life are left behind,—a feature of true repentance. This illustrates the human side in turning to God. The divine side is brought to view in the two preceding parables, and must be taken for granted here. It is only through God's strength and grace that the sinner can arise and go (John 6 : 44), and it is not by his penitence, but by Christ's sufferings and death, that he is reconciled to God, Heb. 10 : 19-22.

**Father.** How differently did he utter this word now from what he did when he asked his portion, ver. 12! Then indifferently, formally, and hypocritically; now solemnly, imploringly, and with a full sense of its meaning. He recognizes the relation, but he can claim nothing as a son; and to be received and treated as a hired servant he feels is only a matter of undeserved favor.

Most strangely does Trench here suggest that the sinner's ground of confidence—that, returning to God, he shall not be repelled—is "the adoption of sonship which he received in Christ Jesus at his baptism." But baptism comes after repentance and faith, Matt. 28 : 19; Mark 16 : 16; Acts 2 : 38, etc. Besides, the Scriptures teach that it is by repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ that the sinner is received, 2 Cor. 7 : 10; Acts 11 : 18; 20 : 21; Rom. 3 : 25; Joel 2 : 13; 2 Cor. 5 : 19; Jer. 31 : 19; Ezek. 18 : 30; 36 : 31; Jer. 31 : 18; Ps. 119 : 59, 60.

**I have sinned.** He does not propose to apologize, or to deceive, by say-

am no more worthy to be called thy son: °make me °Jam. 4. 10; 1 Pet. 5. 6.

- 20 And he arose, and came to his father. But 'when 'Job 33. 27, 28; Ps 103. 10-13; Is. 57 18; Jer. 31. 18-25; Eze. 18. 27, he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and 28; Mic. 7. 18, 19; Ac. 2. 39; Ro. 5. 8; Eph. 2. 13, 17; 1 John 4. 8-10.

ing that he had been unfortunate or had been robbed of his property. He will not plead his youth or his indiscretion, or that his fault had been that of his head rather than of his heart. He lays the whole blame upon himself, and owns his guilt. Sincere and humble confession is connected with repentance, ch. 18 : 13; 2 Sam. 12 : 13; Prov. 28 : 13; Hos. 14 : 2; 1 John 1 : 9, 10. **Against heaven**, against God. Heaven, the immediate abode of God, is put for God himself. The prodigal feels and acknowledges that his sins, however much against others and injurious to himself, were chiefly against God. So in true repentance the sinner with David says, "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight," Ps. 51 : 4. **Before thee**, in openly abusing thy goodness and in grieving thee by my unnatural treatment, and in throwing off thy easy yoke. In the application of this parable to God the phrases *against heaven* and *before thee* really merge into one: Against God and in his presence all this has been committed. To the penitent sinner the sense of a heavenly Father's presence and love makes sin against him the more intensely odious. It is in view of this, as manifested in Christ, that he is overwhelmed with shame and self-condemnation.

19. **And** should be omitted, according to the oldest and best manuscripts. **Am no more**, etc. Rather, *no longer worthy*, etc. He casts a glance into the past. He remembers that he is a son, and he recalls the time when he was acknowledged and treated as a son, of which privilege he confesses himself no longer worthy. He cannot ask for this, but he will implore that he be not left to perish, and that he, a son, be made as a servant. Let emphasis be laid upon **as**; he proposes to ask that he be made *as any one of his hired servants*. Though a son, he was a *hired servant*, and he naturally compares himself with those of that rank in his father's family, and he feels that this is the most he can

ask. He would gladly act and be treated as any one of them if he could only be received back at home. So the repenting sinner comes to God just as he is.

20. He at once put his resolution into practice. **And he arose**, etc. This is a proof of the sincerity of his purpose and of the genuineness of his repentance. But how many good resolutions are formed which come to nothing! The prodigal, however, arose and began his long journey (ver. 13), though many fears and trials assailed him, such as weakness from hunger, the difficulties of the way, begging his food, and the thought of meeting his offended father. He perseveres until he **came to the neighborhood of his father**. He catches a glimpse of his father's mansion. How his heart beats! What mingled hope and fear fill his mind! What shall he do?

**HIS KIND RECEPTION** is now related in this and the four following verses. **When he was yet a great way off, his father saw him**. The father is represented as looking for the return of his long-lost and wandering one. From some eminence, or from the roof or a pinnacle of his house, he spies him in the distance; and although emaciated and in rags, he recognizes his form and movements as those of his son. "It is the custom of the East to meet a friend at some distance from the house, even outside of the town. So the bridal company goes out to meet the bridegroom. As we were returning to Beyroot after travelling through Palestine, our host, hearing of our coming, rode out on horseback two miles beyond the city, and met us with true Oriental salutations."—**JACOBUS**. So God sees the returning sinner from *afar*. And, what could not be said of a human father, he sees him in all his wandering—yea, from the foundation of the world. The parable was not intended to illustrate the whole system of divine truth in regard to turning from sin to God. This part, however, is very suggestive of truths

had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and  
 21 kissed him. And the son said unto him, Father, I  
 have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and <sup>a</sup> Ps. 51. 4.  
 22 am no more worthy to be called thy son. But the  
 father said to his servants, Bring forth <sup>b</sup> the best robe, <sup>b</sup> Ps. 61. 10.

which could not be taught by the parable in its present form. We catch a glimpse of God's love toward lost sinners. Christ's coming and work are also taken for granted, since he himself utters the parable from the high plane of his own kingdom. So also the Holy Spirit, by whose working the first motions of repentance are produced, Ps. 10 : 17 ; John 16 : 8.

**Had compassion**, a strong expression, *was moved with compassion*, bringing to view the yearning emotions which were at once excited by the sight of a long-lost son. None but a parent can enter into this feeling; and this compassion he expresses in action. **He ran, and fell on his neck**, with embraces, **and kissed him**. The kiss is a sign and pledge of reconciliation in the East, often accompanied with the salutation, "Peace be with thee," ch. 10 : 5 ; Gen. 33 : 4 ; 45 : 14, 15. Thus is illustrated the readiness of God to receive and forgive a repenting sinner, Isa. 1 : 18 ; Jer. 31 : 20 ; James 4 : 8. And thus is he encouraged to confide in the heavenly Father's love as brought to view by Jesus Christ.

21. But what effect did all this kind treatment have on the prodigal? Did it prevent his humiliation or lead him to omit his confession? By no means; it rather encouraged him to carry out his purpose, while it deepened his contrition and godly sorrow. "The beautiful picture would have been marred had he faltered in his purpose of full and open confession in consequence of this outburst of paternal love." And so a view of God's free, full, and pardoning love in Christ melts the sinner and fills him with penitence. And the more he sees and feels this love, the more does he hate and mourn over his sins. Compare Ezek. 36 : 26-31 ; 16 : 60-63. **And am no more**, etc., or, as in ver. 19, *no longer worthy*, etc. See on vers. 18, 19.

But the prodigal did not finish what he intended, "Make me as one of thy hired servants," ver. 19. But why this

omission? More generally it has been said that the father cut him short with the direction to his servants in ver. 22. Some, however, suppose that the filial spirit and love was so awakened in the prodigal's heart as to prevent the request. May there not be truth in both of these reasons? Surely it is in harmony with love and with the father's compassion that he should not have allowed him to make this request. Indeed, the father's outreaching love could hardly have permitted it. Then, too, how natural that he who ran to meet him with embraces and kisses before he had time to confess, should, upon hearing it, command the best robe to be brought before he had finished. Yet, on the other hand, how must the prodigal's love and confidence in his father have increased, with all the feelings becoming a son! Still, he comes just as he is, and is willing to take any position his father assigns him. But the father's reception already points him to something higher. His words are repressed by overpowering embraces. Indeed, his confession, *I am no longer worthy*, etc., contained it all. He can do nothing but leave it all with him. The language of his heart is, "Let him do as seemeth him good," 2 Sam. 15 : 26. And while the words of confession are on his lips the father directs according to his good pleasure.

22. **But the father said**. The direction to the servants who had gathered around this wondrous scene was truly an answer to his son, assuring him of forgiveness and restoration to the privileges of sonship. It is noticeable that the father utters not a word to his son about his wickedness. Overflowing love forgives it all. It is as if it never had been, Ps. 103 : 12 ; Micah 7 : 19 ; Heb. 8 : 12 ; 10 : 17. **Bring forth**, in some of the oldest manuscripts, *bring forth quickly*. The thought seems implied, even though it be not in the original. He is also to be arrayed publicly before the servants and others present. **The best robe**, a strong

and put *it* on him; and put <sup>1</sup>a ring on his hand, <sup>1</sup>and <sup>1</sup>23 shoes on *his* feet: <sup>k</sup> and bring hither the fatted calf, <sup>1</sup>24 and kill *it*; and let us eat, and be merry: <sup>1</sup>for this <sup>1</sup>my son was dead, and is alive again; <sup>m</sup>he was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry.

<sup>1</sup> ver. 32; Ro. 6. 13; Eph. 2. 1; 5. 14; 1 Tim. 5. 6; Rev. 3. 1. <sup>m</sup> Mt. 18. 11-13.

expression in the original, *a robe, the chief or best*. This was a long flowing robe reaching to the feet, worn by kings and by persons of rank and distinction. Such a command indicated in a most striking manner that the father intended to treat the prodigal as a son, not as a servant. The ring and the shoes spoke the same language, Gen. 41 : 42. This best robe points to Christ's righteousness, Rev. 3 : 18; 19 : 8; Isa. 61 : 10. **Put a ring**, literally, *a finger-ring*. This was worn by freemen, and as a gift was a mark of honor or a token of elevation to some high office, Esth. 3 : 10; 8 : 2; James 2 : 2. As a ring was often used for stamping or sealing documents (Esth. 3 : 12; Dan. 6 : 17), so this gift of the father has been thought to point to the sealing of believers by the Spirit, 2 Cor. 1 : 22; Eph. 1 : 13. The ring was also used as a pledge of betrothal, and has therefore been regarded here as a pledge of the Father's love and faithfulness, and of the spiritual union of believers with Christ, Hos. 2 : 19. But perhaps better than these and more consistent with the simple language of the parable is the view which takes the ring to be not only a token of affection and of restoration to the honors and privileges of sonship, but an ornament of dress, and thus pointing to Christian graces, to that adorning which pertains to "the hidden man of the heart," to "the meek and quiet spirit, which in the sight of God is of great price," 1 Pet. 3 : 4. **And shoes, sandals**, on his feet. See on ch. 3 : 16. Slaves generally went barefoot; the sandals were a mark of a free man. Thus the believer is clothed as a son with the gifts of grace and holiness, and is enabled to walk in the ways of the Lord, Zech. 10 : 12; Eph. 6 : 15. Compare similar language, shadowing forth the honors and privileges which God confers upon his people, Ezek. 16 : 10-14; Zech. 3 : 4, 5.

The wonder is that the repenting sinner should be received into the high-

est favor. But this is explained by the fact that it is through the merits and righteousness of Christ. By virtue of his relation to Christ he is a free man and a son of God, Rom. 8 : 17; Gal. 5 : 1; 1 John 3 : 1.

23. The reinstatement of the son must be full and complete, in the presence of the whole family, and attended with rejoicing. **Bring hither the fatted calf**, or *that fatted calf*, implying an extraordinary one and intended for some special and joyous occasion. It was common with Eastern hospitality to have some such animal ready to be slaughtered, Gen. 18 : 7; 1 Sam. 16 : 20; 28 : 24; 2 Sam. 6 : 13. The custom still exists. "Among the unsophisticated Arabs the killing of a sheep, calf, or kid in honor of a visitor is strictly required by their laws of hospitality, and the neglect of it is keenly resented."—DR. THOMSON, *Land and Book*, vol. ii., p. 162.

**Let us eat and be merry**, the usual joy and merriment connected with feasting, ver. 25. As the shepherd called together his friends and neighbors (ver. 6), and the woman her female friends (ver. 9), so here the householder summons his servants to share his joy. Thus plainly, as in the two preceding parables, is represented the joy in heaven over a sinner that repenteth, vers. 7, 10. In the killing of the fatted calf there can be no allusion to the sacrifice of Christ, for it was not killed as a sacrifice, but for a festal purpose; and besides, Christ's sacrifice is presupposed throughout the parable and was the ground of the reconciliation, 2 Cor. 5 : 19; Rom. 3 : 24-26. Equally far-fetched is the idea that it at all represents the Lord's Supper, for that is in no sense an ordinance for rejoicing over returning prodigals.

24. The father gives the reason for feasting and rejoicing. And in doing this he openly presents the prodigal as restored to sonship, **for this my son**, and at the same time contrasts the

25 Now his elder son was in the field. And as he came and drew nigh to the house, he heard music and

past with the present, **was dead and is alive again.** He was as one dead to me. By a striking figure vicious persons are represented as *dead*, 1 Tim. 5 : 6. Indeed, the death of the body is not to be compared with such a moral death. Much less grievous to a pious parent would be the natural death of children than their abandonment to vicious indulgences. The prodigal was also dead in his alienation from his father and in his entire abandonment of home and country. So his returning with penitence, with renunciations of vicious practices, to virtuous living and to proper affection and reverence to his father, was indeed to be **alive again.** And so the natural man, without fellowship with God and in a state of sin, is spiritually dead (Eph. 2 : 1, 5, 12), and his recovery is life from the dead, Eph. 2 : 5-7, 14; 1 John 3 : 14. "No language could better express the depths of sin and misery from which the sinner is reclaimed, and the new, peaceful, happy life which he begins to live when he has returned and received the forgiveness of his heavenly Father."—DR. J. J. OWEN. **Was lost**, in all that pertains to a son, in his filial feelings and duties, in his character and life, in his words and deeds, and in his far-off wanderings. **Is found**, in his return to his home, to the feelings, practice, and life of a son. So the sinner is *lost* to God, to holiness and happiness, among the enemies of God, in sin and misery. And the believer is *found* in being brought into a state of reconciliation and delivered from the condemnation of sin. In his being *found* we catch a glimpse of God's love going out after sinners, Isa. 65 : 1; 1 John 4 : 19.

**They began to be merry**, the prodigal participating in the feast. The joys of repentance and of a new life are a foretaste of heavenly joy. The joy of heaven over repenting sinners is in a degree participated in by saints on earth. So far as the returning prodigal is concerned, the parable ends here. But Jesus had a further design in relation to his hearers, and especially to those who murmured against his

laboring among publicans and sinners, ver. 2. The parable is therefore continued with reference to the other son.

25. The remainder of the chapter is taken up with the ENVY OF HIS ELDER BROTHER. Who is this **elder brother**? Most strangely have some answered, the angels in heaven, when all three parables of this chapter specially represent the rejoicing of the inhabitants of heaven, among whom are the angels, over the repentance of a sinner. Better is the answer of *Stier*, most comprehensive though somewhat indefinite: "All who are such as he." *Krummacher* of Elberfeld was asked this question, and he answered "Myself." He then confessed that he once murmured at a miserable creature having suddenly become rich with a remarkable visitation of grace. The immediate application of this part of the parable is most plainly to the scribes and Pharisees, who had just been murmuring at the conduct of Jesus, ver. 2. In their self-righteousness they had doubtless classed themselves among those ninety-nine just persons who needed no repentance, ver. 7. And now they quietly recognize themselves in the *elder brother*, though in not so fair a light; and if they had spiritual perception given them, they could have seen that their righteousness was rather a form than a reality. Our Saviour had already thrice illustrated the joy of heaven over repenting sinners, from which the plain inference followed that earth also should unite in the joy, and that none should find fault and murmur. But now he proceeds to show how unreasonable is all such envy and malice. Let this design be kept in view, and it will be easy to discriminate between the mere drapery of the parable and the main points of illustration.

**Was in the field**, in some distant part of the farm where he had not heard of his brother's return; and in the great and unexpected joy that filled the house he had been temporarily overlooked. But **as he came**, probably at the close of a hard day's labor, gradually approaching the house, he

26 dancing; and he called one of the servants, and asked  
 27 what these things meant. And he said unto him, ▪ Ac. 11. 2, 3; 13  
 Thy brother is come; and thy father hath killed the 45; 22. 21, 22  
 fatted calf, because he hath received him safe and Ro. 10. 19.  
 28 sound. ° ch. 18. 9, 11; Is  
65. 5.

heard **music and dancing**, a concert of musical instruments, accompanied with dancing and song. The eating was doubtless over, unless, contrary to usual custom, they at once before the feast gave vent to their great joy. It was common in the East to hire the musicians and dancers at such festivities. But this large householder may have had them in his household. Dancing was practised among the Jews, sometimes at feasts (Judg. 21 : 23), on triumphal occasions (Judg. 11 : 34), and sometimes in religious worship, Ex. 15 : 20; 2 Sam. 6 : 14. Similar customs exist at the present day. "At weddings, on birthdays, and at all other festal gatherings music is their chief entertainment; and they will beat the derbekkeh, thrum the deff, rattle the castanets, and clap their hands in concert without intermission until long after midnight."—DR. THOMSON, *Land and Book*, vol. ii., p. 579.

Our Saviour's parables were true to life. He made their most familiar practices contribute to the vividness of his teaching. It is most groundless to deduce from this true picture of the manners of the people any argument for dancing and gay festivities. Compare ch. 7 : 22. The *elder brother* away in the field in hard service truly represents the Pharisees, away from God, engaged in a legal service, and laboring hard to maintain an outward righteousness. The self-righteous, too, are not generally at hand when the lost sinner returns.

26. On hearing the rejoicing, instead of going into the house, as was his right and privilege, and inquiring of his father, the elder **called one of the servants**, etc. Thus is incidentally shown a certain estrangement of heart from his father. Very probably he inferred that some distinguished person had unexpectedly arrived, and he is secretly displeased at what was taking place without his knowledge. Formalists and the self-righteous are selfish and faultfinding. The spirit of a legal

righteousness would even call God to an account, and would question his method of working and of salvation. **Asked**, etc., *inquired what these things might be*; he wanted an explanation of the unusual proceeding. The form of the expression indicates somewhat the feeling and the earnestness with which he asked the question.

27. The servant seems to share in the joy, and he naturally expects that the elder brother will see a cause of rejoicing. As if announcing welcome news, he says, **thy brother**. And to show that the rejoicing was properly authorized and perfectly right he says, **thy father**. Concerning the **fatted calf**, see on ver. 23. **Hath received him**, *hath received him back, safe and sound*, in a sound, healthy condition. The reference is, without doubt, to his physical condition. Trench and others have noticed here a nice distinction in the narrative. The father, in the strength of his parental affection, is filled with overwhelming joy at the moral transformation of his son, and thinks of him as one who was dead and is alive, and who was lost and is found. But the servant is more absorbed with external features. After enduring many and great hardships he has returned home in good health.

"In so good-natured an answer there lies nothing at all, in and of itself, which could have given the elder brother just ground for bitterness. It is rather the state of the case that is sufficient (in his temper of mind) to fill him with anger. This last stroke of the pencil also proves satisfactorily the unreasonableness of the singular interpretation that by the elder brother we are to understand the unfallen angels."—VAN OOSTERZEE.

28. Instead of receiving the news with joy, **he is angry**, very angry or enraged; and instead of hastening to see his brother and participating in the general rejoicing, he **would not go in**. Thus did he manifest his censorious temper, his jealousy, and his want

therefore came his father out, and entreated him.  
 29 <sup>p</sup> And he answering said to *his* father, Lo, these many years do I serve thee, neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment: <sup>q</sup> and yet thou never gavest me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends:  
 30 but as soon as this thy son was come, which hath de-

<sup>p</sup> ch. 17. 10; Mt. 20. 12; Ro. 3. 20. 27;  
<sup>1</sup> John 1. 8, 10;  
 Rev. 3. 17.  
<sup>q</sup> Mal. 3. 14.

of filial love and hearty sympathy with his father, notwithstanding his strong declarations of obedience and long service in ver. 29. Stier here remarks that the elder is now the *lost son*, he having lost all childlike, filial feeling and betraying the hypocrite within. What a picture of the self-righteous Pharisee, showing contempt for repenting publicans and censuring Jesus for laboring among them! Compare a similar spirit among early Jewish Christians regarding the preaching of the gospel to the Gentiles (Acts 11 : 1); also the anger of Jonah when God spared Nineveh, Jon. 4 : 1.

**Therefore came, etc.** According to the highest critical authorities, *and his father came out*, in great condescension, leaving the festivities within, **and entreated him**, expostulated and with kind words tried to induce him to lay aside his anger and enter the house. He utters not a word of anger or rebuke. Thus the condescending love and forbearance of the father is strikingly exhibited. Even then, and in this very discourse, the heavenly Father was coming to these Pharisees through Jesus, dissuading them from their envy and entreating them to enter humbly and submissively into his kingdom.

29. But the father's condescension and entreaty have no other effect than to draw from the elder brother a complaint of the unfairness with which he had been treated. **Lo, etc., Behold, see**, sharply and indignantly spoken. He does not say "Father," as his penitent brother had done (ver. 21), showing how entirely were filial feelings wanting in his heart. His answer was unbecoming a son, highly disrespectful, and deeply selfish. **These many years, or so many years**, in contrast with "as soon as," in ver. 30. **Do I serve thee**, a strong expression in the heat of anger, *do I serve thee as a slave*. As if the loving obedience and voluntary service of a son were slavery. Yet heartless obedience and mechanical ser-

vice of even a son are servitude. Every clause adds to the picture of the one who trusts in a *legal* righteousness.

**Neither transgressed, etc.** A boastful and self-righteous utterance. Yet he disregards his father's pleasure in regard to his brother. Behold the Pharisee delineated to the very life, ch. 18 : 11, 12, 21; John 8 : 33, 41; Rom. 2 : 17-19. "As if it were no breach of a commandment to murmur at the salvation of a brother."—JEROME. Compare 1 Sam. 15 : 13. **Thou never gavest me a kid**, a young goat, far inferior to a fattened calf. Spoken contemptuously, and with hatred and envy toward his brother. That he had lived with his father, and that what was his father's was his, he counts as nothing. The reward that he was looking for was to get something from his father instead of possessing everything in, through, and with him. So the legalist counts his works and bases his hopes of reward upon them (ch. 18 : 12), and looks upon the plan of grace toward sinners as unfair to himself. He wants something *from* God, instead of having all things *in and through* God. **My friends**, as if his friends were different from those of his father. An alien spirit is thus manifested. Implying also that the feast was made for his younger brother's friends, when it was really intended in order that the whole household, including the elder brother, might manifest their joy upon the restoration of the younger son.

30. This verse stands in strong contrast to the preceding. **But as soon as, or but when**, is contrasted with "these many years;" "devoured thy living," etc., with "do I serve thee, neither transgressed I," etc.; and "thou hast killed for him the fattened calf" with "thou never gavest me a kid." Notice the scorn and contempt in the language, not merely for his brother, but even toward his father. **This thy son**. He will not say "my brother," and he does not recognize him as such

voured thy living with harlots, thou hast killed for  
 31 him the fatted calf. And he said unto him, Son,  
 'thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine. Is. 54. 9, 10; Jer. 31. 35-37; Ro. 8. 17; 9. 4.  
 32 It was meet that we should make merry, and be  
 glad: \*for this thy brother was dead, and is alive ver. 24; Eph. 2. 1-10; 1 Tim. 5. 6.  
 again; and was lost, and is found.

As if, pointing his finger toward the house, he had exclaimed, "Thou mayest call him thy son, but I own him not as my brother." **Was come**, not *returned*, but *was come*, as if he spoke of a stranger. **Which hath devoured**, who squandered, **thy living**, that portion which thou didst give to him. Perhaps, as Alford suggests, there is a covert reproach of his father for having given it to him. **With harlots**. In his rage he tells the worst and exaggerates. The words *with harlots* are not necessarily implied in the words *with riotous living*, ver. 13. **Thou hast killed for him**, for that one, spendthrift and profligate that he is, **the fatted calf**. What a union of envy, jealousy, ill-will, and uncharitableness! How does this illustrate a legalist, or an exemplary worldling who loves to dwell upon the failings and sins of penitents!

31. **And he said unto him**. How does the answer of the father, so full of compassion, reason, and moderation, contrast with the rage, unreasonableness, and hatred of the son! **Son**, rather, *child*. He tenderly addresses him as a son, though the son had failed to address him as father, ver. 29. So God addresses sinners, "Son, give me thy heart," Prov. 23 : 26. **Thou art ever with me**. Ever opposed to "never" (ver. 29), and therefore it is not necessary that there should be special joy on thy account. *With me*, enjoying my society and receiving tokens of my love, and there is no need of seeking outside friendships and other happiness. "It is better to be happy with a father than with a multitude of friends." It is the joy of believers to have their Lord with them always, and their future bliss to be "ever with the Lord."

**All that I have is thine**, if thou art willing to receive and enjoy them. Thy brother has received his portion; thou shalt lose nothing by his prodigality, or by his restoration, by my kind-

ness and forgiveness. Thou hast nothing therefore to complain of, neither couldst thou demand more. "All are yours," 1 Cor. 3 : 21-23. Thus did Jesus offer to the Pharisees and to the Jews the full blessings of the gospel, which had been promised and foretold, if they would but receive them. And these blessings would not be lessened, but, in fact, rather increased, by the salvation of publicans and sinners. "This is the grace in the gospel that makes over to us God himself and all that he has. All Christ's merit is applied to us, and we are to enter into the joy of our Lord. This was the privilege which Christ held out to the Pharisees if they would. . . . The spirit of bondage is narrow, complaining, and grudging. We must enter into the spirit of adoption, and cry, *Abba, Father*, with true filial confidence and joy."  
 —JACOBUS.

32. **It was meet**, proper and right, required by the nature and circumstances of the case, and in accordance with reason, as thou too must acknowledge after due consideration. **That we**, including even the enraged and uncharitable brother. "A moving intimation that the best of men ought to look on the most abandoned sinners as in some respect their brethren still, and should especially remember the relation when there appears any inclination to return."—DODDRIDGE. **Make merry**, with or connected with feasting. **Be glad**, rejoice.

**This thy brother**, reminding the elder son of the relation of him whom he styled "this thy son" (ver. 30), and at the same time intimating that the younger brother had been restored to all the relations which he had forfeited. It was also an appeal to the elder son's own feelings as a brother, which should arouse gratitude and joy. There, too, was a hint to his Pharisaic hearers that they must regard repenting publicans and sinners as their brethren if they would enjoy the bless-

ings and privileges of the Father's house. **Was dead**, etc. See on ver. 24. This was a father's testimony to his son of the transformation of the younger brother.

The parable closes without stating the effect of the father's tender address upon the son, and whether or not he joined the festivities in his father's house. And very properly it is left unfinished, for it was an appeal to the Pharisees and scribes and to all who partake of their spirit. Jesus left it for them to answer each for himself. And legalists, formal professors, and the self-righteous of various descriptions have continued to answer it ever since.

While this parable was specially designed to show the joy in heaven over repenting sinners, and also the relation between the self-righteous Pharisees and penitent publicans and sinners, it constantly finds illustrations in the religious feelings and experiences of men. Thus it illustrates the relation between the Jews and the Gentiles (Acts 13 : 42-50; 22 : 21, 22; 1 Thess. 2 : 16), and also the conduct of Jewish Christians toward Gentile Christians, Acts 15 : 1; 21 : 21; 20 : 21, 28. Alford also truthfully remarks: "We are all in turn examples of cases of both these brothers, containing the seeds of both evil courses in our hearts." And may not the Christian sometimes in his departures from God or in melancholic moods feel temporarily a discontented and murmuring spirit in witnessing the exulting joy of the repenting sinner, not considering that his joy is really greater and deeper, but spread over a longer space of time—that it is "not the suddenly swelling mountain cataract, but the deep though smooth and silent river, and what is given to the other is given to him just because he is a beginner?"

#### REMARKS.

1. We should have no fellowship with sinners in their evil deeds; but, like Jesus, we should strive to induce them to forsake their sins and turn to God, vers. 1, 2; Eph. 5 : 7-11; 2 Cor. 5 : 20.

2. Murmuring when sinners come to Christ shows a selfish, wicked spirit,

totally unfit for the employment and bliss of heaven, vers. 1, 2; Isa. 65 : 5.

3. How wonderful the grace and condescension of Jesus in coming to seek and save the lost! How does he follow the sinner by his word, Spirit, and providence through the devious ways of transgression, patiently and unwearily, until he has found him! vers. 3-5; Ezek. 34 : 11, 12, 13, 16; John 10 : 11, 15-17; Isa. 40 : 11.

4. How anxious should we be for the salvation of our own souls when God does so much for us, and men manifest so much interest to recover a lost sheep or a lost piece of money! vers. 4-8.

5. What an encouragement we have to labor for the salvation of the worst of men! The meanest sinner may become an object of joy in heaven, vers. 7, 10; Isa. 1 : 18; 55 : 6, 7, 11.

6. What a great thing is the conversion of a single soul! What an estimate is put upon it in heaven! vers. 7-10; Matt. 16 : 26; James 5 : 20.

7. The pitiable condition of the sinner is portrayed in the first two parables of this chapter, as a lost sheep wandering in barren wastes instead of pasturing in green meadows, as a lost piece of money, its stamp marred, though not defaced, and buried in the dust and from the light of day, and in both so lost as to be beyond self-recovery, vers. 4, 8; Isa. 53 : 6; 1 Pet. 2 : 25; Eccl. 7 : 29; Jer. 13 : 23.

8. What a wonderful fact is the revelation that angels rejoice over repenting sinners! May we not suppose that departed saints share also in these joys? vers. 7, 10; Isa. 44 : 23; Heb. 12 : 2? 23; Rev. 5 : 11; 22 : 9.

9. How great should be our joy at the recovery of a soul to God! vers. 6-10; Acts 8 : 8; 11 : 23; 15 : 3.

10. How are impenitent sinners admonished and encouraged by these parables to accept of Christ, and through him to receive pardon and salvation! vers. 3-10; Ezek. 18 : 32; 33 : 11; 1 Tim. 2 : 4.

11. The essence of sin is selfishness. Connected with this, and growing out of it, is rebellion and unbelief. The sinner desires to get all he can, and is impatient of delay, vers. 11, 12; Rom. 8 : 7; Prov. 18 : 1; 17 : 11; Gen. 3 : 6.

12. Sinners are going farther and farther from God, wasting their spiritual

blessings and bringing upon themselves spiritual want and wretchedness, ver. 13; Ps. 10 : 4; 73 : 27; Rom. 13 : 13; Eph. 2 : 12; Prov. 28 : 19.

13. Sinners are reckless of the woes that are coming upon them, ver. 13; Job 18 : 8; Eccl. 9 : 12; 11 : 9.

14. The course of sin is downward. It begins in a heart destitute of love to God and bent upon its own lists. It soon shows itself in outward transgression, and in perverting to sin and shame the gift of God's goodness and love. Then follow the consequences—dissatisfaction, unrest, and want, a soul with expiring hope and having foretastes of unutterable woe, vers. 12-14; Rom. 1 : 21; Eph. 4 : 18, 19.

So a great English poet, who with everything that fortune, rank, and genius could give him, and having laid out his whole life for pleasure rather than for duty, yet, when he had only reached the noon of life, exclaimed :

“My days are in the yellow leaf,  
The flowers, the fruits, of love are gone;  
The worm, the canker, and the grief  
Are mine alone.  
The fire that on my bosom preys  
Is lone as some volcanic isle;  
No torch is lighted at its blaze,  
A funeral pile!”

15. God often speaks to the sinner through want and by afflictions. His voice is sometimes heeded, but oftener the sinner only pushes on to greater degradation, selling himself more absolutely to evil and only increasing the pangs of his famishing soul, vers. 14-16; 1 Kings 21 : 20; 2 Kings 17 : 17; 2 Tim. 3 : 13.

16. What an exhibition of the wants and woes of a sinner! He has spent all, far from God, without a friend, and ready to perish from soul-famine, vers. 13-17; Amos 8 : 11, 12; Isa. 55 : 2; 57 : 20, 21; Jer. 2 : 19.

17. Sinners in their wretchedness and want often apply to the wrong source for help and comfort, vers. 14, 15; Ps. 10 : 4; Jer. 2 : 13.

18. Learn several things connected with true repentance: (1) The sinner comes to himself. He sees that he is perishing, and is deeply affected with his miserable condition. (2) He is sensible that his sins are against God, and that they are deeply aggravated and deserving of divine wrath. (3) He

is ready to confess and forsake his sins. He would conceal nothing from God. (4) He feels that he has no claim on God, and that the lowest place in his kingdom is above his deserts. (5) Yet he does not despair. He resolves to go to God with humble confession and prayer for pardon. (6) But he does not simply think, feel, and resolve. He puts his resolves into action. (7) In faith he yields up himself to God through Jesus Christ, submitting the whole case to his hands, vers. 17-20; Ps. 119 : 59, 60.

19. True repentance is voluntary on the part of the sinner, yet none would repent unless operated upon by the convicting and renewing Spirit, vers. 17-20; Acts 3 : 19; 5 : 31; 26 : 20; Rom. 2 : 4; Phil. 2 : 12, 13; 2 Tim. 2 : 25.

20. God is waiting to respond to the very first step of a returning sinner, and to welcome him to his kingdom with pardon and blessings, ver. 20; Neh. 9 : 17; Isa. 30 : 18; Matt. 11 : 28-30; Rev. 22 : 17.

21. Upon repentance and faith God accepts and pardons the sinner, adopts him as a son, clothes him in the pure robe of Christ's righteousness, and adorns him with the dignity and honor of an heir of salvation, vers. 20-22; Jer. 31 : 20; Rom. 8 : 1, 9, 14, 17; Eph. 2 : 4-7.

22. The return of a soul to God is an event of great joy in heaven and on earth, vers. 23, 24; Zeph. 3 : 17.

23. How fearful the condition of the sinner in a state of spiritual death, and how glorious that of the believer with eternal life! ver. 24; John 5 : 24; Eph. 2 : 1; Col. 2 : 13.

24. We should not be envious at the favors which God bestows upon others, since he has given us more than we deserve and all his favors are of grace, vers. 25-28; Gen. 4 : 5-7; Jonah 4 : 9-11; 1 Cor. 1 : 31; 4 : 7; James 1 : 9; 4 : 5.

25. The conduct of the self-righteous toward repenting sinners is vividly portrayed: envy, pride, scorn, ingratitude, loving to dwell upon the former misconduct of the returning prodigals, and wholly overlooking the change that had taken place in them; disowning them, and refusing to share in the joy and blessings growing out of their salvation, vers. 28-30; Isa. 63 : 16. Con-

*Parable of the unjust steward.*

XVI. AND he said also unto his disciples, 'There was a certain rich man, which had a steward; and the same was accused unto him that he had wasted his

<sup>1</sup> Mt. 18. 23, 24; 25  
<sup>14</sup>, etc.  
<sup>1</sup> Cor. 4. 1, 2; 1  
 Pet. 4. 10.

trast the prodigal as the open transgressor and the elder son as the exemplary moralist.

26. How great the condescension and love of God in continuing the offers of the gospel to murmuring legalists and self-righteous formalists! vers. 31, 32; Ex. 34 : 6; Ps. 125 : 6. Though outwardly near the kingdom of God, their self-righteousness must be renounced before they will enter in.

27. The sensible joy of the returning penitent is often greater than that of the matured Christian, yet the joy of the latter is generally deeper, calmer, and less fluctuating, vers. 30-32; Neh. 8 : 10; Isa. 48 : 18.

28. Since God is so willing to receive sinners, and since all heaven rejoices when they return, how should we strive to bring them to Christ! vers. 29-32.

29. How earnest, too, should sinners be to seek the Lord while the day of mercy lasts! vers. 29-32; ch. 13 : 6-9.

## CHAPTER XVI.

The connection and the instruction of this chapter both point to a continuous narrative. After the three parables of the preceding chapter, which exhibit the compassionate love of God, Jesus now utters two relating to love to our fellow-man and inculcating the right use of the things of this life. First is the parable of the unjust steward and its application (vers. 1-13), which is followed by the derision of Jesus by the Pharisees (14), whereupon Jesus rebukes their hollow self-righteousness (15), their rejection of John (16), and their neglect and transgression of the law by their unauthorized divorces, 17, 18. He then utters that impressive and solemn parable of the rich man and Lazarus, 19-31.

1-13. PARABLE OF THE UNJUST STEWARD AND ITS APPLICATION. Recorded only by Luke. Spoken in Perea. No parable has been so variously explained as this. It is neither

possible nor desirable here even to mention the most of these, which would tend rather to confuse than to solve the difficulties of the parable. Let us rather seek its true solution.

1. **And he said also.** The most natural meaning of this language is that he uttered what follows soon after the preceding parables. Jesus addresses the various classes of his audience, with perhaps occasional pauses in his discourse. **His disciples.** According to the highest critical authorities, this should read *the disciples*, not merely the twelve, but including also his followers present, among whom were perhaps some of the publicans, ch. 15 : 1. **A certain rich man.** One having large possessions and great wealth. He belongs rather to the drapery of the parable, since it is the shrewdness of the steward which Jesus especially uses in its application, ver. 9. Yet the thought is naturally suggested that God has entrusted to men as stewards the blessings they enjoy.

**A steward.** A general overseer and manager of the estate. Such a one was Eliezer, Abraham's steward, Gen. 15 : 2. Such persons were very commonly slaves, ch. 12 : 42, 43. This one was, however, a free man, for the landholder proposes neither to punish nor sell him, but to discharge him from his position. That this rich man needed a steward showed his great wealth. That the steward managed among other things large landed property seems very probable. It appears that his lord had clothed him with extensive powers, entrusted him with great responsibilities, bestowed upon him full confidence, and had never required any reckoning or complete account of his stewardship.

**Was accused.** The verb implies maliciousness, but not that the charge was wrong or untrue. The steward does not deny it or propose any defence, thus acknowledging his guilt. **That he had wasted.** Rather, *as wasting*, indicating what was then going on. The

2 goods. And he called him, and said unto him, How is it that I hear this of thee? <sup>v</sup> give an account of thy stewardship; for thou mayest be no longer steward.

3 Then the steward said within himself, What shall I do? for my lord taketh away from me the stewardship: <sup>w</sup> I cannot dig: to beg I am ashamed. I am resolved what to do, that, when I am put out of the stewardship, they may receive me into their houses.

5 So he called every one of his lord's debtors *unto him*,

<sup>v</sup> Ecc. 12. 14; Ro. 14. 12; 2 Cor. 5. 10; 1 Pet. 4. 5.

<sup>w</sup> Pro. 18. 9; 21. 25

same word in the original as in ch. 15 : 13, *wasting or squandering his goods*, substance, possessions. He was living extravagantly and spending prodigally. Jesus derives lessons of instruction from the conduct of wicked men, ch. 18 : 1-5. So was Israel's instability condemned by the trust that the heathen put in their idols, Jer. 2 : 11.

2. **How is it?** Rather, *What is this*, etc.? an indignant expression of surprise and of interrogation as to the ground and truth of the report. **Of thee**, in whom I have placed so much confidence. Can it be true that thou hast acted so unjustly and basely? **Give an account.** Literally, *give the account*, such as was usual for stewards to give when required. Dr. Jahn says that Oriental kings, except Persian monarchs, who sent legates yearly to examine into the affairs of the provinces, did not usually call their subordinates to account except when they were charged with maladministration of affairs.

**For**, under such imputations and suspicions, and they seem to be true, since thou dost not deny it, **thou mayest be, thou canst be, no longer steward.** The proprietor thus indicates the necessity of dismissing him from his service. The natural implication from the language and circumstances is that if the steward should be successful in proving his innocence to the satisfaction of his lord, he might be retained in his position.

3. The steward, conscious of his guilt, begins to reflect as to **what** he should **do**. As a shrewd and prudent man he will strive either to avert the threatened danger and keep his place or, if he cannot do this, he will seek to provide for himself a comfortable old age. The former he sees he cannot do; he therefore resolves upon the latter. **My lord taketh away . . . the**

**stewardship**, and with it I shall lose my living. He had *wasted* his lord's property, not enriched himself. He sees poverty staring him in the face. **I cannot dig.** *I am not able to dig*, to engage in manual labor, which in agricultural pursuits consists largely in upturning the earth. He is not strong enough for that; he may have been weakened by disease or effeminacy. At least he feels that he is unable to do it. Another alternative is **to beg**, but to do this he is **ashamed**. That would be too great a descent from his former position.

4. The steward continues his soliloquy. The word-painting is very vivid. A thought just strikes him. **I am resolved, I know what I will do**, I have just thought of a plan; and he determines upon it at once. **When I am put out of, removed from.** He uses a mild word regarding himself. **They may receive me.** The subject of the verb *receive* is omitted in the original, the mind of the steward being intently fixed on the action of the verb. *They* is understood, the men with whom the steward was going to treat, ver. 5. He would make them his friends, so that they would receive him **into their houses**, into their hospitality, out of gratitude for what he had done for them. He hoped to enjoy life still in the homes of those whom he had laid under obligations to him.

5. He immediately puts his plan into execution. **So he called.** Rather, *and having called to him*, still using his authority as steward while making up his accounts. **Every one, each one**, one by one. All his master's debtors were called, yet each by himself, the master also being absent. The haste and other circumstances connected with these transactions, lead to the natural inference that the proprietor was not

and said unto the first, How much owest thou unto  
 6 my lord? And he said, An hundred \* measures of oil. \* Eze. 45. 10, 11, 24  
 And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and sit down  
 7 quickly, and write fifty. Then said he to another,  
 And how much owest thou? And he said, An hun-  
 dred measures of wheat. And he said unto him, Take  
 8 thy bill, and write fourscore. And the lord com-

present. The steward must have time to give the required account. **Debtors.** Who these debtors were, is not indicated. Some suppose them to be persons who had purchased these various amounts of farm products, and had given bills or notes of hand, acknowledging the amounts they had received and for which they were indebted. It seems, however, more natural to suppose that these were his lord's tenants, and that the *corn* and *oil* spoken of (vers. 7, 8) were the terms on which they held the grain-fields and olive-grounds. And this gives opportunity for another, not improbable, supposition, that the steward, in his extensive powers, had farmed out these portions of land at higher rates than he paid his lord, thus getting much clear gain for himself. The publicans were familiar with that way of managing and farming out the public revenues. The steward, however, on account of his squandering habit, had not enriched himself, for now he sees beggary before him, unless by wise policy he escapes it. We cannot, therefore, suppose that he paid his lord for these reductions in the bills. Neither is there any hint that he thereby defrauded his lord. The natural supposition, therefore, is that he reduced the bills to the actual amounts which he himself paid to his lord. This view removes much perplexity regarding the parable, and is the least of any beset with difficulties.

**Unto the first.** Two examples are given to show his mode of procedure toward all. **How much owest thou?** The steward asks this, not for his own information—for he had the bills—but that each debtor might recall the amount of his indebtedness and appreciate the steward's kindness in the reduction of his bill. The debtors were not aware of the disgrace into which the steward had fallen, and he, while still in authority, could change

the bills, which his lord had not as yet seen.

**6. A hundred measures of oil, a hundred baths, etc.** The bath was a Hebrew measure for liquids, equal to about eight and seven-eighths gallons. The amount of his indebtedness was, therefore, about eight hundred and eighty-seven gallons.

**Take thy bill, thy writing, bond, or bill. Sit down quickly,** implying the haste with which these private transactions were accomplished. The debtor is made also to write his own bill. Thus he is in no uncertainty about it, and thereby acknowledges his obligation. **Write fifty.** We are not to suppose that he wrote a new bill, but rather altered the old one, which could easily be done by changing a single letter in the Hebrew numerals. The reduction of so large an amount, one-half, was eminently adapted to secure the steward's end; and as the rent would doubtless continue at this rate, the tenant would be yearly reminded of the kindness he had received.

**7. A hundred measures of wheat.** The word here translated *measure* was the *cor* or *homer* (Ezek. 45: 14), the largest Hebrew dry measure, equal to ten baths (ver. 6), or about eleven bushels. The whole indebtedness was, therefore, about eleven hundred bushels. **Write fourscore, eighty,** throwing off twenty homers. The inequality of the deduction in these two examples, which illustrate all the other cases, is not so great when we consider that there could not have been any large difference in value between fifty baths of oil and two hundred baths or ephahs of wheat. Still, there was a great disproportion in the amounts of deduction with reference to each man's indebtedness. There was, doubtless, something in the circumstances of each debtor which had decided the increase on the actual rent

mended the unjust steward, because he had done <sup>wisely.</sup> For <sup>the</sup> children of this world are in their generation wiser than <sup>the</sup> children of light.

\* John 12. 36; Eph. 5. 8; 1 Thes. 5. 5; 1 Pet. 2. 9.

ch. 20. 34; Ps. 17  
14; Mt. 13. 38  
John 8. 23; Gal  
1. 4.

and now decided the deduction to be made.

Jesus hastens to the application of the parable. He tells nothing of the result of this affair, whether the steward successfully defended himself and reinstated himself in his position or was actually discharged from service. The latter, however, is the more natural inference from the whole connection. This was omitted because it had nothing to do with the point of illustration.

8. **The lord**, or *master*, of the steward. To make the sense less ambiguous in English, the translation might be *his lord*. **Commended**, or *praised*, not the injustice or dishonesty of the steward, but his prudence and practical shrewdness, **because he had done wisely**, Ps. 49:18. He has shown worldly foresight and acted upon it. **Unjust steward**, a strong expression, pointing to injustice as an essential part of the man. Notice that the proprietor, as a man of the world and from a worldly standpoint, praises the prudence of the steward, but Jesus puts his estimate upon him by styling him *unjust*. While injustice impregnated his character and life, he had particularly manifested it in charging increased rents and in such extravagance and squandering as not only used up his own wages and his unrighteous gains, but also was wasting his lord's property.

The view of this parable thus far presented, seems to me to be the one which is the least beset with difficulties. We are not to consider it as an imaginary account, but an incident from actual life, used to illustrate a single important point. Jesus, with his omniscience, had no need of fiction, when all the events of the world were before him. From his immense treasure of facts he could draw at pleasure.

The parable ends with *wisely*. Jesus, however, throws in a single remark in conclusion, and then makes the principal application in the next verse. **For**, introducing both the reason of the

steward's being highly commended and also a well-known fact of the prudence of worldly men. **Children, or sons, of this world**, a vivid Oriental mode of characterizing worldly men. **Are wiser**, more sagacious, exercising greater prudence and foresight in arranging their plans, in their choice of means, and in promptness of action. **In their generation**, in respect to those with whom they live and have to do; in their business and affairs, as just illustrated by the unjust steward. Wordsworth supposes that the lord had not found out the artifices of the steward, and that he saw only the results—namely, his reception into the habitation of the debtors. This may be possible, but not necessary.

**Children, or sons, of light**, of him who is the true light (James 1:17); Christians who are enlightened by God, and in whose heart and life truth and goodness abound, John 12:36; Rom. 13:12; 1 Thess. 5:5; Eph. 5:8. Trench relates the story of an Egyptian hermit who, seeing a dancing-girl, was moved to tears. In reply to the question why he wept, he said, "Because she should be at so much pains to please men in her sinful vocation, and we in our holy calling should use so little diligence to please God."

May we not regard the Lord here as a *just* and at least a professedly righteous man, in contrast to his *unjust* steward? And in commending his steward did he not recognize that he himself had not shown as great prudence and foresight? In other words, that his stewards had so far excelled him in shrewd and sagacious management as to call forth his admiration? "For the children of this world," of whom this unjust steward was one, "are wiser than the children of light," to whom this proprietor is supposed to belong.

9. The application, which Jesus now makes, shows that he intended to illustrate and enforce a single point, and it thus avoids many difficulties which grow out of using the mere drapery of the parable to illustrate points no

9 And I say unto you, <sup>a</sup>Make to yourselves friends <sup>a</sup>ch. 11. 41; 14. 14  
of the mammon of unrighteousness; that, <sup>b</sup>when ye <sup>b</sup>Pro. 19. 17; Is  
fail, they may receive you <sup>c</sup>into everlasting habita- <sup>c</sup>58. 7, 8; Dan. 4.  
27; Mt. 6. 19  
10. 41, 42; 19. 21; 25. 35-40; 1 Tim. 6. 17-19. <sup>b</sup>Ecc. 12. 3-7. <sup>c</sup>2 Cor.  
5. 1; Ecc. 11. 1.

mentioned by our Saviour. **And I say unto you.** The master commended his unjust steward for his prudent forethought, *and I*, your Teacher and Lord, *say to you* that you should use a like forethought in regard to your spiritual and immortal interests.

**The mammon of unrighteousness.** *Mammon* is an Aramæan word applied to *wealth* or *riches*, and, according to its most probable derivation, meaning originally *trust*, thus descriptive of wealth, not merely as a possession, but also as something which is so generally made a ground of confidence. Compare Mark 10 : 24. *Riches* is here personified as the *mammon of unrighteousness* (nearly equivalent to *unrighteous mammon*) because, in our present state, it so generally becomes the occasion and the means of unrighteous conduct. Especially is this the case where it is made an object of love or of trust. Hence, in contrast to the "true riches," it is false, deceptive, and fleeting, ver. 11. "The love of it is called 'the root of all evil' (1 Tim. 6 : 10) because it leads into every form of sin. It tempted Achan to his destruction by the 'wedge of gold and the goodly Babylonish garment,' Josh. 7 : 21. It made Judas the betrayer of Christ; Ananias and Sapphira, seduced by it, 'lied to the Holy Spirit,' and perished in their sin. And Demas, the companion of apostles, forsook them, 'having loved this present world,' 2 Tim. 4 : 10. The history of God's church in all ages exhibits fearful wrecks of Christian character through the power of this temptation. So potent is its malign influence that our Lord says, 'It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.'"—DR. H. HARVEY, Madison University.

**Make to yourselves friends of,** literally, *out of*, as a source or cause; it may be popularly expressed, *by means of*. The idea is, make such a use of your possessions as to secure heavenly treasures and gain you friends who,

having gone before you, will welcome you in the world to come to everlasting habitations. By means of wealth we may make to ourselves friends among the Lord's poor; by helping his servants we shall help Christ (Matt. 25 : 40) and receive the blessings of his and their friendship.

**That when ye fail,** when ye die, when your stewardship ceases. But according to the highest critical authorities this should read, *when it*, the mammon of unrighteousness, *fails*; when wealth fails you, or is exhausted, **they**, the "friends," **may receive you into everlasting habitations**, welcome you to a home in heaven. "Is there joy in heaven at thy conversion, and will there be none at thy glorification?"—BAXTER. Compare such Scripture as 1 Tim. 6 : 17, "Charge them that are rich in this world that they be not high minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate, laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life." Also Matt. 6 : 20; Luke 12 : 33. Thus may we transmute earthly possessions into heavenly treasures and make for ourselves friends who will welcome us into everlasting habitations there.

Jesus in this parable guards against two extremes: (1) Making wealth an idol. (2) Regarding it as so profane and unclean that it cannot be employed in the service of God. He shows how riches, though dangerous and fatal to many, can be made a help rather than a hindrance in our progress to heaven, and how its higher value may be transferred to the other world and be made to enrich our lives there.

"But what shall we say of its doctrine of making to ourselves heavenly friends by the mammon of unrighteousness—securing a place in the kingdom of God by the right use of worldly possessions? Are we not become legalists? Are we not fallen from grace? Have

10 tions. <sup>a</sup>He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the  
 11 least is unjust also in much. <sup>b</sup>If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who  
 12 will commit to your trust 'the true riches? And if

<sup>a</sup> ch. 19. 17; Mt. 25  
21.

<sup>b</sup> 1 Cor. 4. 7.

<sup>c</sup> ch. 12. 33; Pro. 8  
18, 19.

we not abandoned faith as the ground of justification? I answer, we are just as much legalists as the Saviour. We need not be shy of following where he leads. We have simply explained the obvious and necessary import of the parable. And so elsewhere. 'He that giveth a cup of cold water in the name of a disciple, shall not lose his reward;' and Christ's rewards are spiritual; he rewards with nothing *less* than eternal life. 'Come, ye blessed of my Father; for I was an hungered and ye gave me meat.' 'Sell all that thou hast and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven.' 'When thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, and the blind; and thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee; but thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just.' The Saviour is not careful to guard these statements. But in truth they are attended by no real difficulty. It is always understood that these works are not the ultimate ground of justification, but the fruit and evidences of a higher and holier life in the soul. We obtain heaven by our good works in so far, first, as Christ condescends to speak of rewarding the good works, which are an expression and fruit of faith in him; and secondly, because, once within the sphere of grace, he does actually reward his people according to their fidelity in his service. The Christian labors to express his love to Christ, and then flies from all his good deeds to the cross; the Saviour gathers them up, and declares that a cup of cold water, given in the name of a disciple, shall not lose its reward."—DR. A. C. KENDRICK.

It may be further remarked on this parable that it was adapted, aside from its main design, to suggest to the publicans the restitution of dishonest gains. Compare the case of Zaccheus, ch. 19 : 8. But with proper motives. The steward had remitted his overcharges from pure selfishness, with the shrewdness of a worldly man. They should

remit theirs because it was their duty, and so use what was left as to lay up treasures in heaven. Finally, the parable does not teach the Jesuitical principle that the end sanctifies the means; for however interpreted, it is the prudence which is held up to view and illustrated, and not the evil which the steward did.

10. Jesus makes an application to every one by stating a general principle. His words take the form of a proverbial expression. **He**, whoever he may be, **that is faithful**. Jesus emphasizes fidelity rather than mere prudence, for the former wisely regulates the latter. The steward was prudent in his final arrangements, but he lacked faithfulness. **In that which is least**, in the least things or in the smallest trust, whatever it may be. Worldly interests and possessions, in comparison to the spiritual and eternal, may be numbered among the least. **Is faithful also in much**, in those things of the greater importance, or in the greatest trusts, among which must be included our spiritual and eternal interests. Fidelity to God in the least is an evidence and pledge of fidelity in the greatest, but he who buries his one talent would not improve the five. It is the *principle* which is here made prominent. He who, in the small interests of this life, has been faithful according to the principles of truth and righteousness, has shown himself to be one to be faithful in the greater interests of eternity. Similar is the verdict of the judge: "As thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things," Matt. 25 : 21.

11. **If, therefore, etc.**, more exactly, *if therefore ye were not faithful*. Here commences a particular application of the principle stated in the preceding verse. **Unrighteous mammon**, or riches, so called because they are false, deceitful, fleeting, and so common an occasion of sin, in contrast to the "true riches." See on ver. 9. **The true riches**, the real and substantial; the

ye have not been faithful <sup>a</sup> in that which is another man's, who shall give you that which is your own? <sup>a</sup> ch. 19. 13-26.

13 <sup>b</sup> No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon. <sup>b</sup> Mt. 6. 24.

*Jesus reproves the Pharisees. The rich man and Lazarus.*

14 And the Pharisees also, <sup>c</sup> who were covetous, heard <sup>c</sup> ch. 20. 47; Is. 58 11; Mt. 23. 14.

spiritual and eternal; the blessings of salvation, which are not false and deceptive, unsatisfying and perishable, ch. 12:33. If we prove faithless in the small concerns of this life, who will entrust to us the immense and enduring treasures of eternity? "A king appointed one servant over his gold treasures, another over his straw; the latter's dishonesty being suspected, he was angry because the gold had not been trusted to him. The king said, 'Thou fool, if thou couldst not be trusted with straw, how can any one trust thee with gold?'"

12. The application is made personal to their own hearts. **If ye have**, etc., more exactly, *if ye were not faithful. In that which is another man's*, or simply, *another's*, such as your earthly possessions and interests, which belong to God and have been entrusted to you but for a little time. Riches and worldly property cannot be called our own ooth because they are simply entrusted to us, and also because they are constantly changing hands from generation to generation by misfortune, calamity, and death. **Who will give you . . . your own?** That blessedness which was originally man's, and which by grace is given to the righteous and becomes truly their own, becoming a part of their very selves and an unchangeable and everlasting inheritance. It is said that stewards were sometimes rewarded for their fidelity by making over to them a portion of the estate they had managed. Perhaps there may be an allusion to some such custom. They surely who manage what is entrusted to them here in the interests of heaven will receive heaven at last.

13. Final application of the parable, showing that what is required is fidelity to God—that wisdom which includes both faithfulness and prudence in the service of our heavenly Master. Our

earthly interests must be held subordinate to the interests of God and heaven, or else we fail of heaven. **No servant.** It is taken for granted that all men are servants either of God or of the world. **Can serve two masters**, be wholly devoted to them. His affections and interests would be divided. The reference is to the continued obedience of a bond servant, and to that true service which presupposes love and attachment. The masters also are supposed to have opposite interests. Hence either he would hate the one and love the other, or he would cleave to the one and despise the other. He would have really but one master; one only would receive his hearty service, while that of the other would be merely outward, with disdain or hatred. In application our Lord says directly and pointedly, **Ye cannot serve God and mammon.** See on ver. 9. Riches are here personified and treated as a master in opposition to God. No two masters can both receive single-hearted service, especially when they are so opposed as God and the world. How vain the attempt to seek your chief good both on earth and in heaven! Give up such folly and seek it only in God. Make him thy master and mammon thy servant, and use all for God. This verse contains one of those proverbial sayings of our Lord which he may have often repeated. See Matt. 6:24.

14-31. JESUS REBUKES THE PHARISEES WHO DERIDE HIM, AND SPEAKS THE PARABLE OF THE RICH MAN AND LAZARUS. The covetousness and hollow self-righteousness of the Pharisees. Recorded only by Luke. For similar or the same utterances as vers. 16-18, see Matt. 11:12, 13; 5:18; 19:9. Spoken in Perea, perhaps not far from the ford of the Jordan opposite Jericho.

14. **The Pharisees also**, as well

- 15 all these things: and they derided him. And he said unto them, Ye are they which justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God. } ch. 10. 29; 11. 39  
18. 11, 12; Mt. 23. 5.  
} Ps. 7. 9; Jer. 17. 10.  
} 1 Sam. 16. 7; Is. 55. 8, 9; Mal. 3. 15; 1 Cor. 1. 26-29; 1 Pet. 5. 5.
- 16 <sup>m</sup> The law and the prophets were until John; since } ch. 7. 29; Mt. 4. 17; 11. 12, 13.

as the disciples, heard all these things which Jesus had spoken and the low estimate he put upon wealth. Jesus had intended it for them as well as for the instruction of his disciples. **Who were covetous, lovers of money,** hoarding it and fixing their hearts upon it. Jesus had touched their darling lust, their master-sin. Avarice seems inherent in the Jewish people. Of the Jews of Palestine, Dr. Thomson says: "Everybody trades, speculates, cheats. The shepherd-boy on the mountain talks of *piastres* from morning to night; so does the muleteer on the road, the farmer in the field, the artisan in the shop, the merchant in his magazine, the pacha in his palace, the kadi in the hall of judgment, the mullah in the mosque, the monk, the priest, the bishop—money, money, money! The desire of every heart, the theme of every tongue, the end of every aim. Everything is bought and sold; each prayer has its price, each sin its tariff."—*The Land and Book*, vol. ii., ch. xxvii.

**They derided him.** They began to sneer and scoff at him, not only in looks, but also in words. The simple verb in the original means *to turn up the nose, to sneer*. It is here strengthened by being compound with a preposition, in which form it is only found in the New Testament here and in ch. 23 : 35, where it means *scoff*. It is used in the Septuagint, in Ps. 2 : 4, for the Hebrew word signifying "to mock, deride." They treated him and his words with contempt and derision. "They derided him as a poor visionary who did not understand human life, or only appeared to despise the world because, as they supposed, it was out of his reach."—DODDRIDGE.

15. Open derision demanded open rebuke. In doing this Jesus lays bare their hollow self-righteousness and their hypocrisy. It was their covetousness which led them to deride, but in so

doing they professed great sanctity, and that truth and righteousness were on their side. **Ye are they.** Pointed and emphatic, reminding the careful student of Nathan's exclamation, "Thou art the man," 2 Sam. 12 : 7. **Which justify yourselves before men,** who profess to be righteous, strict observers of the law before men, feigning that ye are so and are so regarded. Compare ch. 10 : 29; 18 : 11, 12. They "went about to establish a righteousness of their own, and had not submitted to the righteousness of God," Rom. 10 : 3. **But God knoweth your hearts** and sees your inner wickedness; you cannot justify yourselves before him. Your righteousness is outward and superficial; God sees through it, and knows your selfishness and hypocrisy, that you love the praise of men rather than the honor which comes from above. Compare 1 Sam. 16 : 7; Ps. 7 : 10.

**For** introduces the reason for God's abhorrence of the Pharisaic character, which is implied in the first part of this verse. **Highly esteemed among men,** that which is lofty among men, loud professions and pompous ceremonies, this show of sanctity, self-exaltation, and self-justification; all of which robs God of his glory and gives it to self. **Is abomination in the sight of God,** or *before God*, ch. 15 : 18. A strong expression. *A stench before God*; are utterly offensive and abhorrent to God, Isa. 1 : 13-15. Compare ch. 18 : 14. So also riches, upon which they placed their avaricious hearts, were, as an idol, abhorred of God.

16. Jesus announces that a new dispensation is dawning upon them. **The law and the prophets,** the old dispensation. The whole testimony under the old dispensation is sometimes expressed more fully by "law of Moses, and the prophets, and the psalms," ch. 24 : 44. **Were until John,** continued until John the Baptist appeared. Com-

that time <sup>a</sup> the kingdom of God is preached, and <sup>o</sup> every man presseth into it. <sup>p</sup> And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail.

- 18 <sup>q</sup> Whosoever putteth away his wife, and marrieth another, committeth adultery: and whosoever marrieth her that is put away from *her* husband committeth adultery.

<sup>a</sup> Mt. 3. 2.

<sup>o</sup> John 11. 48; 12. 19

<sup>p</sup> ch. 21. 33; Ps. 102

26, 27; Is. 40. 8

51. 6; Mt. 5. 18,

1 Pet. 1. 25.

<sup>q</sup> Mt. 5. 22; 19. 9;

Mk. 10. 11; 1

Cor. 7. 10, 11.

pare Matt. 11 : 13. **Since that time**, or *from that time*, when John appeared, **the kingdom of God**, the Messiah's kingdom, the dispensation of the gospel, **is preached**, publicly and plainly announced. **Every man presseth into it**, or is pressing into it, essaying to do it or doing it. This does not refer, as Stier supposes, to the violent opposition of the Pharisees against the kingdom of God, but to the earnestness of common people and of publicans and sinners in seeking the proffered blessings of the gospel. Thousands flocked to John's baptism (Matt. 3 : 5, 6), and afterward the disciples of Jesus baptized more than John, John 4 : 1, 2. The common people in crowds attended our Saviour's ministry and heard him gladly. Perhaps also the manner of entering is the principal point. Every one that entereth *presseth into it* with eagerness and with holy violence, Matt. 11 : 12. Compare ch. 13 : 24.

17. But though a new dispensation is being ushered in, yet its design is not to destroy the law, but to fulfil it, Matt. 5 : 17. **Heaven and earth to pass**, Gen. 1 : 1; 2 : 1. The visible creation will pass away (2 Pet. 3 : 11-13), but God's word endureth for ever, 1 Pet. 1 : 25. **One tittle**. In Matt. 5 : 18, "one jot or tittle." *Tittle* refers to the little points, turns, or strokes by which one letter differs from another. The omission of a single letter or a change in similar-looking letters would sometimes greatly alter the sense. The expression means the *smallest portion*. **To fail**, or *to fall*, to fail of its purpose and fulfilment or to be set aside as faulty. The gospel does not destroy the law, but confirms it, Rom. 3 : 31.

18. Jesus gives an example, drawn from the seventh commandment, to show how, under the gospel, the deep spiritual meaning of the law is brought to light and enforced. The reason for adducing this particular example was probably the loose practice of the Phar-

isees in regard to divorces. According to the Mosaic law, the wife could not divorce the husband, but only the husband the wife. Moses had permitted divorce (Deut. 24 : 1, 2) in such a way as to restrain a bad practice which had gone far to annul the original law of marriage, and which still prevails among the Arabs, who by a word may dissolve the marriage tie. He allowed the wife to be divorced only on account of "some uncleanness," and only by a legal document—"a bill of divorcement." Thus Moses did not command to divorce, but rather placed a restriction on the prevailing custom. In the days of our Saviour two opposite interpretations of this law prevailed among the Jews. Rabbi Schammai and his disciples taught that, according to Moses, adultery was the only allowable ground of divorcement, while Hillel and his disciples taught that a wife might be put away for anything that amounted to uncleanness in the eyes of the husband, and indeed for anything displeasing to him in appearance, manner, or dress. Josephus thus loosely states the law (*Jewish Antiq.* iv. 8, 23): "He that desires to be divorced from his wife from any cause whatsoever—and many such causes happen among men—let him in writing give assurance that he will never use her as his wife any more; for by these means she may be at liberty to marry another husband, although before this bill of divorce was given she is not permitted so to do."

**Whosoever putteth away his wife**. As if Jesus had said, "As, for example, in regard to your disorderly divorces, I say to you that *whosoever putteth away*," etc. In the strongest language our Saviour affirms the binding obligation of the marriage relation, and that the husband who is guilty of breaking it or the man who sanctions it by marrying her thus put away commits adultery. In Matt. 5 : 32 one exception to the rule is given, "save for

19 There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every

the cause of fornication." Adultery is an actual breaking of the marriage tie. Hence he who puts away his wife and marries another is guilty of it; and he that marries her thus put away becomes a partaker, and sanctions an unlawful sundering of the marriage relation. Compare 1 Cor. 7 : 11, where Paul advises the wife that has departed from her husband either to remain unmarried or to be reconciled to her husband.

19-31. THE PARABLE OF THE RICH MAN AND LAZARUS. This is the most awful of our Saviour's parables, and so graphic and forcible that it has the appearance of history. Beginning in time, it is carried into the future world, and exhibits the fearful results of worldliness, impenitence and unbelief. It is closely connected with what precedes. To the covetous Pharisees, Jesus presents a luxurious worldling who made the world his all, in contrast to one who, having nothing of the world, made God his all. He struck a blow both at their covetousness and also at their boasting dependence on Abraham as their father, and at the same time reaffirms the sufficiency of Moses and the prophets for guiding the Jews of that time to him and salvation. It also supplements the parable of the unjust steward, in that it presents the condition, in the future state, of one who did not, by a proper use of this life, make to himself friends of the mammon of unrighteousness.

It has been much discussed whether this be a parable or a history. It matters little so far as the teaching of the passage is concerned; for parables were designed to present and illustrate truth, not falsehood. It seems to me, however, most natural to regard it as a parable, and that Jesus here uses, as in other cases, human experience and certain human conceptions, so far as they could be safely used, to illustrate and enforce spiritual truth. The objection that it is narrated like a history may be brought with equal force against the parable of the prodigal son and several others recorded by Luke. That it is not called a parable by Luke may also be

said of the parables of the good Samaritan, prodigal son, and unjust steward. That it was founded on actual facts is another question. Jesus, who was acquainted with the realm of death as well as of life, had abundant resources from which to draw, and had no necessity to resort to pure fiction. We may well conclude that this and all his parables had been realized in the natural world or in human experience.

19. **There was.** *And there was.* The *and* connects with what precedes, being a continuation of his answer to the scoff of the Pharisees. **A certain rich man.** No name is given, and wisely too, for many there had been and many there were just like him. These were doubtless found not only among Pharisees, but also among Sadducees, who were the wealthier class among the Jews. Compare Ps. 73 : 4-9. *Dives*, a Latin word meaning *rich*, is often applied to him, and is so used in Jerome's Latin version, the Vulgate. But it is better not to name where inspiration has not named. By so doing there may be danger of limiting its application. The designation the *rich man* points at once to one rich in this world alone, who trusts in it, gives his whole heart to it, and seeks in it his highest enjoyment. It is noticeable that no crime is alleged against him. He was no miser, hoarding up his treasures. Nor is it intimated that he had acquired his wealth by unlawful means or that he was guilty of extortion or oppression. He is presented simply as a rich man who **made** the world his portion and used his wealth for his own gratification.

**Which was clothed.** This states what he was accustomed to do, *who was wont to clothe himself in purple and fine linen.* Purple was an expensive color, and here the celebrated Tyrian purple is probably meant, which was obtained from a rare shell-fish about Tyre, amounting to only about a drop in each animal. Robes or outer garments of purple were worn by kings and persons of princely wealth, Judg. 8 : 26; Jer. 10 : 9; Ezek. 27 : 7. Thus Mordecai and Daniel were arrayed in

20 day: and there was a certain beggar named Lazarus,  
21 which was laid at his gate, full of sores, and desiring  
to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich

purple, Esth. 8 : 15; Dan. 5 : 29 ("scarlet," rather "purple"). The precious art and article are lost. *The fine linen.* This refers to the fabric of probably the inner garment. It was extremely expensive, and entered into the commerce of Tyre and Egypt, 2 Chron. 2 : 11; Ezek. 27 : 7, 16. The dresses of the Levite choir in the temple (2 Chron. 5 : 12), the loose upper garment worn by kings over the close-fitting tunic (1 Chron. 15 : 27), and the veil of the temple, were made of it, 2 Chron. 3 : 14. The bandages of the Egyptian mummies were of this material, as Herodotus affirms; and microscopic examinations of late years verify his statement. See Rev. 18 : 12; 19 : 8. Thus the raiment of the rich man was of the finest and costliest material.

**Fared sumptuously, enjoyed himself merrily and sumptuously,** in merriment and feasting. And this was habitual, every day. Compare Amos 6 : 4-6.

20. Contrasted with this rich man who lived so luxuriously is a beggar, who, in addition to his extreme poverty, was afflicted with a loathsome disease, making him a most pitiable object. **A certain beggar, or poor man.** The word in the original, literally means *one who crouches*, hence a beggar or poor man. It is found thirty-four times in the New Testament, and translated *poor* in every instance except twice, in this parable and in Gal. 4 : 9, where it is translated *beggarly*. The general idea is that of one in want, without practicing beggary. We have no evidence that Lazarus was a beggar habitually, but only one when loathsome disease was added to his poverty. In his dying condition the parable presents him, not only as a *poor* man, but also as a *beggar*, and it is fitting so to translate it.

**Named Lazarus.** The only name occurring in Christ's parables. Names are introduced by Ezekiel into parabolic discourse, Ezek. 23 : 4. The name Lazarus is indeed significant in the parable, whether we take it to mean *the helpless*, with Olshausen and Lange,

or *God is his help*, with Lightfoot and Meyer. Both were indeed true of him.

**Was laid at his gate.** Literally, the original does not imply a custom, that he was habitually laid at the gate of the rich man, as interpreted by some, but simply that he *had been laid* there on a certain occasion, and remaining there died in that situation. Whether he had been laid there before is not stated. He seems to have been placed there by friends to excite the compassion of this rich man. The *gate* was the deep arch under which the gate opened, the arched gateway of a large and magnificent mansion. **Full of sores, ulcerated,** covered with ulcers. The gate of the rich, then as now, was the resort of beggars in the East. So the lame man at the gate of the temple, Acts 3 : 2. "It is still," says a modern traveller, "a common custom throughout the East—and I observed it this morning in the streets of Jerusalem—to lay a cripple or a leper at the door of some wealthy man or to place him in a public thoroughfare stretched upon his mat or wooden litter. The blind, too, line the approaches of the city, and cry out with a loud voice to the passers-by for mercy and for charity."—DR. A. NEVIN. The poor man must have been seen and known by the rich man, for he afterward recognized him.

21. **And desiring,** earnestly desiring or longing, **to be fed with the crumbs,** scraps or fragments, which fell from the rich man's table. Whether he received these crumbs is not definitely stated. Some expositors hold that he did not. Others think that he did, and that it is implied in the language here used. Upon this I remark: (1) The expression in the original does not necessarily mean that he was refused the crumbs. (2) It is not inconsistent with the occasional use of the verb translated *desiring* to take the expression to mean *desiring* and *glad* to be fed, etc. (3) He was evidently expecting the crumbs or fragments, in being laid there. (4) The presence of the dogs suggests that he may have shared with them in the fragments from the

man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his 22 sores. And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom. <sup>r</sup> Heb. 1. 14.

table. (5) The way the next clause is introduced, "Moreover," etc., indicates that this might have been the case. (6) It is not implied that the rich man was miserly and meanly avaricious. Such a supposition weakens the force of the parable. The representation appears to be of one who refused neither to let him remain at his gate nor to feed upon the scraps from his table, but who gave him no special attention and took no particular interest in his welfare. This he should have done, according to the law of Moses, Deut. 15 : 7, 8.

Moreover, indicating something more of his miserable condition different from what precedes: *But also, or yea, even*, such was his miserable and abandoned condition that **the dogs came and licked his sores**, which lay uncovered. Thus shut out from human society, he craved only the food of the lower animals, and his ulcers, receiving no attention from man, were licked by the dogs. The picture of this poor man's misery is now complete. This last representation may be conceived of as presenting either the heightening of the pain by the licking of the sores, or his misery, so deep that even the dogs pitied him, and licked his sores as they do their own. The latter is the more common view, and more consistent with the fact of the mollifying effect of the smooth tongue of the dog. "Treated by men contemptuously as little better than a dog, and by dogs compassionately as one of themselves."

22. This verse presents the transition from this world to another. **And it came to pass.** How long after the event just narrated is not indicated. The narrative seems, however, to imply that it was soon after; and the strictest interpretation of the two preceding verses points to the death of Lazarus while lying at the rich man's gate. His case is represented as an extreme one when placed there. He may have lain under the arched gateway, by permission of the rich man, for several days. It is not necessary to suppose that he died of starvation. The beg-

gar died. Nothing is said of his burial, for that was of no moment in comparison to what immediately occurred to his soul at death. Besides, his burial was so obscure as to deserve no mention, especially in contrast to that of the rich man. **Was carried**, the reference, of course, is to his soul. **Angels.** See on ch. 1 : 11. One would have been sufficient, but many gladly share the honor. Angels are ministering spirits, Heb. 1 : 14. What a contrast to the treatment he had received on earth! The Jews also held that the souls of the righteous were borne by angels into Paradise. Jesus had represented the rejoicing of heaven over a repenting sinner, ch. 15 : 10; now we have him welcomed and attended by angels in the other world.

**Abraham's bosom.** The righteous dead are not homeless between death and the resurrection, Phil. 1 : 23. The Jewish rabbis taught that Abraham was in Paradise, ready to welcome the souls of the righteous at death to his fellowship. Jesus endorses the doctrine as substantially correct. *Abraham's bosom* was a name given to that part of the unseen world, or place of departed spirits, where the patriarchs and the righteous were in happiness. It is an expression derived from the practice of reclining on couches at meals. As each leaned upon his left arm, his friend next below would be described as lying in his bosom, and he who lay nearest to the head or master of the feast occupied a position of greatest honor, John 1 : 18; 13 : 23. To lie in Abraham's bosom, therefore, denoted a condition after death of happiness and rest and a position of honor and intimate nearness and association "with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of God," Matt. 8 : 11. Here no personal pre-eminence appears to be meant. It is the place of the righteous dead, where was Abraham, the father of the faithful. It seems to be about equivalent to Paradise, ch. 23 : 43. But Abraham's bosom, not Paradise, is mentioned here, both to suggest the striking contrast to the daily feasting and luxu-

- 23 <sup>•</sup>The rich man also died, and was buried. And in <sup>•</sup>hell he lifted up his eyes, <sup>•</sup>being in torments, <sup>•</sup>and seeth
- 24 Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and <sup>•</sup>cool my tongue; for I <sup>•</sup>am tormented in this flame. But Abraham said, Son, <sup>•</sup>re-

<sup>•</sup>Ps. 49. 6-12, 16-19; Ecc. 3. 20  
5. 13-16.  
<sup>•</sup>Rev. 14. 11.  
<sup>•</sup>Mt. 8. 11, 12.  
<sup>•</sup>Zec. 14. 12.  
<sup>•</sup>Is. 66. 24; Mk. 9. 43-48.  
<sup>•</sup>ch. 6. 24; Job 21. 13; Ps. 17. 14.

rious living of the rich man on earth (ver. 19), and also to prepare the way to the dialogue introduced between Abraham and the rich man. See Remarks 24, 25, at the end of the chapter.

That Lazarus should die first is a necessary conception of the parable, in order that he may be in the future world in advance of the rich man, and an occupant of the abodes of bliss when the latter arrives.

**The rich man also died.** Wealth could not ward off the last enemy. Death is no respecter of persons, Eccl. 8 : 8. How soon after is not stated. The most natural impression from the parable is that it was not long after. **And was buried.** His *funeral rites and burial* were attended to with great solemnity and pomp. The fact is stated to show that he had a funeral according to his condition in life, pompous and expensive, purple and linen, ceremonies and lamentations and a tomb—all that wealth and worldly friends could give. This was the end of his "good things," ver. 25. And now he is soon forgotten. He had no angels to bear him to Paradise, yet perhaps evil spirits may have borne him to the place of torment.

23. **In hell**, not the place of the final punishment of the wicked, which is expressed by another word (see on ch. 12 : 5), but the abode of departed or disembodied spirits. The word in the original is *Hades*, the *unseen world*, or the *underworld*. See on ch. 10 : 15. There is a disposition among some to limit the use of Hades in the New Testament to the place of punishment and make it almost equivalent to hell. This seems somewhat forced. There is nothing to be gained by so doing. **Being in torment**, showing that he was in that part of the unseen world where the disembodied spirits of the wicked are confined. This is opposed to Abraham's bosom, ver. 22. **He lifted up his eyes.** The rich man is conceived

of as being in the abyss, in the lower region of Hades, and looking up toward paradise. **Afar off**, in the distance. A bridgeless gulf between, ver. 26. **In his bosom**, reclining in honor at the banquet of bliss. This portion of the parable would seem to indicate that the rich man died soon after Lazarus. The recognition of individuals in the other world is brought incidentally to view.

24. **Father Abraham**, etc. The rich man was a Jew, but a pious ancestry and a connection with God's chosen people were of no avail to him now. We have here the solitary example in Scripture of prayer to a departed saint, and with what poor success! **Have mercy on me**, take pity on me. On earth he had neglected to make to himself friends of the mammon of unrighteousness (ver. 9), and now he has no one to welcome him into the everlasting habitations. He is now the beggar, and, strange to say, he now asks a favor of that poor man who had lain at his gate.

**Send Lazarus**, not because he would treat him as a servant, for he was now painfully sensible how infinitely exalted was Lazarus' position above his own, but because he recognized him as one who had lain at his gate, and he hoped that the remembrance of this would induce Lazarus to do him a favor. His cry was that of misery, craving even the smallest relief. **Dip the tip**, the end, the extreme point, of **his finger**. What a change a few hours or days have made! Then Lazarus glad to receive a crumb of bread; now the rich man imploring a drop of water. The latter asks not for the removal of his sufferings, for he knows that is impossible, but only for a slight alleviation. **Cool my tongue**, refresh by cooling it. **Tormented**, better, *in anguish in this flame*. We have here material and physical imagery of soul-misery. How far this con-

member that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; <sup>7</sup>but now <sup>7</sup>Job 3. 17-19; Ac 14. 22; Rev. 7. 14  
 26 he is comforted, and thou art tormented. And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: <sup>8</sup>so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that *would*  
 27 come from thence. Then he said, I pray thee there-

sisted of the stings of conscience, feelings of remorse, the sad memories of the guilty past, and of unrestricted human passions, and how far produced by some external form of sufferings, we know not. The form of expression seems to indicate that it was not subjective or inner torment alone.

25. **Abraham said.** The answer is frank, but not severe; exact, but not unkind; calm, fatherly, and without a word of reproach, but solemn and without affected compassion. **Son**, or *child*. He answers in great kindness. He was addressed as *Father Abraham*; in reply he calls him *son*. One was just as much a son as the other was a father, but only in the flesh. So Joshua called the rebellious Achan son, Josh. 7 : 19. **Remember.** What a fearful word at such a time! Memory will indeed be a worm that never dies, Prov. 5 : 12, 13. The rich man needed only to be reminded of the past to understand the reason of his present misery. **That thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things.** The expression is a strong one, meaning *receivedst in full thy good things*. He had in life exhausted his store of happiness; he had no more claim on the good things which were for him, and which *he* made the sole object of life. He had received them in full, and now nothing but misery remained to his lot. A similar expression is found in Matt. 6 : 2. He had made the world his portion and had received his earthly reward, he had neglected his soul and made no preparation for eternity, and now he suffers the consequences.

**Likewise Lazarus evil things.** Notice that Abraham does not say *his* evil things. Lazarus did not make them for himself, nor did they result from his own agency. He had chosen God for his portion and made provision for eternity, but in so doing a life of suffering fell to his lot. God in love

chastened him and brought him up through great sufferings into everlasting habitations. He, too, had received in full *the evil things* through which God in his wise providence had caused him to pass, and now the evils and sufferings are ended. Lazarus is **comforted** and the rich man is **tormented**. Interference is not permitted in either case. According to the oldest and best manuscripts, this should read, *but now here he is comforted*, etc.

26. Having shown the rich man that he has no claim to happiness, and that misery is the necessary and irrevocable consequence of his past life, Abraham points out another barrier to the granting of his request. **Besides all this.** In addition to all these things, it is literally impossible. **Between us and you.** *You* is the plural in the original, thus including the others who were with the rich man in torment. **A great gulf fixed**, a vast, yawning, and impassable chasm. This is directly opposed to the papal doctrine of purgatory. The unchangeable and unalterable condition of things is expressed by the word **fixed**, *set fast*, made firm.

**So that** expresses design, *in order that*, or simply *that*, giving the purpose of the gulf being fixed between them. **That they who would pass from hence to you**, from motives of compassion. **That would come from thence**, to escape torment. What a vivid picture of the unchangeable state after death! Rev. 22 : 11.

27. Having failed in his prayer for himself, he turns from his own hopeless condition and prays for his father's family. He remembers his brethren and the example he had set them, and the thought that they should come to that place of torment through his influence added pangs to his misery. Their presence and their reproaches would increase his torment. It may have also been, in part, the expression

fore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house: for I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment. Abraham saith unto him, <sup>a</sup>They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent. And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, <sup>b</sup>neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.

<sup>a</sup> Deu. 30. 11-15, 19  
Ps. 19. 7-11; Is.  
8. 20; 34. 16; John  
5. 39-47; Ac. 15.  
21; 17. 11, 12.

<sup>b</sup> John 11. 43-53;  
12. 10, 11; Ac. 26.  
28.

of natural sympathy, for even this may contribute to future misery. **My father's house.** Not that his father was living, but there existed a paternal estate and a family of five brethren, who lived on or near it. This passage is directly opposed to the views of those who hold that the demons of the New Testament were the departed spirits of wicked men. The rich man is confined in his place of torment, and cannot himself go to his father's house. And instead of desiring to make his brethren worse than they already were, he would, if possible, warn them, and thus prevent them from coming to that place of misery.

28. **Five brethren.** Perhaps five Pharisees, who already were following in the footsteps of the departed brother. Nothing can be inferred regarding their family relations, whether married or unmarried. That does not come within the scope of the parable. **Testify**, an emphatic verb in the original. *Testify fully, earnestly*, by admonitions and warnings. **Lest they also come**, that they may not also come. As if he would not himself have come thither if he had only had such clear testimony from the other world. Underlying this was a certain self-justification and a finding fault with God and his method of revealing truth and warning men. It is worthy of notice that both the rich man and Abraham regard the return of Lazarus to earth as possible. No impassable gulf lay between him and earth. Yet there is nothing in this passage to lead us to conclude that the spirits of the righteous dead do visit their former abodes on earth.

29. The answer of Abraham is brief, positive, and almost stern. **They have Moses and the prophets**, the Old Testament Scriptures. They have teach-

ing and warning sufficient, but they will not hear, believe, and obey. **Let them hear them.** *Hear* is often used in Scripture in the sense of *obey*. Let them take heed and follow the teachings of Moses and the prophets, and thus secure the divine favor and escape the fearful doom that awaits them. Moses and the prophets pointed to Christ. We have here one of the many testimonies of Christ, including that of Abraham from the heavenly world, that the Old Testament Scriptures are the word of God.

30. But this miserable creature thinks that he knows his brethren better than Abraham does; he still undervalues God's word, but at the same time implies that he had not repented, and therefore his doom was a righteous one. **Nay**, say not so, **father Abraham**, they will perhaps slight God's word, as I foolishly did. **If one went unto them from the dead, they will at once hear and repent.** Like many of the wicked on earth, he had false views of repentance, supposing that something sudden and miraculous would produce it. But alarms, apparitions, and miracles cannot convert.

31. The answer of Abraham is positive and final. The rich man had affirmed, "They will repent;" Abraham replies that they will not even be **persuaded**. The former had said, "If one went to them from the dead," but the latter declared, "Not though one **rose** from the dead." You think they would repent if one went to them from the dead, but I tell you that the testimony of Moses and the prophets is stronger and more effective—so much so that if they will not hear and obey them, they would not be even persuaded to believe though one should rise from the dead, Isa. 8 : 19, 20; John 5 : 45.

Not only must the reason and judgment be convinced, but there must be a proper state of heart to receive the truth. The wicked can always find some pretext to resist the truth and continue in sin even in the face of the greatest miracles. Jesus had raised the dead—the daughter of Jairus and the widow's son—yet the scribes and Pharisees were bent on his destruction. A Lazarus was called from the grave; but while they did not deny the miracle, they would not believe Christ, and even sought to put Lazarus to death, John 11 : 44-46; 12 : 10. Jesus also afterward rose from the dead, yet the Jewish leaders still rejected him. The truth of God brought to the heart by the Holy Spirit, who convicts of sin (John 16 : 8, 9), is necessary to true repentance; and if these fail, vain will be the efforts of men, living or dead, however miraculous.

The following just remarks on the bearing of this parable on doctrines are from *The State of Men after Death*, by A. Hovey, D. D.

“(1) The parables of Christ never violate the order and course of nature, never introduce foreign elements into any domain of existence. In other words, both the characters and events of every parable uttered by Christ—unless this be an exception—will be found natural—that is to say, consistent with the actual conditions of being from which the imagery of the parable is drawn. If, then, we call our Saviour's account of the rich man and Lazarus a parable, and consent to interpret it according to the uniform analogy of his teaching in other instances by parables, we have this lesson from him, to wit: That God will treat certain parties not here named as he treats the prosperous unbeliever and the afflicted believer, when removed from the present world; that the *normal* conditions of bad and good men after physical death are used to shadow forth the relations of two classes of men to the kingdom of Christ on earth. Hence it matters not, so far as its bearing upon the state of the departed is concerned, whether the passage in question be interpreted as a narrative or a parable; for in either case its picture of *their condition* must be honored as one which accords with substantial truth.

“(2) All the parables of Christ—unless this one is an exception—employ well known characters, customs, or events to illustrate spiritual things. . . . If, then, the account of Dives and Lazarus be a parable, we must either hold that Christ here deviated most strangely from his otherwise uniform and really perfect method of teaching by parables, or else that the conscious misery of the wicked after death was a truth well known to the Pharisees. To call the passage a parable is to make Christ assume the doctrine of conscious existence immediately after death, both for the evil and the good, as a doctrine at once true and familiar to his hearers. And so in fact it was, as Josephus distinctly avers.

“(3) The parables of Christ are always—unless this be an exception—constructed of such elements, be they characters or events, as not only suggest, but also *commend*, the lessons contained in them. They are so fit, appropriate, and natural in their own sphere as to justify to some degree certain parallel events in a different sphere. . . .

“Whether, then, our Saviour's account of the rich man and Lazarus be a parable or not, it affords decisive evidence of the misery of the lost in Hades. Indeed, I am unable to conceive of more conclusive evidence. But the only really tenable exposition of the Saviour's discourse is the obvious one that he presents in brief the history of two supposed persons as samples of the way in which all who are like them will be treated, the prosperous unbeliever of this life sinking into misery at its close, and the afflicted believer passing at once from death into blessedness. Thus interpreted, the lesson is indeed a tremendous one, but as an honest man I cannot possibly give it any other interpretation. Nor can I believe that the merciful Redeemer purposely exaggerated the difference between the state of the lost and the state of the saved after death. . . . In these days of apology for evil-doing the language of Christ seems fearfully bold and plain, but something in the secret places of the soul responds to its truth, and warns the sinner at times to flee from the wrath to come.”

## REMARKS.

1. Jesus condemns all fraudulent dealings, however shrewdly or wisely done. He speaks of an "unjust steward" who "wasted" his master's goods, vers. 1, 8; ch. 11 : 39; Jer. 4 : 22; 1 Cor. 4 : 2; 6 : 9, 10.

2. They who are only wise in this world will prove bankrupts in the world to come. Having wasted their Lord's goods, they will have there no alternative but to suffer the terrible consequences, vers. 1-9; ch. 12 : 21; Eccl. 9 : 10; Mark 8 : 36, 37; 1 Cor. 3 : 18; James 5 : 1-3.

3. Riches and all our other blessings come from God, and are entrusted to us as stewards; and for the use of them we must give an account, vers. 1-9; ch. 19 : 12-25.

4. What a humiliating contrast does Jesus present between the wisdom of worldly men in respect to the trifles of this world and that of his disciples in the vastly more weighty matters of eternity! ver. 8.

5. The wisdom of worldly men in their comparatively trifling concerns should excite a holy emulation in the children of light, ver. 8; John 12 : 36; Eph. 5 : 8, 14-16.

6. The Christian belongs to Christ. All his powers and activities should be used in his service and to his glory, vers. 1-9; 1 Cor. 6 : 20; 7 : 23; 1 Pet. 4 : 10.

7. The Christian use of riches to the glory of God and the good of men has its special reward in heaven, ver. 9; Matt. 6 : 19-21; 1 Tim. 6 : 17-19; 1 Cor. 7 : 31; Mark 9 : 41; Heb. 6 : 10.

8. A consecrated and unselfish life is continually expanding and enriching the soul, and influences that life in heaven, vers. 9, 10; ch. 19 : 16-19.

9. A Christian should so use his talents and blessings for Christ that when he enters another world he may be welcomed by those whom he has led to Jesus or helped on their spiritual journey, ver. 9; 1 Thess. 2 : 19, 20.

10. He who faithfully discharges his duties in life, however humble they may be, will be honored of God. His faithfulness may be great, though his trust may be small, ver. 10; ch. 21 : 23; Mark 9 : 41.

11. We must be honest toward God

here if we would be happy hereafter. If we rob him of what he gives us on earth, he will not bestow upon us the riches of heaven, vers. 11, 12; ch. 19 : 20-24.

12. Sinners, by their unfaithfulness, deprive themselves of their own birthright, ver. 12; Heb. 12 : 16, 17.

13. It is impossible to have two objects of supreme good at once. If a man permits riches, or any other object, to take the place of God in his heart, he becomes an idolater, ver. 13; Rom. 6 : 16-23.

14. Wicked men hate the light because their deeds are evil, and when reproved find it easier to resort to ridicule than to vindicate their conduct. Mockery is the last resort when arguments fail, ver. 14; Prov. 1 : 22, 26; 2 Pet. 3 : 3.

15. Nothing less than justification by faith in Christ and a heart renewed by the Holy Spirit will meet the divine requirement and receive the approbation of God, ver. 15; Jer. 17 : 10; Ps. 10 : 3; Rom. 5 : 1; Heb. 12 : 14.

16. Gospel-preaching began with John, ver. 16; Mark 1 : 1.

17. Christ's mission was in harmony with the old dispensation. He did not lessen, but by the diffusion of greater light increased, moral obligation. He "magnified the law and made it honorable," and he gives all moral requirements a practical efficacy over the hearts and lives of men by leading them to love and obey them, ver. 17; Isa. 42 : 21; Col. 2 : 14; Rom. 3 : 31; Heb. 10 : 16.

18. Marriage, not celibacy, and the union in heart as well as in flesh, and not divorce, received Christ's sanction, ver. 18; John 2 : 1; 1 Tim. 4 : 3; Heb. 13 : 4.

19. Riches are not in themselves an evil, but they too often become a snare and an idol to the heart, an object of trust and love, ver. 19; Ps. 62 : 10; 1 Kings 3 : 13; Jer. 9 : 23; Col. 3 : 5.

20. Neither is poverty in itself a good, but in the hands of God it often becomes a means of leading the soul to the highest good and a heavenly inheritance, ver. 20; Gen. 1 : 31; Ps. 49 : 2; Prov. 22 : 2; Zeph. 3 : 12; 2 Cor. 6 : 10; 8 : 2, 9; James 2 : 5.

21. Let us not envy the condition of the rich; neither let us despise the

poor nor desire poverty, vers. 19-21; Prov. 30 : 8; Ps. 73 : 12-20.

22. Have we this world's goods? Let us use them to the glory of God and the good of others. Are we poor? Let us be contented and submissive to the divine will, and mainly anxious for the glory and bliss of heaven, vers. 19-21; Matt. 6 : 33; 1 Cor. 7 : 31; James 2 : 5.

23. The soul does not die with the body, vers. 22, 23; ch. 20 : 34-38; Eccl. 12 : 7.

24. Between death and the resurrection the soul is not asleep, but in a conscious state of existence, vers. 22-25.

Jesus represents the rich man and Lazarus as conscious immediately after death; the one comforted, the other tormented. If it be a parable, the representations of blessedness on the one hand and misery on the other, it cannot be regarded as mere drapery without special significance. And besides, if the departed spirits are unconscious, then (a conclusion which we cannot harbor a moment) Jesus spake a parable in which are represented positive untruths, and which is left on record in such a way that it naturally impresses the mind with error. That the rich man is represented as suffering bodily pain militates nothing against the doctrine of a conscious existence after death, since, if it proved anything, it would tend to show that departed spirits are not altogether without some kind of bodily organization. But even this last conclusion is by no means legitimate, because it was necessary for Jesus to use physical symbols in order to give vividness to the representation, and to deeply impress the mind with the misery experienced. Here, as elsewhere, the sufferings of disembodied spirits are metaphorically represented by bodily pain. The conscious existence of the soul after death is also taught in Job 19 : 26 (correctly translated, "without my flesh shall I see God.") Compare ch. 9 : 30; Isa. 14 : 9-12; 2 Cor. 5 : 8; Phil. 1 : 24; Rev. 6 : 9. See also *Christian Review*, April, 1862; *The Righteous Dead*, by the author.

25. There is an intermediate place as well as state of departed spirits between death and the resurrection. The latter, however, is the more important; for

whatever the separation of the righteous and the wicked in space, it will be infinitely greater in character and destiny, vers. 24-26.

Space is not confined to this world or to this life. Like God, it is everywhere and eternal, and sustains relations both to the physical and the spiritual world. Wherever space is, there may be found portions of it which we may call, for want of a better term, locality. We cannot so much as conceive our existence here or hereafter apart from locality, or how departed spirits can any more than God himself be nowhere. The righteous dead must be somewhere, and the only question is, Are they in some one locality, or are they changing their locality? Have they or have they not some definite place allotted to them? Reasoning analogically, we should suppose that they existed in some place adapted to them. God in creation has adapted places to beings and beings to places. The water, the ground, and the air have their animals, and the soul has now its abode in the body and with it resides upon earth. May we not naturally suppose that God has formed some place fitted for departed spirits, and that, as we are now confined to earth, which is peculiarly fitted for the union of soul and body in our present state, so, after death, disembodied spirits are confined to some region peculiarly adapted to their separate existence? It is, moreover, repulsive to think that departed spirits have no definite abode, that they are to wander through the trackless regions of space. May we not reasonably expect that the love of home, of abode, so natural to the soul, will be satisfied in the case of the righteous dead while they await the resurrection? That this expectation is to be realized is confirmed by revelation. The Bible, we think, furnishes reasons for believing that the righteous dead are in some locality. Even Judas went to "his own place;" equally, we might argue, the righteous will go to their place. So far as they are referred to, either in the Old or New Testament, they are in some way connected with place. Neither can we find any intimations that they will be wandering or without a definite residence. Whether they are described as being gathered to their fathers, or as go-

ing to Sheol, or joining the assembly of the dead, or descending into Hades, or being in Abraham's bosom, or entering Paradise, or being present with the Lord, the language and connection naturally carry along with them the idea of locality. That this was the impression made on the Jewish mind and on the first readers of the New Testament there can be but little doubt.

Of the exact locality of Hades or its extent we can definitely learn but little from Scripture. God in his word uses the language of men. He uses *Sheol* (Hebrew) and Hades as terms generally understood as designating the place of departed spirits, yet he is not responsible for all that superstition and carnal conceptions may include in those terms, but only for those conceptions necessarily included in their use, or which he sees fit to reveal in connection with them. That they do not refer to a region under our earth (as the translation *underworld* might suggest) is evident, since the earth is constantly changing its position, and that which is beneath us at one time is above us at another; but their use shows that they refer to a region somewhere. In a certain sense the whole of Hades may be said to be in the presence of God (Ps. 139 : 8), and even the wicked dead under his care. They are certainly under his charge, though prisoners of despair.

That Abraham's bosom, or Paradise, is not only separated from that fearful abyss where the wicked are confined, but distant from it, accords with the fact that the rich man saw "Abraham afar off." The language of Paul in 2 Cor. 12 : 1-4 points to Paradise as distinct from the third heaven—the immediate presence of God—yet closely connected with it. The most natural interpretation is that Paul speaks of two different revelations and two distinct localities. He speaks of being "caught up, or away, *into* Paradise," and being "caught up, or away, *unto* the third heaven," the conception placing the latter higher than the former. The similarities and dissimilarities are such as might be expected in the relation of events taking place in two distinct yet closely connected localities. If, then, the abode of the righteous dead is closely connected with the place of God's immediate presence, into which the

risen and glorified righteous will at last enter, we can conceive how Christ may be with his people after death, and how they can enjoy his special presence and care. Indeed, may it not be part of his work to superintend and care for those souls who have been redeemed by his precious blood? 2 Tim. 1 : 12. Compare John 17 : 24; Phil. 1 : 23; 2 Cor. 5 : 6-8; Acts 7 : 59; 1 Thess. 4 : 14; Rev. 1 : 18.

26. The departed saint enters Paradise not as a stranger nor alone. Angels guide his way and introduce him into the society of the blessed, ver. 22.

27. We shall know each other in another world, vers. 23-25; ch. 9 : 30, 32.

28. Prayers are not to be made to departed saints, vers. 24-29; Rev. 22 : 8, 9.

29. Memory will prove an instrument of joy to the righteous, but of torment to the wicked, in the world to come, ver. 25; Prov. 5 : 12; Rev. 5 : 9.

30. The character and destiny of souls are irrevocably fixed at death and the judgment, vers. 26-30; Prov. 11 : 17; Heb. 9 : 27; Rev. 22 : 11.

31. The Scriptures afford a sufficient proof of a future life and future retribution. It is an all-sufficient revelation for warning and instruction respecting heaven, hell, and eternal life, and tenfold more to us, who have not only Moses and the prophets, but a risen Saviour and a full and completed revelation, vers. 29-31; John 5 : 39. There is no need of table-tippings, spirit-knockings, or any mysteries of spiritualism.

32. The state of the heart in which the Bible is rejected is such that it would not be overcome or changed by any additional external evidence, ver. 31; John 3 : 19-21; 5 : 39, 40. Let us therefore learn—(1) that the appointed means of salvation are abundantly sufficient; (2) that if these means fail to convert, no miraculous means are to be expected; (3) that when they do fail to convert, miracles, though they were wrought, would fail also.

## CHAPTER XVII.

This chapter opens with a discourse of Jesus on forbearance, faith, and humility (vers. 1-10), after which Luke

*Forbearance, faith, and humility inculcated.*

XVII. THEN said he unto the disciples, °It is impossible but that offences will come: but woe *unto him*, 2 through whom they come! It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the sea, than that he should offend one of

°Mt. 18. 6, 7; Mk. 9. 42; 1 Cor. 11. 19; 2 Tim. 4. 3, 4.

proceeds in his narrative to the last journey to Jerusalem, in which Jesus appears to have passed through Samaria and a portion of Galilee, or, according to some, between Samaria and Galilee and crossing the Jordan to have travelled southward through Perea. In an early part of this journey he cleansed ten lepers (11-19), and afterward answered a question of the Pharisees, how the kingdom of God should come, directing his principal discourse to his disciples; and he foretells his second coming.

1-10. JESUS ADDRESSES HIS DISCIPLES CONCERNING OFFENCES AND FORBEARANCE, FAITH AND HUMILITY. On offences (vers. 1, 2); on forgiveness of injuries (3, 4); on faith (5, 6); by a parabolic illustration teaches to say, We are unprofitable servants, vers 7-10. This appears to be somewhat closely connected with the preceding discourses and parables, and may have been suggested by the offence which the Pharisees had taken at the conduct of Jesus, ch. 15 : 2 ; 16 : 14. Similar utterances on other occasions are recorded in Matt. 18 : 6, 7, 15-17, 21, 22; Mark 11 : 22, 23. Jesus was in Perea, or perhaps had crossed the Jordan, and was now on his way to Bethany to raise Lazarus.

1. **Then said he.** Rather, *And he said.* Though there is no specified connection of time in the original, this discourse of Jesus follows naturally after his reproof of the Pharisees. Perhaps they had departed in anger after hearing the parable of the rich man and Lazarus. **Unto the disciples.** According to the best critical authorities, *to his disciples*, the larger circle of his disciples, among whom may have been publicans recently converted. In ver. 5 his more limited disciples, the apostles, are specified. Failing to do the murmuring and incensed Pharisees any good either by tender or severe discourse (chs. 15, 16), he turns

to his followers and improves the lessons of the hour.

**It is impossible.** In view of the depravity of the heart, the wickedness of men, the snares of the world, and the temptations of Satan, it cannot be otherwise than that **offences**, rather, *causes of offence*, occasions of falling into unbelief or sin, **will come**. Compare Rom. 14 : 13, "an occasion to fall." In a world where there is so much unbelief and where men act freely there will be those who lead others astray. **Woe unto him through whom they come!** Fearful retribution will be visited upon men for sins and errors produced among Christ's followers through artfulness and physical force. The errors and defects of Christians in faith and practice will also in turn have a terrible effect on the world in darkening their minds and hastening their destruction. Although such causes of offence will and must come, yet this does not excuse the offender, since he acts freely.

2. **It were better.** It would be profitable, well for him, and hence better for him. **A millstone.** According to the highest critical authorities, a common hand-stone, not a large millstone, which was turned by the ass, as in Matt. 18 : 6. **And he cast, or thrown, into the sea.** Drowning of course would be the necessary result. The conception is that of a man about whose neck the millstone had already been hung, and who had already been drowned. Such a terrible fate were better than to live and cause one of his humblest followers to offend. Punishment by drowning was common among the Greeks and Romans and the Eastern nations, but not among the Jews. Execution by drowning is still practiced in the East. Doubtless persons had been thus punished in the Sea of Galilee. Josephus records that the Galileans, at one time revolting from their commanders, drowned certain persons who were

3 these little ones. <sup>a</sup>Take heed to yourselves. <sup>•</sup>If thy brother trespass against thee, <sup>'</sup>rebuke him; <sup>•</sup>and if he repent, forgive him. And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him.

<sup>a</sup>Eph. 5. 15; Heb 12. 15.  
<sup>•</sup>Mt. 18. 15-17.  
<sup>'</sup>Le. 19. 17, 18; Pro. 17. 10; Jam. 5. 19.  
<sup>•</sup>Mt. 18. 21, 22, 35; Eph. 4. 31, 32; Col. 3. 12, 13.

of Herod's party, Joseph. *Antiq.* xiv. 15. 10.

**Than that he should offend.** Rather, *cause one of these little ones to offend*, to fall into sin and error, cause him to become alienated from me. **One of these little ones**, one of my humble followers, one who possesses the humble, childlike spirit essential to discipleship, Matt. 18 : 3.

3. Having thus spoken of causes of offences and the terrible guilt attending them, Jesus proceeds to enforce forbearance and a spirit of forgiveness. **Take heed to yourselves.** "This contains a strong and important intimation how much sin and scandal is occasioned by a severe, quarrelsome temper in the disciples of Christ, as it not only stirs up the corruptions of those with whom they contend, but leads others to think meanly of a profession which has so little efficacy to soften and sweeten the tempers of those who maintain it."—DODDRIDGE. Guard your spirit, govern your passions, lest much sin be occasioned in yourselves and others. See to it that you be not led into the indulgence of a wrong spirit toward **thy brother** who may **trespass**, rather, *sin*; but kindly and faithfully **rebuke him**, admonish him earnestly and in love, endeavoring to convince him of his sin; and if he **repent**, turning from it in his heart, confessing it and forsaking it, **forgive him** at once, pass it over without demanding any rigorous satisfaction; let it be, as it were, forgotten, and never upbraid him for it. Thus, whether he repent or not, we are to have a forgiving spirit and pray God for him. According to the best critical authorities, the reading should be simply *sin*, instead of **trespass against thee**. Yet the connection shows that Jesus is speaking of those sins which one brother commits in his intercourse with another and against another. This is brought out definitely in the next verse.

4. **If he trespass, sin, against**

**thee**, again and again, even **seven times in a day**. Seven was a complete or perfect number; and as a sacred number is closely connected in the Scriptures with forgiveness and retribution, Lev. 4 : 6; 16 : 14; 26 : 18, 21, 24, 28; Ps. 79 : 12; Dan. 4 : 16; Rev. 15 : 1. The Jewish rabbis limited forgiveness to three times, basing their view on Amos 1 : 3; 2 : 6; Job 33 : 29, 30. Jesus extends it indefinitely. To the question of Peter recorded in Matt. 18 : 21, 22, "How oft shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him? till seven times?" Jesus answered, "I say not to thee, until seven times, but until seventy times seven." The meaning of all which is: As oft as a brother may **turn again to thee, saying, I repent**, I confess my sin, exercise sorrow for it, and turn from it, **thou shalt forgive him**, pass it over, hold him and treat him as if he had never sinned against thee. Thus exercise a forbearing and forgiving spirit, and by this means be no cause of offence to him or to yourself. In most differences, however, both parties have something to confess and forgive. Mutual concessions and mutual forgiveness are generally needed. It is well to compare this precept for the private intercourse of Christians with that designed for and connected with discipline in the church, Matt. 18 : 15-18. The church may exercise a power which is not permitted to the individual.

5. The twelve felt their deficiency in this spirit of forgiveness which Jesus had enjoined, and their need of spiritual strength in order to exercise it. And this reminded them of their deficiency in many other respects, and especially in faith, by which they might attain and exercise spiritual power. Jesus had once said to the twelve, "Why are ye fearful? O ye of little faith!" Matt. 8 : 26. To Peter he had said, "O thou of little faith! wherefore didst thou doubt?" Matt. 14 : 31. The nine also had attempted to cast ou

5 And the apostles said unto the Lord, <sup>1</sup>Increase our faith. <sup>1</sup>And the Lord said, If ye had faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye might say unto this sycamine tree, Be thou plucked up by the root, and be thou planted in the sea; and it should obey you.

<sup>1</sup>Ac. 6. 8; 11. 24.  
Ro. 4. 19, 20;  
Eph. 5. 16; 1  
Thes. 3. 10; 2  
Thes. 1. 3, 4, 11;  
Heb. 10. 22, 23.  
<sup>1</sup>Mt. 17. 20; 21. 21;

Mk. 9. 23; 11. 23; 1 Cor. 13. 2.

a demon, and could not because of their unbelief, Matt. 17 : 19-21. Sensible of their weakness and many deficiencies in action and in spirit, they could well pray, **Increase our faith**, *add to our faith*, or give us more faith.

Notice, it is the **apostles** (see on ch. 6 : 13) who make this request. Compare "disciples" in ver. 1. The twelve felt that the instructions of Jesus came home specially to them; they felt their responsibility as leaders and examples. It is also worthy of note that this is the only place in the Gospels where the apostles, as such, are spoken of as making any request to Jesus. In all other instances the word *disciples* is used. Whatever differences they may have had at other times and in other respects, they all now feel their want and all crave the same blessing. Conscious, too, of Christ's divine power, they reverently and prayerfully address him as **Lord**.

6. Jesus answers by asserting the efficacy of faith, which should lead the apostles to feel even more deeply its importance and to long more earnestly after its fullest exercise, and at the same time arouse them to use what they already had. **If ye had faith**, etc. Jesus does not deny that they had any faith, but only intimates that it was weak and far from what they might enjoy. **As a grain of mustard seed**. See on ch. 13 : 19. Compare Mark 11 : 23, "shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe." **This sycamine tree**, one probably standing near at hand, to which our Lord pointed. It would seem that Jesus was in the open air, perhaps on his journey toward Bethany, when he spoke this. The *sycamine* tree was the black mulberry tree which was common in Palestine, lofty and affording a shade, and was suited for the illustration which Jesus here makes. This name, however, was sometimes given by ancient writers to the sycamore tree, or fig-mulberry, a common and important tree in Palestine. Some authors there-

fore regard this as the same as that mentioned in Luke 19 : 4. Thus Dr. Thomson in *The Land and Book* (vol. i., p. 24), who maintains that the mulberry tree could be plucked up with comparative ease, but not so with the sycamore. "Now look at this tree, its ample girth, its widespread arms branching off from the parent trunk only a few feet from the ground; then examine its enormous roots, as thick, as numerous, and as widespread into the deep soil below as the branches extend into the air above—the very best type of invincible steadfastness. What power on earth can pluck up such a tree? Heaven's thunderbolt may strike it down, the wild tornado may tear it to fragments, but nothing short of miraculous power can fairly pluck it up by the roots." This tree also affords a delightful shade, and on this account is often planted by the wayside. Its size and strength would make it fitting for our Saviour's use in illustrating the invincible power of faith.

Perhaps it is as if Jesus had said, If ye had faith in lively exercise like a grain of mustard, small indeed in its beginnings, but great in its development and growth (ch. 13 : 19), ye would accomplish seeming impossibilities. "All things are possible to him that believeth," Mark 9 : 23. But see next paragraph.

**Be thou planted in the sea**. A strong expression; not merely sunk, but rooted in the sea. May not this sycamine tree represent the difficulty which the disciples felt in obeying the command in vers. 3, 4? In hearing it they felt the need of a faith which would be productive of such fruit. The great difficulty in forgiving oft-repeated offences was indeed a sycamine tree; but if they had faith as a grain of mustard seed, it would at their command be plucked up by the root and planted far away in the sea, there to remain no more to trouble them. **It should obey you**, rather, *it would obey you*. The tree is personified and represented

- 7 But which of you, having a servant ploughing or feeding cattle, will say unto him by and by, when he is come from the field, Go and sit down to meat?
- 8 And will not rather say unto him, Make ready wherewith I may sup, and gird thyself, and serve me, till I have eaten and drunken; and afterward thou shalt eat and drink? Doth he thank that servant because he did the things that were commanded him? I trow not. So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all

Jch. 12. 87; 2 Pet.  
3. 14.

as understanding and obeying a command of faith. Faith applies the power of God, and hence is invincible.

7. Jesus introduces an illustration which has been called the parable of the unprofitable servant. Much difficulty has been experienced in tracing the connection with what precedes, and this has been increased by the translation **but**, instead of *and*, **which of you**. The main idea of the parable is that they were to do all the things which were commanded them in a humble spirit. In exercising such faith and such an unselfish and pious spirit as to forgive a repenting brother, though he should sin against them seven times a day, they were not to think that they had merited anything thereby, but remember that they had only done their duty. And so in all their obedience and all their works of faith. *And if ye have this faith, do not suppose that you are entitled to any merit or reward on that account; for who of you, having a servant, etc.* The word *servant* in the original points to one purchased or born to servitude, who was dependent on his lord and strictly bound to obey him.

**Ploughing or feeding cattle.** These two, the more difficult and the easier kind of labor, are selected to represent all kinds of labor. **By and by, immediately.** Some eminent authorities join this with the following verb, **Go, or come immediately, and sit down to meat, recline at table.** But it seems to me to agree better with the context to join it with the preceding verb, as in our version, *say to him immediately.*

8. **And will not rather, etc.,** a question implying an affirmative answer. Not only would you as a master demand from your servant the ordinary service in the field, but also the additional service of preparing for the even-

ing meal when he had returned from his day's toil. Having **made ready** the supper, then he should attend to waiting on the table of his master. **Gird thyself,** gathering up the long and flowing Oriental robe and confining it with the girdle. **And afterward,** after you have performed the service which you properly owe me as your master, **thou shalt eat and drink,** and have a full supply of thy wants. We cannot for a moment suppose that Jesus in this illustration countenanced harshness or indifference to servants, for that would be contrary to the spirit of Christianity, which requires men to do to others as they would have others do to them. He rather used a fact which was then doubtless of common occurrence and the obligation implied in the relation of a servant to a master.

9. **Doth he thank that servant, or the servant,** as though he had done him some great favor not required at his hands. **I trow not,** old English for *I think not*. It is omitted in some of the oldest manuscripts, and by the Revised version, although most of the ancient documents have it. If it is not a true reading, something like it is implied. Jesus is not here laying down a rule for the conduct of a master toward his servants; but taking things as they then were, he reasons from the acknowledged duties of a servant to his master. The latter has a claim upon the service of the former, and expects obedience as a matter of obligation. To be obliged to thank him would be directly contrary to the relation itself.

10. **So likewise ye.** *So also ye* are not to regard the requirements of God as a hardship nor to esteem their performance meritorious. Ye are not to found upon your obedience a claim to God's favor, but humbly realize that in

those things which are commanded you, say, We are <sup>1</sup>unprofitable servants we have done that which was our duty to do.

<sup>1</sup> Chr. 29. 14-16  
Job 22. 2, 3; 35.  
7; Ps. 16. 2; Is.  
64. 6; Mt. 25. 30;  
Ro. 3. 12, 27; 11.  
35; 1 Cor. 4. 7;  
9. 16, 17; Phil. 3.  
8, 9; Philem. 11.

*Last journey to Jerusalem. Healing of ten lepers.*

11 And it came to pass, <sup>1</sup>as he went to Jerusalem, that

<sup>1</sup>Mt. 19. 1; Mk. 10. 1.

your best services you cannot go beyond your duty. **When ye have done all**, everything, the hardest and the easiest, through the powers of nature and of grace which have been conferred upon you. **Say**, confess humbly that you can claim no merit for having done them. **Unprofitable**, in the sense of bringing no gain, of doing nothing beyond the requirement of duty, and therefore having no merit or claim upon God. This meaning is evident from the next clause, **we have done that which was our duty to do**, which we owed, or were under obligation to do, and no more, Job 22 : 2, 3; Rom. 11 : 35; 1 Cor. 4 : 7. And if this is so when "all things commanded" are done, how much more must it be so with our service, which is so defective even at the best! Rom. 3 : 23; Heb. 8 : 12. "Wretched is he whom the Lord calls unprofitable (Matt. 25 : 30); happy he who calls himself so."—BENGEL. There are thus no works of supererogation, as the Church of Rome teaches. Eternal life is a *gift*; sin alone has wages—*death*, Rom. 6 : 23.

In this verse also Jesus teaches his disciples that they stand in the relation of **servants** to God. They belong to God by creation and redemption, and owe him the service of all their powers, 1 Cor. 4 : 7; Eph. 2 : 8. This is entirely consistent with our Saviour's language in John 15 : 15: "Henceforth I call you not servants; . . . but I have called you friends." This friendship or relationship was to be shown by a willing service: "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatever I command you." Compare Rom. 6 : 17-23.

This closes a series of discourses beginning with ch. 15.

11-19. JESUS PASSES THROUGH THE MIDST OF SAMARIA AND GALILEE IN HIS LAST JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM. TEN LEPERS CLEANSED. There is evidently a break in the narrative between verses 10 and 11 sufficient to

allow considerable time to have intervened. A careful comparison with John's Gospel leads to the opinion that during this interval Jesus raised Lazarus, which resulted in the hostile deliberation of the Sanhedrim and our Lord's retirement to Ephraim, a city probably in the wild, uncultivated hill-country of Judah, about sixteen miles north-east of Jerusalem, and on the borders of Samaria, John 11 : 47-54. As it did not come within Luke's plan to narrate the raising of Lazarus, it seems very natural that after relating events and discourses connected with our Lord's journeying toward Jerusalem (ch. 13 : 22)—a journey which did not then end at Jerusalem, but probably at Bethany (John 11 : 7, 18)—he should pass over the several weeks of retirement at Ephraim and take up the history again at the point where Jesus once more appears in public, on his last journey to the passover. Such a supposition is preferable to supposing this journey to have been that to the feast of tabernacles, or that to be the one recorded in Luke 9 : 51-56, which would make Luke from 9 : 51 to this point without chronology or order—a mass of material thrown together, a supposition inconsistent with his orderly arrangement in other parts of his Gospel and with his declared purpose in ch. 1 : 3. See author's *Harmony of the Gospels*, § 126. It was now probably in March, two or three weeks before his arrival in Bethany, six days before his last passover. Recorded only by Luke.

11. **And it came to pass.** It occurred as time and events passed along. A very proper opening of a new portion of the narrative, and to a route to Jerusalem somewhat peculiar. The expression is not found in the narrative since ch. 14 : 1. **As he went**, or *was going*, **to Jerusalem.** Compare a significant difference between this expression and that in ch. 13 : 22, "journeying toward

he passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee.  
 12 And as he entered into a certain village, there met him ten men that were lepers, <sup>m</sup> which stood afar off: <sup>n</sup> Le. 13. 45, 46; Num. 5. 2, 3; 2 Ki. 7. 3.

Jerusalem." The one very naturally implies that he did not reach Jerusalem, the other that he did at length arrive at that city. The later reference may be regarded as supplementing the earlier, and as a general statement of the continuation or resumption of a journey which at length ended at Jerusalem.

**That he passed.** He is emphatic. *He, for his part,* went in the way about to be indicated. The expression very naturally suggests peculiarity in the route he took. **Passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee.** On *Samaria* see on ch. 9 : 52. The plain and obvious meaning of the original is that Jesus passed through both of these countries, taking Samaria first and Galilee afterward. Compare "through the midst," ch. 4 : 30. This harmonizes with the fact that in his last journey he went from Ephraim, a city near the northern borders of Judea, John 11 : 54; 12 : 1. Hence, in passing through those countries, he would take Samaria first. It also best explains why Luke emphasizes Jesus as taking this journey, incidentally implying some peculiarity about it. Grotius, Meyer, and some others would translate or interpret *passed between Samaria and Galilee*, having one on his right hand and the other on the left, skirting both countries. But this, while grammatically possible and apparently defensible (*Xen. Anab.* i. 4, 4), is not very natural or probable. A suspicion also is cast upon this interpretation by the fact that it has generally been resorted to by those who supposed that Jesus was now journeying from Galilee; and such an interpretation has given them a convenient explanation why Samaria should be named first. But Galilee would naturally be named first (Acts 9 : 31) unless there was some reason to the contrary, and the explanation given by these expositors does not seem to me to afford a sufficient reason, unless, perhaps, they say that without any special thought Luke happened to write Samaria first. But only let Ephraim be the starting-point of this journey, as John

seems to indicate, and all is plain. There is no necessity, then, for taking the expression out of its natural and obvious meaning.

After proceeding northward, Jesus appears to have passed over Jordan and proceeded southward through Perea, recrossing the Jordan to Jericho, ch. 18 : 35; Matt. 19 : 1; Mark 10 : 1. This verse, as well as ch. 18 : 35, appears to indicate that the journey was now continuous without any long intervals of teaching. How far into Galilee Jesus went, is not stated. Perhaps he journeyed even to the north of the Sea of Galilee; yet the conditions of the narrative are all met by supposing that he went into the central portions of the country, and turning eastward passed over the Jordan just south of the lake into Perea.

**12. As he entered into a certain village, was entering a certain village,** probably near the borders of Galilee and Samaria. It must have been outside of the gate, for lepers were shut out of towns, Lev. 13 : 46; Num. 5 : 2. A type of the unclean shut out of the city of God, Rev. 21 : 27. **Ten men that were lepers.** On the *leprosy* see on ch. 5 : 12. Their common misery and loneliness brought them together and broke down the distinction existing between the Jews and Samaritans. A company of four leprosy men is mentioned in 2 Kings 7 : 3. They are often seen in companies in the East at the present day. "As we approached Nablous, or Shechem, we saw several lepers, who followed us to our tenting-ground and insisted on a fee for leaving the place. Our dragoman protested that their charge was exorbitant; but as the company were alarmed, he yielded at length, paid them their price, and they left us. We found lepers also on the slope of Mount Zion, where a retreat is provided for them near the Zion gate."—JACOBUS. **Who stood afar off,** at a distance, in obedience to the law (Lev. 13 : 45, 46), and in order not to pollute any one by touching him. The rabbis prescribed the distance which lepers

13 and they lifted up *their* voices, and said, Jesus, Master, have mercy on us. And when he saw *them*, he said unto them, "Go show yourselves unto the priests. And it came to pass that, °as they went, they were

<sup>u</sup> ch. 5. 14; Le. 13  
2; 14. 2; Mt. 8.  
<sup>4</sup>  
<sup>o</sup> John 4. 50-53; 9.  
7; 11. 40.

must keep between themselves and the clean, but are not agreed, some putting it at about a rod and others much farther. These lepers exhibited their sense of uncleanness and their humility by standing in the distance, very probably farther even than usage demanded.

13. **They lifted up their voices,** *their voice, or a cry*, in earnest petitions, so that he might hear. They had heard of the name and power of **Jesus**, and now they range themselves at a distance from the roadside, yet near enough to be heard. Companions in suffering, they are also companions in prayer. As with one voice they send up their mournful wail. **Master**, one having the authority of a teacher. The word in the original is several times used by Luke, and only by him in the New Testament, ch. 5 : 5; 8 : 24, 45; 9 : 33, 49. The lepers acknowledge his authority as a teacher and profess their confidence as disciples. It does not appear that they really recognized his Messiahship, but rather looked upon him as a prophet mighty in word and deed, a teacher sent from God. **Have mercy on us.** Have compassion, take pity upon our miserable condition. They had, doubtless, heard of others who had been cleansed, ch. 7 : 22; Matt. 8 : 3. While their prayer was general, the particular thing they wanted was evident. They wished the cure of that terrible disease which was the cause of their misery and uncleanness.

14. **When he saw them, and seeing them, or it,** what was taking place, seeing them and hearing their cry. His eyes and ears were ever open to the cry of the afflicted. They asked in expectation, and Jesus tests their faith and their obedience to God's word by the command, **Go show yourselves unto the priests.** According to the law, a leper, when cured, was to show himself unto the priest, who would readmit him into the congregation, giving him a testimony or certificate of his cure, ch. 5 : 14; Lev. 13 : 1-6. The plural, *priests*, is used because there were ten lepers and the service of more than one

would be required. The command implied, therefore, that they were to be healed and required faith in the word and power of Jesus. They might have objected, "Why send us to the priests without healing us first?" But this was not Christ's way. He would develop and manifest their faith. So, many sinners would have repentance, convictions, and a certain preparation before they go to Jesus. But they must go as they are if they are ever healed. But to what *priests*? All these ceremonies prescribed in cases of leprosy could not be properly performed without going up to Jerusalem, yet there were priests residing in various parts of the country, and the lepers could at least go and show themselves to them. But to whom should the Samaritan go? A Jewish priest would have nothing to do with him. But he might go as a matter of duty and obedience, yet, perhaps better, he would go to one of his own priests, who doubtless observed the same laws of purification. This command of our Saviour freed him and those healed from the imputation of disregard of the law of Moses. See further on ch. 5 : 14. On *priests*, see ch. 1 : 5.

**As they went,** while on their way, before they arrived at their destination. Their going showed their faith; and they were evidently *cleansed* before they had gone far, for the incidents here related seem to have occurred within a short time. Yet it was far enough to test the strength and endurance of their faith.

Most strangely do the papists infer from this passage that men should confess their sins to Romish priests. There is nothing in this passage to warrant it. These men were to go to the priests, not to confess sin, but to show that they were already cleansed and to get a certificate of this fact. It may be said further that the true sacrifice was not yet offered; the veil was not yet rent. The Levitical priesthood still continued its functions, and the requirements pertaining to it were to be observed. But

15 cleansed. And <sup>p</sup>one of them, when he saw that he  
 was healed, turned back, and with a loud voice glori-  
 16 fied God, and fell down on *his* face at his feet, giving  
 17 him thanks: <sup>q</sup>and he was a Samaritan. And Jesus  
 answering said, Were there not ten cleansed? <sup>r</sup>but  
 18 where *are* the nine? There are not found that re-  
 turned to give glory to God, <sup>s</sup>save this stranger.

<sup>p</sup> Ps. 30. 11, 12; 103.  
1-4.

<sup>q</sup> ch. 10. 33-35.

<sup>r</sup> 2 Chr. 32. 24, 25,  
Ps. 106. 13; Ro.  
1. 21.

<sup>s</sup> Mt. 8. 10, 11; 20. 16.

now the old dispensation has entirely passed away; the handwriting of ordinances that was against us is blotted out and nailed to the cross, Col. 2 : 14. Jesus is the High Priest who has offered up a sacrifice once for all (Heb. 7 : 27); and all believers are a holy priesthood, who are to offer up spiritual sacrifices through Jesus Christ, 1 Pet. 2 : 5, 9. No priest now can stand between the believing soul and Jesus.

15. **And one . . . turned back,** not after he had showed himself to the priest, but **when he saw that he was healed.** Or, *seeing that he was healed, he turned back,* implying immediate and prompt action. **With a loud voice,** he had sent up a loud, hoarse cry for help, and now, with an equally strong but clear voice, he **glorified God,** praised God for this signal deliverance and mercy. The voice of a leper is usually hoarse; the sound itself proclaims the cure. His heart was overflowing with joy and thanksgiving to God. He could not proceed a step farther toward the residence of the priest before returning to express his gratitude to Jesus.

16. **And fell down on his face,** in deep humiliation, gratitude, and love, at the feet of Jesus, **giving him thanks,** as the author of his cure. He recognized divine power as exercised in his behalf, but whether he recognized the divinity in Jesus is a question which each one must decide for himself. But whether or not, he, according to the measure of his knowledge, honored both the Son and the Father, John 5 : 23. Having thus done, we are to suppose that, in obedience to the command, he goes at once to the priest. So should all have returned with praises and thanksgiving, yet there was only one, and he **a Samaritan,** an alien, one who was treated as a Gentile, with whom the Jews would not associate, John 4 : 9. See on ch. 9 : 52. We may conceive Jesus as on his journey. Perhaps he

was leaving the village which he had a little before entered, ver. 12.

17. This incident enabled Jesus to preach and to show that the blessings of the gospel extended to Samaritans as well as Jews, and that strangers would value it more highly than his own nation. **And Jesus answering,** the incident calling forth this response or expression of his heart. **Were there, etc. Better, were not the ten cleansed?** Most surely. Equal to a strong affirmation, calling attention to the fact. **Where are the nine?** A sad and touching inquiry. Jesus remembers every one he blesses, and expects his gratitude. The nine were, doubtless, rejoicing in their cure, pressing on toward Jerusalem. But their bodies had been blessed rather than their souls. Deep, hearty gratitude to God would have been naturally attended with thankfulness to him who had exerted God's power upon them. Naaman, when cleansed of his leprosy, returned with thanks and gifts to Elisha, 2 Kings 5 : 15. "The lesson before us is humbling, heart-searching, and deeply instructive. The best of us are far too like the nine lepers. We are more ready to pray than to praise, and more disposed to ask God for what we have not than to thank him for what we have. Murmuring, complaints, and discontent abound on every side. Few indeed are to be found who are not continually hiding their mercies under a bushel and setting their wants and trials on a hill. Let us pray for a daily thankful heart. It is a spirit which God loves and delights to honor. It must mingle with our prayers, Phil. 4 : 6."—DR. A. NEVIN. Ps. 78 : 42; 103 : 2; Heb. 12 : 11.

18. **There are not found, etc.** This verse is a question in which Jesus assumes a negative answer with an expression of surprise and condemnation. **Were none found,** at the time of their healing, **returning to give glory to**

19 'And he said unto him, Arise, go thy way: thy faith hath made thee whole.

ch. 7. 50; 8. 48  
18. 42; Mt. 9. 22;  
Mk. 5. 34; 10. 52.

*Concerning the coming of the kingdom of God.*

20 And when he was demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with

ch. 10. 11; 16. 16.

**God**, praising God and giving thanks to me, **save this stranger**, this alien, foreigner, belonging to another nation. In regard to the Samaritans, see on ch. 9 : 52. He was the last one who would have been expected to do this. Surely, the Jews, with their higher privileges and greater professed piety, should have been more ready to praise God for their deliverance. But as it often happens, the last was first, ch. 13 : 30.

19. Turning from those whom he was addressing, and from the ungrateful nine, to the Samaritan, who in humble gratitude was still prostrate at his feet, Jesus says to him, **Arise, go thy way, rise to thy feet, go, depart, and perform whatever duty devolves upon thee.** He would, of course, go to the priest for examination and for a certificate of his cleansing, and offer the gift commanded by Moses.

**Thy faith hath made thee whole**, literally, *saved thee*, not only in body, for in that the nine shared, but also in soul. He received a spiritual cleansing. The nine had exercised such faith in the word of Jesus as to start to show themselves to the priests, and were healed, but the one took hold not only of Christ's word, but also of his character as a Saviour. His gratitude was deeper, more spiritual, and his faith recognized the power and the blessing of the gospel in Jesus.

This account of the cleansed and believing Samaritan is in harmony with the Pauline character and general design of this Gospel. Compare ch. 10 : 33; Acts 1 : 8. That Luke showed no partiality for the Samaritans is evident from the account in ch. 9 : 52, 53.

20-37. **JESUS DISCOURSES CONCERNING THE COMING OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD.** A number of these sayings Jesus repeated in his last discourse to the four apostles on Mount Olivet, Matt. 24 : 17, 18, 26, 27, 37-39. There is, however, much which is recorded by Luke alone, and so connected as to show that the

discourse was spoken at this time and is not to be confounded with the later discourse. Jesus was probably now in Galilee. The blessing of little children (ch. 18 : 15) is related by Matthew and Mark among the first incidents after our Lord's entrance into Perea. Between this point and that may therefore be regarded as belonging to this brief Galilean journey.

20. **When he was demanded of, asked or interrogated by, the Pharisees.** Why the Pharisees asked this cannot be certainly determined. We only know that it could not have been with a proper motive. That it was asked in derision or in order to entangle him we have no evidence from the question or its connection. That they asked with wrong views of Christ's kingdom is evident from the answer of Jesus, and also from what we know of the common views of the Jews at that time respecting it. Perhaps they had a curious desire to know the opinion of Jesus concerning it. He had for three years so often spoken of the kingdom of God, and had preached that it was at hand, yet they saw nothing which they would call signs of its coming, and they wished to know when he thought it would come. **The kingdom of God.** The Messianic kingdom. See on ch. 4 : 43.

Jesus answers not as they would expect. He says nothing of the *time*, but notes the *manner*, of the coming of his kingdom. **Cometh not with observation**, in such a manner that its approach can be observed by the senses and its progress watched by its outward tokens. It comes not with outward show, political and military triumphs, and the glory of an external and conquering kingdom, but it comes quietly, gradually, and unobserved. This reply was corrective of the worldly views of the Pharisees respecting the Messiah's kingdom. Jesus teaches them that it shall not be a temporal kingdom, coming with external display and loud

21 observation : † neither shall they say, Lo here! or, Lo there! for, behold, † the kingdom of God is † within you. † ver. 23. † John 18. 36; Ro 14. 17. † John 1. 26.

proclamations, but that it shall be spiritual, quiet in its approach, often secret in its growth and noiseless in its progress, Isa. 42 : 2; Matt. 12 : 18-20. The Pharisees might therefore infer their own ignorance of this kingdom and the groundlessness of their expectation that they were the certain subjects of it. It was not to be observed by the senses, but spiritually apprehended, and only such as were its spiritual subjects could enjoy its benefits and blessings.

21. **Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, Lo there!** It is not local in its nature, and its approach shall not be announced as *here* or *there*. It shall not be heralded that in this place or that the Messiah is coming forth. The idea in the last clause of the preceding verse is thus expanded.

**For, behold,** introduces the reason why the kingdom of God comes with no external display and with no proclamation of its establishment in this or that place. **The kingdom of God is within you,** or, according to some, *among you*. The former translation is adopted by Chrysostom, Dr. George Campbell, Olshausen, and others, the latter by Meyer, Alford, and others. The first seems preferable for the following reasons: (1) *within* is the literal and common meaning of the original, and no one would think of translating it differently but for exegetical reasons. It is found in the Septuagint version in Ps. 39 : 3; 109 : 2; Cant. 3 : 10; Ps. 103 : 1; Isa. 16 : 11; Dan. 10 : 16. The only other place in the New Testament is in Matt. 23 : 26. In none of these passages does it admit the translation of *among*, but must be rendered *within*, or, when used elliptically or substantively, *the inside*, or the things within. The only clear example adduced by the critics for translating *among* is from Xenophon's *Anabasis* (1. 10, 3), where he speaks of whatever men or property were *among* them, or *within* their ranks or camp. But this only shows that it is possible so to translate or interpret it where the necessities of the case demand. The question arises, Is it demanded

here? It is said that the kingdom of God was not in the hearts of the Pharisees whom he was addressing, and therefore it should be translated *among you*—that is, *within* the Jewish nation, or *in the midst* of the Jewish people. But it may be answered that *you* is used generally and indefinitely: It is *within you*, such as are or may become its subjects. Thus, Jesus was intimating the nature and seat of true religion, which has its realm in the heart and is actually within God's people, and must be within these Pharisees too if they would reap its benefits. His kingdom was spiritual and had its seat in the hearts of men, John 18 : 36; Rom. 10 : 8; 14 : 17; John 3 : 8; Col. 1 : 27. So also Olshausen: "The expression *within you* does not make the Pharisees members of the kingdom of God, but only sets before them the possibility of their being received into it, inasmuch as an internal and spiritual manifestation is made its universal criterion." (2) But *within* is demanded as a contrast to the outward manifestations which the Pharisees expected, the "lo here!" and "lo there!" The reason introduced by **for**, and the antithesis to the external coming, receive their full force only as we view the kingdom in its internal, spiritual nature. Jesus also implied and taught here that it already existed in human hearts. The Pharisees were looking for its coming, but it had already come. They were thus taught the essential nature of this kingdom, and at the same time their thoughts were turned to their own hearts, with the reflection that if they would belong to this kingdom and enjoy its blessings, it must be set up within them. (3) This is confirmed by ancient versions, among them the Vulgate and Syriac, which take the words in their literal sense, *within you*. I need scarcely add that the internal, spiritual nature of Christ's kingdom is entirely consistent with its external manifestation in the churches of Christ and with the second coming of Christ, foretold in the remaining portion of this chapter. There is a spiritual origin and an external development

- 22 And he said unto the disciples, <sup>1</sup>The days will come, when ye shall desire to see one of the days of
- 23 the Son of man, and ye shall not see it. <sup>2</sup>And they shall say to you, See here! or, See there! Go not
- 24 after *them*, nor follow *them*. <sup>3</sup>For as the lightning, <sup>4</sup>

ch. 5. 35; Mt. 9. 15; John 7. 33-36; 13. 33; 17 11-13.

ch. 21. 8; Mt. 24 23-26; Mk. 13. 21 Mt. 24. 27.

the beginning in the heart and the manifestation in the life, Rom. 10 : 9, 10. This kingdom exists under the Messiah in his humiliation, in his exaltation, and in his coming in his glory.

But if any one prefers to render *among you*, we may say, with Alford, that this meaning includes, of course, the deeper and personal one "within you," such as are members of that kingdom. And so also the rendering *within you* implies that the kingdom of God was among them, that it had begun and continued its progress without parade and proclamations or confining it to any particular place, John 1 : 26 ; 12 : 35 ; Luke 7 : 16 ; 11 : 20. Hence some interpreters have attempted to unite these two ideas in the meaning of the passage.

22. Having sufficiently answered the Pharisees, Jesus proceeds to instruct his disciples respecting his presence now among them and his second coming. **The disciples**, his followers in general. Some suppose that Jesus uttered this in the presence of the Pharisees, but more probably apart from them. Such truths he did not generally utter to promiscuous audiences, Matt. 24 : 3.

**The days**, rather, *days*, **will come**, of severe trial, **when**, amid the struggles and progress of my kingdom, I your Lord and Master being absent, **ye shall desire**, earnestly, **to see one of the days of the Son of man**, not one of the days of his present humiliation, but of his exalted and glorified presence, for which they would then long. Jesus would prepare them for his approaching departure, and prevent them from expecting a temporary and speedy return. With his kingdom in their hearts, they should long to see the coming of their King and enjoy one of the days of his personal presence, but they shall not see it. When he leaves the earth, it will be till the promised day when he shall be revealed from heaven in glory. See Acts 3 : 21 ; 2 Thess. 1 : 7-10. How were these words fulfilled? Compare ch. 5 : 35 ;

John 16 : 6 ; Rev. 6 : 9, 10 ; Tit. 2 : 13 ; James 5 : 7-9 ; 1 John 2 : 18. How earnest John's desire when banished to the isle of Patmos, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus"! Rev. 22 : 20.

23. See here or see there, announcing false Christs, just as he said they would not do in regard to the true Messiah, ver. 21. After he was gone, amid the awful calamities which should befall the Jewish nation, false Christs should appear, and the unbelieving multitudes, who had rejected the true Messiah, would in their vain desires after one of their own imagination accept them and say, *See here, see there*.

These impostures were numerous before and after the destruction of the city. Felix, A. D. 53-60, put down false prophets and false Messiahs. According to Josephus, they persuaded many "to follow them into the wilderness, and pretended that they would exhibit manifest wonders and signs that should be wrought by the providence of God." They "deluded the people under pretence of divine inspiration." So, also, during the siege a great number of false prophets proclaimed that the people "should wait deliverance from God;" and just before the burning of the temple one of them made a public proclamation that "God commanded them to get upon the temple, and that they should receive miraculous signs of deliverance." And long after this, about A. D. 135, a false Messiah arose, who called himself Bar Cochebas, or son of a star, from the star prophesied by Balaam. He performed tricks of legerdemain, deluded multitudes, among whom were three of the greatest rabbis, and raised an insurrection against the Roman government, which was put down with great bloodshed. And others are recorded as having arisen still later.

**Go not after them**, rather, *go not away*, from your work which I have given you to do, or go not out from your own place and work to behold them. **Nor follow them**, more literally, *and follow not*, these false Christs

that lighteneth out of the one *part* under heaven, shineth unto the other *part* under heaven; <sup>b</sup>so shall  
 25 also the Son of man be in his day. <sup>c</sup>But first must  
 he suffer many things, and be rejected of this genera-  
 26 tion. <sup>d</sup>And as it was in the days of Noah, so shall it  
 27 be also in the days of the Son of man. They did eat,  
 they drank, they married wives, they were given in  
 marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the  
 ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all.

<sup>b</sup> Mal. 3. 1, 2; Mt. 26. 64; 1 Thes. 5. 2.  
<sup>c</sup> ch. 9. 22; Mk. 8. 31; 9. 31; 10. 33  
 John 1. 11.  
<sup>d</sup> Ge. ch. 7; Mt. 24. 37-39; 1 Thes. 5. 3; 1 Pet. 3. 20.

a warning against all who would leave the word of God and follow the false teachings of impostors, enthusiasts, and errorists of all kinds. Let them seek the old paths and return to the ancient landmarks which they have forsaken.

24. **For as the lightning, etc.** His coming will not be from the earth, but from heaven; not manifested only in a certain place, but everywhere conspicuous, like the lightning, which "cometh from the east and shineth even unto the west." It shall be sudden, unmistakable, and so public that every eye can see him, Rev. 1 : 7. **So shall also.** *Also* is omitted in many of the oldest and best manuscripts. **The Son of man be in his day,** in the day of his coming in glory and to judgment. There will be no doubt or uncertainty, no need of inquiring whither or where, but everywhere manifested, like the lightning which illumines the whole sky. Compare Acts 26 : 13; Rev. 16 : 15; Amos 5 : 18-20. But some of the best manuscripts omit, *in his day.* While this prediction can receive its complete fulfilment only at the second personal coming of our Lord, yet it may include as its type his providential coming in the destruction of Jerusalem.

25. But before his coming Jesus predicts that he must suffer and be rejected, that men will be unbelieving, indifferent, and absorbed in their own selfish gratifications, vers. 25-30. He thus checks the ambition and any unwarranted expectation of his disciples by placing the cross before the crown. **But this coming will be different from what you expect. First must he suffer many things.** As on several other occasions, he teaches his disciples the necessity of his sufferings. See on ch. 9 : 22, 44, 45. **And be rejected of, by, this generation,** in condemn-

ing him to death and demanding his crucifixion, and afterward in rejecting the gospel when offered to them, ch. 23 : 18-21; John 19 : 15; Acts 3 : 13-15; 7 : 51, 52; Acts 13 : 46; 28 : 25-28. This rejection of Jesus by that generation shadows forth the rejection of him by the world. "When the Son of man cometh shall he find faith on the earth?" ch. 18 : 8. In this rejection is implied the necessary sufferings of his disciples, Matt. 10 : 24, 25; Rom. 8 : 17; 1 Pet. 4 : 13.

26. To unbelievers his coming would be a day of sudden and unexpected vengeance. It would indeed be a day of complete deliverance and redemption to his disciples; but Jesus here pictures the other and darker side—his coming to judgment of the unbelieving world; and this finds a striking illustration in the destruction of the antediluvian world. **As in the days of Noah,** etc. See the same illustration similarly used in Matt. 24 : 37; see also 2 Pet. 2 : 4-10; 3 : 5, 6.

27. The idea of the preceding verse is expanded and explained in this. **Did eat, they drank.** They were living in apparent security, unconscious of the calamities that awaited them. **Married wives, etc.** Forming new connections in life and expecting a posterity. The words do not necessarily imply open and notorious wickedness, but a perfect security, not anticipating their sudden and terrible doom. As the men of the old world were unbelieving, heeding not the warning of Noah, giving themselves up to their occupations and pursuing their pleasures, so, when Christ comes, men will be engaged in their business and seeking their own self-gratification, indifferent to the claims of the gospel, and forming their plans for the future. It will be sudden and unexpected to them. **And de-**

28 <sup>e</sup>Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; <sup>f</sup>they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, <sup>g</sup>they builded; but the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and <sup>h</sup>destroyed *them* all. Even thus shall it be in the day <sup>i</sup>when the Son of man <sup>j</sup>is revealed. In that day, he <sup>k</sup>which shall be upon the housetop, and his stuff in <sup>l</sup>25; 16. 26; 24. 17, 18; Mk. 13. 15; Phil. 3. 7, 8.

**stroyed them all**, so the destruction of the wicked will be complete and universal.

28. Jesus further illustrates his coming to a wicked world and the condition of things preceding it by the carnal ease and security of the Sodomites, Gen. 19 : 1-29; 2 Pet. 2 : 6; Judg. 7 : 14, 15. This illustration is recorded only by Luke. **Lot**, the son of Haran and nephew of Abraham, Gen. 11 : 27, 31. He followed his uncle from Ur, and afterward from Haran to Canaan, Gen. 12 : 4-6; 13 : 1. When their flocks became so great that they could not continue together and their shepherds sometimes quarrelled, Lot chose the plain of Sodom, where he continued to dwell till the destruction of that city and those adjacent to it. He was a righteous man (2 Pet. 2 : 7), but his life and character seem to have been marked with grave imperfections.

**They did eat, they drank.** Sensual and corrupt, they were absorbed with temporal concerns and ignored even the thought of danger. **They bought, they sold, they planted, they builded.** Active, enterprising, they counted upon the continuance of their prosperity. They continued a course of careless living, with no expectation of destruction.

29. **But the same day, etc.** The suddenness of the destruction is brought into view. **It rained fire and brimstone**, burning brimstone, sulphurous flames. **From heaven.** "Jehovah rained brimstone and fire out of heaven," Gen. 19 : 24. God controls the elements as he pleases. **Destroyed them all.** Not only a sudden but an utter destruction.

30. **Even thus, After this manner,** suddenly and unexpectedly to unbelievers, will Christ come bringing judgment upon them. **When the Son of man is revealed,** is manifested in

his power and glory, when he shall appear visibly, and his power be sensibly displayed. The same verb is used in 2 Thess. 2 : 3, 6, 8.

The following historical note on this passage by Dr. J. J. Owen is worthy of thought: "There was an unwonted degree of active enterprise throughout the whole Roman empire in the time of Christ's appearance upon earth, and especially in the reign of Vespasian and Titus, by whom Jerusalem was destroyed. The increase of luxury and sensuality in the same period is too well authenticated a fact to be disputed. What was true of the times of this subordinate appearance of our Lord to destroy Jerusalem will no doubt be far more striking when the teeming population of earth shall be arrested in their worldliness and sensuality by the trump of the archangel summoning them to judgment."

31. Jesus forewarns them that they must be ready to leave everything. Applicable to both the destruction of Jerusalem and our Lord's second coming. **In that day**, the day in which "the Son of man is revealed," ver. 30. This would appear to refer primarily to his second coming, but may also be applied to its type, the destruction of Jerusalem, when the power of Christ, the King of kings, was revealed in judgment upon a wicked and unbelieving people.

**Housetop.** Literally, *upon the house*. The houses in Palestine were flat-roofed and communicated with each other, so that a person might proceed to the city walls and escape without coming down into the street. Persons would naturally go to the housetop to view an invading army. Jesus, however, may have referred to escaping by a stairway leading from the court to the roof without entering the house. The admonition is not against *coming down*, but against

the house, let him not come down to take it away: <sup>1</sup>1 Cor. 10. 6, 12, and he that is in the field, let him likewise not return <sup>2</sup>Heb. 10. 38, 39. <sup>3</sup>2 Pet. 2. 20-22. 32, 33 back. <sup>4</sup>Remember Lot's wife. <sup>5</sup>Whosoever shall <sup>6</sup>ch. 9. 24; Mt. 10. seek to save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall <sup>7</sup>39; 16. 25; Mk. 8. 35; John 12. 25; Rev. 2. 10. 34 lose his life shall preserve it. <sup>8</sup>I tell you, in that

<sup>9</sup>\* Mt. 21. 40, 41; 1 Thes. 4. 17.

coming down to take his stuff, goods, household goods and valuables. The stairway landed "outside the house, but within the exterior court. It would not be either agreeable or safe to have the stairs land outside the enclosure altogether, and it is rarely done, except in mountain villages and where roofs are but little used."—DR. THOMSON, *The Land and the Book*, vol. i., p. 52. So likewise he that is in the field, engaged in labor, and having left his upper garment with everything at his house, let him not return back to remove or save anything, however valuable. Compare Matt. 24 : 17, 18. This injunction received an illustration and was obeyed in the siege of Jerusalem. By a singular providence the Roman general Cestius, after taking a portion of the city, with good prospects of capturing the whole, withdrew without any apparently good reason. This gave the Christians an opportunity to escape, which they did, over the mountainous region to Pella and other places east of the Jordan, where the country was at peace with the Romans. Pella was on the northern border of Perea. According to Eusebius the historian, the Christians were divinely directed to flee thither.

32. Jesus cautions them against vacillation of purpose by again referring to the destruction of Sodom and reminding them of one who perished through fickleness and turning back. **Remember Lot's wife.** She commenced to flee through the urgency of the angels, but she hesitated, looked back with longing desire, and even turned her face toward the doomed city, and perished in its destruction. "Instead of following close upon her husband's steps, she turned her face toward the home she unwillingly left; and while he barely escaped the storm, she was overtaken by it and perished."—DR. CONANT on Gen. 19 : 26. She became "a pillar of salt," entrusted by it. She became a monument of the divine wrath and of "that earth-

ly-mindedness and self-seeking which wishes to preserve the lesser at any cost, and thereby loses the greater." Meyer says: "Her slowness to give up all interests in earthly possessions ruined her. Remember her and abandon all."

33. Jesus still further warns against a secular and worldly spirit by the use of one of his proverbial sayings, Matt. 10 : 39; 16 : 25; Mark 8 : 35; John 12 : 25; Luke 9 : 24, which compare. Its application is here different from that in the other passages. **Whosoever shall seek to save his life,** by the ordinary means of worldly wisdom and caution, such as gathering up his goods and seeking some fortified position, **shall lose it.** He who fixes his heart on his earthly treasures and is unwilling to abandon them shall perish. But **whosoever shall lose his life,** according to worldly judgments, abandoning property and means of living, and apparently facing death, **shall preserve it,** not only temporally, but unto life eternal. The verb translated *preserve* is found in the New Testament only here and in Acts 7 : 19, and means *preserve alive*; not merely shall not perish in the destruction connected with Christ's second coming, but also shall be partakers of the salvation and life connected with it. Doubtless in the destruction of Jerusalem there were many illustrations of this in the narrow escapes of individual Christians, who, in abandoning everything and apparently rushing into the jaws of death, were preserved alive; while those who condemned their apparent folly, pursued an opposite course, met a fearful death. Yet the illustration must not be limited to physical life and death; and especially in its application at the second coming of Christ, it must include the spiritual, since then the spiritual and eternal will be inseparably connected with life and death. To perish then will be to perish eternally, and to live then will be a life everlasting.

night there shall be <sup>1</sup>two men in one bed; the one shall  
 35 be taken, and the other shall be left. Two women  
 shall be grinding together; the one shall be taken,  
 36 and the other left. Two men shall be in the field; the  
 37 one shall be taken, and the other left. And they  
 answered and said unto him, Where, Lord? And he

<sup>1</sup>Eze. 9. 4-6; Mal  
 3. 18.

34. Jesus adds two or three examples, showing not only the suddenness of his coming, but also the divisions which shall then be made according to the principle which underlies the statement in the previous verse. **I tell you, I say to you.** These words render emphatic the important declarations which he now makes. **In that night.** About equivalent to in that day. In representing the close and intimate fellowship denoted by two occupying the same bed, it would be most natural to say *in that night*, being the time when persons are wont to be in bed. Christ, too, comes as a thief in the night, Matt. 24 : 44. Besides, we now know from the rotundity of the earth that while it is day in one place it is night in another. Luke alone gives this first example. **In one bed.** Some would interpret *dining-couch*, but this is by no means probable. **One**, who has forsaken all, **shall be taken**, saved as a follower of Christ; **the other**, having chosen the world and fixed his heart upon it, **shall be left** to perish. *One* and the *other* are masculine in the original.

35. **Two women shall be grinding together.** Grain was ground by a hand-mill, and generally by women. This was performed usually at early dawn, in preparation of the morning meal and for another meal at the close of day. "In the court of one of the houses of this village (Jenin, on the border of the plain of Esdraelon) I saw two young women sitting on the ground engaged in this mode of grinding. The mill consisted of two stones, the upper one circular, the lower one partly so, with a projection on one side two or three inches long, slanting downward, and scooped out so as to carry off the meal. The lower stone had an iron pivot, I think it was, extending from its centre through a hole in the centre of the upper stone. An upright handle was fixed in a socket near the edge of the upper stone, and both the women, tak-

ing hold of this handle, whirled the stone round and round with great rapidity. One of them every now and then dropped a handful of grain into the hole at the centre of the upper stone. . . . At an earlier stage of my journey, at Pompeii, in Italy, I had seen a pair of millstones entirely similar to these in the East. They were in the house known among the ruins there as the house of the baker, occupying, in all probability, the very spot where they stood on the day when the eruption of Vesuvius buried that ill-fated city."—DR. HACKETT, *Illustrations of Scripture*, p. 86.

**One shall be taken.** One of the elect shall be taken by the angels and borne to the presence of Christ and the company of the redeemed. The other is left to be borne at length to the company of the wicked at the left hand of Christ. See Matt. 24 : 31. The suddenness of his coming is thus illustrated in this and the next verse. See the same examples in Matt. 24 : 40, 41.

36. **Two men, simply two, shall be in the field,** engaged in their daily occupation. **One shall be taken,** etc., as in the preceding verse. This verse is not found in the oldest manuscripts, and is omitted by the highest critical authorities. It is supposed to have been interpolated from Matt. 24 : 40.

In these three examples the first denotes the most intimate friendship; the other two, companionship in labor.

37. **Where, Lord?** Where shall this take place? Luke, more than Matthew or Mark, notices the questions which gave rise to observations and discourses, ch. 11 : 1; 12 : 13, 41; 13 : 23, etc. The disciples were excited with mingled surprise and fear. Their question gives Jesus an opportunity of declaring that punishment will not be confined to any one spot, but will be inflicted wherever sin may be found.

said unto them, "Wheresoever the body is, thither" <sup>Mt. 24. 28.</sup> will the eagles be gathered together.

**Wheresoever the body is, etc.** The *body*, like *carcass* in Matt. 24 : 28, is to be understood of the dead body which is eagerly sought by birds of prey. The expression is proverbial, and contains much truth in a nutshell. The eagles and carrion vultures, which were often included by the ancients among eagles, would quickly scent the corrupt carcass and gather around it. The precise application has been much disputed. The preferable meaning here is: Wherever sin is, there will punishment find it. This might be expanded thus: As surely as the eagles gather around a lifeless body, so surely will the Son of man come to judgment; and the angels shall gather out of his kingdom all that offend and do iniquity, Matt. 13 : 41. It is, however, not unlikely that Jesus uttered this language here with great pregnant meaning, designing more than a single application, and that it has been verified frequently in Jewish history, and will be especially in the history of the world at the second coming of Christ.

#### REMARKS.

1. Offences are certain in such a world as ours, but their authors are responsible, ver. 1; Lev. 19 : 14; 1 Sam. 2 : 17; Matt. 18 : 7-9; Rom. 14 : 13-16, 21; 1 Cor. 8 : 9, 12.

2. How great the guilt in causing a Christian to go astray! vers. 1, 2; 2 Pet. 2 : 1-8.

3. Rebukes of sin should be mingled with compassion for the offender, ver. 3; Lev. 19 : 17; Matt. 18 : 15; Prov. 24 : 29.

4. We should forgive even as we hope to be forgiven. It is folly to withhold mercy when we need mercy. They who need infinite forgiveness ought not to limit that which they grant to their fellow-men, ver. 4; Matt. 18 : 21-35; 1 Cor. 13 : 4-7.

5. Faith is needed for the performance of duty, especially in overcoming stumbling-blocks and freely forgiving offences. They who find difficulty in obeying this or any command need to

pray, "Increase our faith," ver. 5 Rom. 14 : 23; Tit. 1 : 15; Heb. 12 : 2.

6. No barrier to Christian progress, nothing within the circle of Christian duty, is too great for a childlike faith. "It is a greater victory to root out self-love from the heart than a mountain tree by its roots," ver. 6; Mark 9 : 23; 1 Cor. 13 : 2.

7. Humility, as well as faith, is essential to godliness, and is inseparably connected with the right performance of duty, vers. 7-10; Isa. 57 : 15; Luke 18 : 14; James 4 : 6, 10.

8. Salvation is of grace, vers. 7-10; Rom. 3 : 20; Gal. 2 : 16, 21; 3 : 11; 1 Cor. 15 : 10; Eph. 2 : 5, 8.

9. No one can perform works of supererogation or acquire any surplus merit beyond what is required of him, vers. 7-10; Rom. 3 : 23; 7 : 14-25; 1 Cor. 9 : 16; James 3 : 2.

10. The spirit of the gospel is contrary to a spirit of self-valuation, vers. 7-10; ch. 18 : 14; Isa. 64 : 6; 1 Cor. 15 : 9; Eph. 3 : 8; Job 22 : 2.

11. We should make Christ's service our great business and delight, vers. 7-10; Phil. 3 : 7-9; Ps. 40 : 8.

12. Like Jesus, we should not allow increasing hostility to truth to hinder us from working while it is day, vers. 11, 13; ch. 13 : 32, 33; John 9 : 4.

13. Sin, like leprosy, is severe and painful, and affects the whole man, ver. 12; Isa. 1 : 5, 6.

14. They who would be saved must, in faith, cry to Jesus for mercy, ver. 13; ch. 18 : 13; Acts 2 : 21.

15. God has seen fit to hinge our salvation on certain conditions, not as grounds of merit, but as a test and development of faith and obedience, ver. 14; Acts 2 : 38; 3 : 19; Rom. 10 : 9, 10.

16. Learn the nature of true gratitude. It ascribes glory to God; it honors Christ; like love, it exhibits itself toward man, vers. 15, 16; Ps. 29 : 1, 2; 50 : 23; 116 : 1; John 5 : 23; 1 John 4 : 20.

17. Professed Christians are often guilty of base ingratitude, ver. 17; Ps. 78 : 42; Hos. 6 : 4; Rev. 2 : 5; 3 : 17.

18. Those whom we least expect have often been the first to accept the gospel

*Parables illustrating the nature of successful prayer.*XVIII. AND he spake a parable unto them *to this end*,

and to take a foremost place among Christians, vers. 17, 18; ch. 18 : 30; Matt. 8 : 10, 11; Acts 18 : 46-49.

19. "Renewed sinners, while their hearts overflow with gratitude to Jesus, should *express* their gratitude by obeying God and engaging in the appropriate duties of their calling and of religion."—BARNES. Ver. 19; ch. 19 : 8-10; 1 Sam. 15 : 22.

20. A gross and sensual Christianity, like the Pharisees of old, delights in legal works, outward forms, and ecclesiastical display, ver. 20.

21. Christ's kingdom is spiritual and has its seat in the hearts of believers, vers. 20, 21; John 18 : 36-38.

22. A state religion is not in accordance with the nature of Christ's kingdom, vers. 20, 21.

23. Many, like the Pharisees, see not the spiritual growth and power of Christ's kingdom, and fail even to recognize its presence, although it is all about them, vers. 20, 21; John 1 : 26.

24. In days of trial and persecution Christians long for the return of the Son of man. It is to be feared that in these days of prosperity we are too un-mindful of his second coming, ver. 22; 1 Thess. 4 : 13-18; 2 Thess. 2 : 1, 2.

25. We must guard against false leaders, especially in times of political convulsions and spiritual darkness, and trust only in Jesus as the true Messiah, ver. 23; Acts 20 : 30; Eph. 5 : 6; Col. 2 : 8; 2 Thess. 2 : 3.

26. Christ's second coming will be unexpected, sudden, and manifest throughout the world, ver. 24; 1 Thess. 5 : 2, 4; 2 Pet. 3 : 10; Rev. 1 : 7.

27. It was necessary that Christ's exaltation and glory should be preceded by the lowest depth of his humiliation, ver. 22; ch. 24 : 25, 26; Phil. 2 : 6-9.

28. We should live in constant readiness for our Saviour's coming, either in death, judgment, or the clouds of heaven, vers. 26-30; 1 Thess. 5 : 5-7; Rev. 2 : 7, 11, 17, 26; 3 : 5, 12, 21.

29. We should cherish a spirit of consecration to Christ and of readiness to leave everything earthly for him at any moment, vers. 31-33; Gen. 19 : 17; Prov. 22 : 3; 2 Pet. 3 : 11.

30. The coming of Christ will be a time for separating the righteous from the wicked, a day joyous to the former, but terrible to the latter, vers. 34-36; 1 Thess. 4 : 17; 5 : 1-3; 2 Thess. 1 : 7-10.

31. Lot's wife, an example of vacillation, indecision, and disobedience. Fleeing from Sodom at the command of God, she left her heart with her treasures in the burning city, ver. 32; ch. 9 : 62; James 1 : 6-8.

32. Worldly means of salvation will only result in destruction, ver. 33; 1 Cor. 1 : 19.

33. Self-denial is essential to true discipleship. Self must be renounced or we are lost, ver. 33; ch. 14 : 26-33.

34. Our only safety is in Christ. So surely as the eagles gather to devour their prey, so surely shall judgment come upon the wicked, whatever their plans and combinations, ver. 37; Prov. 11 : 21; 16 : 5; 2 Pet. 3 : 4-7.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

This chapter opens with two parables illustrating the nature of successful prayer (ver. 1-14), which are followed by the account of Christ blessing little children (15-17), the question of a rich ruler, and our Lord's answer and discourse thereupon, showing the necessity of self-denial in order to true discipleship, 18-30. After this Jesus the third time foretells his death (31-34), and in his journey near Jericho heals a blind man, 35-43.

1-8. PARABLE OF THE IMPORTUNATE WIDOW; OF THE UNJUST JUDGE. Jesus inculcates persevering prayer and illustrates one element of successful prayer—importunity. This is recorded only by Luke. It is fitting that this evangelist, who, more than the others, notices Jesus at prayer, should alone relate several parables of Jesus on prayer. See parable of "A Friend at Midnight" (ch. 11 : 5-10) and next parable, vers. 9-14. Jesus was probably still in Galilee.

1. **And he spake a parable unto them**, to his disciples, ch. 17 : 22. It

that men ought <sup>a</sup>always to pray, and not to faint; <sup>a</sup>ch. 11. 5-8; 21.  
 2 saying, There was in a city a judge, which feared not <sup>36</sup>; Ge. 32. 24-  
 3 God, neither regarded man: and there was a widow <sup>26</sup>; Ro. 12. 12;  
 in that city; and she came unto him, saying, <sup>o</sup>Avenge <sup>Eph. 6. 18; Phil.</sup>  
 4 me of mine adversary. And he would not for a <sup>4. 6; Col. 4. 2;</sup>  
<sup>1 Thes. 5. 17.</sup>  
 1, 2, 12-15; 119. 84.

seems natural to suppose that Jesus spoke this parable while the prophetic words of the last chapter regarding his second coming were still fresh in the minds of his disciples. In view of his second coming, the trials that should precede it, the longing of his people for his appearance, it would become them—nay, it would be a necessity in order to their full deliverance—to be constant in prayer.

**To the end** should not be in italics, for the original requires this or a similar phrase, *with reference to*, or simply *that*. The intention of the parable is here stated, or the point which it was designed to illustrate and enforce. "The key," it has been remarked, "hangs at the door." **That men**, rather, *that they*, the disciples, and they who should be disciples after them. **Ought**, the duty and implied necessity of constant prayer. **Always to pray**, day and night, ver. 7. The spirit of prayer should be kept in constant and lively exercise, 1 Thess. 5 : 17. True prayer is not the mere utterance of a prescribed form of words, but the expression of the spiritual life, "the rising of the inmost soul to God." Yet, as with the appetite, the devotional spirit will have its stated times of asking; and since it has constant needs, and a constant necessity of reaching out after grace, holiness, and God, its condition is that of devout longing and of waiting on God, Eph. 6 : 18. **And not to faint**, not languish and fail and become discouraged through overpowering evil. This is closely connected with the preceding words, presenting the negative side. Prayer must not only be constant, but persevering. To be ever in the spirit of prayer will require a struggle. It will be easier to begin a habit of prayer than to continue it. The exhortation to *faint not* is as important as that to *pray always*.

2. **In a city a judge**. Rather, *in a certain city a certain judge*. The language is lifelike, and in the vivid

narrative style common to the parables given by Luke. According to the Mosaic law, all the cities of Israel were to have their judges, who were to administer justice without partiality, Deut. 16 : 18; Ex. 18 : 21; 2 Chron. 19 : 6, 7. Compare Matt. 5 : 21, 22. Very likely just such a case as this had occurred. **Feared not God, neither regarded man**. A strong and emphatic expression in the original, denoting a person of unprincipled and reckless depravity. He stood in no awe of God, and entertained no reverence and respect for men and their opinions concerning him. Without these two restraining influences, he was perfectly reckless, following his own caprice and consulting his ease and selfish interests. How directly opposite to requirements of the law was his character! Ex. 23 : 6-9; Lev. 19 : 15; Deut. 1 : 16, 17. It must be borne in mind that in this parable God is not compared with but *contrasted* with this judge, ver. 7.

3. **A widow**. The condition of widows was indeed desolate, helpless, and friendless. The treatment to which they were exposed is implied in the directions and warnings of Scripture, Ex. 22 : 22; Deut. 10 : 17; 24 : 17; 27 : 19; 1 Kings 17 : 9, 12; Mal. 3 : 5; Mark 12 : 40. This widow, easily injured and not readily protected, without influence and unable to bribe, had little to hope from this wicked and ease-loving judge. She also dwelt **in that city**, and therefore was no stranger to the judge, who could the more easily put aside her claim as especially unworthy of his notice.

**And she came unto him**. The original seems to point to continued action and the next verse implies it. She *used to come* to him, or, she went to him and continued to go. **Avenge me**. Do me justice against, deliver me from or exact justice for me from my adversary, or opponent, in my suit before thee. There is no idea of

while: but afterward he said within himself, Though  
 5 I fear not God, nor regard man; yet because this  
 widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her  
 6 continual coming she weary me. And the Lord said,

revenge. She simply desires to have justice done. It is implied that her cause was just, that it had been proved and acknowledged by the judge to be such; notwithstanding which, she in her helplessness was suffering from the oppressive hand of her enemy. She asks the judge to interpose justice, execute the law, and maintain her right.

4. **For a while.** *For a time* he is perfectly indifferent, and puts her off. He does not wish to disturb his ease. **He would not.** Neither her gifts, her influence, nor her displeasure affected his selfish nature, and he is determined to have nothing to do with it. It is implied, however, that the widow continues to come at those times when access could not be denied her, and renews her urgent request again and again.

**But afterward.** After a sufficient time to convince the judge of her earnestness and persistency, and of the hopelessness of soon being rid of her, he changes his purpose, not from a sense of justice, but from a purely selfish consideration. **He said within himself.** It adds beauty to the parable that the conclusion of the judge is thus stated. The real ground of his act in avenging the widow is thus brought out, and the only one which he would be willing to recognize or have others recognize as the reason. He would have no one suppose that it was from any fear of God or any regard for man. Yet his language implies his belief in the existence of God, and at the same time his open contempt for divine authority and for the rights of his fellow-men. His soliloquy shows that his character was not only known to others, but to himself, and that he prided himself in it. It would be difficult to give a more vivid picture of a hardened, heaven-daring man. Yet that such a man should have been moved to do justice by the constant entreaties of a weak, defenceless widow most strikingly illustrates the power of *importunity*.

5. **Yet because.** Compare the same expression in ch. 11 : 8. What motives derived from duty to God or man fail to do selfishness accomplishes. **This widow troubleth me,** annoys and vexes me. **Lest by her continual coming,** literally, *coming to the end or for ever*—that is, continually. So long as life lasts and her request is not granted. The strong language is perfectly natural in one who was impatient and foreboding an annoyance which would be long and incessant. **She weary me.** The verb in the original means literally *to beat under the eye*, and secondarily, *to treat with severity*, torment, harass, distract, worry out. The only other place where it is found in the New Testament is in 1 Cor. 9 : 27, "I keep under my body," treat with severity, severely discipline my body. Some take the verb in its primary sense, and represent the judge as fearful lest the widow, becoming desperate, should attack him and do him violence. But such a supposition is quite inconsistent with the character of the weak and supplicating widow, and also with that of the judge as regarding not man. The figurative sense is clearly demanded, and the connection points quite exactly to the meaning in which the word is to be taken. This woman was *a trouble*, an annoyance, to him. Each time she came to renew her request was *like a blow in the face*, a vexation. He foreboded that it would be incessant, a constant beating, torment, worry, or plague. She would thus as it were *beat him out*, distract, worry, and weary him, or, to imitate the strength of the original, *weary me out*. Such exaggeration is the language of impatience and selfishness. Common usage has similar terms, such as, "I am worried to death." The word here is just the one that an unjust and godless judge would naturally use under the circumstances, and strikingly reveals his rough and unrefined character. It was very nearly the same motive, though more mildly expressed, which led the apostles to ask Jesus to send away the woman

- 7 Hear what the unjust judge saith. And <sup>p</sup>shall not  
 God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night  
 8 unto him, though he bear long with them? I tell  
 you, <sup>q</sup>that he will avenge them speedily. Neverthe-  
 less, <sup>r</sup>when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith  
 on the earth?  
 9 And he spake this parable unto certain <sup>s</sup>which  
 trusted in themselves that they were righteous, <sup>t</sup>and  
 10 despised others. "Two men went up into the temple  
 4; Pro. 30. 12; Ro. 10. 3. <sup>u</sup>ch. 7. 39; 15. 2; 19. 7; John 9. 28, 34. <sup>v</sup>ch. 7. 29, 30.

of Canaan, "for she crieth after us,"  
 Matt. 15 : 23.

6. **The Lord.** Thus Luke frequently designates Jesus, see on ch. 7 : 13. Here, perhaps, our Lord paused in his discourse a moment, so that the attention of all might be fixed upon the effect of this widow's importunity upon this unjust judge, as exhibited in his language. Then, resuming, Jesus exclaims, **Hear**, give attention and reflect upon this surprising utterance, **what this unjust judge saith**, showing the power of importunity even upon an unrighteous and faithless man, and when even applied by a feeble woman. *Unjust* is emphatic; with it the assumed holiness and righteousness of God is in contrast, ver. 7. Compare ch. 16 : 8, where we have the same designation, "the unjust steward."

7. **And shall not God avenge**, vindicate (see note on ver. 3), **his own elect**, his chosen ones? His people's cause is dear to him. He is *just*, and it is impossible for him to reject or neglect his chosen. **Which cry day and night unto him.** *Who* is the more grammatical word. The reference is to those who habitually and fervently appeal to him for help. The expression is designedly strong. **Though he bear long with them?** There seems to be a little ambiguity here when compared with the next verse. A better translation is, "*though he is long-suffering with them.*" He does not check the oppressors of his people immediately. There seems to be delay.

8. **I tell you**, an emphatic utterance, **that he will avenge them speedily.** We must not limit the "speedily" by our notion of time; the day of the Lord is not like ours. When he arises to vindicate, he makes short work. See 2 Pet. 3 : 8-10. The great Teacher adds

a practical question calculated to lead one to self-examination concerning his possession of faith. **Nevertheless, yet, when the Son of man cometh**, in the great day of vindication, in the character of judge, to overthrow the wicked and rescue the righteous, **shall he find faith on the earth?** Will there be to any extent a strong confidence, that will show itself in such fervency and continuance as the case of the widow illustrates? There are several scriptures which refer to the period about the time of the second coming in language similar to this. The interrogative form here certainly supposes that the faith of professed disciples will be called to a great conflict, and the form of the question leads us to infer that the aggregate of faith in that day will be small and feeble. Read 2 Pet. 3 : 3, 4; 2 Tim. 3 : 1-5; Jude 15-18. A thoughtful comparison of these passages will suggest whether our Saviour did not throw his thoughts beyond the particular application of the parable, and give a hint of the fearful apostasy that will prevail in the world when he comes, according to his word, "in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory," Matt. 24 : 30, 37-39.

9-14. PARABLE OF THE PHARISEE AND THE PUBLICAN. We have here a comprehensive account of two representative characters revealed by peculiarities in the act of worship. Recorded only by Luke.

9. **Trusted in themselves.** They had not seen the plague of their own hearts, and in their blindness they had confidence that their moral standing was right. They had no idea that the source of righteousness and acceptance was *outside* of themselves. This spirit fostered the feeling described in the words **despised others.** This preface

to pray; the one <sup>v</sup>a Pharisee, and the other a publican. The Pharisee <sup>w</sup>stood and prayed thus with himself, <sup>x</sup>God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this 12 publican. <sup>y</sup>I fast twice in the week, <sup>z</sup>I give tithes

Phil. 3. 4-9. <sup>v</sup> Ac. 23. 6-8.  
<sup>w</sup> Ps. 135. 2; Mt. 6. 5.  
<sup>x</sup> Is. 1. 15; 58. 2;  
<sup>y</sup> Jer. 2. 35; Rev. 3. 17.  
<sup>z</sup> Mt. 6. 16-18; Ro. 3. 27; Eph. 2. 9;

is the key to open the parable and show its application.

10. **Went up to the temple.** The word here translated temple denotes *sacred*, a sacred, consecrated place, and is applied to the whole sacred inclosure of courts and buildings, including the temple in its strict and proper sense, which is expressed by another word in such passages as Matt. 23 : 35 ; 27 : 51. For further on the temple, see chap. 1 : 9. **To pray.** The temple was a place for prayer as well as for sacrifice. See Isa. 56 : 7. Jesus says, "My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations." "Peter and John went *up into the temple to pray*," Acts 3 : 1. The third and ninth hours—that is, 9 A. M. and 3 P. M. of our time—were hours of prayer in connection with the morning and evening sacrifice and the burning of incense. **A Pharisee.** One of the two principal sects of the Jews at that time. They both originated about one hundred and fifty years before Christ. The *Pharisees* were noted for their rigid observance of the letter of the law and of their traditions. Among their leading characteristics were formality, ostentation, self-righteousness, and hypocrisy. **A publican.** The *publicans*, or the collectors of revenue and taxes under the Roman government, consisted of two classes. The first were Roman knights, who levied the revenues of a large district; the second were subordinate collectors, each of whom was required to pay a certain sum to his superior, with the privilege of raising as much more as he pleased for his own benefit. This led to extortion and oppression. The latter class were the publicans of the New Testament. They were also under the additional reproach of being the instruments of a Gentile or heathen power and a foreign despotism. Hence the very name of *publican* was expressive of a depraved and reckless character. Jews engaged in this calling were excluded by their occupation from respectable society, and were naturally

thrown into that of wicked and disreputable men. This explains the force of the phrase so frequently used in the Gospels, "publicans and sinners," ch. 7 : 34. These two men thus classified are now presented individually by their acts.

11. **Stood.** This is not an improper posture in prayer. At the dedication of the temple Solomon stood and also knelt, 1 Kings 8 : 22, 54. Our Lord sanctions standing (Mark 11 : 25), and there are examples of kneeling, Acts 9 : 40 ; 20 : 36 ; 21 : 5. Sitting upright is nowhere authorized. **Thus with himself.** Some think this means that he prayed only mentally, but this would scarcely furnish the illustration intended. The literal order of the original is "*the Pharisee standing by himself prayed these things.*" **I thank thee.** So far the words are right. Thanksgiving is an important part of our communications with God. **That I am not as other men.** If in deep humility he had owned God's distinguishing mercy toward him, and had ascribed all to the grace of God, the utterance might be permitted; but when the next words reveal his haughty, self-sufficient, abominable pride, and his mean allusion to the man who was professing to engage in the same worship with himself, we realize that his boastful sacrifice was abomination to the Lord. In his intense selfishness he separates himself according to the meaning of his name, *Pharisee*, and he lifts his head above all others. He makes but two classes in the matter of merit; all men are on one side, he on the other. He specifies various characters and separates himself from them. **Extortioners.** I never compel more than is my due. **Unjust, adulterers.** I never transgress, I live a pure life. And then, as if his heart bounded at the illustration furnished for a contrast in the poor penitent whom he saw in the distance, he adds, **or even as this publican.** There is no evidence that he knew anything about the

13 of all that I possess. And the publican, <sup>a</sup>standing afar off, would not lift up so much as *his* eyes unto heaven, <sup>b</sup>but smote upon his breast, saying, <sup>c</sup>God be  
14 merciful to me a sinner! I tell you, this man went down to his house <sup>d</sup>justified rather than the other:

<sup>a</sup> Job 42. 6; Ps. 46  
12.

<sup>b</sup> Jer. 31. 18, 19.

<sup>c</sup> Ps. 51. 1-3; 86. 15

<sup>d</sup> Ro. 3. 20-26; 5. 9

man, except that he was a publican; he had no right to impute to him special sin because of his employment. The charity that thinketh no evil would have avoided such imputation. The language, when probed, reveals an expression of impudent contempt. Infatuated with a sense of his own importance, he asks God to notice the worthlessness of the man who stood at the other extreme of character. Next he boasts of his positive good qualities.

12. **Fast twice in the week.** The only fast positively enjoined was on the day of expiation, the tenth day of the second month, Lev. 23 : 27. There are, however, instances of fasting on other occasions. See Ezra 8 : 21; Dan. 10 : 3; Acts 13 : 3. The Jewish fasts in Christ's time were on the second and fifth days of the week, Monday and Thursday. In Isaiah's day fasting was greatly abused (Isa. 58 : 3-5); and when the parable was uttered, the service had for the most part degenerated into a depraved "voluntary humility," so that Jesus cautioned his disciples to avoid in fasting the appearance the hypocrites assumed, disfiguring their countenances that they might appear to men to fast. The Pharisees boasted of their frequent fastings as evidences of their peculiar holiness. **Tithes of all.** A tithe is a tenth part. Refer to Num. 18 : 21; Lev. 27 : 30-32. For an example of Pharisaic strictness see Matt. 23 : 23. This man seems to have been of the class there mentioned. **Possess** means rather *acquire*. Not tithes of all I have, but of my increase—profits. This utterance completes his profession of negative and positive goodness.

13. Here is the other part of the picture. **Standing afar off.** There is a distinction in the words indicating the posture of the two men that does not appear in our translation. The word "stood," as applied to the Pharisee, contains the idea of being put in position (*σταθεῖς*), while the standing (*εστώς*) of the publican was the mere transient remaining. **Would not lift so much**

**as his eyes toward heaven.** Conscious of guilt, he cast his eyes downward, as is natural for those who have similar feelings, Ps. 40 : 12; Ezra 9 : 6; Dan. 9 : 7. **Smote upon his breast,** an action which denotes great grief, violent trouble within the breast, Nah. 2 : 7; Luke 23 : 48. The many pungent sorrows of that soul cannot be repressed, and in addition to the gesture there burst forth the words, **God be merciful, be propitiated, to me (the) sinner,** a full, explicit confession and an anxious cry for mercy. He not only makes the general confession, but singles himself out as *the* sinner. The Greek article does not appear in our translation. Note the importance of a little word. "*The*" shows the personal individual application, as though he said, "Lord, all men are sinners, and I as a man am in the common condemnation, but my thoughts just now are directed to myself. I am *the* sinner." His is the feeling uttered by Job: "Behold I am vile; what shall I answer thee? I will lay my hand on my mouth. I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." The Pharisee was blind, the publican saw himself as lost. The **be merciful** is not the usual cry for mercy merely. It belongs to the family of words used in connection with the shedding of substitutionary blood, and contains, therefore, the idea of mercy through atonement. The petitioner recognizes God's plan of pardon through the slain sacrifice.

14. **I tell you,** emphatic words equivalent to, Give heed to what I am about to say. **This man went down . . . justified rather than the other.** The word *rather* is to be explained by such passages as Eph. 4 : 28; 5 : 4, 11; Heb. 11 : 25, where the word excludes comparison and includes contrast. The Pharisee was not at all justified. He offered no petition, indicated no sense of need. He said, in effect, "I am holier than thou." He stumbled through his own blindness. The other felt and confessed his sins; he

\*for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; \*ch. 14. 11.  
and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

*Jesus blesses little children.*

- 15 'And they brought unto him also infants, that he would touch them: but when *his* disciples saw *it*, they  
16 rebuked them. But Jesus called them *unto him*, and said, Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for <sup>s</sup>of such is the kingdom of God. <sup>r</sup>Mt. 19. 13-15; Mk 10. 13-16. <sup>s</sup>1 Cor. 14. 20; 1 Pet. 1. 2.

found that God was faithful and just to forgive him and cleanse him from all unrighteousness. To him belonged the promise, "To this man will I look, even to him who is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word," Isa. 66 : 2.

Jesus states the principle by which exaltation or abasement is ensured. **Exalteth himself**, like the Pharisees. **Shall be abased**, by the divine condemnation. **Humbleth himself**, before God and as a servant of his brethren. **Exalted**, by the divine favor and the honor that comes from God. Somewhat similar to this is Ezek. 21 : 26, "Exalt him that is low and abase him that is high," and the rabbinical sentiment, "My abasement is my exaltation, and my exaltation my abasement." The maxim which Jesus announced on this and several other occasions (chap. 14 : 11; 18 : 14) is, however, superior to all similar ones as a universal principle of God's government, and as embracing man's agency in his exaltation or abasement: "Shall exalt *himself*; shall humble *himself*," Prov. 16 : 18.

15-17. LITTLE CHILDREN BROUGHT TO JESUS, Matt. 19 : 13-15; Mark 10 : 13-16. Mark's account is the fullest.

15. **Infants**. Matthew has little children; Mark, young children. The same word in the original, but the word which Luke here uses means a babe, an infant. It is used chap. 2 : 12, 16; Acts 7 : 19; 2 Tim. 3 : 15; 1 Pet. 2 : 2. They were evidently little children of tender age. **They brought**, *bore*, them in their arms or *led* them. The verb in the original may be applied to either mode of bringing them. Who brought them we are not told; probably the fathers and mothers or those who had charge of them. Jesus may have been about to depart from the place where

he was, and hence the parents may have sought his blessing on their children before he left.

**That he would touch them**. Luke and also Mark appear thus to bring out the modest form of their request. Matthew states the full meaning, "that he should put his hands on them and pray." The object of their bringing them was that he might bless them, or invoke the blessing of God upon them. Thus Jacob put his hands upon the two sons of Joseph and blessed them, Gen. 48 : 14. It seems to have been common among the Jews to put their hands on persons when they prayed for them. Compare Mark 5 : 23 : Luke 4 : 40. It was also customary with the Jews for the greater to bless the less, Heb. 7 : 7. **His disciples rebuked them**. They probably felt that the various duties of Jesus were too urgent for him to turn aside to bless little children. They may have been very much engaged in their conversation with Jesus, and did not wish to be interrupted, feeling that it was more important that they be instructed than that parents and friends be gratified in having their children blessed. They seem also to have thought it unsuitable for little children to be brought to Jesus either at this time or for this purpose, and hence the reply of Jesus, *Suffer little children*, etc. How chilling the rebuke of these disciples to fond parents who had doubtless been greatly moved and drawn by the wise and tender words of Jesus! But they were doomed only to temporary disappointment. Mark says he was much displeased at what the disciples had done.

16. Jesus calls them and says, **Suffer little children**. Jesus was pleased to have them come to him. He gives the reason, **for of such is the kingdom**

17 <sup>b</sup> Verily, I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive <sup>b</sup> Mt. 18. 1-5 10;  
the kingdom of God <sup>1</sup> as a little child shall in no wise <sup>c</sup> Mk. 10. 15.  
enter therein. <sup>1</sup> 1 Pet. 1. 14.

*Question of a rich ruler; our Lord's answer and discourse thereupon.*

18 And a certain ruler asked him, saying, Good Mas- <sup>d</sup> Mt 19. 16-30; Mk  
19 ter, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? And Jesus <sup>e</sup> 10. 17-31.  
said unto him, Why callest thou me good? none is

of God, for to such as these belongs the kingdom of God. Who are meant by such is evident from Mark 9 : 42, *these little ones that believe in me*, those who have a childlike spirit, humble, teachable, submissive, and obedient. Such, indeed, are subjects and citizens of the Messiah's kingdom, and entitled to its blessings both for time and eternity. Next verse confirms this symbolical reference of *children* to the childlike dispositions of the regenerated.

For a discussion of the subject at length see notes on the parallel passage in Mark.

17. What Jesus has stated concerning the little ones leads him to present an important and closely-connected truth. A person cannot belong to the kingdom of God without entering it, and he cannot enter it without a child-like spirit. This solemn truth he introduces with the authoritative expression, **Verily I say unto you, . . . shall not receive the kingdom of God**, in their hearts (chap. 17 : 21), shall not receive Christ and the gospel (ch. 1 : 15), **as a little child**, with the humility, simplicity, and confidence of a little child. **He shall in no wise enter therein**, and hence he cannot be saved. We can only enter by receiving Christ, the King, his laws, etc., in a proper spirit. Thus this verse shows that the meek, humble, and childlike disposition implied in the preceding verse is necessary to discipleship.

18-30. THE RICH YOUNG RULER. DISCOURSE ON RICHES AND FORSAKING ALL FOR CHRIST'S SAKE. One thing lacking. This seems to have occurred soon after Christ's blessing the little children, Matt. 19 : 16-30; Mark 10 : 17-31. Mark is the fullest and most vivid. Luke is the briefest. Matthew (19 : 28), however, records a promise to the twelve not found in the other evangelists.

Mark says when he had gone forth into the way from the house where he had stopped, and where he taught his disciples and blessed the little children on his journey toward Jerusalem. This definite connection is preserved only by Mark, Matthew and Luke agreeing with him in the order of events.

18. **A certain ruler**, a man distinguished from the people, not only by his eager and earnest coming to Jesus, but also by his rank. He was a ruler, probably of some neighboring synagogue. Matthew (19 : 20) speaks of him as a young man, probably between twenty and forty. He did not come, like many others, "tempting him" (Mark 10 : 2), but with reverence and desires to be taught. He was honest, but self-righteous. Mark alone states the fact that he came running and knelt to him.

**Good Master, teacher.** A teacher indeed like himself, but one of superior and eminent virtues. **What shall I do**, etc., a question which a convicted sinner might have asked, as those did upon the day of Pentecost (Acts 2 : 37), but which here meant, **What work of merit** (Matthew says "good thing") **must I do** in order that I may attain to that goodness which ensures eternal life? **Inherit, possess by right**, have for my portion. **Eternal life**, an unending blessed existence, everlasting happiness.

19. Jesus *first* replies regarding the epithet "Good." He reminds him that absolute goodness belongs not to man, but to God. The reply was adapted, on the one hand, to correct the false notion of the young man, who was expecting to arrive at absolute and meritorious goodness, and on the other to point him to God as the only source of goodness to man. **Why callest thou me good?** since you regard me as only a virtuous man, an eminent rabbi or teacher. **None is good, save one,**

- 20 good, save one, *that is*, God. Thou knowest the commandments, <sup>k</sup>Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, <sup>l</sup>Honor thy father and thy mother. And he said, <sup>m</sup>All these have I kept from my youth up.
- 22 Now when Jesus heard these things, he said unto him, Yet lackest thou one thing: <sup>n</sup>sell all that thou hast, and distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have

<sup>k</sup>Ex. 20. 12, 16  
Deu. 5. 16-20  
Ro. 13. 9.

<sup>l</sup>Eph. 6. 2; Col. 3. 20.

<sup>m</sup>Phil. 3. 6.

<sup>n</sup>Mt. 6. 19, 20; 19. 21; 1 Tim. 6. 19.

**that is, God.** God only is absolutely good. "For thou only art holy," Rev. 15 : 4. Jesus thus makes no reference to his own divinity, but he shows the young man how vain his thought of doing an absolutely good thing. It was the first blow to his self-righteousness.

20. He then proceeds to the *second* part of his answer, and attends to the great end which the young man wishes to attain—namely, *eternal life*. **Thou knowest the commandments**, since he was a Jew, and a ruler probably of a synagogue and instructed in the Scriptures. As if Jesus had said, "Why ask, *What shall I do?* Why come to me? Thou knowest what God has already commanded. Jesus thus directs his attention first to the commandments, which pointed out the way of holiness, which is the way of God. Similarly he had answered the young lawyer in regard to the law, "This do and thou shalt live," ch. 10 : 28. The law was indeed intended to give life to all who should perfectly obey it, John 12 : 50; Rom. 7 : 10. It was fitted to Adam in his state of innocence and to holy beings. And in our present fallen condition it is fitted to show men that they are sinners, Rom. 7 : 7-9. As a wise Physician, Jesus would first make this young man feel that he was sick, and hence he preaches to him the law. If he had come a sin-sick soul, he would have proclaimed to him the gospel, Matt. 11 : 28-30. Jesus quotes as specimens the second table of the decalogue, the duties between man and man, because these are the more easily understood and the more easily tested. The young man may also have laid less stress on these than the other commandments, and may have been remarkably deficient in honor to his parents and in love to his neighbor (Mark 7 : 9-13; ch. 10 : 30-35); and then, if he was wanting in performing his duty toward men,

surely he was lacking in his duties toward God, 1 John 4 : 20.

The commandments are not given in their order, but the seventh first, then the sixth, then the eighth, ninth, and last of all the fifth. Matthew gives the sixth first, and then the seventh, but Mark the same as Luke. The fifth is placed last, very probably because it is a positive command. Matthew also adds, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," a positive summary of the second table. Mark alone adds, **Defraud not**, by covetousness or any dishonest act, which appears to be a brief summary of the tenth commandment, Ex. 20 : 17.

21. **All these have I kept.** Externally, in outward appearance, he had observed them, but he had no insight into the spiritual nature of the law as exhibited in the sermon on the mount, or he would not have thus spoken. **From my youth up.** These words are not given by Matthew, but by Luke and Mark, according to the highest critical authorities. As he was still young, he must refer back to his early youth, his childhood. But though he was self-righteous, he felt a sense of need. All his strict external observances did not give him peace of mind. He therefore, Matthew says (19 : 20), also inquired, "What lack I yet?" He was, like Saul of Tarsus, sincere, earnest, circumspect, but intensely self-righteous, Phil. 3 : 4-6. Mark tells us that Jesus, beholding him, *loved* him.

22. **Lackest thou one thing.** If thou desirest to have moral completeness and lack nothing, if you would "be perfect, entire, wanting in nothing," James 1 : 4. See on Matt. 5 : 48. **Sell all that thou hast.** Jesus shows by this single command the weak point in the young man's character and a fatal lack in his righteousness. He places before him a perfect standard,

23 treasure in heaven : and come, follow me. And when he heard this, he was very sorrowful : for he was very rich.

24 And when Jesus saw that he was very sorrowful, he said, °How hardly shall they that have riches enter  
25 into the kingdom of God! For it is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye, than for a rich  
26 man to enter into the kingdom of God. And they

• Pro. 11. 28; Mt. 19. 23; Mk. 10 23; 1 John 2. 15

but not *such* as he desired. He wished to do those performances and observances which accorded with his proud and self-righteous spirit. Jesus places before him self-renunciation, a life of self-denial, and discipleship of the despised Nazarene. Thus we must understand the command, for merely selling his earthly possessions would not constitute perfection or the complete circle of moral obligation. The selling all that he had was but a type of giving up all for Christ. In his case it was made the test of love to God and of the value he put on eternal life. In the spirit of love to God and man he was to **distribute to the poor**, come, and follow Jesus. Mark adds, "Take up the cross." The young man, in professing to keep the commandments, professed to love God supremely; yet Jesus shows him that he loved his possessions more than God, that he valued them above eternal life, and that he would break any or all of the commandments of God rather than part with them. They were in his case his *idol*, and therefore they must be sacrificed.

The spirit of this command is required of every disciple, ch. 14 : 33. Jesus requires a full surrender of soul, body, talents, influence, property. He does not require us to sell our possessions, impoverish ourselves, and thus unsettle the social system, but he does require us as his stewards to use the world as not abusing it, and to give freely as we have the ability, ch. 12 : 33; 1 Tim. 6 : 17, 19. **Treasure in heaven.** In place of thy treasures on earth, Matt. 6 : 19, 20.

23. Jesus had taken the young man at his word and pointed him to a perfect standard, and by it showed him that, however moral and amiable he had been, he was lacking in the ground principles of righteousness. He **heard this**, the saying of Jesus, felt its force, but the requirement was too hard for

him. He had great possessions, and his love for them was inordinate. He therefore was **very sorrowful: for he was very rich.** He has a struggle, but he cannot give up the world. Thus his sorrow showed that Jesus had struck at the idol which stood in the place of God, and which must be renounced and forsaken or salvation could not be attained.

24. **How hardly**, etc. With what difficulty shall a rich man become the subject and attain the blessings and honors of the new dispensation here and hereafter! With what difficulty shall he be saved!

25. **Easier for a camel**, etc. The passage is in harmony with the Oriental modes of conception and proverbial language. Compare also Jer. 13 : 23. It is a strong hyperbolic proverb, expressing the greatest conceivable difficulty, the greatest human impossibility of a rich man entering Christ's kingdom. The following, from Dr. Fish's *Bible Lands Illustrated* (pp. 165, 166), is a forcible statement of a view which has able advocates: "The Jaffa gate is close to the castle of David. I found in it an illustration of Matt. 19 : 24 as to a rich man going through 'the eye of a needle.' There is here a small gate in the large one, bearing the name needle's eye. My dragoman informed me of this, and said it had always been so called. I afterward inquired of a Christian Jew, for thirty years a resident in Jerusalem, who verified the statement, and farther said that *any* little gate like that in a large one, in both Palestine and Egypt, was called a needle's eye—a fact which I have since ascertained from other sources. At nightfall the Jaffa gate, like the others, is shut, and laden animals coming up must lie on the outside. But Mr. Floyd, my dragoman, stated that he had often seen *small* camels, for fear of being run off by

- 27 that heard *it* said, Who then can be saved? And he said, <sup>p</sup>The things which are impossible with men are possible with God. p ch. 1. 37; Jer. 32. 17; Zec. 8. 6; Mt. 19. 26; 2 Cor. 12. 9.
- 28 <sup>a</sup>Then Peter said, Lo, we have left all, and followed thee. And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, <sup>r</sup>There is no man that hath left house, or parents, or brethren, or wife, or children, for the kingdom of God's sake, <sup>s</sup>who shall not receive manifold q Mt. 19. 27-29; Mk. 10. 28-30. r Deu. 33. 9.
- 30 more in this present time, and in the world to come life everlasting. \* Job 42. 10.

the Arabs, passed in through this little door, *after their loads had been removed*. I measured the opening, and found it two feet six inches wide, by about seven feet in *height*. As there is considerable space in the main gate *below* this little one, which the animal steps over, a small-sized camel, stripped and crouching, can squeeze through. So, while as a big rich man one cannot enter heaven, yet if he will humble himself and become as 'a little child,' and be stripped of the world and all self-righteousness, he can enter."

26. They said to one another, **Who then can be saved?** An abrupt question of strong surprise. Quick as thought the disciples *generalized* the class of *the rich*, or of those that *trusted* in riches. They saw that the desire and love of riches were so common among men, and also the trust in them, both of those who had them and those who were striving to obtain them, as to seemingly render the Saviour's declaration of almost universal application, and they exclaim, "Who then can be saved?"

27. **Impossible with men, possible with God.** It is a human impossibility. It is beyond human power for any to be saved, and especially those who are surrounded with the dangers and the difficulties of wealth. God can break the spirit of covetousness, change the heart, and make the rich humble, believing, self-denying, and obedient, so that they shall trust in God rather than in their possessions, love him supremely, and consecrating all to his service act only as stewards. *All things are possible*, thus including the conversion and salvation of the rich as well as of the poor.

28. Peter speaks and says, **We have left all**, rather (best text), *we left*

*our own*, our property and business, and *followed thee* as personal attendants, Mark 1 : 16-20; 2 : 14. This declaration of Peter was suggested by the command of Jesus to the young man, "Sell whatsoever thou hast," etc. (ver. 22), and his discourse on the difficulty of rich men attaining salvation. We are not to regard it as a *boast*, for that would have called forth a different answer from Jesus. It seems to have been an anxious inquiry regarding themselves, whether they had complied with what was required. They had forsaken all. None of them was rich, yet they had broken many fond ties and made many great sacrifices. James and John, sons of Zebedee, had hired servants (Mark 1 : 20); Matthew was a man of some property, ch. 5 : 29.

29. For slight variations in the record of this answer, see Matt. 19 : 29; Mark 10 : 29-31. The enumeration of various family connections indicates that the self-denial must be complete, devotion to the kingdom must be devotion. Christ, his truth, and his gospel are one.

30. **Manifold.** In Mark it is a hundredfold. There is a blessing here in self-denial for Christ and his kingdom. **The world to come**, the period after death. **Life everlasting**, everlasting state of holy and happy existence. Life here means not merely existence, but existence in its right relation to God and truth, hence holy and happy existence. As physical life consists in a certain connection of soul and body; so spiritual life, in a certain connection of the soul with God. Thus the reward commences in this world, but has its great realization in the world to come.

31-34. JESUS AGAIN FORETELLS HIS

*Jesus a third time foretells his sufferings, death, and resurrection.*

- 31 'Then he took *unto him* the twelve, and said unto them, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and all things <sup>u</sup>that are written by the prophets concerning the Son  
 32 of man shall be accomplished. For <sup>v</sup>he shall be delivered unto the Gentiles, and shall be mocked, and  
 33 spitefully entreated, and spitted on: and they shall scourge *him*, and put him to death: and the third day  
 34 he shall rise again. <sup>w</sup>And they understood none of these things: and this saying was hid from them, neither knew they the things which were spoken.

<sup>u</sup> Mt. 20. 17-19; Mk. 10. 32-34; also Mt. 16. 21; 17. 22.  
<sup>v</sup> Ps. 22; Is. ch. 53.  
<sup>w</sup> ch. 23. 1; Mt. 27. 2; John 18. 28; Ac. 3. 13.

<sup>x</sup> ch. 2. 50; 9. 45; Mk. 9. 32; John 10. 6; 12. 16.

*Healing of a blind man at Jericho.*

- 35 <sup>x</sup>And it came to pass, that as he was come nigh

<sup>x</sup> Mt. 20. 29-34; Mk. 10. 46-52.

SUFFERINGS, DEATH, AND RESURRECTION, Matt. 20 : 17-19; Mark 10 : 32-34.

31. **The twelve.** He took them apart from the other followers. See Matt. 20 : 17. **We go up.** Jerusalem is about 4000 feet higher than the Jordan valley. **All things written in the prophets.** Peter tells us that "*the Spirit of Christ, which was in them (the prophets), testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow.*" Read Isa. ch. 53.

32. **Delivered.** By the treachery of Judas and by the Sanhedrim. **Gentiler.** The Greek word for *Gentiles* literally means *nations*—that is, *all nations* besides the Jews—and is very nearly equivalent to our *heathen*. It here referred particularly to the Romans, to Pilate, and the Roman soldiers, ch. 23 : 35, 36. **Mocked,** etc. See the narrative of our Lord's trial and crucifixion as given in the Gospels.

33. **Scourge,** etc. For this purpose they would deliver him to the Gentiles. Crucifixion properly commenced with scourging, yet in our Saviour's case, through the petulance of the brutal soldiery, he was also *mocked*. **Shall rise again.** As on the two former announcements of his death, he foretells his resurrection. This was a gleam of light which shone up beyond the intervening darkness. Without his resurrection his death would have been in vain, 1 Cor. 15 : 12-18. His resurrection exhibits unmistakably his divine power.

34. **They understood none of**

**these things.** They may have regarded his language as figurative of great obstacles and difficulties in setting up a temporal kingdom. Or his words may have been to them dark and parabolic sayings, which they did not attempt to understand, much less did they desire to understand in their literal sense. See ch. 9 : 45, and even after his resurrection, ch. 24 : 16.

35-43. **HEALING OF THE BLIND MAN,** Mark 10 : 46-52; Matt. 20 : 29-33. Mark again is the fullest, but Luke alone records the effect of the miracle on the people, ver. 43.

35. **Jericho** signifies "the fragrant place," and was a city of Benjamin (Josh. 18 : 21), situated about eighteen miles north-east of Jerusalem and seven miles west of the Jordan. It was founded probably after the destruction of Sodom, called "the city of palm trees" (Deut. 34 : 3), and famous for its roses and balsam. It was the first city in Canaan taken and destroyed by Joshua (Josh. 6 : 24-26), rebuilt five hundred years afterward by Hiel (1 Kings 16 : 34), and became distinguished for its school of the prophets and as the residence of Elisha, 2 Kings 2 : 18. Meanwhile, a new Jericho appears to have been built on a neighboring site, Judg. 3 : 13; 2 Sam. 10 : 5; Josephus, *Bell. Jud.* iv. 8 : 2, 3. From Josephus and 2 Kings 2 : 19-22 we infer that the ancient city stood near Elisha's fountain, supposed to be the one now named Ain-es-Sultan, the plain around which is now strewn with ancient ruins and rubbish. **As he was come nigh**

unto Jericho, a certain blind man sat by the wayside  
 36 begging: and hearing the multitude pass by, he asked  
 37 what it meant. And they told him, that Jesus of  
 38 Nazareth passeth by. And he cried, saying, Jesus,  
 39 *thou* son of David, have mercy on me! And they } Ro. 1. 3.  
 which went before rebuked him, that he should hold  
 his peace: but he cried so much the more, *Thou Son*  
*of David*, have mercy on me!

Matthew says, "as they were going forth from Jericho." There are also apparent disagreements as to the number of the healed. But they are only apparent, not real. It is difficult to harmonize the evangelists. If we knew the full particulars, all would be plain. Some little circumstances not related might remove all apparent discrepancies. In our ignorance of the details of our Saviour's visit at Jericho we may present several ways which the learned have proposed for harmonizing Luke with Matthew and Mark: 1. There was an *old* and a *new* Jericho. Jesus may have been leaving one and approaching the other. The first two evangelists may describe the former act, while Luke describes the latter. 2. There may have been two miracles, one just before entering the city and one as he was leaving it, Luke mentioning the former and Mark the latter, and Matthew describing both under one account. 3. One of the blind men may have besought Jesus on his entering the city, but for some reason was not answered; but at the departure of Jesus, on the following morning, with a companion he may have renewed the appeal, when they both obtained a cure. 4. Jesus may have remained several days at Jericho, during which time he would perhaps visit points of interest in the vicinity. Compare Mark's language, "They came to Jericho." The miracle, therefore, might have been performed, not when he was finally leaving Jericho, but when he was *occasionally* going out of Jericho and returning to it. 5. The Greek verb in Luke rendered to *come nigh* may signify to *be near*. See Septuagint, 1 Kings 21 : 2; Deut. 21 : 3; Jer. 23 : 23; Ruth 2 : 20; 2 Sam. 19 : 42. Thus the language of Luke may mean while he was *yet near* the city, including the idea expressed by Matthew and Mark. No one need stumble

when we can conceive of so many explanations. The second and fifth are the least satisfactory. The first is preferable. See Clark's Harmony, § 135. **A certain blind man.** Matthew's *two* men include the *one* here mentioned. His name was Bartimeus. See Mark 10 : 46. **By the wayside.** Probably the road leading to Jerusalem. **Begging.** Probably his blindness accounted for his poverty.

36. **And hearing.** It was a blessing that he retained that faculty. **The multitude.** Jericho would be full of people who were going up to Jerusalem to attend the feast of the passover. The number would be greatly increased by those coming from Galilee by the way of Perea to avoid passing through Samaria.

37. **Jesus of Nazareth,** whose fame as a prophet and miracle-worker was familiar.

38. **With a loud voice.** He is intensely anxious and earnest. **Son of David.** Descendant and successor of David on the throne of Israel. The angel of the Lord had previously applied the title to Joseph, Mt. 1 : 20. It seems to have been a popular designation of the Messiah (Matt. 22 : 42), and by the use of it the blind men acknowledged the Messiahship of Jesus. Our Lord did not employ this title in speaking of himself, doubtless because it would favor the idea of an earthly reign and kingdom, and might lead the people to desire, as on one occasion (John 6 : 15), to make him king. The titles, "the Son of man," "the Son of God," were of deeper significance and less liable to be perverted. **Have mercy.** Have pity, show compassion.

39. **Rebuked him.** They did not wish to be disturbed and interrupted in the journey. **He cried so much the more.** The rebuke of the multitude only aroused his earnestness, for he

40 And Jesus stood, and commanded him to be brought  
 unto him : and when he was come near, he asked him,  
 41 saying, What wilt thou that I shall do unto thee?  
 42 And he said, Lord, that I may receive my sight. And  
 Jesus said unto him, Receive thy sight : <sup>ch. 17. 19.</sup> thy faith  
 43 hath saved thee. And immediately he received his  
 sight, and followed him, <sup>ch. 5. 26; Ac. 4.</sup> glorifying God : and all the  
 people, when they saw *it*, gave praise unto God. <sup>21; 11. 18.</sup>

believed that Jesus would be willing to heal him. It was a trial of his faith. He saw the difficulties of his situation, and faith in the ability and willingness of Jesus to open his eyes excited him to surmount every barrier, and to cry "Have mercy on me," etc. A good illustration of the sinner awake to his necessity and seeking from Jesus the salvation of his soul.

40. **Jesus stood still.** He recognized the title, and stopped to hear further particulars of the request.

41. **What wilt thou?** A direct question, responded to by a specific answer.

42. **Receive thy sight.** Matthew prefixed, *He had compassion.* **Thy faith,** etc. For other instances of this sentiment see ch. 7 : 50; 8 : 48; 17 : 19; Matt. 9 : 29.

43. **Immediately.** Forthwith at the word and the touch, Matt. 20 : 34. **Followed him.** Mark adds, "*glorifying God.*" The cured man wishes to be with Jesus, and mingles in the joyous procession that is attending him toward Jerusalem. The effect of the miracle upon the people was that **they gave praise unto God.**

#### REMARKS.

1. The duty and privilege of earnest prayer set before us in this parable is emphatically enforced in the *life* of our great Exemplar. Search out the various passages in the Gospels that reveal to us Jesus in prayer. Then read Heb. 5 : 7, 8.

2. Wicked men sometimes do commendable things from the force of circumstances. The judge avenged the widow from selfish motives. We must do good, not because it is profitable, but because *it is right.*

3. There is not a personal comparison

here between God and the unjust judge. The power of importunity is the point to be illustrated, and we learn that a benefit done by man, though he is selfish, is a faint illustration in some respect of what God will do for his people because of his relation to them. See ch. 11 : 5-13.

4. We must persistently pray for deliverance from our adversary who seeks our destruction.

5. Faith is an element in every successful prayer, John 16 : 23, 24.

6. Do I feel my need of help? Do I watch and pray? Does my faith fasten upon the promises, and am I determined to bring my tithes and offerings to God and prove him if he will not bless me richly? ch. 12 : 35-40; 21 : 36; Matt. 15 : 25; John 16 : 24; Mal. 3 : 10.

7. Though the temple is demolished and all places are sacred to the believer, the institution of public worship is in force and should not be neglected, Acts 10 : 33; Heb. 10 : 25.

8. We must "do good to all as we have opportunity," but must never forget that "by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight," Matt. 5 : 20; Luke 17 : 10; Rom. 3 : 24; Tit. 3 : 5.

9. Ostentation in religious exercises is displeasing to God; a boastful prayer is abomination, Ps. 5 : 7; 29 : 2; Eccl. 5 : 1, 2; Heb. 12 : 28.

10. Giving for the extension of God's kingdom should be diligently cultivated (Ex. 25 : 2; Acts 11 : 29; 1 Cor. 16 : 2); but it should be done cheerfully, as a duty performed by God's steward, and not with motives of ambition or hope of reward, Matt. 10 : 8; Rom. 12 : 8; 2 Cor. 8 : 9-12.

11. The publican's posture becomes us all. We have all sinned, Isa. 64 : 6, 7.

12. The publican's intense sense of personal sinfulness should be ours, Ps.

69 : 5 ; 90 : 8. Paul calls himself "chief of sinners."

13. Ever look for mercy *through the atonement* alone, John 14 : 6 ; Acts 2 : 36 ; 4 : 12.

14. The joy of justification is unspeakable, Rom. 5 : 11 ; 8 : 1 ; 15 : 13 ; 1 Pet. 1 : 8.

15. Christ's interest for little children should encourage us to bring them to him in faith and prayer and early instruction, vers. 16, 17 ; Eph. 6 : 4.

16. Children should be encouraged to come to Jesus, who is displeased with any hindrances put in their way, ver. 16 ; Deut. 11 : 19 ; 1 Sam. 2 : 18 ; 3 : 10 ; Ps. 8 : 2 ; Prov. 8 : 17 ; Matt. 21 : 16.

17. It is common for sinners to desire to do some good things to secure their salvation, ver. 18 ; John 6 : 28 ; Acts 2 : 37 ; Rom. 9 : 31, 32.

18. God is goodness in himself and the author of all good. Christ, being one with the Father, is also one with him in goodness, ver. 19 ; 1 Sam. 2 : 2 ; Ps. 36 : 9 ; 34 : 8 ; John 1 : 16-18 ; James 1 : 17.

19. The law of God is binding on us, and must either be satisfied in us or in Christ. We are condemned by the law unless justified through faith in Christ, vers. 20-24 ; Rom. 3 : 31 ; 5 : 1 ; 11 : 6 ; Gal. 2 : 16 ; Eph. 2 : 8, 9.

20. Through faith in Christ we obtain the assistance of the Holy Spirit, and obedience to God becomes our delight, John 14 : 21 ; 15 : 14 ; Acts 15 : 9 ; James 2 : 17, 18 ; 1 John 3 : 3 ; 1 Cor. 6 : 9-11.

21. He who thinks he has kept the commands of God is alike ignorant of himself, of God, and of the perfection of his holy law, vers. 11, 12 ; Matt. 19 : 20 ; Rom. 10 : 3 ; 7 : 9-11 ; Phil. 3 : 6. Compare 1 Cor. 8 : 2.

22. Perfection consists in a full surrender of all to Christ, a complete acquiescence of the human will in the divine, and an entire conformity of human acts to the divine requirement, ver. 22 ; Matt. 5 : 48 ; Prov. 23 : 26 ; James 2 : 10 ; Phil. 3 : 7-10.

23. Many think they are willing to do anything that God requires of them in order to be saved, yet when told to forsake all they are unwilling to do it, ver. 23 ; 2 Tim. 4 : 10.

24. The poor should not envy the rich, but rather rejoice that they are not exposed to the dangers and temptations of wealth, ver. 24 ; Deut. 31 : 20 ; 32 : 15 ; Matt. 13 : 22 ; 1 Tim. 6, 8, 9 ; James 5 : 1-3.

25. The great danger of riches is the love and confidence which men place upon them, vers. 24, 25 ; 1 Tim. 6-10.

26. Sinners are blinded by sin. They do not spiritually discern Jesus or his truth, ver. 35 ; Jer. 5 : 21 ; John 1 : 5 ; 1 Cor. 2 : 14 ; 2 Cor. 3 : 15 ; 4 : 6.

27. Sinners should call on Jesus to open their blind eyes, ver. 38 ; Ps. 119 : 18 ; Isa. 42 : 7 ; Luke 4 : 18 ; John 8 : 12 ; 9 : 39 ; 2 Cor. 3 : 14 ; Rev. 3 : 18.

28. Sinners should improve present opportunities while Jesus is yet graciously near, and before their blindness becomes for ever fixed, ver. 38 ; Isa. 55 : 6 ; Ps. 69 : 3 ; Isa. 44 : 18 ; Acts 28 : 25-27.

29. They who are seeking spiritual sight will meet with obstacles and opposition from the world, but this should only excite them to greater importunity, lest they fail of a cure, ver. 39 ; Luke 11 : 5-10 ; Acts 2 : 40.

30. The sinner has no plea but mercy for the sake of Jesus, ver. 38 ; chap. 18 : 13.

31. The compassion of Jesus is infinite. He pauses, as it were, to attend to the importunate cry of the sinner, ver. 40 ; Mark 10 : 49.

32. The seeker after Jesus, as well as the Christian, should come to him with definite requests, vers. 38, 39 ; Acts 8 : 22 ; Phil. 4 : 6.

33. Jesus will open the eyes of the blind as they send up the prayer of faith, ver. 42 ; Matt. 21 : 22 ; Isa. 29 : 18, 19 ; Acts 9 : 11, 18.

34. They who are made to spiritually see will follow Jesus, ver. 43 ; ch. 14 : 27 ; John 15 : 14.

## CHAPTER XIX.

In this chapter we have—(1) The call of Zaccheus, with the conversation in his house, vers. 1-10. (2) The parable of the pounds, uttered to correct the mistaken expectation that on his arrival at Jerusalem he would at once proclaim and establish his kingdom, vers. 11-27. (3) The triumphal entry into Jerusalem

*Our Lord's visit to Zaccheus.*

XIX. AND *Jesus* entered and passed through Jericho. And, behold, *there was* a man named Zaccheus, which was the chief among the publicans, and he was rich. <sup>b</sup>And he sought to see *Jesus* who he was; and could not <sup>c</sup>for the press, because he was <sup>d</sup>little of stature. And <sup>e</sup>he ran before, <sup>f</sup>and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see him: for he was to pass that

<sup>b</sup> John 12. 21.

<sup>c</sup> Lk. 8. 14; 11. 40  
21. 34.

<sup>d</sup> Mt. 8. 26.

<sup>e</sup> Ex. 23. 2; Mt. 7.  
13.

<sup>f</sup> Lk. 13. 24.

and his weeping over the city as he beheld it from the brow of the Mount of Olives, vers. 28-44. (4) His second cleansing of the temple, when he drove out those who sold and bought, vers. 45-48. The cursing of the fig tree as he entered the city in the early morning of that day, recorded in Matt. 21: 18, 19; Mark 11: 2-4, being here omitted. Compare author's *Harmony*, §§ 136-142.

1-10. THE CALL OF ZACCHEUS. Found only in Luke.

1. **Entered and passed through**, or, more correctly, *was passing through*. *Jesus* was on his way from Perea to Jerusalem, on the ordinary caravan route, which led through the splendid city of Jericho; and this event occurred while he was passing through the city. This was one of the largest and most beautiful of the cities of Palestine. "Josephus has described it; its stately buildings rising up among groves of palm trees miles in length, with gardens scattered round, in which all the chief flowers and fruits of Eastern lands grew up in the greatest luxuriance, the rarest and most precious among them the balsam, a treasure 'worth its own weight in silver, for which kings make war,' 'so that he,' says the Jewish historian as he warms in the recital of its glories—'he who should pronounce the place divine would not be mistaken, wherein is such plenty of trees produced as is very rare and of the most excellent sort.'"—HANNA. It was through this scene of marvellous wealth and beauty *Jesus* was passing, accompanied by the crowds who at this season were ascending to Jerusalem to keep the passover.

2. **A man named Zaccheus**, a common Jewish name formed from a word signifying *pure*. The original here for "man" denotes a person of consequence, dignity. **Chief among**

**the publicans.** The taxes imposed by the Romans on subject nations were farmed out to men of wealth, who, for a specified sum paid at once into the Roman treasury, obtained the right of collecting the taxes of a province or city. These contractors, who were usually Roman knights, entrusted the actual collection of taxes to sub-contractors or tax-gatherers. This system, which is still prevalent in the East, gave the widest scope for rapacity and extortion, and the men who enforced it were everywhere odious to the people they oppressed. Jericho, famous for its balsam and dates, was one of the wealthiest cities; and of the numerous tax-gatherers here Zaccheus seems to have been superintendent or receiver-general, a position affording large opportunities to become "rich."

3. **Sought to see *Jesus*.** This desire did not spring from idle curiosity, but from a sense of need, as the event shows. The character and works of *Christ*, which must have been known by him, had doubtless awakened in him desires, possibly not yet fully defined, but rising toward God and salvation.

4. **Climbed up into a sycamore tree.** Earnest seekers after *Christ* will not stand upon dignity of station or pride of character, but will press through all obstacles to him. "The sycamore, or fig-mulberry, is in Egypt and Palestine of great importance and very extensive use. It attains the size of a walnut tree, has widespreading branches, and affords a delightful shade. On this account it is frequently planted by the waysides. Its leaves are heart-shaped, downy on the under side, and fragrant. The fruit grows directly from the trunk on little sprigs, and in clusters like the grape. In form and smell and inward structure it resembles the fig, and hence its name. It is always verdant, and bears fruit several times in

- 5 way. And when Jesus came to the place, <sup>a</sup> he looked up, and saw him, and said unto him, Zaccheus, <sup>b</sup> make haste, and come down; for to-day <sup>1</sup> I must abide at thy house. And he made haste, and came down, and received him joyfully.
- 7 And when they saw *it*, they all murmured, saying, <sup>j</sup> That he was gone to be guest with a man that is a
- <sup>a</sup> John 1. 48.  
<sup>b</sup> Ecc. 9. 10; 2 Co<sup>r</sup>. 6. 1, 2.  
<sup>1</sup> John 14. 23; Eph. 3. 17; Rev. 3. 20  
<sup>j</sup> ch. 5. 30; 7. 39; 15. 2; Mt. 9. 11.

the year, without being confined to fixed seasons, and is thus, as a permanent food-bearer, invaluable to the poor."—SMITH'S *Dict.* "When Zaccheus climb-

heart of Zaccheus. "He calleth his own sheep by name," John 10 : 3. **To-day I must abide at thy house.** Not will, but *must*. The plan of Christ's life was preordained in the divine counsels; this fact he everywhere emphasizes, as in John 2 : 4; 13 : 1. He *must*, according to this plan, abide that day in the publican's house to bring salvation to him and his household.

**6. And he made haste.** The proposal of Jesus, so unexpected, but so grateful to the heart of Zaccheus, filled him with wonder and gratitude, and kindled into a flame the desires for salvation which already burned in his soul. Joyfully, therefore, he hastened to entertain his divine Guest. "Zaccheus was ripe fruit which dropped into the Saviour's lap at the first and



FRUIT OF SYCAMORE.

ed into a sycamore tree, he doubtless stood upon one of the lower horizontal branches extended over the road, and could see the whole multitude who accompanied our Saviour pass beneath him—a position which children, and even men and women, now take to get the best view of a similar crowd or procession."—VAN LENNEP, *Bible Lands*, p. 146.

**5. He looked up, and saw him.** There is no intimation that Jesus had known him before, or had been informed respecting him. He whose all-seeing eye had seen Nathanael under the fig tree (John 1 : 48) here, with like omniscient glance, read the history and the

lightest touch."

**7. They all murmured.** "All" here refers not to the disciples, but to the multitude, composed partly of those who were ascending with him to Jerusalem and partly of citizens. Jericho was a priest-city, distinguished for the number of priests who dwelt there, and he might have sought entertainment with one of them. All the Jewish conceptions of what was befitting a religious teacher forbade his becoming the guest of a publican, a man odious as the representative of a galling oppression, and despised as an outcast from the synagogue. The idea of saving the lost had no place in their religion.

8 sinner. And Zaccheus stood, and said unto the Lord ;  
 \* Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the  
 poor ; ' and if I have taken any thing from any man  
 9 by false accusation, " I restore *him* fourfold. And  
 Jesus said unto him, " This day is salvation come to  
 this house, forasmuch as ° he also is <sup>p</sup> a son of Abra-  
 10 ham. ¶ For the Son of man is come <sup>r</sup> to seek and to  
 save that which was lost.

6 ; 15. 24.    \* Eze. 34. 11-16.

\* ch. 3. 8.  
 1 ch. 3. 12-14.  
 ° Ex. 22. 1 ; Le. 6  
 5 ; 1 Sam. 12. 3 ;  
 2 Sam. 12. 6.  
 ¶ 1 Cor. 6. 9-11 ; 1  
 Pet. 2. 10.  
 ° Ro. 4. 11, 12, 16 ;  
 Gal. 3. 7, 14, 29.  
 ¶ ch. 13. 16.  
 ¶ Mt. 18. 11 ; Mt. 10.

8. **Stood.** The word indicates that he took a conspicuous position, so that all might see and hear. **The half of my goods I give to the poor**, not that he had been accustomed thus to give to the poor—a thought inconsistent alike with the language and with the occasion—but rather an expression of gratitude, a thank-offering for the blessing Jesus had bestowed. It is the outgushing of a heart which by Jesus' grace had been emptied of selfish greed and filled with the self-abnegating love of Christ. Observe the time of the gift ; he does not say, " I will give it by will when I die, but I *do* give it now."—**HENRY. If I have taken anything by false accusation.** No doubt is here expressed of having actually thus defrauded. The sense is, whatever I have fraudulently exacted of any man I return him fourfold. The law required in one case fivefold, in others fourfold restitution, but ordinarily only twofold, Ex. 22 : 1-10. The precept applicable to this case, however, is probably that of Num. 5 : 6-8, which requires the return of the amount wrongfully taken with one-fifth added. But Zaccheus is not thinking of law ; in the sincerity and depth of his penitence he returns fourfold. This declaration of the publican seems for the moment to have silenced the murmurers.

9. **This day is salvation come to this house.** The change of character in this man is manifest to all by his confession and restitution, and the Lord now declares that, in his own coming, salvation has come to Zaccheus' house. His sins are forgiven ; his soul is cleansed ; his alms to the poor and his restitution to the wronged are accepted. **Forasmuch as he also is a son of Abraham.** A son of Abraham by natural descent, and of those, therefore, to whom chiefly the personal

ministry of Christ was directed (Matt. 15 : 24), and a son of Abraham also by faith, a possessor of Abraham's character.

10. **Come to seek and to save that which was lost.** A vindication of his entrance into the publican's house, similar to that in the series of parables in ch. 15. It was his proper place as the **Son of man**. His mission on earth was to seek and to save lost men, and especially " the lost sheep of the house of Israel," of whom Zaccheus was a conspicuous example ; and his true place and work, therefore, as also that of his servants in all ages, is among the lost, to rescue them from destruction by turning them from sin to holiness, from Satan to God.

11-27. **PARABLE OF THE POUNDS.** Peculiar to Luke. This parable and that of the talents (Matt. 25 : 14-30) have marked points of resemblance, but they also differ so widely that we cannot regard them as only varied forms of one parable. For, 1. The parable of the pounds was uttered at Jericho before he reached Jerusalem ; that of the talents was spoken on the Mount of Olives several days later. 2. This was intended to correct their false expectation that *immediately* on their arrival at Jerusalem this kingdom, conceived as a great temporal power, would be established ; that was uttered to emphasize the certainty of his second coming and the personal accountability of his professed people to him. 3. In this the amount entrusted to each servant is the same, and the rewards differ according to the sum gained, depending on the capacity as well as the fidelity displayed in using the trust ; in that the amount committed to each is different and the reward is the same, depending, not on the sum gained, but on the fidelity shown. These differences, alike

*Parable of ten servants entrusted with ten pounds.*

- 11 And as they heard these things, he added and spake a parable, because he was nigh to Jerusalem, and because <sup>¶</sup>they thought that the kingdom of God should
- 12 immediately appear. <sup>¶</sup>He said therefore,   
 A certain nobleman went into <sup>¶</sup>a far country <sup>¶</sup>to
- 13 receive for himself a kingdom, <sup>¶</sup>and to return. And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come.
- 14 <sup>¶</sup>But his citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, We will not have this *man* to reign over
- 15 us. And it came to pass, that when he was returned, having received the kingdom, then he commanded these servants to be called unto him to whom he had given the <sup>¶</sup>money, <sup>¶</sup>that he might know how much
- 16 every man had gained by trading. Then came the

<sup>¶</sup>cn. 17. 20; Ac. 1. 6  
<sup>¶</sup>Mt. 25. 14; Mk. 13. 34.  
<sup>¶</sup>ch. 24. 51; Eph. 4. 8.  
<sup>¶</sup>John 18. 37; Eph. 1. 20-23; Phil. 2. 9-11; 1 Pet. 3. 22.  
<sup>¶</sup>John 14. 2, 3; Ac. 1. 11; 17. 31; Rev. 1. 7.  
<sup>¶</sup>John 1. 11; 19. 15; Ac. 3. 14, 15; 4. 27, 28; 7. 51, 52.  
<sup>¶</sup>ver. 23.  
<sup>¶</sup>1 Cor. 4. 1-5.

in the historic setting and in the scope of the two parables, compel us to regard them as distinct. Compare author's notes on Matthew, ch. 25 : 14-30.

11. **Because he was nigh to Jerusalem.** Jericho is eighteen miles and six furlongs from Jerusalem. The multitudes thronging this great caravan route to the Holy City, as they heard his words and saw his miracles, supposed that he was ascending now to set up the long-expected Messianic kingdom, and with ever-growing enthusiasm were preparing to hail him as King. But he here taught them that instead of this he is about to depart, and only after a long absence will his kingdom be established.

12. **Went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom.** Under the Roman empire kings were invested with royal authority by the Senate at Rome. Herod there received the kingdom of Judea. Archelaus, whose splendid palace may have been before the eye of Jesus, went to Rome to receive his kingdom; and it is remarkable that in his case a faction of the Jews sent an embassy after him to protest against his appointment as king. Here the nobleman is Christ, departing to heaven to receive from the Father the heavenly kingdom, and to return in triumph at the last day for its full establishment. Thus had God said to him (Ps. 110 : 1), "Sit thou on my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool."

13. **His ten servants,** more cor-

rectly, *ten of his servants*, leading us to infer that he had other servants not here included. **Ten pounds.** The *mina*, here translated "pounds," was about fifteen dollars. One was entrusted to each servant to test at once his fidelity and his capacity, so that when the nobleman had returned as king he might know whom to appoint as officers for the government of his kingdom. The Lord seems thus to intimate that the work here assigned his servants in the church is intended as a process to test their fidelity and capacity, and that according to the character developed in their work on earth will be their position and employment in the eternal kingdom of God. **Occupy till I come,** while waiting my return, use this in working for me.

14. **His citizens hated him.** The Jews are here intended, who rejected him, saying, "We have no king but Cæsar;" and after his departure, they persecuted and slew those who were proclaiming his kingdom.

15. **When he was returned, having received the kingdom.** The opposition of his enemies had been unavailing; he had received the kingdom. The foes of Christ shall not prevail to prevent his coming and triumph; for God had declared, "Yet"—despite all opposition—"have I set my King upon my holy hill of Zion." **He commanded these servants to be called.** He first takes account of his servants and afterward inflicts judgment on his enemies. "Judgment must

- first, saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained ten pounds.
- 17 And he said unto him, Well, thou good servant: because thou hast been <sup>a</sup>faithful in a very little, have
- 18 thou authority over ten cities. And the second came, saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained five
- 19 pounds. And he said likewise to him, Be thou also
- 20 over five cities. And another came, saying, Lord, behold, *here is* thy pound, which I have kept laid up
- 21 in a napkin: <sup>b</sup>for I feared thee, because thou art an austere man: <sup>c</sup>thou takest up that thou layest not
- 22 down, and reapest that thou didst not sow. And he saith unto him, <sup>d</sup>Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, *thou* wicked servant. <sup>e</sup>Thou knewest that I was an austere man, taking up that I laid not down, and
- 23 reaping that I did not sow: wherefore then gavest not thou my money into the bank, that at my coming
- 24 I might have required mine own with usury? And he said unto them that stood by, Take from him the pound, and give *it* to him that hath ten pounds.
- 25 <sup>f</sup>(And they said unto him, Lord, he hath ten pounds.)
- 26 For I say unto you, <sup>g</sup>That unto every one which hath shall be given; and from him *that* hath not, even

<sup>a</sup> ch. 16. 10; Mt 25. 21.

<sup>b</sup> Mt. 25. 24.  
<sup>c</sup> Eze. 18. 29.

<sup>d</sup> 2 Sam. 1. 16; Job 15. 5, 6; Mt. 12. 37.  
<sup>e</sup> Mt. 25. 26.

<sup>f</sup> Is. 55. 8, 9.  
<sup>g</sup> ch. 8. 18; Mt. 13. 12; 25. 29; Mk. 4. 25; John 15. 2.

begin at the house of God," 1 Pet. 4 : 13.

16-23. THE ACCOUNT RENDERED.

**Thy pound hath gained ten pounds.** His fidelity and capacity have produced a tenfold result, and his loyalty and humility stand attested in that, as a bond-servant, he recognizes the right of his lord to the results of his labors; and instead of ascribing the increase to his own power, he says, "*Thy* pound hath gained ten pounds." He is warmly commended, and advanced to an exalted position and trust as governor over ten cities. **Thy pound hath gained five pounds.** Here no special commendation is bestowed, but, in proportion to the fidelity and capacity shown, he also is placed over five cities. **Here is thy pound which I have kept laid up in a napkin.** *Napkin*, a handkerchief, often attached to the girdle and used for keeping valuables. The pound was safely kept and returned, but he had shown no fidelity as a servant owing service to his lord, and no capacity for a position of trust and responsibility. **An austere man,** a hard, grasping man. It was a false and insulting conception of his lord, who had entrusted the pound to him only that he might

develop in him a fitness for a far higher trust and a position of more exalted honor. The work which Christ assigns his servants on earth is preparatory to a higher work in the heavenly kingdom. But the indolent misinterpret his character and intention, and for ever lose their opportunity. All sin begins in a false conception of God. **Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee.** If, as he alleged, he knew his lord to be a hard, grasping man, this fact should have impelled him, since he did not himself traffic with the money, to put it in the hands of a money-changer, so that at least the customary interest might be returned with the principal.

24-26. THE JUDGMENT. **Them that stood by,** his officers of justice, denoting, in the parabolic representatives, the angels who at the last day execute the divine judgments, Matt. 13 : 41. **Give to him that hath ten pounds.** The officers express surprise at this award, but the king declares, **unto him which hath shall be given.** He who has neglected to use the trust, however small, committed to him shall lose it, but he who has diligently used that which was entrusted to him and has thus increased it, to him more shall

27 that he hath shall be taken away from him. But those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay *them* before me.

*Public entry into Jerusalem, and lamentation over the city; cleansing of the temple.*

28 And when he had thus spoken, <sup>b</sup> he went before, <sup>c</sup> *Mk. 10. 32.* ascending up to Jerusalem.

be entrusted. Fidelity and capacity, as shown in the use of trusts or events, are the tests according to which Christ will bestow trusts in the heavenly kingdom. **But those mine enemies . . . bring hither and slay them before me.** Having judged the unfaithful servant, he now passes sentence on his enemies. Their unavailing opposition to his reign is punished by death. Thus, at the last day, when Christ shall come in his kingdom, his foes "shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power," 2 Thess. 1 : 6-10. Not an enemy will be left to harass those within his glorious realm, Matt. 13 : 40-43.

The imagery of the parable thus explained presents the following correspondences: The nobleman is Christ departed to heaven to receive his kingdom; the ten servants are the professed disciples of Christ; and whereas he entrusted to each a pound, the parable shows that the Lord has committed to each disciple a trust, the use of which is to test his fidelity and capacity; the citizens who would not have him to reign over them are primarily the Jews, who rejected Christ and persecuted his followers, but also all the ungodly; the account rendered by the servants is the final judgment; and whereas the servants, though receiving each an equal trust, did not equally gain, and the reward is proportioned to the amount gained, the Lord shows that the position and work of Christ's servants in the heavenly kingdom will be assigned according to the fidelity and capacity shown in the works or events; the taking of the pound from the slothful servant and giving it to him who had ten pounds shows that, while the indolent ultimately lose all, the most faithful disciple is ever receiving more; and the slaying of the citizens who

hated him is the final ruin of all the opposers of the Messiah's reign.

28-44. CHRIST'S TRIUMPHAL ENTRY INTO JERUSALEM, *Sunday, April 2d, Matt. 21 : 9; Mark 11 : 1-10; John 12 : 12-19.*

28. **Went before, ascending to Jerusalem.** The Holy City, situated near the water-shed of the central highlands of Palestine, is more than 3000 feet higher than Jericho, and the road ascending to it winds along the side of a deep, rugged gorge, which cleaves the barren hills of "the wilderness of Judea." Jesus *went before*, leading the multitudes, though he distinctly foresees the rejection, the agony, and the cross that awaited him. They thought him advancing to his coronation and triumph; he knew that in obedience to the Father's will he was hastening to an ignominious death. How voluntary was his sacrificial work! Truly, by act he said, "Lo, I come to do thy will, O God," Heb. 10 : 7, 9.

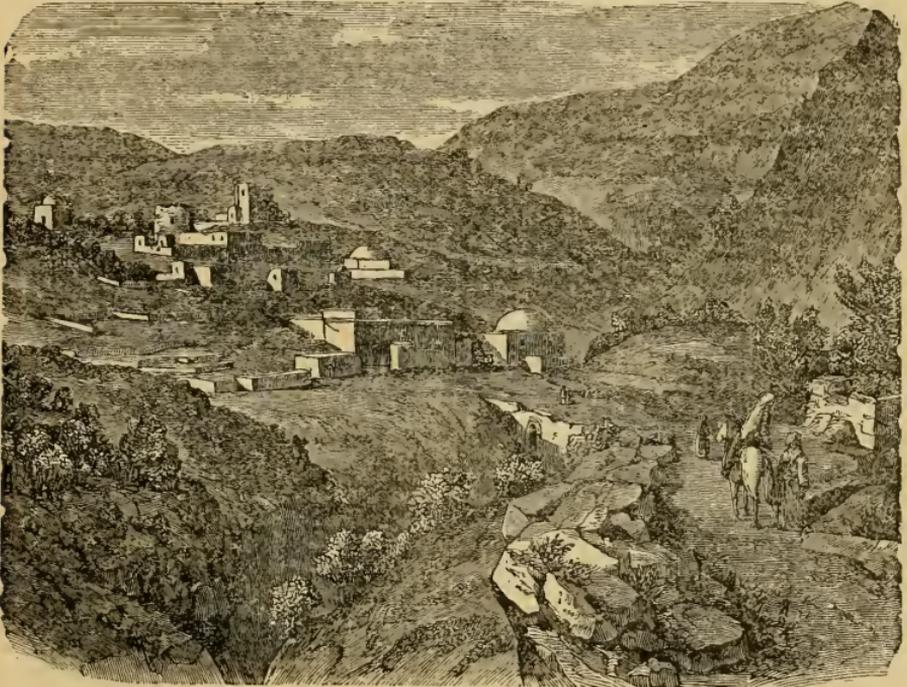
Jesus probably reached Bethany on Friday evening; and according to the other Gospels, he passed Saturday, the Jewish Sabbath, in that village. His public entry into Jerusalem took place the following day, which was Sunday. Compare author's *Harmony*, § 138 and note.

Christ's triumphal entry, while significant in the recognition of him as the predicted Prince of peace (Zech. 9 : 9; Matt. 21 : 4), had also other aspects. (1) It put in strong relief the voluntariness of his sufferings. This enthusiasm for him among the common people, so intense and widespread, how easily might he have directed it to the support of his claims to the earthly throne of David, and by the erection of a great temporal power have accomplished the carnal expectations of the Jews! But he deliberately refused the tempting honor and chose the cross

29 <sup>1</sup>And it came to pass, when he was come nigh to <sup>1</sup>Mt. 21. 1-9; Mk.  
Bethphage and Bethany, at the mount called *the* 11. 1-10; Jobu 12  
30 *mount* of Olives, he sent two of his disciples, saying, 12-15.

(2) The entry occurred on the 10th of Nisan, the day ordained for the selection of the passover lamb, and his public manifestation in the temple on that day may have been significant of his selection as the lamb of God, the true paschal sacrifice, of which the sacrifices of former ages were only types.

29. Bethphage and Bethany.



BETHANY.

These places are mentioned together, and may have designated different parts of the same village, the former denoting *the place of figs*, as if a fig orchard, the latter *the place of dates*, as if a palm grove. Bethany, which alone can be at present identified, "is a poor village of about twenty houses, situated in a shallow wady, on the eastern slope of Olivet, and surrounded by broken, rocky ground and carefully terraced, and still contains a few orchards of fig trees. Its distance from Jerusalem is about one and a half miles, corresponding pretty exactly to the fifteen furlongs of John 11 : 18. The view from it is dreary and desolate, commanding the region through which the road to

Jericho runs. The houses are of stone, massive and rude, evidently constructed of old materials."—PORTER.

**The mount of Olives.** This is the well-known eminence facing Jerusalem on the east, and separated from it by the narrow, deep valley of the Kidron. So near, indeed, is it that, as seen from within the walls of Jerusalem, the mount seems a part of the city itself. Its summit is about three hundred feet above Moriah and one hundred above Zion, but its proximity makes it appear much higher. "It is not so much a 'mount' as a ridge, of rather more than a mile in length, covering the whole eastern side of the city and screening it from the bare,

Go ye into the village over against *you*; in the which at your entering ye shall find a colt tied, whereon yet  
 31 never man sat: loose him, and bring *him hither*. And if any man ask you, Why do ye loose *him*? thus shall ye say unto him, Because the Lord hath need of him.  
 32 And they that were sent went their way, and found  
 33 even as he had said unto them. And as they were loosing the colt, the owners thereof said unto them, Why  
 34 loose ye the colt? And they said, The Lord hath  
 35 need of him. And they brought him to Jesus: and <sup>J 2 Ki. 9. 13.</sup> they cast their garments upon the colt, and they set

waste, uncultivated country, the 'wilderness,' which lies beyond it and fills up the space between the Mount of Olives and the Dead Sea. At a distance its outline is almost horizontal, sloping away at its southern end; but when approached, and especially when seen from below the eastern wall of Jerusalem, it divides itself into three, or rather perhaps four, independent summits."—SMITH'S *Dictionary*. At present it is thinly dotted with olive, almond, fig, and carob trees, and has a general aspect of barrenness. Anciently it was covered with rich olive orchards, and in the Bible it is linked with events of deepest interest as "the scene of the flight of David and the triumphal progress of the Son of David, of the idolatry of Solomon and of the agony and betrayal of the Son of God."

30. **The village over against you.** Three roads lead and have always led from Bethany to Jerusalem. Two of them pass over the mount and are mere footpaths; the third, which Jesus must have taken with such a multitude, is the ordinary caravan route from Jericho, and winds around the shoulder of the mount in the depression between the central and southern summits of Olivet. "Soon after leaving Bethany that road meets a ravine. From its brow the top of Zion is seen, but the rest of the city is hid by an intervening ridge; and just opposite the point where the first view of Zion is gained, on the other side of the ravine, are the remains of an ancient village. Is not this the spot, therefore, where Jesus said to the ten disciples, 'Go into the village over against you'?" The main road turns sharply to the right, descends obliquely to the bottom of the ravine, and then, turning to the

left, ascends to the top of the opposite ridge, a short distance above the ruined village. The two disciples could cross the ravine direct in a minute or two, while the procession would take some time in slowly winding round the road. The people of the village saw the procession, they knew its cause, and were thus prepared to give the ass to the disciples the moment they heard 'the Lord hath need of him.' The disciples led it up to the road and met Jesus."—PORTER. **Whereon yet never man sat.** Animals selected for sacred uses were usually those which had never been put under the yoke or used for ordinary purposes, Deut. 21 : 3; 1 Sam. 6 : 7. This, therefore, was fitted for the holy service here required.

31-34. The more full narratives of Matthew and Mark record our Lord's predictions both as to the exact place where the colt would be found and the immediate consent of the owners to send it. This was doubtless another manifestation of Christ's omniscience and secret control over the hearts of men. He thus tenderly and graciously strengthens the faith of the disciples, and prepares them for the ordeal of trial awaiting them in his approaching death. **The Lord hath need of him.** It is not certain that the word *Lord* would be understood as indicating his divine character; but as Jesus was in full view on the other side of the ravine, its reference to him must have been fully understood. Possibly its owners shared in the general feeling of the multitudes on that day in regarding him as the Messianic King.

35, 36. **Cast their garments upon the colt.** In the absence of a saddle, they used, as is not uncommon, their mantles to supply its place. **Spread**

- 36 Jesus thereon. And as they went they spread their clothes in the way.
- 37 And when he was come nigh, even now at the descent of the mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works that they had seen; saying, <sup>k</sup> Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord! <sup>l</sup> Peace in heaven, and glory in the highest!
- 38 <sup>k</sup> ch. 13. 35; Ps 118. 26.  
<sup>l</sup> ch. 2. 14; Eph. 2 14.
- 39 And some of the Pharisees from among the multitude said unto him, Master, rebuke thy disciples.
- 40 And he answered and said unto them, I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, <sup>m</sup> the stones would immediately cry out. <sup>n</sup> Hab. 2. 11; Mt 3. 9.

**their clothes in the way.** On state occasions, in the East, the road on which a monarch is to pass is sometimes carpeted. Here they express their homage by taking off their mantles and spreading them as a carpet on the ground under the feet of the beast on which he rode. This has always been a customary mark of honor shown to royalty.

37-40. **Descent of the Mount of Olives.** "Two vast streams of people met on that day. The one poured out from the city, and as they came through the gardens whose clusters of palm rose on the south-eastern corner of Olivet they cut down the long branches, as was their wont at the feast of tabernacles, and moved upward toward Bethany with loud shouts of welcome. From Bethany streamed forth the crowds who had assembled there on the previous night, and who came testifying to the great event at the sepulchre of Lazarus. The road soon loses sight of Bethany. It is now a rough but still broad and well-defined mountain track, winding over rocks and loose stones; a steep declivity below on the left; the sloping shoulder of Olivet above it on the right; fig trees below and above, here and there growing out of the rocky soil. Along the road the multitude threw down the branches which they cut as they went along, or spread out a rude matting formed of the palm branches they had already cut as they came out. The larger portion—those, perhaps, who escorted him from Bethany—unwrapped their loose cloaks from their shoulders, and stretched these

along the rough path to form a momentary carpet as he approached. The two streams met midway. Half of the vast mass, turning around, preceded, the other half followed; gradually the long procession swept up and over the ridge where first begins 'the descent of the Mount of Olives' toward Jerusalem. At this point the first view is caught of the south-eastern corner of the city. The temple and the more northern portions were hid by the slope of Olivet on the right; what is seen is only Mount Zion, now for the most part a rough field, crowned with the mosque of David and the angle of the western walls, but then covered with houses to its base, surmounted by the castle of Herod, on the supposed site of the palace of David, from which that portion of Jerusalem—emphatically the 'city of David'—derived its name. It was at this precise point, 'as he drew near at the descent of the Mount of Olives' (may it not have been from the sight thus opening upon them?), that the shout of triumph burst forth from the multitude, 'Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord! Blessed is the kingdom that cometh of our father David! Hosanna! . . . Peace! . . . Glory in the highest!' There was a pause as the shout rang through the long defile; and as the Pharisees, who pointed by in the crowd, complained, he stood to the stones which, strewn beneath their feet, would 'immediately cry out' if these were to 'hold their peace.'"—STANLEY, *Sinai and Palestine*, p. 188.

41 And when he was come near, he beheld the city,  
 42 and <sup>a</sup>wept over it, saying, <sup>o</sup>If thou hadst known, even  
 thou, at least, <sup>p</sup>in this thy day, the things *which be-*  
*long* unto thy peace!—but now they are hid from  
 43 thine eyes. For <sup>q</sup>the days shall come upon thee,  
 that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and  
 compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side,  
 44 and <sup>r</sup>shall lay thee even with the ground, and <sup>s</sup>thy  
 children within thee; and <sup>t</sup>they shall not leave in  
 thee one stone upon another; <sup>u</sup>because thou knewest  
 not the time of thy visitation.

<sup>a</sup> ch. 21. 6; Mt. 24. 2; Mk. 18. 2. <sup>o</sup> ch. 1. 68, 78; Dan. 9. 24; John 3.  
 18-21; 1 Pet. 2. 12.

41-44. CHRIST WEEPS OVER JERUSALEM. Peculiar to Luke.

41. **When he was come near.**

This is a memorable scene in the life of Christ, and the spot is easily recognized by the traveller. Not far beyond the point just described the road suddenly emerges from the hitherto intervening rocks, and the city, in its full extent, lies spread before the eye. Striking as the view there seen is, it bears no comparison with the scene the Lord beheld as Jerusalem, with its magnificent temple, overlaid with gold and silver, and its gorgeous palaces, lay spread before him, reflecting with dazzling brightness the beams of the morning sun. **He beheld the city, and wept over it.** The word here rendered *wept* signifies not the shedding of tears only, but weeping with loud words of lamentation. It was a strange sight. Amidst the joy and acclamations of the exulting multitude, he alone weeps. His omniscient eye, penetrating the future, sees the crime of crimes soon to be perpetrated there, in the crucifixion of the Son of God, and the fearful doom coming as God's judgment on the guilty city in her awful and utter desolation.

42. **In this thy day.** The period of Christ's presence among them. With strange infatuation they refused to heed the evidence of his divine character and the gracious words he spake. Even the raising of Lazarus, the recent manifestation of his divinity, was now only quickening their efforts to destroy him; and the awful crime which formed the climax of their guilt was about to be committed. Jesus saw it all and wept; but with fearful pertinacity they pressed forward to their doom.

43. **Days will come,** referring to the approaching destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans under Titus, A. D. 70. **Cast a trench about thee,** rather, an embankment with palisades. This was first raised by the Romans; but when the Jews destroyed it, Titus built a wall enclosing the entire city, cutting off all supplies for the besieged and causing the horrors of a famine. This wall, which was nearly five miles in length, completely isolated the city.

44. **Lay thee even with the ground.** When the city was taken, it was razed to the ground, except the north-eastern corner of the temple wall and three massive towers in the city of David; these were left to show the enormous strength of the fortifications which Roman valor and skill had overthrown. After the insurrection of Bar Cocheba, A. D. 132, Hadrian made the destruction even more complete: "the ruins which Titus had left were razed to the ground, and the plough passed over the site of the temple." **And thy children within thee.** Josephus reports the number who perished at the siege of Jerusalem as eleven hundred thousand, and says the city was "so thoroughly levelled and dug up that no one visiting it would believe that it had ever been inhabited." **Because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation.** The visitation of grace they wickedly refused to recognize, and now there remained for them only the visitation of judgment.

45, 46. CHRIST CLEANSING THE TEMPLE. Monday, April 3. Matt. 21: 12, 17; Mark 11: 15-17.

This remarkable assertion of Christ's authority in his Father's house was

- 45 ▽ And he went into the temple, and began to cast ▽ Mt. 21. 12, 13;  
out them that sold therein, and them that bought; Mk. 11. 11, 15-19;  
46 saying unto them, ▽ It is written, My house is the also John 2. 14,  
house of prayer: but ▽ ye have made it a den of 15.  
thieves. ▽ Is. 56. 7.  
47 And he taught daily in the temple. But ▽ Jer. 7. 11.  
the chief priests and the scribes and the chief of the  
48 people sought to destroy him, and could not find what ▽ Mt. 11. 18; John  
they might do: for all the people ▽ were very attentive 7. 19; 8. 37.  
to hear him. ▽ Ne. 8. 2; Ac. 16.  
14.

twice made: first at the beginning of his ministry (John 2 : 15-17), and now at its close, as recorded by the other evangelists. The traffic here rebuked was in the outer court of the temple, the court of the Gentiles. It had doubtless been permitted originally for the convenience of the immense concourse of strangers who came from all parts of the world to worship at Jerusalem. Sacrificial victims and all other requisites for the offerings were here kept for sale, and the coin of all nations was exchanged for the shekel of the sanctuary, which alone could be offered in the temple. But the traffic, originally conducted with honesty and decorum, had degenerated; and the temple courts were made a scene of extortion and fraud, and the sacredness of God's worship was profaned by the din and confusion of trade. The traffic was no longer limited to the needs of the temple; for in verse 23 it is implied that the money-changers were bankers, receiving money on deposit and paying interest, and were thus doubtless money-lenders, not improbably making the house of Jehovah a place where the needy and the stranger were despoiled. **A den of thieves**, more accurately, *a den of robbers*, a stronger word. So abandoned and shameless was their dishonesty. The words, **and them that bought** are omitted in the best text. They were probably borrowed from Matt. 21 : 12 and Mark 11 : 15.

The mere word of Christ drove the unhallowed traffickers from the sanctuary. There was doubtless a majesty in the countenance of Christ which struck them with awe, as when, on the night of his betrayal, the band of soldiers led by Judas "went backward and fell to the ground" while he stood before them. Their consciences also may

have been quickened as they stood in the presence of him whose character and works attested him as God's Messiah.

47, 48. CHRIST DURING THE LAST WEEK. **Taught daily in the temple**—that is, he continued to teach them daily, notwithstanding the danger of his position. Though fully aware of the result, he did not seek concealment. In this closing week of his life Jesus thus passed the day in the temple in words and works of mercy, and at night retired to the loving, trusted circle in Bethany, his last home on earth. **Sought to destroy him**. Rather, *were seeking*, implying constant machinations to compass his death. Some of these attempts are afterward narrated, especially their efforts to entrap him in discourse, and thus find ground of accusation against him, but they signally failed. **For all the people were very attentive to hear him**. Literally, *hung upon him*, hung on his lip. The expression denotes that fixed attention, absorbed interest, which riveted them to the spot and held them as if spellbound to his discourse. Thus was it always. "The common people heard him gladly" (Mark 12 : 37); and even the officers of the Sanhedrim, when they went to arrest him, were rendered utterly incapable by the power of his words, and returned, saying, "Never man spake like this man," John 7 : 46. Jesus was enthroned within the profoundest convictions of the common people; his words touched the deepest springs of their souls, waking the conscience and stirring the hearts as no mere man had done; and until the Heaven-appointed hour came, their fear of the people continually frustrated the fiendish purpose of the Jewish rulers.

"The additional idea of astonishment at his doctrine is noted in Mark, ch. 11:18. Doubtless the words of our Lord in these his last days were of peculiar depth, tenderness, and solemnity. The themes were the spirituality of God's law, the necessity of faith and repentance as pre-requisites to the blessings of the Messianic dispensation, and solemn warnings against the formality and hypocrisy of the Pharisees. Allusions to his own approaching sufferings and death were doubtless made, which were so opposed to their views of a conquering, triumphant Messiah as to excite their highest wonder, and give rise to discussions among themselves as to what the great Teacher meant. Thus in his daily teachings he was drawing his earthly ministry to a close and preparing the minds of his followers for the awful scene which was approaching."—DR. J. J. OWEN, *Commentary on Luke*.

## REMARKS.

1. Divine grace is omnipotent. Though "it is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God," yet the potent word of Christ here brings a man who was "rich" to his feet as a humble, penitent, believing soul. "The things that are impossible with men are possible with God," ver. 2; Luke 18:24-28.

2. The man who would find Christ must not stand upon dignity or station. Zaccheus, disregarding all the suggestions of wealth and position, like a child, climbed a sycamore tree rather than fail of seeing him, ver. 4; Ps. 138:6; Luke 18:14.

3. Whenever the gospel comes, Christ is at the door seeking entertainment; and if admitted, he brings salvation, ver. 5. "Behold I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me," ver. 5; Rev. 3:20.

4. "Those who are convinced of having done wrong cannot evidence the sincerity of their repentance unless by making restitution. Observe, he does not think that giving half his estate to the poor will atone for the wrong he has done. God hates robbery for burnt

*offerings*, and we must first do justly and then have mercy."—HENRY. Ver. 8.

5. Penitence only finds full proof when, after confession and restitution, the sin renounced is replaced by the opposite virtue. Zaccheus said, "The half of my goods I give to the poor;" the selfish greed of wealth was changed into self-abnegating charity, ver. 8; 2 Cor. 5:17.

6. Mark the responsibility of the head of a family! The reception or rejection of Christ by him, determining, as it so often does, the whole character and influence of home, may be the hinge on which turns the salvation or ruin of his household. When Zaccheus received Christ, salvation came to his house, Gen. 18:19; John 4:53; Acts 10:2; 18:8.

7. Christ came to seek and save the lost, therefore never despair of the lost or give over seeking their salvation. Jericho was a priest-city, crowded with men glorying in their religion, but he brought salvation, not to these, but to the chief of the publicans, ver. 10; Matt. 8:5-13; Luke 4:25-27.

8. Human vision is too limited to forecast the future. The multitudes, glowing with temporary enthusiasm, suppose Christ's coronation as King on the throne of David will at once occur. They see not the long ages filled with conflict and sorrow which must pass before he will "come in his glory" and his kingdom be set up in power on earth, ver. 11; Matt. 24:36; Acts 1:7.

9. Jesus has gone to receive for himself a kingdom and to return. His coming in triumph, "having received the kingdom," is as certain as his departure, ver. 12; Acts 1:11; 1 Thess. 4:15-17; 2 Thess. 1:7-10.

10. Life with its gifts and opportunities is in a certain sense a probation, and the place and work here assigned are appointed to test fitness for a higher place and greater work in the heavenly kingdom, ver. 13; Matt. 19:27-30; Rev. 3:21.

11. Every servant of Christ must at last render to him a strict account; he cannot escape it. And each will receive a reward according to the use he has here made of the trust committed to him, ver. 15; Luke 16:2; Rom. 14:12; 2 Cor. 5:10; Heb. 13:7; 1 Pet. 4:5.

12. Success in life's work is achieved not by our own power, but through Christ's grace; and the glory of the result, therefore, is not to be ascribed to self, but to him. "Thy pound hath gained ten pounds," ver. 16; John 15 : 5; Rom. 12 : 3, 6; 1 Cor. 3 : 5-7; 1 Pet. 4 : 10, 11.

13. "There are degrees of glory in heaven. Every vessel will be alike full, but will not be alike large, and the degrees of glory there will be according to the degrees of usefulness here."—HENRY. Vers. 16-19.

14. Unworthy and perverted conceptions of God lie at the basis of failure to serve him; we could not know him as he is and withhold our hearts and service, ver. 21; Rom. 1 : 22-25.

15. The negative character, who, admitting that he does no good, yet thinks he does no evil, makes a fatal mistake. His failure to discharge the trust committed to him robs and insults God by withholding the service due to him and by impeaching the divine goodness in bestowing the trust, ver. 22.

16. A faithful improvement of Christ's gifts perpetually adds to them, and with an ever-enlarging ratio of increase, while a failure to use them continually decreases them, and results at last in their total loss, ver. 26.

17. The enemies of Christ's kingdom will in the end fall before him. "Whoever will not be ruled by the *grace* of Christ will inevitably be ruined by the *wrath* of Christ," ver. 27; 2 Thess. 1 : 6-10.

18. Jesus, though he knew that suffering and death awaited him at Jerusalem, yet for our salvation "went before," hastening to the cross, ver. 28; Heb. 12 : 2, 3. How should this quicken our zeal for him! 2 Cor. 5 : 14, 15.

19. Christ is omniscient and omnipotent; he perfectly knew the heart and exercised secret control over its purposes, vers. 30, 34; Matt. 9 : 4; John 2 : 24, 25.

20. Hypocrites dislike the exaltation of Christ and refuse him royal honors as the divine King, ver. 39; John 5 : 23; 8 : 47; 10 : 46; 1 John 4 : 6.

21. Christ was the revealer of God. "The holy tears of Jesus show how God's heart is disposed toward men when they fall into sin and destruc-

tion," ver. 41; Matt. 23 : 37; John 1 : 18; 14 : 9-11; Heb. 1 : 2, 3.

22. Great privileges, if abused, only bring the greater condemnation, ver. 43; Matt. 11 : 20-24; John 15 : 22-24.

23. There is a "time of visitation," an hour of special grace, when salvation is nigh, but abused and neglected, it passes away for ever and becomes a presage of the day of doom, ver. 44; Prov. 1 : 24-30; Jer. 8 : 20; Luke 14 : 24; Heb. 12 : 25.

24. The more perfectly Christ revealed his Godhead in his words and works of mercy, the more fiercely the Jews sought to destroy him; and in like manner "all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution," ver. 47; John 15 : 18-21; 2 Tim. 3 : 12.

25. Christ's words of life and peace thrill the souls of the humble, the troubled, and the sorrowing, while they influence the hatred of the proud and self-sufficient, ver. 48; Mark 12 : 37; Luke 4 : 18, 19.

## CHAPTER XX.

In this chapter Luke gives the account of the conflict on Tuesday of the passion week between Jesus and the ecclesiastical leaders of the Jews. They question his authority and demand his credentials. He replies by questioning them in regard to the authority of John the Baptist (vers. 1-8), and then shows their guilt and terrible doom by the parable of the vineyard let out to wicked husbandmen, 9-18. Gladly would they lay hands on him, but they are restrained by fear of the people. They therefore resort to artifice, hoping to entrap him and in some way turn from him the favor of the people. First they send "spies," certain Pharisees and Herodians, to him to inquire concerning paying tribute to Cæsar, but his answer excites admiration and astonishment, 19-26. Next, Sadducees come and ask a perplexing question regarding the resurrection, but they are put to silence, 27-40. Jesus then puts a question concerning the Messiah, which is unanswered, and follows it by warning the people against their covetous and hypocritical teachers, 39-47.

### 1-8. THE AUTHORITY OF JESUS

*Christ's authority questioned; parable of the vineyard and the wicked husbandmen.*

XX. AND <sup>a</sup>it came to pass, *that* on one of those days, as he taught the people in the temple, and preached the gospel, the chief priests and the scribes came upon <sup>b</sup>him with the elders, and spake unto him, saying, Tell us, <sup>b</sup>by what authority doest thou these things? <sup>c</sup>or who is he that gave thee this authority? And he answered and said unto them, I will also ask you one <sup>d</sup>thing; and answer me: The baptism of John, was it <sup>e</sup>from heaven, or of men? And they reasoned with

<sup>a</sup>Mt. 21. 23-27  
<sup>b</sup>Mk. 11. 27-33.

<sup>b</sup>John 2. 18; Ac. 4  
7; 7. 23.

QUESTIONED BY THE SANHEDRIM, Matt. 21 : 23-27; Mark 11 : 27-33. The three accounts are very similar. Mark is the most vivid; Matthew adds the parable of the two sons; Luke begins indefinitely.

1. **One of those days, Tuesday morning,** Matt. 21 : 18; Mark 11 : 20. **The chief priests and the scribes came upon him with the elders,** members of the three classes composing the Sanhedrim, the highest ecclesiastical council of the Jews. They were evidently the leading members of the Sanhedrim, though it does not appear that they came as an official and formal deputation similar to that which had been sent to John the Baptist, John 1 : 19-28.

2. **By what authority?** Not only *by what*, but also *by what kind* of, authority, divine or human, Messianic or prophetic? **These things,** cleansing the temple, performing miracles, and teaching. **Who is he that gave thee?** Who, with authority, gave thee this authority? The Sanhedrim authorized teachers in the temple and tried false prophets, but Jesus had not been authorized by them. Hence their two questions, implying that his authority was not of God. The Mosaic law had given directions for the discovery, rejection, and death of false prophets, Deut. 13 : 1-5; 18 : 20-22. These questions in themselves were therefore entirely proper for any Jews, and especially for the members of the Sanhedrim, to ask. John had asked a somewhat similar question, Matt. 11 : 3. But they now ask with wrong motives, wishing to entrap him and find occasion to destroy him (ch. 19 : 47), and to draw forth some such declaration as that he was the Son of God, and

charge him with blasphemy, Mark 14 : 61-64. The questions were also really needless, for the works and doctrines of Jesus were evidences that he was the Messiah, and that he came from God, John 3 : 2; 10 : 24, 25, 37, 38; 12 : 37. Jesus, therefore, was not called upon under such circumstances to answer their questions. We have here the first direct assault of the authorities of the temple and of the great Jewish council upon Jesus.

3. Jesus does not evade them, but he brings them to the consideration of a fundamental fact in this discussion, the admission of which would lead to an irresistible conclusion, John 5 : 33-36; 10 : 41. He might have appealed to the raising of Lazarus, and his other miracles; but since these Jewish rulers came with wicked designs, and were not even deserving an answer, he adopts a different mode of reply, one which both answers and confounds them. The reference to John, whom Jesus had declared to be his forerunner (the Elijah that was to come, Matt. 11 : 14), and by whom he had been baptized, was indeed a suggestive answer that he was from God, the Messiah, since John had declared him so to be, John 1 : 26, 29, 32-34. Jesus could appeal to these declarations. At the same time he defeats their designs, and extorts from them an unwilling and hypocritical confession that they are unable and incompetent to judge. **Answer me.** This is a demand or challenge, and gives greater life to the narrative.

4. **The baptism of John,** the whole ministration of John, of which baptism formed a very prominent part. **From heaven, or of (from) men?** Did John act by the authority of God, or by his own? Was he a true prophet

- themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; he  
 6 will say, Why then believed ye him not? But and  
 if we say, Of men; all the people will stone us: ° for ° ch. 7. 29; Mt. 14. 5.  
 7 they be persuaded that John was a prophet. And  
 they answered, that they could not tell whence it was.  
 8 And Jesus said unto them, Neither tell I you by what  
 authority I do these things.  
 9 Then began he to speak to the people this parable; ° Mt. 21. 33-46.  
 ° Mk. 12. 1-12.  
 ° also Is. 5. 1, 2.  
 ° A certain man planted a vineyard, and let it forth to

or a false one? This was a fundamental question, really involving the question they asked. If they acknowledged John as a prophet, they must also acknowledge Jesus.

5. **They reasoned with, rather, among, themselves.** They saw that the question was a legitimate one, but it troubled them. They consulted and deliberated as to what answer they should give and what might be the effect of the different replies suggested. **Why then believed ye him not?** Why did you not become his followers and believe when he testified of me as the Messiah? To acknowledge that John was a true prophet would be to condemn themselves for rejecting both John and Jesus.

6. **But and if we say, Of (from) men; all the people will stone us.** This was the grand motive of their silence. They would have preferred to say from men, but they feared to brave popular opinion, and perhaps a popular tumult. **Persuaded that John was a prophet.** Mark says, "All counted John, that he was a prophet indeed." All regarded him as really a prophet.

7. Against all the evidence they had seen of John's prophetic office, and doubtless against their own convictions, **they answered that they could not tell, rather, they knew not whence it was.** The answer was hypocritical, a confession of ignorance.

8. **Neither tell I you.** One of our Saviour's brief answers replete with meaning. If you are unable or unwilling to judge of John and his teaching, you are equally so in regard to me. If you dare not deny his divine commission, you should acknowledge mine. Your real unwillingness to acknowledge, according to the convictions of your own consciences, that John was a true prophet, merits from me a cor-

responding unwillingness to give you any more evidence in regard to myself than that you already have.

9-18. **THE PARABLE OF THE WICKED HUSBANDMEN**, Matt. 21 : 33-46; Mark 12 : 1-12. The fearful guilt of the Jewish people in persecuting the prophets and murdering the Messiah, and their terrible doom. Mark and Luke relate this parable alone; the three related by Matthew were all specially applicable to the Jewish leaders in their rejection of the Messiah. But this is the central one, and deals most pointedly with the murderous rejecters of Jesus.

9. **To speak to the people.** According to Matthew, to "the chief priests and the elders of the people," 21 : 23. Mark says "the chief priests and the scribes and the elders," 11 : 27. The evangelists write according to their different standpoints. All these classes were among his auditors. It was specially intended for the scribes, chief priests, and elders; but he intended that the people should also hear it, for it was a matter of great concern to them. We have here a beautiful illustration of diversity and harmony in the independent accounts of the evangelists. **Parable.** See on ch. 5 : 36. **A certain man.** Simply, *a man*. **A vineyard.** A simile often used in Scripture, Ps. 80 : 8-16; Isa. 27 : 2-7. See especially Isa. 5 : 1-7, which bears a close resemblance to this parable. The Jewish leaders were familiar with these passages, and were thus somewhat prepared to understand the parable, ver. 19. **Let it out to husbandmen.** Tillers of the ground, who in this instance turned their attention to keeping a vineyard. From Sol. Song 8 : 11 and Isa. 7 : 23 we may infer that a most valuable vineyard of a thousand vines yielded a rent of a thousand shekels of

husbandmen, and went into a far country for a long  
 10 time. And at the season he sent a servant to the  
 husbandmen, that they should give him of the fruit  
 of the vineyard: but the husbandmen beat him, and  
 11 sent *him* away empty. And again he sent another  
 servant: and they beat him also, and entreated *him*  
 12 shamefully, and sent *him* away empty. And again he  
 wounded him also, and cast  
 13 *him* out. Then said the lord of the vineyard, \* What • Hos. 11. 8.  
 shall I do? I will send my beloved son; it may be  
 14 they will reverence *him* when they see him. But  
 when the husbandmen saw him, they reasoned among  
 themselves, saying, This is the heir: come, let us kill  
 15 him, That the inheritance may be ours. So they cast

silver, or about five hundred dollars. In this instance the husbandmen were to give a portion of the fruits as the rent, ver. 10; Mark 12: 2. Vineyards were very productive, but required great labor and care in digging, planting, propping, pruning, gathering grapes, and making wine. **Went into a far country.** Rather, *went abroad*. The Greek word does not say whether it was far or near.

10. **At the season,** the time of vintage. The general vintage was in September. The first ripe grapes were gathered somewhat earlier, Num. 13: 20. **Of the fruit,** that portion of the product which belonged to him as rent. The vineyard was let out on shares. **But the husbandmen beat him.** Instead of cheerfully and honestly giving the servant the portion of fruit which was due the owner, they "beat him" severely with rods or with their fists, and sent him away empty. All the three evangelists show in their accounts that the husbandmen treated the servants worse and worse. The ground-thought is the same in all, but Mark is the most particular in describing the gradation of their crimes.

11. The husbandmen treated the second servant worse than the first. They not only beat him, but **treated him shamefully.** Mark says, "at him they cast stones and wounded him in the head." Stoning was a common way of putting to death among the Jews, Deut. 21: 21; Josh. 7: 25; Acts 7: 58. In this case death did not result, as the connection shows; but they treated him with dishonor, out-

raged, shamefully handled him, and then sent him away empty.

12. **And again he sent a third, and they wounded him, also and cast him out.** Mark says, "him they killed, and many others," 12: 5. They not only wounded but killed him. In like manner they maltreated many others, beating and stoning some and killing others. Thus the three servants specified were only selections from many examples.

13. The owner perseveres with wonderful patience in his peaceful endeavors to obtain from these lawless husbandmen his due. Having exhausted every resource, having sent every servant that could have any influence, he says, **What shall I do?** The question denotes anxiety to avoid, if possible, a resort to extreme measures. **I will send my beloved son.** Mark records that it was his "one son," his *one beloved son*. **They will reverence,** etc. They will so respect and revere my son as to heed what he says, and pay the rent. **When they see him.** These words are not found in the best text. They may have been added by some copyist, as the thought is implied.

14. **The heir, the one to whom the vineyard would at length belong. Come, let us kill him.** Compare the similar language of the sons of Jacob concerning their brother Joseph, Gen. 37: 20. **The inheritance shall be ours.** Thus, in opposition to the great clemency and wonderful patience of the owner, these wicked men consulted among themselves and plotted against him. When the only son and

16 him out of the vineyard, and killed *him*. What therefore shall the lord of the vineyard do unto them? He shall come and destroy these husbandmen, and shall give the vineyard to others.  
And when they heard *it*, they said, God forbid!

heir was destroyed, they thought to hold the vineyard as their own. The parable presents an extreme case. But it is not necessary to regard it as unlikelike or fictitious. Doubtless his hearers could recall similar agreements violently broken. In the unsettled state of the country we can conceive that an atrocious case, as the one here presented, could have happened.

15. They put their fiendish plans into execution. **They cast him out of the vineyard, and killed him.** They treated him with contempt and heartlessly put him to death. **What therefore shall,** etc. Rather, *What therefore will the lord of the vineyard do?* Not merely what *would* he do nor what *can* he do, but, such being the terrible state of things, what *will* he do? There seems to be some transition, or at least a reference, from the parable to the things signified among the Jewish people.

16. **He shall come and destroy these husbandmen,** etc., Isa. 5 : 4, 5. According to Matthew (21 : 41), the Jewish rulers give this answer, and thus pass sentence upon themselves. But here and in Mark 12 : 9 Jesus seems to answer the question himself. It is not impossible, however, to regard the answer even here as given by some one of the chief priests, elders, or scribes. But it is better to suppose that Jesus repeated the answer to give it emphasis and his approval. And as he repeated it the people seemed to have caught the meaning of the parable; for according to ver. 16, they exclaimed, **God forbid,** or rather, May it not be! Far be it! Let it never happen!

The parable being completed, it is best at this point to consider its meaning. Its *grand design* was to shadow forth the rejection of the Jewish people on account of their rejection of the prophets, and especially of the Messiah. Verses 9-14 referred to the past; verse 15 and onward was prophetic. The *centre of comparison* is found in the ungrateful and cruel treat-

ment of the servants and son on the one hand, and the righteous judgment upon the husbandmen on the other. The *man* or *lord* of the vineyard represents God the Father; the *husbandmen*, the Jewish people, as is very evident from Matt. 21 : 43, "The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof." The chief priests and Pharisees, being both the civil and religious leaders, representatives and rulers of the people, could very truly regard the parable as against them, ver. 19. The *vineyard* cannot here represent, as in Isa. 5 : 1, the Jewish people, for they are already represented by the husbandmen, but rather the religious blessings and privileges entrusted to them as a people—the *true religion* as revealed in the word of God, Rom. 9 : 4, 5.

The minute details in regard to the vineyard need not be pressed closely. The *planting* may be said to have occurred under Moses and Joshua, Ps. 80 : 8. The *letting it out to husbandmen* may refer to the solemn covenants between God and the people, as at the giving of the law, Ex. 20 : 19; 24 : 7, 8. The householder *going to another country* can also be used to represent the withholding of such open revelations as upon Sinai and the speaking face to face with Moses, Deut. 34 : 10-12. The *fruit* represents the wise improvement of their gifts and blessings, the bringing to God, not only the service of their lips, but also their hearts (Isa. 5 : 4; 29 : 13); the tithes, offerings, prayers, and labors, Mal. 3 : 8-10; Rom. 7 : 4.

The *servants* sent by the householder represent the prophets. A period of about three hundred and eight years intervened between the death of Moses and the call of Samuel to be a prophet. Though there were prophets during the Judges, yet the more conspicuous prophets began with Samuel, continuing till Malachi, and ending with John the Baptist, Matt. 11 : 13. The treatment they received accords well with the lan-

17 And he beheld them, and said, What is this then <sup>Ps. 118. 22; Mt. 21. 42; Mk. 12. 10, 11.</sup> that is written, 'The stone which the builders re-

guage of the parable. Thus the children of Israel preferred a king to Samuel in his old age, 1 Sam. 8 : 6-8; 12 : 12, 13. Elijah was persecuted by Ahab, 1 Kings 18 : 10-12. Isaiah, according to Jewish tradition, was sawn asunder by King Manasseh. Zechariah, the son of Jehoiada, was stoned to death, 2 Chron. 24 : 20-22. Jeremiah was imprisoned (Jer. 37 : 15), and according to tradition was stoned by the exiles in Egypt. Compare also 1 Kings 22 : 26-28; 2 Chron. 36 : 16; Neh. 9 : 26; Matt. 27 : 37; Acts 7 : 52; Heb. 11 : 36-38.

The *son* represents Christ, who was sent after a long series of revelations and prophets, Heb. 1 : 1, 2. He is the only-begotten and well-beloved Son, the Son of God in the highest sense, Mark 1 : 11; John 1 : 14; Heb. 1 : 3-9. He is the "*heir of all things*," Heb. 1 : 2. Thus, in parabolic language, Jesus answers the question of the chief priests and elders in ver. 1. He had done "these things" by the authority of the Son. The language *they will reverence my son* presents the human side as it would seem to men, to intelligent creatures who had no knowledge of the future. It was their duty to reverence the Son of God. It was reasonable to suppose that they would have revered their long-expected Messiah. God's foreknowledge of their wicked conduct did not affect their freedom and their duty. They acted without compulsion. The *killing of the son* points to the crucifixion, ch. 23 : 33; Acts 3 : 13-15. And as the son was *cast out of the vineyard*, so Jesus "suffered without the gate," Heb. 13 : 12, 13; Mark 15 : 20-23. Compare 1 Kings 21 : 13; Acts 7 : 58. The *reason for killing the son*, that *the inheritance may be ours*, must not be pressed too closely. The very nature of sin is robbery; the sinner robs God, and would usurp his place and authority. So the Jewish people, in rejecting Christ, wanted their own way, and were determined to have it. They were robbers, murderers, and usurpers. John 11 : 47-53 throws light on their feelings and motives a little time before uttering this parable. They feared lest *all should believe on him*, and they would

lose their power and position; they also feared, or professed to fear, lest the people should make him king and the *Romans come and take away their place and nation*.

Thus far the parable represents the patience and forbearance of God in sending his servants, the prophets, and last his Son. What more could he have done? Isa. 5 : 4, 5. After receiving such ungrateful and cruel treatment from their hands, what was left but to punish? Isa. 5 : 5, 6.

*The coming of the Lord of the vineyard* and the *destruction* of these husbandmen represent the coming of God in judgment upon the Jewish nation in the destruction of Jerusalem, when "their house was left unto them desolate" (ch. 13 : 35), and they suffered "affliction such as was not from the beginning of the creation," Mark 13 : 19. At Jerusalem alone, it is said, 1,100,000 perished by the sword, famine, and pestilence. Besides, 97,600 were sold as slaves, and vast multitudes perished in other parts of Judea. Compare Matt. 23 : 34-36. *The giving the vineyard unto others* represents the rejection of the Jews and the calling of the Gentiles, Rom. 9 : 30, 31; 11 : 9, 10.

17. Jesus further rivets the application of the parable by quoting an ancient prophecy, and thereby intimating, at the same time, that the son who had been left dead would come to life again and be the Head of the people of God. **What is this then that is written?** You surely have read it. The scripture quoted is Ps. 118 : 22, and in the words of the Septuagint version. The Jews applied it to the Messiah; from it (vers. 25, 26) the multitude had derived their hosannas at the public entry of Jesus into Jerusalem, Mark 11 : 9, 10. As the multitude had applied this Psalm to Jesus, so Jesus now applies it to himself as the Christ. **The stone**, in the figurative language of prophecy, was Christ. This is regarded as a typical prophecy, some referring its typical fulfillment to David, who was disallowed and rejected by Saul and the ruling men of the nation, and yet was chosen to be king of Israel; others refer it to Zerub-

jected, the same is become the head of the corner?  
 18 Whosoever <sup>a</sup>shall fall upon that stone shall be broken; but <sup>b</sup>on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind  
 19 him to powder. And the chief priests and the scribes the same hour sought to lay hands on him; and they feared the people: for they perceived that he had spoken this parable against them.

<sup>c</sup> Ps. 2. 12; Is. 3. 14, 15; Zec. 12. 3. Mt. 21. 44; Ro. 9. 33; 2 Cor. 4. 3, 4; 1 Pet. 2. 8. <sup>b</sup> Ps. 2. 9; 21. 8, 9; Is. 60. 12; Dan. 2. 34, 35, 44, 45 Mt. 21. 44.

*Concerning the payment of tribute to Cæsar, the resurrection of the dead, and the Son of David.*

20 <sup>1</sup>And they watched *him*, and sent forth spies, which

<sup>1</sup> Mt. 22. 15-22; Mk. 12. 13-17.

babel (Zech. 3 : 8, 9; 4 : 7), and others still to Mordecai; its special and complete fulfilment was in Christ. Compare on Matt. 1 : 22, 23. **The builders** were the Jews, John 19 : 15. **Rejected, disapproved, disallowed.** They did not allow the claims of Jesus. **Head of the corner.** The head-stone or corner-stone; the stone that lies at the foundation of the building, where the two walls come together, binding them firmly, and giving the building its strength and support. Thus Christ is the support of the spiritual building, the "holy temple in the Lord," Eph. 2 : 20-22; 1 Cor. 3 : 11. Though the Jews rejected Jesus, yet God has made him the head-stone of his spiritual temple (Acts 4 : 10, 11), uniting both Jews and Gentiles in himself, Gal. 3 : 28. He is highly exalted as a Prince and Saviour, Acts 2 : 33-36; 5 : 29-31; Phil. 2 : 9-11. Compare 1 Pet. 2 : 7, where the prophecy is quoted with a similar application.

18. Jesus adds another word of terrible warning, still using and applying the figure of a stone. **Whosoever shall fall on that stone**, he that makes it a stone of stumbling, that takes offence at Christ, **shall be broken**, shall suffer accordingly, ch. 2 : 34; Isa. 8 : 14, 15. Thus the Jews already had taken offence at Jesus in his humiliation, and were suffering hardness of heart and all of the direful consequences of unbelief. But as a person in a fall may only so break his limbs as to recover, so to many of these Jews there was yet hope. Some, however, were doubtless so broken as to be beyond hope and recovery. **On whomsoever it shall fall.** They who shall continue to oppose and neglect him, on them his vengeance shall fall. The

weight of his power and indignation shall fall on all such as continue to stumble and take offence at him, resulting in their most fearful destruction. **Grind him to powder.** The verb, which generally means to *winnnow*, has here the idea of *scattering in minute fragments*, making chaff of him, crush him to pieces, grind him to powder. It shall break him in pieces, and he shall become "like the chaff of the summer threshing-floors," Dan. 2 : 35, 44, 45. Such was the ruin of the hardened Jews after Christ's exaltation, and such will be the destruction of all the finally impenitent. Thus, Jesus presents himself in four aspects under the figure of a stone: (1), a *rejected or disallowed stone*; (2), the *head-stone of the corner*; (3), a *stumbling-stone*; and lastly, *the stone of retribution*.

19. THE EFFECT OF THE PARABLE ON THE CHIEF PRIESTS AND SCRIBES. **They sought to lay hands on him**, in order to kill him, as the Scriptures and Jesus in this parable had foretold; for they perceived that the parable had direct reference to them. But they **feared the people**, the common people. Multitudes were now gathered from all parts to celebrate the passover. **Had spoken this parable against them.** They saw that their secret and evil designs were brought to light, that they themselves were condemned and threatened with overwhelming ruin.

20-26. THE ARTFUL ATTACK OF THE SPIES, AND THEIR DEFEAT. CONCERNING PAYING TRIBUTE TO CÆSAR, Matt. 22 : 15-22; Mark 12 : 13-17. The three accounts are very similar, with the usual differences of independent narrators.

20. **They watched him.** The chief priests and scribes. Matthew

should feign themselves just men, that they might take hold of his words, that so they might deliver him unto the power and authority of the governor.  
 21 And they asked him, saying, Master, we know that thou sayest and teachest rightly, neither acceptest thou the person *of any*, but teachest the way of God  
 22 truly: <sup>1</sup>Is it lawful for us to give tribute unto Cæsar,

<sup>1</sup>Deu. 17. 14. 15  
 28. 47. 48.

mentions the Pharisees, who were the leaders of the opposition, and probably formed the principal ones of those who had questioned his authority. With these were joined also the Herodians (Matt. 22 : 16; Mark 12 : 13), who, though they hated each other, yet hated Jesus so much more that they could unite in their opposition to him. From these were selected the spies, which should feign themselves just men, men professing a great regard for the law and a desire to know how to reconcile their duty to it with submission to the Roman government. **Might take hold of his words**, or of *some word or saying of his*, supposing that he must answer either *yes* or *no* to their question, ver. 22. They thought that by the utterance of a single word in answer he must fatally involve himself in his relations either to the government or the people. Their object was to find a civil or ecclesiastical accusation against him. Supposing that he would probably give a negative answer, they thought thereby to deliver him unto the power and authority of the governor, who would be obliged to adjudge him guilty of death for counselling opposition to the rights of Cæsar.

21. **Master, we know, etc., Teacher, we know.** They affirm what is true, but hypocritically. Nicodemus used similar language, but sincerely. They came to Jesus, not as Pharisees or Herodians, but as just men, hoping by their words to hide their character and purpose, and by flattering Jesus to put him off his guard and lead him into the snare set for him. They pretended to acknowledge him to be all that he claimed, and to be ready to abide by his decisions, since they would be absolutely true and just, independent of the influence and authority of men. **Sayest and teachest rightly**, thy doctrines and utterances are in accordance with truth and righteousness.

**Neither acceptest thou the person of any**, thou art not influenced by rank or position, not even by Cæsar himself, in thy decisions, but art perfectly impartial, Lev. 19 : 15. **The way of God**, the way that God has marked out for men to walk in, Ps. 27 : 11. **Truly**, or *in truth*, as it is, without any addition or diminution.

22. **Is it lawful**, is it right for us as Jews, the chosen people of God, Matt. 22 : 17. The question is not whether it was advisable, but whether it was lawful, for them who acknowledged God as their King, **to give tribute**, the Roman poll-tax imposed on all males from fourteen and on females from twelve to sixty.

**Cæsar.** The family name of Julius Cæsar, the first Roman emperor, and applied to his successors, whether of his family or not, as a designation of their office and a representation of Roman power. The Cæsar then reigning was the emperor Tiberius. **Or no?** The question was so put as to require, as they thought, the answer either *yes* or *no*. They would rather have him answer in the negative, for then they would "deliver him into the power and authority of the governor" as a seditious person. But if he answered in the affirmative, then they would accuse him before the people as opposed to the law of God. The Herodians, as friends of Herod, and hence of the Roman supremacy, were in favor of paying tribute. The Pharisees generally espoused the popular Jewish sentiment that paying tribute to a foreign power was a badge of servitude, and even contrary to the law of Moses. Thus Judas the Gaulonite (Acts 5 : 35) had raised an insurrection in opposition to levying this tax, holding that it was unlawful, and even rebellion against God, for the Jews to pay tribute and submit to a foreign power. These sentiments were extensively promulgated;

- 23 or no? But he perceived their craftiness, and said  
 24 unto them, Why tempt ye me? Shew me a <sup>k</sup>penny. <sup>k</sup>Mt. 18. 28.  
 Whose image and superscription hath it? They an-  
 25 swered and said, Cæsar's. And he said unto them,  
 1Render therefore unto Cæsar the things which be <sup>1</sup>Mt. 22. 21; <sup>Mk.</sup>  
 Cæsar's, and unto God the things which be God's. <sup>12. 17; Ro. 13. 7.</sup>  
 26 <sup>m</sup>And they could not take hold of his words before the <sup>m</sup>Job 5. 13.

and the Jewish people, who were very restless under the Roman yoke, quite generally espoused or sympathized in them. This was, however, a fanatical view of the law, since the Jews were nowhere forbidden to pay tribute to a foreign conqueror. They were only forbidden to set a stranger over them as king, Deut. 17 : 15. They had at different times paid heavy tribute to Syria and Babylon.

23. **But he perceived their craftiness**, their dissimulation and false pretences, that they were assuming a character and disposition which did not belong to them, ver. 20. **Why tempt ye me?** Why entice me to say something which you can use against me? These words, however, are not in the correct text; but see Matt 22 : 18. Then, instead of answering as they expected, he calls for a coin in which the Roman tax was paid, so that he might address the eye as well as the ear.

24. **A penny, a denary**, a Roman silver coin worth about fifteen cents. It was a current maxim of Jewish teachers that "wherever a king's coin is current, there his sovereignty is acknowledged." It was an evidence of the Roman dominion over the land that Roman currency was used; and by using it the Jews acknowledged their subjection to the Roman power. **Whose image and superscription**, or *inscription*. The *image* was probably the likeness of the Roman emperor Tiberius Cæsar. The *inscription* was the motto of the coin, the title of the emperor, declarative of his sovereignty. The image showed that it was not a Jewish but a foreign coin, for the Jews put no images on their coins, though they put inscriptions on them. **Cæsar's**. Both the coin and their answer showed that they were peacefully submitting to Cæsar's government and enjoying his protection.

25. Everything is now ready for the answer of Jesus. **Render. Pay off.**

The idea is not *rendering a gift*, but rendering what is *due*. **The things which be Cæsar's**. Render to Cæsar whatever is due to him, what rightfully belongs to him; if you are under his government, obey him and pay him fully for his protection, so long as you violate no divine obligation. He does not discuss a political question nor the right or wrong of Roman supremacy; but taking their condition as it really was, the Roman power peacefully acknowledged and its protection enjoyed, he teaches that they should pay toward its support and render to it whatever was rightfully its due. Paul expands this idea in Rom. 13 : 1-7. The Jews themselves taught that a king ought to have his dues, whether he was a king of the Jews or of the Gentiles. **The things which be God's**. And since in the highest sense you are under God's government, preserved, protected, and supported by him, render to him whatever is due to him as your God and King—your obedience and the whole circle of religious duty. The two precepts are in harmony, and the one really flowing out of the other. As love to our neighbor is in harmony with love to God and flows from it, so rendering all rightful obedience to human government is in harmony with the discharge of our full obligation to God and springs from it, 1 Tim. 2 : 1, 2; 1 Pet. 2 : 13-16. There is no reference to the union of church and state, much less any sanction for it.

"Man is the coinage, and bears the image of God, Gen. 1 : 27; 9 : 6; Acts 17 : 29; James 3 : 9. . . . We owe, then, *ourselves* to God; and this solemn duty is implied of going ourselves to him with all that we have and are. The answer also gives them the real reason why they were now under subjection to Cæsar—namely, because they had fallen from their allegiance to God, 2 Chron. 12 : 5-8."—ALFORD.

26. **Could not take hold of his**

people: and they marvelled at his answer, and held their peace.

- 27 <sup>a</sup> Then came to *him* certain of the Sadducees, <sup>o</sup> which deny that there is any resurrection; and they asked  
 28 him, saying, Master, <sup>p</sup> Moses wrote unto us, If any man's brother die, having a wife, and he die without children, that his brother should take his wife, and

<sup>a</sup> Mt. 22. 23-33  
 Mk. 12. 18-27.  
<sup>o</sup> Ac. 23. 6, 8.  
<sup>p</sup> Deu. 25. 5.

**words.** They could not detect a word that would render him liable to civil or ecclesiastical censure. **They marvelled at his answer.** They *wondered* at a reply so unexpected, so apt and true, and at his wisdom in escaping their snare. He maintained both the rights of government and the rights of God, and in such a manner that neither party could accuse him. The wisdom of his reply may well command our admiration. He laid down a great moral principle, which is applicable in every age of the world, and which, if properly carried out, will conduce to the highest good of man and to the glory of God. No wonder that his interrogators **held their peace**, were reduced to absolute silence; that they "left him and went their way" (Matt. 22 : 22), sensible of overwhelming defeat.

27-40. THE QUESTION OF THE SADDUCEES CONCERNING THE RESURRECTION. THE REPLY OF JESUS, Matt. 22 : 23-33; Mark 12 : 18-27. Luke is the fullest; Matthew the briefest. Mark holds a middle place, but exhibits his usual descriptive style. This attack of the Sadducees was less artful and insidious than the preceding one of the Pharisees and Herodians. Their question was most frivolous, and their design seems to have been to throw contempt, not merely on the doctrine of the resurrection, which they denied, but especially upon Jesus, by any answer he might give.

27. **Then came to him.** Rather, *and there come to him*. There is no note of time. Matthew says "on the same day," or *that day*, on which the Pharisees and Herodians were baffled and put to silence; probably a short time after. **The Sadducees.** The Sadducees were a Jewish sect, or party, so called either from *righteousness*, the meaning of their name, or from Zadok, some distinguished individual (1 Kings 1 : 32; 2 Chron. 31 : 10), or, as some

suppose, the founder of the sect, about B. C. 260. They were opposed to the Pharisees, and rightly rejected tradition, and that God gave it, the oral law, to Moses; but they unhappily denied the resurrection and the existence of angels and spirits, Acts 23 : 8. They also laid special stress on the freedom of the will, while the Pharisees held strongly to the doctrine of providence. The opinion that the Sadducees held to only the five books of Moses is now given up. As a sect they disappear from history after the first century. They were mostly men of rank, wealth, and education; but the Pharisees were more numerous and had greater influence with the people.

The word **resurrection**, as used in this and the following verses, appears to have a somewhat broader signification than merely rising from the dead, including not only the life that ensues, but also the life of the soul previous to the reunion of soul and body. Thus it is very nearly equivalent to future life, the rising from the dead being the central hinge around which that life turns. Compare the language in Mark 12 : 23 : "In the resurrection, therefore, when they shall rise."

28. **Master, Teacher**, ver. 21. They also approach him with apparent regard as a prophet or religious teacher. **Moses wrote unto us.** Rejecting all human tradition, they acknowledge the writings of Moses as authority, and as pre-eminent authority. The law which they cite is found in Deut. 25 : 5, 6, and was designed to prevent any family of Israel from becoming extinct. The case stated in the following verses was very likely fictitious, and took for granted that if there was a resurrection the present relations of life must continue in the future state. The Sadducees thought thus to show from the law the manifest absurdity of the doctrine. It may have been a favorite argument of theirs with the Pharisees, and illns-

29 raise up seed unto his brother. There were therefore seven brethren: and the first took a wife, and died  
30 without children. And the second took her to wife,  
31 and he died childless. And the third took her; and in like manner the seven also: and they left no children, and died. Last of all the woman died also.  
32 Therefore in the resurrection whose wife of them is she? for seven had her to wife.

34 And Jesus answering said unto them, The children  
35 of this world marry, and are given in marriage: but they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither  
36 marry, nor are given in marriage: <sup>9</sup>neither can they die any more: for they are equal unto the angels; and

<sup>9</sup> Is. 25, 8; Hos. 13.  
14; John 11. 25,  
26; 1 Cor. 15. 26,  
42, 49-55; 1 John  
3. 2; Rev. 21. 4.

trates the manner of their opposition. **Seed unto his brother**, the first-born was regarded as the offspring of his deceased brother.

29-32. Having quoted the law, they now state the case formally and with great particularity. They doubtless made it as ludicrous as possible. **The seven**—that is, as in ver. 33, “seven had her to wife,” *the seven took her*. The Sadducees speak of it as an actual fact, especially according to Matt. 22 : 25, “There was with us.” Some suppose it founded on the apocryphal book of Tobit 3 : 7, 8, “Sara the daughter of Raguel was also reproached by her father’s maids, because she had been married to seven husbands.” It may have been a long-disputed problem never before solved. In the case of two husbands the rabbins taught that the wife would belong to the first in the next world. But here were seven. What would the great Teacher say to that?

33. **In the resurrection**, in the resurrection state or life, the state of being into which the resurrection issues. **Whose wife of them is she?** The Pharisees appear to have held that the relationships of this life would continue in the future state. And with no other conception of the doctrine the Sadducees foresaw a certain conflict between these seven brothers. All, then, cannot have her, but only one; yet none has a claim upon her above the rest. Whose wife, then? They see here, as they imagine, an insurmountable difficulty to supposing a resurrection life. It would be a state of confusion, with interests and rela-

tionships which could never be justly settled. And besides, as this case grew out of a Mosaic enactment, it was evident, as they thought, that Moses never intended to reveal a resurrection and a future life. Their object was not to have their question solved, but rather to puzzle Jesus or to draw forth some expression which they could use against him. They could not expect him to deny the resurrection, for he had raised Lazarus from the dead, and had repeatedly inculcated the doctrine. He was doubtless known to side with the Pharisees in this respect. But they hoped to bring him into conflict with the law of Moses, or induce him to utter that which they could construe into blasphemy or turn into ridicule.

34. **The children of this world**, or *the sons of this world*, marry, etc. Marriage is ordained for this present state of being, and is therefore confined to mortals.

35. **Accounted worthy**. Our Lord here speaks of the resurrection state of the righteous, who alone through God’s grace are accounted worthy to have part in “the resurrection of life,” John 5 : 29. That the wicked will also rise from the dead is plainly taught (John 5 : 28, 29; Acts 24 : 15), but his argument does not require him to speak of *their* future state, but only of that of the righteous.

36. **Neither can they die any more**. They cannot be dependent on the marriage relation for the preservation of their species, for they are themselves immortal. **They are equal unto the angels**—that is, their existence, relations, and state will be similar

are the children of God, \*being the children of the  
 37 resurrection. Now that the dead are raised, \*even  
 Moses showed at the bush when he calleth the Lord  
 the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the  
 38 God of Jacob. For he is not a God of the dead, but

\* Ro. 8. 23; 1 Cor.  
 15. 44-49; Phil  
 3. 20, 21.  
 \* Ex. 3. 6.

to those of angels; not earthly, sensual, and mortal, but heavenly, spiritual, and immortal. As the marriage relation exists not among angels, so it will not exist among the saints in heaven. As the righteous will be as angels, the wicked will be as fallen angels or demons. **Are the children (sons) of God, being the children (sons) of the resurrection.** The sense seems to be that because they share in the resurrection of the just, God imparts a new life to them, by virtue of which they are his sons, not in a moral or ethical, but in a metaphysical sense. They partake of a life which in its essence is immortal.

37. **That the dead are raised.** The *dead* here refers not merely to the bodies of those who have died, but to their disembodied spirits—with reference, indeed, to their being reunited to their bodies and raised. The Hebrew had a distinct word, *rapha*, which refers to that part of man which survives death, and was a distinct name for that separate existence, Job 26 : 5; Ps. 88 : 10; Prov. 2 : 18; 9 : 18; 21 : 16; Isa. 14 : 9; 26 : 14, 19.

**Even Moses showed at the bush,** at the passage relating to the burning bush, Ex. 3 : 1 ff. *Bush* denotes the section in the Pentateuch where the words that follow are to be found. Jesus aptly appeals to Moses, inasmuch as the Sadducees had just drawn their argument from Moses. Some affirm and others deny that the Sadducees rejected all the other parts of the Holy Scriptures but the five books of Moses. The true statement seems to be that they rejected all tradition and received only the written law, and that they held that the five books of Moses should be greatly preferred above the rest of the Old Testament and regarded as the only ultimate standard of appeal for all doctrine. We thus see another reason why Jesus appeals to Moses, since they regarded his writings of the highest authority. He, however, implies that he might have appealed to the strong testimonies of other Scripture (Isa. 26 :

19; Ezek. 37 : 1-14; Dan. 12 : 2): "*even Moses showed.*"

**When he calleth the Lord the God of Abraham,** Ex. 3 : 6. The living and eternal God, bearing a personal relation as the living God to Abraham and to Isaac and to Jacob, which supposes that those patriarchs were still bearing a living and personal relation to him as his servants, and also implies he will not suffer them always to remain under the power of the grave, but will in due time raise them to a glorified life. Jehovah is the **I am**, the ever-faithful, the unchangeable, the living and eternal God. He was the personal God of the patriarchs. That he continued this personal relation implies their continued existence. Since he declares, "*I am the God of Abraham,*" etc., their God absolutely and without reference to time—that is, eternally—their immortality is implied. And since he was the God of their whole existence, body and soul, it is implied that, though the relation between their bodies and souls be suspended for a time, they will be reunited ere long in an endless existence.

It does not follow that these inferences and truths thus brought out were plain on the surface of this declaration to Moses, or that they would ever in this world have been clearly seen or thoroughly understood without revelation. It is enough to know that Jesus has authoritatively brought them to light, and that when thus revealed they come with the beauty and the internal testimony of truth. They came home to the hearts of the Sadducees and others who heard Jesus with convincing power, ver. 38; Matt. 22 : 33, 34. The various objections, therefore, against our Lord's interpretation of this passage are of no force. Christ's words are authority, and these words of his bear along with them their own evidences of truth.

38. **He is not a God of the dead,** in the sense of *extinct*, as the Sadducees

- 39 of the living: for <sup>1</sup>all live unto him. Then certain of <sup>2</sup>the scribes answering said, Master, thou hast well <sup>3</sup>said. <sup>4</sup>And after that they durst not ask him any <sup>5</sup>question at all. <sup>6</sup>And he said unto them, <sup>7</sup>How say they that Christ

<sup>1</sup>Ro. 6. 10, 11; 14. 7-9; 2 Cor. 13. 4.

<sup>2</sup>Mt. 22. 46.

<sup>3</sup>Mt. 22. 41-45; Mk. 12. 35-37.

used the word *dead*. God is not the God of the non-existent. He can bear no relation to a nonentity. **But of the living**, of those who continue to live. He can only bear a relation to the living. The souls of the patriarchs, their essential being, were still living; their bodies, the less important part, had indeed died, yet still existed in matter; and the fact that Jehovah was God of the living was a pledge that this suspension of bodily existence was only temporary. The additional idea of a covenant-keeping God is fitting here, since "*I am the God of Abraham*," etc. (Ex. 3 : 6), may briefly express the blessing pertaining to a covenant relation to God. Compare Deut. 26 : 16; Isa. 41 : 10; Zech. 13 : 9; Heb. 11 : 16. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob must be living, for the blessings and promises of this covenant can only be enjoyed by the living, and the full enjoyment of them must be in connection with the most perfect life and the highest state of being, their glorified and immortal bodily existence. **For all live unto him**, or *to him all live*, a generalization peculiar to Luke. The word *all* comprehends all creatures. We distinguish between the living and the dead. In the divine view there is no such distinction; all are living, whether in the body or out of the body, whether on earth or in the world of spirits.

39. **Then**. Rather, *and*. There is no word expressive of time, although there can be no doubt that the words following were spoken immediately. **Scribes**. See on ch. 5 : 21. **Master, Teacher, thou hast well said**. The scribes were mostly Pharisees who would gladly have seen Jesus ensnared by the Sadducees, but the latter had been so thoroughly routed by our Lord that "some of the scribes," who doubtless lingered near, could not withhold their commendation. The able manner in which he had humbled their enemies won their praise.

40. **And after that they durst not ask him any question at all**.

*For they no longer dared to ask him any question*. The word *for* shows that their praise was drawn forth not only by the fact that he had humbled their enemies, but also by the consciousness that further attempts to entangle him in his discourse would be followed by still other defeats. Their awe of the victor extorted their praise and reduced them to silence.

41-44. JESUS CONFOUNDS THE SCRIBES WITH A QUESTION CONCERNING THE PARENTAGE OF THE CHRIST, Matt. 22 : 41-46; Mark 12 : 35-37. Matthew is the fullest and most lifelike; Luke the briefest; Mark holds an intermediate position, yet shows his characteristic style by the additional statements that this incident occurred "while he taught in the temple," and that "the great multitude heard him gladly," Mark 12 : 35, 37.

Jesus had thus far been acting on the defensive, but now he turns to the offensive and convicts the scribes and Pharisees of ignorance and false views of the Messiah, which opens the way for his warning and denunciations against them in vers. 46, 47. They had disputed his claims as a spiritual Messiah, and by repeated efforts had vainly tried to prove him a base pretender. He now turns and shows the incongruity of their view of a worldly Messiah with the prophetic idea of him. He had silenced their *questioning* (ver. 40); now, as Alford aptly remarks, he silences their *answering* also.

41. **Said to them**, not merely to the scribes, but to the multitude, to all within his hearing. **How say they?** the Pharisees, including the scribes, for in Mark the question is, "How say the scribes that Christ is the son of David?" According to Matthew, Jesus asked the Pharisees, "What think ye of Christ? Whose son is he?" He would give emphasis to *their* answer by incorporating it in a question. The word *they* here evidently refers to the scribes and Pharisees. **That Christ**. Rather, *the* Christ, the Greek equivalent to the

42 is David's son? And David himself saith in the book of Psalms, "The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit  
 43 thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy  
 44 footstool. David therefore calleth him Lord, how is he then his son?"

\* Ps. 110. 1; Ac. 2. 34; Heb. 1. 13.

Hebrew *the Messiah*, meaning *anointed*. Is David's son, or "son of David," a common title of the Messiah. See on ch. 18 : 38.

42. **David himself saith in the book of Psalms.** In Mark the reading is, "David himself said by (*in*) the Holy Ghost," *the Holy Spirit*, in union with him and under his control; pervaded by his influence and under his guidance. Taken in connection with the accounts here and in Matthew, we have strong incidental proof of the inspiration of the book of Psalms.

Jesus quotes from Ps. 110 : 1. This passage is said to be more frequently quoted or referred to in the New Testament than any other in the Old Testament. The Psalm from which it is quoted was written by David after Zion became the seat of the theocracy (2 Sam. 6 : 16, 17), and not long after the promises made to David in 2 Sam. 7 : 11-16 and 1 Chron. 17 : 9-14. The application of the Psalm and of the language here quoted to the Messiah is taken for granted by Jesus, is silently acknowledged by the Pharisees, and was the common interpretation among the Jews at the time of Christ and long after, Acts 2 : 34.

**The Lord, Jehovah. To my Lord,** the Messiah, as the Jews understood the words to refer, and as our Saviour applied them. Thus David spoke of the Messiah as his Lord, his superior and sovereign. **Sit.** An appropriate posture of a sovereign (Ps. 29 : 10), especially of one who was about to use his enemies as a footstool. **On my right hand.** On the throne beside me, not merely as a position of honor, but as a partner of my sovereignty and power, Ps. 110 : 2, 3.

43. **Till I make, etc.** *Till* does not limit the time of his reign, but only carries the thought to a certain point, without going beyond it. Compare Gen. 28 : 15; Ps. 112 : 8. Paul, in 1 Cor. 15 : 24-28, reveals to us some things that shall take place after Christ has subjugated his enemies. **Thine**

**enemies thy footstool.** Emphatic in the original, *a footstool of thy feet*. So in the Hebrew, *a stool for thy feet*. This implies a degrading and ignominious defeat and their most abject subjugation. The foot was often put on the neck of the vanquished, Josh. 10 : 24, 25; Ps. 47 : 3. This prophecy plainly pointed to the divine nature of the Messiah; for only thus could he be spoken of as *Lord*, by Israel's greatest king, and as occupying such an exalted position and exercising such power.

44. **David,** in contrast to the scribes, who merely spoke of him as his son. **Calleth him Lord.** Applies to him the solemn, reverential, and lofty title of Lord. **How is he then his son?** If David acknowledged him as his superior and sovereign, from what source, by what means, is he his son, and hence his inferior? The question could only be answered by acknowledging the divinity and humanity of Christ. It is thus answered in Rom. 1 : 3, 4. But the Jews, especially the scribes and Pharisees, in their worldly views of the Messiah, had lost the doctrine of his divinity, and only held to his humanity as a royal descendant of David. If the scribes had truly understood the character of the Christ, they would have said, As man, he is David's son; but as God, David's Lord. This closes the oral conflict between Jesus and his enemies. They were so thoroughly entangled and discomfited that they feared both to ask and also to answer questions, Matt. 22 : 46. They felt their inferiority to him in wisdom and knowledge and in debate, and they found it necessary to have recourse to some other means for overcoming his influence and putting him to death.

45-47. **DENUNCIATION OF THE SCRIBES.** From the last public discourse of Jesus to the Jews, Matt. 23 : 1-39; Mark 12 : 38-40. Matthew, who wrote especially for Jewish Christians, gives a full report of this discourse. Mark, writing for Gentile Christians, gives but a brief denunciation of the

*Caution against the scribes.*

- 45 \*Then in the audience of all the people he said  
 46 unto his disciples, †Beware of the scribes, which desire to walk in long robes, and †love greetings in the markets, and the highest seats in the synagogues, and  
 47 the chief rooms at feasts; \*which devour widows' houses, and for a show make long prayers: the same shall receive greater damnation.

\* Mk. 12. 38, 39;  
 also Mt. 23. 1.  
 † Mt. 16. 6; 23. 5-7.  
 † ch. 11. 43.

\* Mt. 23. 14; Mk  
 12. 40.

scribes, whom he had named prominently among his opposers, Mark 12:35. Luke, writing for the race, is equally brief, and agrees almost verbally with Mark.

45. **In the audience of all the people he said unto his disciples.** Mark tells us that he said "*in his doctrine,*" *in his teaching,* implying that the language which immediately follows is but a portion of what he then taught.

46. **Beware,** be on your guard against. **The scribes,** the class that opposed him, and who had just been confounded by his question. **Which desire.** Jesus states their ruling passion: their love of display and honor and "to be seen of men," Matt. 23:5. What is here affirmed was true of the scribes as a class, although there were doubtless exceptions. Compare the woes pronounced upon them, Matt. 23:13-25. **To walk in long robes,** *to go about in long, flowing robes,* such as were worn by priests and kings and by persons of rank and distinction. The reference is undoubtedly to their walking about the streets and public places in their long robes of office and rank. **Love greetings,** deferential and complimentary *salutations,* which were performed in a formal and ceremonious manner. **In the markets,** places to which the people were accustomed to resort. See on ch. 7:32. They loved these greetings in the most public places. **Highest seats in the synagogues.** *The first seats,* the foremost row, nearest the reading-desk and the ark, where the sacred books were kept. See on ch. 4:15. **Chief rooms at feasts.** Rooms is here used in the obsolete sense of *place, position,* the chief *places* at feasts, the most honorable position, which was the middle place of the couch on which they reclined at table. Or according to others,

the couches were ordinarily arranged on three sides of a square, the fourth being left open for the servants to wait on the tables. The couch on the right was called the highest, the others, respectively, the middle and the lowest couch. Compare ch. 14:7-10. *Feasts,* dinners or suppers. The chief meal among the Jews was taken toward evening, and often prolonged into the night. This verse shows how the scribes loved positions of honor.

47. Jesus in this verse points to other traits of the scribes—their dishonest and voracious avarice and their hypocritical external piety.

**Devour widows' houses.** Like cunning yet ferocious beasts, they devoured the substance of widows, who were the most defenceless of the poor and the most deserving of sympathy and kindness. *Houses* is here used for *possessions, property.* They influenced widows to give them of their property as an act of piety, or to bequeath it to them. As spiritual advisers of men, and sometimes as the executors of their wills and the guardians of their children, they had special opportunities to rob widows of their property. Pious women were accustomed to contribute to the support of religious teachers, ch. 8:2, 3. "What words can better describe the corrupt practices of the so-called priesthood of Rome than these of our Lord?"—ALFORD. **For a show make long prayers.** As a pretext. They made religion a mask, in order to gain the confidence and the property of even the most helpless. Some of the rabbins would pray nine hours a day. **Greater damnation,** a more abundant *condemnation,* implying a most terrible punishment as a consequence. For the double sin of hypocrisy and fraudulent injustice they should be held accountable, and should meet a terrible doom.

## REMARKS.

1. The servants of Christ must expect opposition, and that their authority will be questioned by the enemies of truth, ver. 1; John 15 : 20, 21.

2. Persons of high ecclesiastical office and authority may be spiritually blinded, vers. 1, 2; Matt. 23 : 24; Rev. 3 : 17, 18.

3. Religious teachers should be called of God and appointed to their work, vers. 2, 3; Acts 13 : 2, 3; Heb. 5 : 4.

4. The envious and unbelieving will throw discredit on those who work for God, vers. 2, 3; Ex. 2 : 14; Acts 6 : 10-12; 17 : 5.

5. Analogical arguments and interrogative answers to the cavils of skeptics are often the most effectual, vers. 3, 4.

6. Formalists and wicked opposers of Christ will feign ignorance, and will lie, rather than injure their popularity or confess the truth which they dislike, vers. 5-8; Acts 4 : 15-18; 6 : 10-14.

7. An honest spirit in religious matters will overcome obstacles and sooner or later come out on the side of truth, vers. 5, 6; John 7 : 17; 8 : 31, 32, 43.

8. They who do not honestly seek after truth must expect to be left in error, ver. 8; Isa. 29 : 15, 16; Matt. 13 : 12; 2 Thess. 2 : 11, 12.

9. God, who bestows all our gifts and blessings, has a right to our service, vers. 9, 10; James 1 : 17; 1 Pet. 4 : 7-11.

10. God's dealings with the Jewish nation an illustration of his goodness, patience, long-suffering, and judgments toward wicked nations and individuals, vers. 9-14; Ps. 81 : 13-16; Ezek. 39 : 23; Heb. 1 : 1, 2; Jer. 7 : 25.

11. The history of the Jewish people is an argument for human depravity, vers. 10-15; Jer. 17 : 9; Acts 7 : 51, 52; 1 Thess. 2 : 15, 16; Rom. 8 : 7, 8.

12. A church should be of God's planting, separated from the world, with tower and every part well manned, and bringing forth fruit unto God, ver. 9; Eph. 2 : 19-22; 4 : 20-23; 5 : 7; Rom. 12 : 6-8; 1 Cor. 3 : 8, 9; 2 Cor. 6 : 16-18; John 15 : 16; Col. 1 : 10.

13. The greater the privileges, if unimproved, the greater the guilt and the more awful the condemnation, ver. 16; Matt. 23 : 34-38; Luke 12 : 45-48.

14. They who obstinately reject the

offers and privileges of the gospel shall have them for ever taken from them, ver. 16; Prov. 1 : 24-32.

15. Let those to whom Christ has become a stone of stumbling beware lest he become a stone of condemnation and unutterable ruin, ver. 17; ch. 2 : 34; 2 Cor. 2 : 16.

16. Christ the rock on which are built our hopes, joys, and full salvation, ver. 17; 1 Cor. 10 : 4; 1 Pet. 2 : 8; Matt. 16 : 18; Heb. 5 : 9; 12 : 2.

17. Christ is triumphant; and so will his cause and people be, however dark and foreboding their circumstances, vers. 17, 18; Eph. 4 : 8; Rom. 8 : 37-39; Luke 12 : 32.

18. Many have had their consciences aroused, but continue impenitent; and in many, an aroused conscience only begets greater hatred and wickedness, ver. 19; 2 Cor. 2 : 16; Acts 13 : 45.

19. Those who are now offended at God's faithful servants for preaching the truth would have joined with the scribes against Jesus, ver. 19; John 15 : 18-21.

20. How great the opposition of the wicked to Christ! Enemies unite in conspiring against him; play the hypocrite and act as his friends; acknowledge the truth and his true character with evil intent, ver. 20; Ps. 2 : 2; 12 : 2; 55 : 21.

21. Hypocrisy and deceit in religion will not escape the detection of Christ, nor his withering curse, vers. 20, 23; Isa. 29 : 15, 16; Heb. 4 : 13.

22. Let us beware of partial views of truth and duty, failing neither to recognize our duties to government nor to God, vers. 22-25; Dan. 6 : 3, 10.

23. The distinction made by Jesus between duties to God and to government shows that the two are in harmony, yet not to be mingled together. The church and the state should be distinct yet harmonious, ver. 25; Rom. 13 : 7; 1 Pet. 2 : 13-17.

24. Civil government is an ordinance of God, and all of its lawful requirements ought to be obeyed. The best citizen will make the best Christian, ver. 25; Rom. 13 : 1-5; Acts 4 : 19; Dan. 4 : 27; 3 : 16-18.

25. "Nothing is more likely to ensnare ministers than bringing them to meddle with controversies about civil rights, and to settle landmarks between

the prince and the subjects, which it is fit should be done, while it is not at all fit that they should do it."—MATTHEW HENRY. Vers. 21-26; 2 Tim. 2 : 4.

26. Men in every lawful station have their rights, and should receive all due honor, ver. 25; 1 Pet. 2 : 13-17.

27. If there come a collision between human and divine law, the Christian's duty is plain: he must obey God rather than man. "Julian was an unbelieving emperor, an apostate, a wicked man, and an idolater. Yet Christian men served as soldiers under him. . . . When the emperor wished them to worship idols or burn incense to them, they preferred honoring God before him. But when he said, 'Draw out in order of battle, march against that nation,' they obeyed. They made a distinction between their eternal Master and their temporal; yet they were submissive to their temporal master for their eternal Master's sake."—AUGUSTINE. Ver. 25; Dan. 3 : 16-18; 6 : 10; Acts 4 : 19, 20.

28. As in the days of our Saviour, so ever since, have infidels and opposers of Christ been shifting their ground of attack, ver. 20, 27; ch. 11 : 15, 16.

29. The object of infidels and opposers to Christ is often only to entangle Christians with difficulties. Press them with plain facts and evidences of Christianity, vers. 29-33; Acts 13 : 8-11.

30. Beware of imaginary difficulties in the doctrine of a future life, and of drawing certain conclusions in respect to it from analogies of the present life, vers. 27-33; 1 Cor. 15 : 39-41, 51-54; 1 John 3 : 2.

31. Thorough and experimental knowledge of Scripture and just conceptions of the power of God are preventives of error in regard to the doctrines of revealed truth, ver. 37; Job 26 : 14; Ps. 62 : 11; John 5 : 39; Acts 17 : 11; 26 : 8; 1 Cor. 1 : 25; 2 Tim. 3 : 15.

32. Christ and the Scriptures clearly teach the existence of angels, ver. 36; Matt. 13 : 41; 24 : 31, 36; Ps. 8 : 5; Heb. 2 : 7, 9.

33. We may reason analogically from the condition of angels in regard to our future state, ver. 36; Judg. 13 : 17-20; 2 Sam. 14 : 20; Ps. 103 : 20; Heb. 12 : 22; Rev. 12 : 7; 22 : 8, 9.

34. There is to be a resurrection of the body from the dead, ver. 37; John 5 : 28, 29; 1 Thess. 4 : 16, 17.

35. There is a conscious existence between death and the resurrection; ver. 37; Job 19 : 26, 27, clearly and correctly rendered by Dr. Conant, *Without my flesh I shall see God*—that is, separated from my body, in my disembodied state after death, Luke 16 : 22, 23; 23 : 43; 2 Cor. 5 : 8; Phil. 1 : 21-23.

36. The resurrection is so important in man's future existence and essential to his glorified state that the Scriptures associate it with his whole future life and immortality. "Without the body man has not his whole full life."—NAST. Ver. 36; Rom. 8 : 11, 23; 2 Cor. 5 : 4; 2 Tim. 1 : 10.

37. In the establishment and defence of any doctrine, our first appeal should be to Scripture, ver. 37; Isa. 8 : 20.

38. Seek not the mere letter of Scripture, but its deep and spiritual meaning, vers. 37, 38; John 16 : 13; 1 Cor. 2 : 10-16; 2 Cor. 3 : 6.

39. What think you concerning the Christ? of his nature, character, work? What is he to thee? vers. 41-44; Rom. 9 : 5; 1 Cor. 1 : 23, 24; 15 : 25; Heb. 12 : 2, 3.

40. Jesus recognized the Old Testament Scriptures as written by inspiration of God, ver. 37; ch. 24 : 25-27.

41. The doctrine of Christ's humanity and divinity is taught in Scripture, and explains difficulties which would be otherwise insuperable, vers. 41-44; Matt. 1 : 23; John 1 : 1, 14; Phil. 2 : 6; 1 Tim. 2 : 5; Heb. 2 : 14-17.

42. A religion that seeks a mere outward appearance and has for its motive the applause of men is not only destitute of the power of godliness, but an enemy to it and its graces, vers. 46, 47; Matt. 6 : 1, 5, 16; 2 Tim. 3 : 2-5; 2 Pet. 2 : 3; 3 John 9.

43. A love of human honors and flattering titles is unbecoming a follower of Jesus, vers. 46, 47; Phil. 2 : 5; 1 Pet. 5 : 5; 1 John 2 : 15.

## CHAPTER XXI.

In this chapter Jesus calls attention to the widow's mite and foretells the destruction of Jerusalem and his second coming.

*The widow's mite.*

XXI. AND he looked up, <sup>b</sup>and saw the rich men casting their gifts into the treasury. And he saw also a certain poor widow casting in thither two <sup>c</sup>mites. <sup>b</sup>Mk. 12. 41-44.  
 3 And he said, Of a truth I say unto you, <sup>d</sup>that this <sup>c</sup>Mk. 12. 42.  
 4 poor widow hath cast in more than they all: for all <sup>d</sup>2 Cor. 8. 12.  
 these have of their abundance cast in unto the offerings of God: but she of her penury hath cast in all the living that she had.

*Jesus discourses on the destruction of Jerusalem and his second coming.*

5 <sup>e</sup>And as some spake of the temple, how it was <sup>e</sup>Mt. 24. 1-14; Mk.  
 6 adorned with goodly stones and gifts, he said, *As for* 13. 1-13.

1-4. THE WIDOW'S MITE, Mark 12: 41-44. Mark's account is the fuller. How fitting this incident here, after the description of the scribes as devouring widows' houses!

1. **Looked up.** Perhaps, after closing the discussion mentioned in Mark 12, he sat down wearily "over against the treasury." His attention was called to the offerings. **Treasury** was the name of certain chests which stood in the second court of the temple to receive contributions. **Rich men.** Mark says, "*Many that were rich cast in much,*" Mark 12: 41.

2. **A certain poor widow.** Probably few noticed her, but Jesus admired and commended her sacrifice. **Two mites.** A mite was the smallest coin current in Palestine. The two were worth about two-fifths of a cent.

3. **More than they all,** in proportion to her means. This is explained in the next verse.

4. **Abundance, excess,** more than they needed. **But she of her penury, deficiency, poverty.** All the living. Hers was real self-denial. She felt what she gave. In love she devoted all to God, and trusted in his providential care. It is improper for people who after giving have an abundance left to say that they give the "widow's mite." They do not practice her self-denial.

5-36. JESUS FORETELLS THE DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM AND HIS SECOND COMING, Matt. 24: 1-51; Mark 13: 1-37. We have here a remarkable prophetic discourse, which has been variously explained, and justly considered one of the most important

and difficult in the New Testament. It is given most fully by Matthew, which see, and compare notes; also notes on 13th chapter of Mark; also author's *Harmony of the Gospels*, § 154.

5. Mark says that the remark here made proceeded from one of his disciples as Jesus went out from the temple, Mark 13: 1. **Goodly stones.** The lamentation over Jerusalem and the denunciation against her (Matt. 23: 37, 38) may have led the disciples to turn his attention to the magnificence of the temple, as if to plead for its preservation. Josephus describes the temple as built of white marble, its face toward the east, covered over with plates of gold, appearing in the distance like a mountain covered with snow, with its gilding dazzling as the rays of the sun. Some of its stones were forty-five cubits long, five high, and six broad, Joseph. *Jewish War*, v. 5, 6; vi. 4, 1. Dr. Robinson speaks of immense stones still remaining in the wall, one of which measures 24 feet long, 6 feet broad, and 3 feet high. Similar stones are found in Baalbek, Lebanon, measuring 63 and 64 feet each.

**Gifts.** It was an ancient custom to consecrate valuable objects to temples and place them therein. Many persons had made presents to this temple; and though a large portion of the spoils had been carried away, many gifts remained. Josephus says: "It had been adorned by many kings in former times, and round about the entire temple were fixed the spoils taken from barbarous nations; all these had been dedicated to the temple by Herod, with the addi

these things which ye behold, the days will come, in which 'there shall not be left one stone upon another, 'ch. 19. 44. that shall not be thrown down.

7 And they asked him, saying, 'Master, but when shall these things be? And what sign *will there be* when these things shall come to pass? 'Mt. 24. 3.

8 And he said, 'Take heed that ye be not deceived: 'Mt. 24. 4; Mk. 13. 5; Eph. 5. 6; 2 Thes. 2. 3. for many shall come in my name, saying, I am *Christ*; and, 'The time draweth near. Go ye not therefore 'Mt. 3. 2; 4. 17.

tion of those he had taken from the Arabians."

6. **There shall not be left one stone upon another.** This was fulfilled forty years afterward, A. D. 70. Josephus relates that Titus tried in vain to save the temple. The Jews themselves first set fire to its porticoes, after which one of the Roman soldiers, without any command, threw a burning firebrand into the golden window, and soon the holy house was in flames. Titus ordered the fire to be extinguished, but his command was not obeyed. The soldiers were furious, and nothing could restrain them. Thus, even against the will of Caesar, the temple was completely destroyed, and the prophecy was fulfilled. After the city was taken, Titus gave orders to demolish the entire city and temple except three towers and part of the western wall. The rest of the wall was laid so completely even with the ground by those who dug it up from the foundation that there was nothing left to make those believe that came thither that it had ever been inhabited, Josephus, *Jew. War*, vi. 4. 5-7; vii. 1. Later still, Terentius Rufus, an officer in the army of Titus, ordered the site of the temple to be furrowed with a ploughshare. Thus nothing was left but parts of the massive foundations, which still remain, Mic. 3 : 12; Jer. 26 : 18.

7. **They asked.** Mark says Peter, James, John, and Andrew asked him, Mark 13 : 3, 4. The rest of the twelve probably came after them and heard the discourse. Or possibly the four asked for the rest or were the only earnest inquirers. **These things**, the destruction of the temple and the judgments of God upon Jerusalem and the Jews. **What sign?** If the temple was to be destroyed, they would naturally expect his glorious coming imme-

diately, when, after destroying his enemies, he would establish a magnificent and religious kingdom, ch. 24 : 21; Acts 1 : 6. Such brief revelations of such great and terrible events arouse their desire for more definite information. Hence they ask for the *time* and the *sign* or tokens of "all these things."

8. **Take heed**, be very careful. **In my name.** Not in the name of Jesus, but of the Messiah, claiming to be him or to represent him. There were many such. Josephus, a Jew, not converted to Christianity, but an eye-witness of the calamities attending the destruction of Jerusalem, and to a considerable extent an actor in them, has, in his account of the Jewish war, given a striking comment and delineated the wonderful fulfillment of the first portion of this chapter. He speaks of the land being overrun with magicians, seducers, and impostors, who drew the people after them into the wilderness, promising to show them signs and wonders. Thus Theudas—not the one mentioned in Acts 5 : 36, but a later one—persuaded a large body of people to follow him to the Jordan, promising to divide the river, as Elijah and Elisha had done of old. But he was taken prisoner before arriving there and beheaded. An Egyptian also pretended to be a prophet (Acts 21 : 38), and deluded thirty thousand men, Joseph. *Antiq.* xx. 5. 1; 8. 6; *Jewish War*, ii. 13. 4, 5. After the destruction of Jerusalem, Bar Cocheba and Jonathan appeared, and almost every age since has witnessed false Christs.

**The time draweth near.** Some think these words are attributed to the impostors; then they would signify the time when the people would be delivered from the Roman yoke. If the other sense is understood, it means the time draws near when these impostors will appear.

9 after them. But when ye shall hear of wars and commotions, <sup>1</sup>be not terrified: for these things must first  
 10 come to pass; but the end *is* not by and by. <sup>2</sup>Then said he unto them, Nation shall rise against nation,  
 11 and kingdom against kingdom: And great earthquakes shall be in divers places, and famines, and pestilences; and fearful sights and great signs shall there be from heaven.

<sup>1</sup>Pro. 3. 26.

<sup>2</sup>Mt. 24. 7.

**9. Wars and commotions.** These wars must be such as to be a terror to Christians, threatening their nation and their homes. The *wars* are to be regarded as certain and actual to them. But the *rumors of wars* would naturally be exaggerated, confused, and frightful, and hence more terrible than war itself. There were numerous agitations and insurrections in the Roman empire previous to the destruction of Jerusalem, in which much blood was shed. Also in Rome itself four emperors, Nero, Galba, Otho, and Vitellius, came to violent deaths in eighteen months. Alford refers to the *three threats of war against the Jews* by Caligula, Claudius, and Nero. When this prediction was made, it was a time of peace throughout the Roman empire.

**Be not terrified, be not confused, agitated, filled with alarm.** The reason is given: such things must take place, but the end of the world is not by and by. Some suppose *end of tribulations* is here meant, but it is more natural to refer it to the end of the world or the present state of things, since that is one of the main points of his discourse. Besides, as Lange remarks, "the end of the calamities is the end of the world," 1 Pet. 4:7. When it is remembered how often Christians have regarded wars and great national commotions as signs of the coming of Christ and the end of the world, it may be seen how wise and necessary was this caution of our Saviour. These things must take place; they are in the divine plan, but the end is not yet; therefore be not troubled, but patient, hopeful, and tranquil.

**10. Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom, etc.,** race against race and kingdom against kingdom. In the preceding verse Jesus says they shall *hear*; now he states what will certainly take place. There shall

be great national struggles and political revolutions. "There were serious disturbances—(1) which gave rise to the complaint against and deposition of Flaccus and Philo's work against him (A. D. 38), in which the Jews as a nation were the especial objects of persecution; (2) at Selencia about the same time (Josephus, *Antiq.* xviii. 9. 8, 9), in which more than fifty thousand Jews were killed; (3) at Jamnia, a city on the coast of Judea near Joppa. Many other such national tumults are recorded by Josephus."—ALFORD. The reference here, however, must not be confined merely to the Jewish people.

**11. Earthquakes.** A great earthquake occurred in Crete about A. D. 46; at Rome in 51; in Phrygia in 53; at Laodicea in 60; in Campania in 58; at Jerusalem in 67, Joseph. *Jewish War*, iv. 4. 5. Pompeii was visited with two disastrous earthquakes about 63.

**Famines.** Historians speak of several famines in different parts of the world which happened in the reign of Claudius (A. D. 41-54), one of which was particularly severe in Judea, about A. D. 44-47, Acts 11:28; Joseph. *Antiq.* xx. 2. 5; 5. 2. Suetonius and Tacitus speak of famines about this time. There was also a famine in Judea in the third year of Nero's reign.

**Pestilences.** A common attendant of famine, and often produced by it. There was one at Rome in the autumn of A. D. 65, which carried off thirty thousand persons.

**Fearful sights and great signs from heaven.** Josephus, in his *Jewish War* (Book iv. 6. 1 and elsewhere), gives several examples of fulfilment. He mentions a star resembling a sword which hung over the city; a great light shining around the altar; the opening of the temple gate without human hands; an appearance of chariots and horses in the clouds; and other signs.

- 12 <sup>1</sup>But before all these, they shall lay their hands on you, and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues, and <sup>m</sup>into prisons, <sup>n</sup>being brought before
- 13 kings and rulers <sup>o</sup>for my name's sake. And <sup>p</sup>it shall
- 14 turn to you for a testimony. <sup>q</sup>Settle it therefore in your hearts, not to meditate before what ye shall answer: <sup>r</sup>for I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gain-
- 16 say nor resist. <sup>t</sup>And ye shall be betrayed both by parents, and brethren, and kinsfolks, and friends; and
- 17 <sup>u</sup>some of you shall they cause to be put to death. And <sup>v</sup>ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake.
- 18 <sup>w</sup>But there shall not an hair of your head perish.
- 19 <sup>x</sup>In your patience possess ye your souls.

21; Mk. 13. 12. <sup>a</sup>Ac. 7. 59; 12. 2. <sup>v</sup>Mt. 10. 22. <sup>w</sup>Mt. 10. 30; Ac. 27. 34. <sup>b</sup>Ps. 27. 13, 14; 37. 7; Ro. 8. 25; 12. 12; Col. 1. 10; 1 Thes. 1. 3; 1 Tim. 6. 11; Heb. 6. 11, 12; 10. 36; 12. 1; Jam. 1. 4; 5. 7; 1 Pet. 2. 19, 20.

12. Previous to this dreadful overthrow the disciples must pass through great persecutions. **Synagogues . . . prisons.** Refer to Acts 4 : 3; 5 : 27; 22 : 19; 25 : 23; 26 : 10.

13. **It shall turn.** Dr. Campbell translates, "This will afford scope for your testimony." The idea seems to be that opportunity would be given them to testify the gospel to persons to whom they would not otherwise have access. Paul before Agrippa is an illustration.

14. **Not to meditate,** etc. This is a direction for an emergency in which they are to be thrown entirely upon God's interposition. We cannot quote it to encourage carelessness in preparation, or the neglect of proper means to shield against evil and answer gain-sayers.

15. **I will give you a mouth and wisdom.** The Holy Spirit would speak through them and utterly confound opposers. "And they were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit with which he (Stephen) spake," Acts 6 : 10.

16. **Both by parents.** There were fearful cases of betrayal in families. Tacitus says that in the persecution under Nero many were convicted by the testimony of persons from among themselves. It was exceedingly distressing that households should be divided. But they were to be conformed to their Head, in whose household the fulfilment would begin in the treachery of Judas.

17. **Hated of all men.** "Concerning this sect, we know that everywhere

it is spoken against," Acts 28 : 22; see also 1 Pet. 2 : 12; 3 : 16; 4 : 14. Christians have been hated and persecuted beyond the adherents of any other sect. **For my name's sake,** on account of their attachment to me and because they bear my name. Here do we see the reason of Christians being so universally hated, not only in every age, but also in the apostolic age, when philosophers were pushing free inquiry and deriding popular superstition, and at the same time the doctrines of Moses were extensively propagated among the Gentiles. Christians proclaimed Christ the only Saviour and all other religions as of no avail. The numerous religions of heathenism acknowledged one another as standing on a common level. The Christian, however, demanded the renunciation of these and faith in Christ. Hence he was regarded as an enemy of the gods and of men, and was hated by all.

18. **Not a hair of your head,** a proverbial way of expressing the security of his disciples. Some suppose that this does not promise exemption from bodily suffering, but rather that they would be the gainers even if they were executed. "Whosoever will save his life shall lose it, and whosoever shall lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it."

Yet this verse may apply particularly to those disciples who should be resident at Jerusalem during the siege which the Saviour foresaw, and then it was fulfilled in the fact that, so far as

- 20 <sup>r</sup> And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh.
- 21 Then let them which are in Judæa flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the countries
- 22 enter thereinto. For these be <sup>t</sup> the days of vengeance, that <sup>a</sup> all things which are written may be fulfilled.
- 23 <sup>b</sup> But woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck, in those days! <sup>c</sup> for there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people.
- 24 And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, <sup>d</sup> and shall be led away captive into all nations: <sup>e</sup> and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, <sup>f</sup> until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.

<sup>r</sup> Mt. 24. 15-42  
Mk. 13. 14-37.

<sup>2</sup> Pet. 2. 9.  
<sup>a</sup> Le. 26. 14-33; Deu. 32. 22-25; Is. 65. 12-16; Dan. 9. 26. 27; Zec. 11. 1, etc.  
<sup>b</sup> Mt. 21. 19.  
<sup>c</sup> ch. 19. 43, 44.  
<sup>d</sup> Deu. 28. 64-68.  
<sup>e</sup> Rev. 11. 2.  
<sup>f</sup> Eze. 34. 23-31; 36. 25-38; 37. 25-28; Dan. 9. 27; 12. 7; Am. 9. 13-15; Ro. 11. 15-32.

is known, not a single Christian perished in the destruction of Jerusalem. They escaped to Pella beyond the Jordan, where they remained in safety till after the fall of the city. Their deliverance may be taken as an illustration and type of the deliverance of all God's people at the end of the world and at the judgment.

19. **Possess ye your souls**, or better, *ye shall win your souls*. The word for patience may be rendered perseverance. Then the thought would be like that in Matt. 24 : 13, "He that shall endure to the end, the same shall be saved." Endure tribulation; the end will come and you shall be delivered. This leads naturally to the thought in the next verse.

20. **Jerusalem compassed**. The Roman army under Cestius Gallus, after taking a portion of the city, A. D. 66, withdrew; the city was closely invested by Vespasian, A. D. 68. **Desolation**, the wasting devastation of war.

21. **Them which are in Judea**, in the country, towns, and cities of Judea. **Mountains**, the mountainous regions and highlands, where there were caves affording a safe retreat. By a singular providence, the Roman general Cestius, after taking a portion of the city, with good prospects of capturing the whole, withdrew without any apparently good reason. This gave the Christians an opportunity to escape, which they did, over the mountainous region to Pella and other places east of the Jordan, where the country was at peace with the Romans. Pella was at the northern border of Perea. Accord-

ing to Eusebius the historian, the Christians were divinely directed to flee thither.

22. **Days of vengeance**. Josephus gives heartrending accounts of the sufferings which befel the rebellious city under the wrath of the offended Jehovah. **Are written**. Reference is here made to the prophetic condemnation uttered in Moses and the messages of God's faithful servants.

23. **Woe unto them**, an exclamation of pity for mothers, whose sufferings would be great.

24. **Edge of the sword . . . led away captive**. According to Josephus, eleven hundred thousand perished during the siege at Jerusalem by the sword, pestilence, and famine. The city was full of people attending the passover festival when the last siege under Titus commenced. Thousands had come from remote parts of the earth, not only to attend the festival, but to assist in the defence of their religion, country, liberties, city, and temple. Ninety thousand were taken prisoners and sold into perpetual bondage. Besides, during the war nearly three hundred thousand Jews perished elsewhere, in addition to a vast multitude who died in caves, woods, common sewers, banishment, and various ways, of whom no computation could be made. Some suppose that Josephus greatly exaggerated the number of sufferers. Tacitus gives six hundred thousand as the number within the city at the time of the siege.

**Trodden down of the Gentiles**. Thus, about A. D. 135, Jerusalem was

- 25 "And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; <sup>b</sup>the sea and the waves  
 26 roaring; <sup>1</sup>men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: <sup>j</sup>for the powers of heaven shall be shaken.  
 27 And then shall they see the Son of man <sup>k</sup>coming in  
 28 a cloud with power and great glory. And when these

<sup>c</sup>Mt. 24. 29; Mk. 13. 24; 2 Pet. 3. 10, 12.

<sup>b</sup>Ps. 46. 3; 93. 3, 4.  
<sup>1</sup>Le. 26. 36.

<sup>j</sup>Mt. 24. 29.

<sup>k</sup>Mt. 24. 30; Rev. 1. 7; 14. 14.

captured again in consequence of an insurrection under Bar Cocheba, which brought most terrible sufferings upon the Jews, who were utterly driven out from the land of their fathers. A temple of Jupiter was then erected on the site of the Lord's house. Afterward, A. D. 635, the mosque of Omar was built upon the same site. If we may conceive of Daniel's prophecy concerning the abomination that made desolate having repeated fulfillments, we might place its final reference to this last event, and also suppose it to mark the commencement of his periods of 1260, 1290, and 1335 years. The distress of the Jews still continues, and Jerusalem is still trodden under foot by the Gentiles.

**Until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.** There are various opinions about the meaning and bearing of these words. Probably the period during which the Gentiles shall possess Jerusalem is meant, but whether this is to terminate in the conversion of the Jews at the time of the general success of Christianity and their restoration to their own land and city is a question upon which much has been written. The learned and pious have differed widely in their views, and perhaps it is wise not to speak too positively until certain obscure prophecies shall be made more clear in the light of accomplished history. There is evidently a glorious future for the true Israel of God, and in Romans (11 : 26) we learn that "the deliverer shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob. For," says he, "this is my covenant unto them when I shall take away their sins." While we should by no means neglect prayer and labor for the conversion of the Jews, we should earnestly seek to accomplish the bringing in of the Gentiles.

25. **Signs in the sun, etc.** This

language may be taken figuratively to mean great calamities and revolutions among the nations of the earth, after the manner of Hebrew prophecies, Isa. 13 : 10; Ezek. 27 : 7; Joel 3 : 15. It is doubtful, however, whether all of these, and similar passages from the Old Testament, are to be taken figuratively. It is better to take this language of our Lord literally, especially as what follows in regard to his coming must be taken literally. The meaning is that terrific phenomena and changes in nature shall occur immediately after the Jewish people shall have endured their full measure of suffering. There shall be darkness, as during the crucifixion of our Saviour and in the plague of Egypt (Ex. 10 : 22, 23); appearances of falling stars, or the shooting of meteors; and the powers and forces of nature, the elements of the heavens, shall be agitated and convulsed like the waves of the sea. Compare 2 Pet. 3 : 12; Rev. 21 : 1.

**Distress of nations . . . sea and the waves roaring.** Other figures to set forth great commotions affecting great masses of men.

26. **Hearts failing them.** Fear and trembling shall take possession of the stoutest as they realize the symptoms of approaching dissolution. **The powers and the forces of nature, the elements of the heavens, shall be shaken,** agitated and convulsed like the waves of the sea, Heb. 12 : 26.

27. **See the Son of man.** Jesus here speaks of his second coming. The coming of Christ is spoken of elsewhere as actual and visible, Acts 1 : 9, 11; 1 Thess. 4 : 16; 2 Thess. 1 : 8; 2 Pet. 3 : 10, 12; Jude 14; Rev. 1 : 7. In harmony with these plain declarations, I take this passage in its natural and literal meaning, and can see no sufficient reason for departing from it. **Coming in a cloud.** Mark says

things begin to come to pass,<sup>1</sup> then look up, and lift up your heads; for <sup>m</sup>your redemption draweth nigh.

29 <sup>a</sup>And he spake to them a parable; Behold the fig

30 tree, and all the trees; when they now shoot forth, ye see and know of your own selves that summer is

31 now nigh at hand. So likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of

32 God is nigh at hand. Verily I say unto you, <sup>o</sup>This generation shall not pass away, till all be fulfilled.

33 <sup>p</sup>Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away.

<sup>1</sup>Ps. 93. 5-9; Is. 25 8, 9.

<sup>m</sup>Ro. 8. 19, 23; 13 11; 1 Cor. 7. 29-31; Eph. 1. 14; 4. 30; 1 Pet. 4. 7; 2 Pet. 3. 11-14; Rev. 22. 12, 20.

<sup>a</sup>Mt. 24. 32; Mk. 13. 28.

<sup>o</sup>Mt. 16. 28; 23. 36.

<sup>p</sup>Ps. 102. 26; Jer. 31. 35, 36; Mt. 5. 18; 24. 35; Mk. 13. 31; Heb. 1. 11; 2 Pet. 3. 10.

clouds. As he ascended, Acts 1 : 9. Not merely in ordinary clouds, but such as anciently attended the divine presence, Ex. 16 : 10; 19 : 18; Dan. 7 : 13. **With power**, with the actual possession of it, and **great glory**, a visible display of his power and majesty, Ps. 68 : 17.

28. **Begin to come to pass.** At the beginning of these things that terrify others **look up**, be encouraged. Turn yourselves to the heavens, whence you expect your glorious Friend and Deliverer.

**Your redemption.** Complete deliverance is just at hand. You have waited long and patiently; now greet the glorified Master as he comes to elevate you to glory unspeakable.

29, 30. **A parable**, etc. Rather, from the fig tree learn the parable which illustrates the circumstances and signs preceding these great events; learn the illustration which the fig tree affords. Fig trees abounded on the Mount of Olives, where Jesus was now discoursing. "On my first arrival in the southern part of Syria, near the end of March, most of the fruit trees were clothed with foliage and in blossom. The fig tree, on the contrary, was much behind them in this respect; for the leaves of this tree do not make their appearance till comparatively late in the season. . . . As the spring is so far advanced before the leaves of the fig tree begin to appear (the early fruit, indeed, comes first), a person may be sure when he beholds this sign that summer is at hand."—DR. HACKETT, *Illustrations of Scripture*, p. 141.

31. **Kingdom of God is nigh at hand.** The ruin of the Jewish kingdom would be speedily followed by the prevalence of God's reign through the

gospel. In the other branch of the double fulfilment these signs would immediately precede the winding up of earth's history in the establishment of the glorious kingdom.

32. **This generation shall not pass away.** Referring to that present generation. **All be fulfilled.** Connected with the destruction of Jerusalem. *All* is in contrast to the expression in ver. 27, which refers exclusively to the coming of Christ. Thus Jesus passes from one event to the other, the former being typical of the latter.

Another explanation makes *this generation* to mean those who know and observe these signs, the generation of his followers who shall be living when these signs occur. In which case it could apply to both the fall of Jerusalem as a type and Christ's coming to judgment as an antitype.

Others maintain that, according to Hellenistic Greek, *this generation* may mean *this race* or *family of people*, according to which view our Saviour says, This race, the Jewish people, shall not pass away till all these things just foretold be accomplished. The first view is preferable. The destruction of Jerusalem occurred about forty years afterward, within the lifetime of many then living. If, however, we give a double or extended meaning to *these things*, we must give a corresponding extended meaning to *this generation*.

33. **Heaven and earth shall pass away.** Even these, which have been so generally regarded as firm and unchangeable, Ps. 89 : 37; Jer. 33 : 25. Even these shall be changed, and give place to the new heaven and new earth, 2 Pet. 3 : 11-13. This is in harmony with the deductions of science. **My words**, in general, and what I have

- 34 And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth.
- 35 Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.

*Jesus teaches daily in the temple.*

- 37 And in the day time he was teaching in the temple; and at night he went out, and abode in the mount that is called the mount of Olives. And all the people came early in the morning to him in the temple, for to hear him.

spoken at this time. **Shall not pass away.** Cannot at any time prove to be false or fail of their accomplishment. They are infallible and more certain than the established order of nature, Isa. 40 : 8 ; 51 : 6 ; 1 Pet. 1 : 24, 25.

34. **Take heed.** Be careful. **Overcharged with surfeiting.** Avoid gluttony, which tends to stupefy the soul. **Drunkenness** is still more deadening. In the day of temporal danger they would need to be sober and in good physical condition if they hoped to survive. Even the **cares of this life** would be a hindrance to safety. This applies with great force to the period of the great crisis when God shall come to judgment. A different punctuation connects with the next verse (so the Revised version) as follows: *and that day come upon you suddenly, as a snare, like the springing of a trap; for (ver. 35) it will come on all, etc.* Like as Jerusalem was so perfectly besieged that great numbers who went up to the feast, being unable to get away, perished. **The face of the whole earth.** Shall share the dreadful result of judgment. Only those who are in Christ will be saved from ruin.

36. **Watch ye therefore.** Be prepared, be in constant readiness, so that you may be like the wise virgins. And be not only vigilant in *preparation and readiness*, but also in *activity and faithful labors*, which will be enforced in the parable about to be spoken, 1 Pet. 4 : 7 ; Heb. 10 : 24, 25. **Pray always.** Watchfulness without prayer is not sufficient. Praying should be a *habit*.

Nehemiah says (Neh. 4 : 9), "We made our prayer unto our God, and set a watch against our enemies day and night." **Accounted worthy.** This habit would show that they had confidence in Christ's words and were his real servants. **Stand before the Son of man.** Abide in the presence of the glorified Christ, and receive marks of his approval and be honored by him.

37. **Mount of Olives.** After teaching all day he went for rest to the Mount of Olives, no doubt to Bethany, according to his custom. See Matt. 21 : 17. This hamlet was two miles from Jerusalem, on the Mount of Olives.

38. **All the people.** A great concourse came every day to hear his gracious words. **Early.** When people are interested in spiritual truth, they will find it no hardship to rise early and go to the house of the Lord.

#### REMARKS.

1. A religion that seeks a mere outward appearance and has for its motive the applause of men is not only destitute of the power of godliness, but an enemy to it and its graces, Matt. 6 : 1, 5, 16 ; 2 Tim. 3 : 2-5 ; 2 Pet. 2 : 3 ; 3 John 9.

2. A love of human honors and flattering titles is unbecoming a follower of Jesus, Phil. 2 : 5 ; 1 Pet. 5 : 5 ; 1 John 2 : 15.

3. Jesus beholds and estimates our offerings, Matt. 6 : 19, 20 ; 10 : 8 ; Acts 20 : 35 ; 2 Cor. 8 : 12.

"Jesus, unseen, but whom all hearts can see,  
Still sits and overlooks the treasury;  
Cast in your offerings where his cause in-  
vites,  
Ye rich, your talents, and, ye poor, your mites;  
Render to God the things that are his due:  
He gave his Son, who gave himself for you."  
MONTGOMERY.

4. Earthly temples, however costly, are of no religious worth without spiritual worship. They are doomed if the Lord has departed from them, 1 Sam. 4 : 21; Jer. 7 : 3, 4, 14.

5. We should guard against false leaders and trust only in Jesus as the true Messiah, Jer. 29 : 8, 9; Acts 20 : 30; Eph. 5 : 6; Col. 2 : 8; 2 Thess. 2 : 3.

6. National convulsions, conflicts, and disasters, while they are the beginning of sorrows to the wicked, are instrumental in advancing, purifying, and consummating Christ's kingdom, Hag. 2 : 6, 7; Rom. 8 : 19-23.

7. Persecutions, defections from the faith, false teachers, and decrease of love amid abounding iniquity are to be expected, and should lead us to trust in Christ and persevere unto the end, Heb. 10 : 39; James 5 : 7-11; 1 Pet. 4 : 12, 13; Rev. 2 : 10.

8. We should mark in history the abomination of desolation and the destruction of Jerusalem, and behold in them a testimony to the truth of Christ, Rev. 1 : 3.

9. We should live in constant readiness, so that if called to escape dangers which may threaten Christians or the church, we may do so at once, ch. 17 : 31, 32; Gen. 19 : 17; Prov. 22 : 3.

10. We are not to believe a teacher merely because he can produce great phenomena. The sorcery of ancient times, the witchcraft and spiritualism of modern days, have done this, Lev. 19 : 31; 20 : 6; Isa. 8 : 19, 20; Acts 8 : 9-12; 13 : 8; 1 John 4 : 1.

11. Our only safety is in Christ. So surely as the eagles gather to devour their prey, so surely shall judgment come upon the wicked, whatever their plans and combinations, Prov. 11 : 21; 16 : 5; 2 Pet. 3 : 4-7.

12. Though heaven and earth be visited with fearful phenomena, foreboding the coming of Christ, yet amid the sorrows of the nations Christians may rejoice and feel secure, ver. 28; 2 Tim. 2 : 19.

13. Let us be as wise in perceiving

the signs of the spiritual world as of the natural, and be prepared for the coming of the Lord either in death, judgment, or the clouds of heaven, Matt. 16 : 1-3.

14. Nothing can be more certain than the coming of Christ and the fulfilment of his word, ch. 16 : 17; Isa. 54 : 10; 1 Pet. 2 : 24, 25; 2 Pet. 1 : 19; 3 : 9, 10.

15. It is best for us to be ignorant of the time both of our death and of Christ's coming, Matt. 24 : 36; Acts 1 : 7.

16. Watchfulness is a trait of a faithful and wise disciple, slothfulness of a worldly and formal professor, Matt. 24 : 42-47; 1 Cor. 6 : 20; 1 Thess. 5 : 5-7.

17. Fidelity to the Master will be gloriously rewarded, Rev. 2 : 7, 11, 17 26-28; 3 : 5, 12, 21.

18. Let us beware of the secret and common persuasion that God will not soon call us to an account, Eccl. 8 : 11; 2 Pet. 3 : 3, 4.

19. The false professor shall meet with a terrible doom, especially if he has held high positions of trust or office, Matt. 22 : 13; 24 : 49-51.

20. The safety of believers is in Christ. Not one of them at his second coming shall be forgotten, not one be lost, 1 Thess. 4 : 14-17; 2 Pet. 2 : 9; 3 : 13.

## CHAPTER XXII.

In this chapter events crowd toward the crisis. Judas consummates his arrangements for the betrayal, vers. 1-6. The place to eat the passover is obtained, the little company of disciples partake, and the Lord's Supper is instituted, 7-20. A conversation ensues, and they depart. The agony in Gethsemane, the betrayal, the arraignment, Peter's denial and contrition, the appearance of Christ before the Sanhedrim, take up the rest of the chapter, 21-71. [The reader should frequently refer to the accounts given in the other Gospels. Consult author's *Harmony*.]

We are now to study a portion of Luke's testimony full of profound solemnity. As we investigate the last acts in that beautiful life of Jesus, and note the preparation and development of the plot that culminated in the crucifixion, it becomes us to go forward with profound reverence, praying that the record may be more than pictured

*The rulers conspire to kill Jesus, and make a compact with Judas.*

- XXII. NOW \*the feast of unleavened bread drew nigh, \*Mt. 26. 2-16; Mk  
 2 which is called the passover. And \*the chief priests 14. 1-11.  
 and scribes sought how they might kill him : for they \*John 11. 47.  
 feared the people.  
 3 <sup>b</sup>Then entered Satan into Judas surnamed Iscariot, <sup>b</sup>John 6. 70, 71  
 13. 2, 27; 17. 12.

on the *intellect*. Let sympathy be aroused, love awakened, and *trust* in the Saviour be experienced as we follow the appointed Lamb of God to his substitutionary offering.

1-6. THE JEWISH RULERS CONSPIRE AGAINST JESUS. JUDAS ENGAGES TO BETRAY HIM, Matt. 26 : 1-16; Mark 14 : 1-11. Matthew is the fullest; Luke the briefest and most indefinite.

1. **Feast of unleavened bread.** See note on ver. 7. **Drew nigh.** According to Mark's account, it was two days before the passover.

2. **Chief priests and scribes.** Probably the members of the Sanhedrim, the highest court, are here meant. Matthew says that they assembled at the palace of the high priest. **Kill him.** Mark adds, *take him by craft*. They used deceit. They were ashamed and afraid to take him openly. They had received wonderful reports of his power, and they knew that the common people heard him gladly. They **feared the people**. At the passover there were great crowds in the city, and not only would some of these take the part of Jesus if he were ill-treated without a cause, but in the event of an "uproar," which Mark says they feared, the riot might compromise these dignitaries with the Roman government and bring calamity upon them. So they meanly watch for the opening which shall enable them to crush their victim with safety to themselves.

3. The opportunity soon presents itself; it comes from an unanticipated quarter. **Judas**, one of the twelve, surnamed Iscariot because, as some think, he was a native of Karioth, a small town in the tribe of Judah, was treasurer of the Lord's family. He was always a bad man. Christ, as God, knew his character, and said in reference to him on one occasion, "Have I not chosen ye twelve, and one of you is a devil?" John 6 : 70. The choice

of this man to be so near our Lord's person is one of the mysteries. We cannot fathom it, but must rest in the recognition of the historical fact as one of the links in the chain of events that led to the great sacrifice. As the Jews crucified with *wicked* hands the Lord of glory, so concerning Judas it may be said, "The Son of man goeth as it was determined; but woe unto that man by whom he is betrayed!" See ver. 22. **Satan.** Satan means *adversary*, the Old Testament name of the chief of fallen spirits. In the New Testament he is somewhat more frequently called the *devil*, which means a *slanderer*. Both names are descriptive of his character and work as the opposer and false accuser of God and man. He is also known by the names of Beelzebub, "the prince of devils" (Matt. 12 : 24), "the prince of the power of the air" (Eph 2 : 2), and the "old serpent," Rev. 12 : 9. That he is a personal agent is evident from the names given him, from the way he is spoken of, and from the acts and attributes ascribed to him, Matt. 4 : 3, 9; John 8 : 44; 14 : 30; 2 Cor. 11 : 3, 14, 15; Eph. 6 : 11, 12; 1 Pet. 5 : 8, 9; 1 John 3 : 8; Rev. 2 : 10; 3 : 9; 20 : 10.

**Entered into Judas.** The saying of our Saviour already quoted shows that before this Judas was a servant of Satan, governed by his influence and principles, but these words indicate an accession of Satanic influence amounting to a *possession*. The immediate occasion of its development seems to have been the anointing at Bethany, John 12 : 5, 6. That beautiful example of consecration awakened and stirred up his hellish greed and avarice; he saw some deficiency in his treasurer's bag, and the hints of the Master that the kingdom he was about to set up would not consist in worldly wealth leads the poor wretch to feel that his opportunity for plunder would not meet

- 4 being of the number of the twelve. And he went his way, and communed with the chief priests and  
 5 °captains how he might betray him unto them. And they were glad, and <sup>d</sup>covenanted to give him money.  
 6 And he promised, and sought opportunity to betray him unto them in the absence of the multitude.

° Ac. 4. 1 ; 5. 24  
 ° Zec. 11. 12.

*Our Lord celebrates the passover ; institutes his Supper ; announces his betrayal ; reproves their contention for pre-eminence ; and warns Peter and the rest.*

- 7 °Then came the day of unleavened bread, when  
 8 the passover must be killed. And he sent Peter and John, saying, Go and prepare us the passover, that

° Mt. 26. 17-19 ; Mk. 14. 12-16.

his anticipations. The prince of darkness now controls the traitor in all his movements.

4. **Communied**, had a talk with them. **Chief priests**, perhaps the Sanhedrim, or more likely Annas, Caiaphas, or some others of the most prominent officials. **Captains**, probably the commanders of the temple watches. It was their duty to carry out the orders of the high priest. **How**. He consulted with them as to the most effectual way of accomplishing the object. Doubtless he was ready to furnish all the details in his possession and co-operate in every way for the arrest. It was a consummate, infamous betrayal. Matthew tells us that he said, "What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you?" He did not prove or even allege anything against Jesus. He easily could have done this if he knew anything against Christ. His failure to do it is a testimony for the innocency of Jesus, corroborated by his subsequent confession when he cast down the money, "I have betrayed innocent blood," Matt. 27 : 3.

5. **Covenanted**. Overjoyed, they lost no time in ratifying the agreement. **Money**. The amount was thirty pieces of silver, Matt. 26 : 15. Thirty shekels, a slave's value (Ex. 21 : 32), about fifteen dollars of our money. If this was all that was to be paid, it shows the contempt of the chief priests for their victim and the sordid meanness of the man who sold his Lord for a pittance.

6. **Sought opportunity**. His whole soul was set upon the matter. He knew that Christ was popular, and he adroitly sought an occasion when the multitude could not be used to defend him against

assault. The other parties to the scheme hoped to overcome the opposition of the populace, if necessary, by their authority and appeals. It was desirable that a tumult of the people be avoided.

7-13. **PREPARATION FOR THE PASSOVER**, Matt. 26 : 17-19 ; Mark 14 : 12-16. Mark and Luke enter most into details. Thursday, April 6.

7. **Day of unleavened bread**, the first day of the passover. The *passover* was instituted in commemoration of God's *passing over* (for this is the meaning of the word) or *sparing* the Hebrews when he destroyed the first-born of the Egyptians. On the tenth day of the month Abib (Ex. 13 : 4), or, as it was afterward called, Nisan (Esth. 3 : 7), answering most nearly to our month of April, a male lamb or kid without blemish was selected. On the fourteenth day of Nisan, it was slain in the temple, between the two evenings of three and six o'clock. In the evening, the beginning of the fifteenth day, the paschal supper was eaten by not less than ten nor more than twenty persons. Bitter herbs and unleavened bread were to be eaten with it, and all was done originally with haste, standing with loins girt, their feet shod, and their staff in hand. The standing posture and the apparent readiness for a journey were at length discontinued. The Jewish year was reckoned from this month, and John marks the various stages of Christ's public ministry by the passover, John 2 : 13, 23 ; 4 : 45 ; 5 : 1 ; 6 : 4 ; 11 : 55. The civil commencement of their year began six months later.

8. 9. Peter and John are sent to prepare the passover meal. They ask *where* it shall be prepared.

9 we may eat. And they said unto him, Where wilt  
 10 thou that we prepare? And he said unto them, Be-  
 hold, when ye are entered into the city, there shall a  
 man meet you, bearing a pitcher of water; follow him  
 11 into the house where he entereth in. And ye shall  
 say unto the goodman of the house, The Master saith  
 unto thee, Where is the guest-chamber, where I shall  
 12 eat the passover with my disciples? And he shall  
 show you a large upper room furnished: there make  
 13 ready. And they went, and found as he had said  
 unto them: and they made ready the passover.

14 'And when the hour was come, he sat down, and

'Mt. 26. 20; Mk.  
 14. 17.

10. Jesus shows his omniscience. His description of the man would be their direction. Put emphasis on **man** bearing a **pitcher of water**. Women were then the water carriers, as they are still largely in the East. To see a man carrying a pitcher of water would be peculiar, so much so as to be observable; and hence fitting as a sign.

11. **Goodman**, an old English word for *master* of the house. **The Master**. Very possibly this man was a disciple, since Jesus was known to him as *the Teacher*. It is said that rooms were furnished strangers at the passover without pay, except the skins of the lambs sacrificed. **Where is the guest-chamber**, the lodging-room. According to some very ancient manuscripts, *my guest-chamber*, my quarters. **The passover**, the paschal supper.

12. **A large upper room**, a room above the first story, the most desirable part of an Oriental house, and still given to guests who are to be treated with honor, THOMSON, *The Land and the Book*, vol. i., p. 235. **Furnished**. *Spread or furnished* with couches and tables, *ready* for the paschal supper. The man may have prepared it and reserved it under a deep divine impression. **There make ready**, or *prepare*. Two preparations are brought to view in this verse—of the room, by the master of the house; and of the lamb and other things necessary for the paschal supper, by the two disciples. On the latter see next verse.

13. They find the man and room as Jesus had said. **They made ready the passover**, the paschal supper. They slew the lamb, or had it slain, in the temple; its blood was sprinkled at

the foot of the altar, and its fat burned thereon; and the bitter herbs, the bread, and the wine were prepared.

14-30. CELEBRATION OF THE PASSOVER. CONTENTION OF THE TWELVE. JESUS FORETELLS HIS BETRAYAL, Matt. 26: 20-25; Mark 14: 17-21; John 13: 1-30. The institution of the Lord's Supper is somewhat incidentally related.

14. **The hour was come**. The evening, which commenced Friday, the 15th of Nisan. **He sat down**. *He reclined at table*, according to the custom of eating, with the left hand resting upon the couch, which was usually higher than the low table. The whole service was originally performed standing, but reclining was adopted after the Israelites possessed Canaan, symbolizing the rest God had given them. Sundry additions were afterward made. According to the Talmud, compiled in the third century from earlier traditions, four cups of the common red wine of the country, usually mingled with one fourth part of water, were drunk during the meal, and marked its progress. The first, as they reclined at table in connection with an invocation and blessing upon the day and the wine, corresponding with the cup mentioned in ver. 17. Then followed washing of hands, the bringing in of unleavened bread, bitter herbs, the roasted lamb, and a sauce or fruit paste. The master of the feast then blessed God for the fruit of the earth and gave the explanation respecting the passover prescribed in Ex. 12: 26, 27. Psalms 113, 114, were then sung, and the second cup was drunk. Then each kind of food was blessed and eaten, the paschal lamb being eaten last. A third cup of thanksgiving,

- 15 the twelve apostles with him. And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this passover
- 16 with you before I suffer: for I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, <sup>g</sup>until it be fulfilled in the <sup>h</sup>kingdom of God. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide it among yourselves: for <sup>i</sup>I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come.
- 19 <sup>j</sup>And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it,

<sup>g</sup> ch. 14. 15; Ac. 10. 41; Rev. 19. 9.

<sup>h</sup> Mt. 26. 29; Mk. 14. 25.

<sup>i</sup> Mt. 26. 26-28; Mk. 14. 22-24; 1 Cor. 11. 23-25.

called the cup of blessing (compare 1 Cor. 10 : 16) for deliverance from Egypt, was drunk. Psalms 115-118 were sung and the fourth cup drunk, closing the celebration. Sometimes Psalms 120-137 were sung or repeated, followed by a fifth cup.

We may presume that Jesus observed the more ancient manner of celebrating the passover rather than that of the later Jewish traditions. We have no evidence that he used more than one cup at the passover, vers. 17, 18. Before the drinking of this cup, the contention among the twelve (vers. 24-30) probably occurred, and the washing of the disciples' feet (John 13 : 1-20) immediately after. The paschal supper is continued; the traitor is pointed out, who withdraws, and then the Lord's Supper is instituted.

The passover was both commemorative and typical in its nature and design. It commemorated the deliverance from the destroying angel in Egypt, and typified the greater deliverance through Christ, "the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world." At this very feast "Christ our passover was sacrificed for us," 1 Cor. 5 : 7.

15. **With desire I have desired.** This was to be his last passover with them before he suffered, the time when he should institute the Lord's Supper, and give his wonderful valedictory discourse; hence he mentions an intense desire to engage in the exercises of this occasion: *I have earnestly desired.*

16. **Fulfilled in the kingdom of God.** The "until" does not mean that he would again partake of the passover after the establishment of the kingdom. The type was to vanish in the presence of the great antitype, "Christ our passover," who is slain for us. He would not partake again until the gospel dis-

penation was established, and then the participation would be in spiritual union and communion of the Head and the members.

17. **Took the cup,** rather, *having received a cup*, one of the passover cups. **Gave thanks,** as was his custom. **Thanks were given** by the Jews at this feast with unusual solemnity. **Divide it,** pass it round to each.

18. **Fruit of the vine.** Wine was made from other things, such as dates, but this expression shows that the passover wine was made from grapes, and this grape wine was also, no doubt, used at the Lord's Supper. The "until" is to be taken in the same sense as in ver. 16. He never observed the passover again; but he ate and drank with his disciples after he rose from the dead, Luke 24 : 30-43. **Kingdom of God shall come.** This *kingdom, reign, or administration* of the Messiah is spiritual in its nature (John 18 : 36; Rom. 14 : 17), and is exercised over, and has its seat in, the hearts of believers, ch. 17 : 21. It exists on earth (Matt. 13 : 18, 19, 41, 47); extends to another state of existence (ch. 13 : 43; 26 : 29; Phil. 2 : 10, 11); and will be fully consummated in a state of glory, 1 Cor. 15 : 24; Matt. 8 : 11; 2 Pet. 1 : 11. It thus embraces the whole mediatorial reign or government of Christ on earth and in heaven, and includes in its subjects all the redeemed, or, as Paul expresses it (Eph. 3 : 15), "the whole family in heaven and earth." In this place he includes the great epochs of the future, and points to the period when the kingdom will be triumphant, and, as "Righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost," will go beyond all earthly expression and elements.

19. In this verse and the next we have the administration of the Lord's Supper. **Took bread, took the loaf**

and gave unto them, saying, This is my body <sup>k</sup> which <sup>k</sup> John 3. 51; Gal. 1. 4.  
is given for you : this do in remembrance of me.

20 Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This

or thin cake of unleavened bread which was before him. The *one loaf* points to the one body of Christ which has been offered up and to the *oneness* of his followers with him, forming "one loaf, one body," 1 Cor. 10 : 16, 17. **Gave thanks.** So says Paul. Matthew and Mark say "he blessed." He blessed God and invoked the divine blessing. The two verbs explain each other and amount to the same thing. The giving thanks was blessing God, and both were a blessing of the bread and a setting it apart to a sacred use. Compare Matt. 14 : 19 and note, and John 6 : 11. **Break.** This represented his body broken on the cross, the wounds and sufferings of death. Hence *breaking* of the bread is essential to the true idea. Cutting it is a perversion. The ordinance was even called "the breaking of bread," Acts 2 : 42. **Gave unto them.** The apostles were the representatives of that one body the church ; hence they alone partook, because it was an ordinance of that one body. The Lord's Supper is a church ordinance, 1 Cor. 11 : 20, 33.

**This is my body which is given for you : this do in remembrance of me.** Not literally *my body*, for Jesus was present in his body, and the broken bread was visibly not a part of it. So also in Paul's account, who declares that he received it from the Lord, and is therefore of the highest authority. Jesus says, "This cup is the new testament in my blood," 1 Cor. 11 : 25. If this broken bread was literally Christ's body, then "This cup," etc., means, This material cup (not the wine in it) is the actual new testament or covenant. The latter so evidently demands a figurative or symbolic meaning that Maldonatus, the Jesuit commentator, could meet the difficulty only by impiously setting himself up against the inspired penman and declaring that Christ never uttered these words. The verb *is*, in the expression, *This is my body*, upon which papists have laid so much stress in advocating the doctrine of transubstantiation, belongs only to the Greek translation of our Saviour's

language, though it was implied in Aramaic, the language in which our Saviour spoke. Similar expressions are however, found in all languages, and with no doubtful meaning. Thus Joseph, in explaining the dream of Pharaoh, says, "The seven good kine are seven years," Gen. 41 : 26. They signified or represented seven years. So also, "The good seed are the children of the kingdom" (ch. 13 : 38); "that rock was Christ" (1 Cor. 10 : 41); "Agar is Mount Sinai" (Gal. 4 : 25); and many similar expressions. So also Jesus calls himself a door (John 10 : 9), a vine (John 15 : 1), a star, Rev. 22 : 16. He also spoke of the temple of his body, John 2 : 19, 21. No one would for a moment take such language literally, but emblematically. So the bread represents his body, is an emblem of it. Or turning our minds from the verb to the two things compared, we may say that as Christ is spiritually and figuratively a door, a star, a vine, or a temple, so his body is figuratively and spiritually the bread of life. Thus in this part of the ordinance Christ is represented as the sustenance of his people. The doctrine of transubstantiation, therefore, finds no basis in this passage; it is contrary to its plain meaning as well as to common sense.

20. **The cup**, including the wine which it contained. Probably the wine mixed with water used at the passover. "The common wine of Palestine is of red color. Such was the wine used at the sacrament, as it would seem both from the nature of the case and from the declaration, This is my blood."—L. COLEMAN, D. D. Some hold that it was unfermented wine, since nothing fermented was permitted at the feast. But of this there is wanting proof. The Jews in Palestine now use fermented wine at the feast; but if any wine is found to be running into acetic fermentation, it is removed. Dr. C. V. A. Van Dyck, who has resided for more than a quarter of a century in Syria, says (*Bibliotheca Sacra*, vol. xxvi. p. 170): "In Syria, and as far as I can learn in all the East, there is no wine

cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you.

21 <sup>1</sup>But, behold, the hand of him that betrayeth me is  
22 with me on the table. And truly the Son of man  
goeth, <sup>m</sup>as it was determined: but woe unto that  
23 man by whom he is betrayed! And they began to

<sup>1</sup>Mt. 26. 21-25; Mk  
14. 18-21; John  
13. 21, 26; also  
Ps. 41. 9.  
<sup>m</sup>Ac. 2. 23; 4. 28.

preserved unfermented; . . . they could not keep grape-juice or raisin-water unfermented if they would; it would become either wine or vinegar in a few days, or go into the putrefactive fermentation. . . . At the passover, only fermented wine is used. As I said before, there is no other, and therefore they have no idea of any other." Dr. Van Dyck is decided in the opinion that such a thing as unfermented wine never has been known in Syria.

This opinion is agreed in by ten other gentlemen, missionaries and residents in Syria, in a document dated May, 1875, and printed in *The Illustrated Christian Weekly* for Jan. 15, 1876.

**New testament, the blood of the new covenant,** of the gospel dispensation (the conditions, promises, and pledges of salvation), Jer. 31 : 31; Heb. 8 : 7-13. In contrast to the blood of the old dispensation, of which that of the passover of course formed a part. The blood of the old covenant was the blood of lambs, calves, goats, and bulls, Ex. 24 : 8; Heb. 9 : 18-22. The blood of the new covenant is the blood of Christ, of which the wine of the cup is an emblem, Heb. 9 : 11, 12, 24-26. As the former covenant was made, dedicated, and its blessings secured by the blood of beasts, so the latter was procured and established and its blessings secured to all believers through the blood of Christ. The former by *types*, the latter by the *reality*, but both by the shedding of blood. In receiving the cup, therefore, we openly accept this covenant.

**Which is shed.** Though this was uttered before his sufferings, yet Jesus, by anticipation, speaks of it as virtually accomplished. **For you.** In Matthew and Mark we have "*for many.*" Luke expresses the "*you*" as representative of all true believers, and does not disagree with the other witnesses who say many, meaning those to whom Christ's blood is rendered efficacious through faith. The poured wine rep-

resents the substitutionary sufferings of Christ for "the many."

**21. But behold the hand.** According to the latest and best harmonists, there is a slight transposition of the incidents here. In order of time, vers. 21-23 come before vers. 19, 20. Luke only incidentally refers to the traitor after relating the institution of the Lord's Supper, which makes a central point in his narrative, and which the mention of the first cup at the passover may have led him to introduce. In John 13 : 30 we are informed that Judas went immediately out after receiving the sop. Christ said, "What thou doest, do quickly," as though the traitor's presence was disagreeable to him. If the traitor was pointed out before the supper was instituted, we must also place his *departure before it*. This is confirmed—(1) by the general narrative of John, which seems to imply, not only that the paschal supper was going on, but that it was near its beginning; (2) by the statement in ver. 20 and by Paul (1 Cor. 11 : 25) that the cup was blessed *after supper*—after the eating of the paschal lamb had been completed. The brazen-faced *Judas was not* at the supper. The little company were relieved of his satanic presence during the memorial meal.

**22. As it was determined.** The Messiah goeth in the path of humiliation and suffering to death, as it is written of him in such prophecies as Isa. 53 : 4-12; Dan. 9 : 26; Zech. 12 : 10; 13 : 7. **Woe unto that man.** Though his death was according to God's purpose and foretold by ancient prophets, yet his betrayer and murderers were without excuse, Acts 2 : 22-24. God's purpose and foreknowledge are coexistent, and are in harmony, with human freedom. Judas was not compelled to betray Jesus. His act was his own and freely committed. The woe upon the traitor in the parallel passage (Mark 14 : 21) points him out as an object both of pity and of wrath.

inquire among themselves, which of them it was that should do this thing.

24 <sup>a</sup>And there was also a strife among them, which of  
25 them should be accounted the greatest. <sup>o</sup>And he said  
unto them, The kings of the Gentiles exercise lord-  
ship over them; and they that exercise authority  
26 upon them are called benefactors. <sup>p</sup>But ye *shall* not  
*be* so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be  
as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth  
27 serve. For whether *is* greater, he that sitteth at meat,  
or he that serveth? *is* not he that sitteth at meat?  
28 But <sup>q</sup>I am among you as he that serveth. Ye are  
they <sup>r</sup>which have continued with me in <sup>s</sup>my tempta-  
29 tions. And <sup>t</sup>I appoint unto you a kingdom, <sup>u</sup>as my  
30 Father hath appointed unto me; that <sup>v</sup>ye may eat and

<sup>a</sup> ch. 9. 46; Mt. 20.  
20-24; Mk. 9. 34.  
<sup>o</sup> Mt. 20. 25; Mk. 10.  
42.  
<sup>p</sup> Mt. 20. 26; Ro  
12. 2.  
<sup>q</sup> See refs. Mt. 20  
28.  
<sup>r</sup> Mt. 19. 28, 29; 24.  
13; John 6. 67,  
68; 8. 31.  
<sup>s</sup> Heb. 4. 15.  
<sup>t</sup> ch. 12. 32; 19. 17.  
Mt. 24. 47; 2 Cor.  
1. 7; Rev. 1. 6.  
<sup>u</sup> Phil. 2. 9-11.  
<sup>v</sup> ch. 12. 37; 14. 15  
Mt. 8. 11; Rev  
19. 9.

The terrible consequences of his guilt are unutterable: it were good if he had never had an existence. His very being will be a curse to him. Our Saviour's language points to a future miserable existence, and may be used as an argument against annihilation.

23. **Began to inquire among themselves.** John says, "they looked on one another doubting of whom he spake." Matthew and Mark say that each asked Jesus. Perhaps they first questioned one another, and afterward appealed to the Master. **Do this thing** They were smitten with astonishment at the thought that any one of them would betray Jesus.

24-30. In these six verses there is a dispute recorded only by Luke, with Christ's admonition and instruction on mutual service and the final rewards. See Matt. 18 : 1-4; 20 : 20-28.

24. **Strife**, a controversy, contention. **Accounted the greatest**, who should hold the highest rank in his kingdom. Ideas of earthly glory were prominent in the disciples' minds, and natural depravity used the ambition to gender strife.

25. **The kings of the Gentiles.** He begins his reproof by showing that they were thinking after the manner of the Gentiles. They **exercise lordship**. Is that your desire? **They are called benefactors.** They are puffed up by flattering titles, such as "benefactor of the realm." Are you striving for such a position of worldly glory? Will you lord it over your brethren? "Our Lord's argument is, You wish for honor and distinction; seek it, then,

after my example, by becoming in reality what others are only in name—the benefactors of mankind."—*Annotated Paragraph Bible.*

26. **Ye shall not be so.** The word "shall" is not in the original. The literal meaning is *ye are not so*. Though distinguished by grace, ye are not to love and seek superiority. On the contrary, let the **greatest be as the younger**, avoid the appearance of lordship. Let the **chief** be ready to do anything that will accommodate and serve his brother.

27. **Whether is greater, he that sitteth (reclineth) at meat, or he that serveth?** There can be but one answer. Then comes the application. **As he that serveth.** He, the King, the Head of the church, the elder brother, voluntarily entered upon the deepest humiliation and the most humble, self-denying service, Phil. 2 : 7-11. Whoever among you will be great, let him engage in a service of love for others.

28. **Continued with me in my temptations.** It is clear that our Lord's life was full of temptations. The Epistle to the Hebrews speaks of this. The gospel narratives only give us a glimpse. These words are a recognition of the general faithfulness of the disciples to their Lord, and show us that Jesus is regardful of every attention shown to him.

29. **I appoint unto you a kingdom.** Though crownless so far as mortals could see, he in that hour of his humiliation appointed, bequeathed them a kingdom, **as my Father hath**

drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

- 31 <sup>a</sup> And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, <sup>a</sup> Satan hath desired to have you that he may <sup>b</sup> sift you as wheat: but <sup>c</sup> I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: <sup>d</sup> and when thou art converted, <sup>e</sup> strengthen thy brethren. And he said unto him, 'Lord, I am

15. <sup>4</sup> vers. 61, 62; Ps. 51. 13; John 21. 15-17. \* Ac. 1. 15; 1 Pet. 5. 8-10; 2 Pet. 1. 10-12; 3. 14, 17, 18. † Pro. 28. 26; Jer. 10. 23; Mt. 26. 33, 35.

‡ Ps. 49. 14; Mt. 19. 28; Rev. 3. 21. § Mt. 26. 31-35; Mk. 14. 27-31; John 13. 36-38. ¶ Zec. 3. 1. \*\* Am. 9. 9. †† Zec. 3. 2-4; John 17. 9-11, 15; Ro. 8. 32-34; Heb. 4

**appointed unto me.** The saints are participants in his kingdom by virtue of their union with him.

**30. My table.** Not the Lord's Supper merely, but may partake of the kingly feast upon the merits of the Redeemer, and enjoy the pleasures of the table prepared for the supply of all our wants throughout eternity.

**Sit on thrones.** Christ shall sit on his throne of glory; they simply on thrones. They shall sit beside him, his assessors, partakers, indeed, of his power and glory. All believers share here his sufferings and hereafter his glory, Rom. 8 : 17; 2 Tim. 2 : 12. The special dignity, power, and glory of the apostles as the chief associates of Christ are here represented, Rev. 21 : 12-14. Under him they exercise spiritual dominion. As inspired teachers they are to be appealed to in matters of faith and practice, and at the final judgment condemnation or acquittal will be in accordance with the doctrines they were inspired to preach. **Judging the twelve tribes of Israel.** Co-operating with and approving his decisions. Believers generally are to have part in the judgment, 1 Cor. 6 : 2. The twelve apostles are to have a special part in judging the twelve tribes, the people of Israel. All the judgments on the Jewish people, and especially the destruction of Jerusalem, which is typical of the final judgment (Matt. 24), may be said to be in accordance with the inspired truth given through the apostles.

31-38. JESUS FORETELLS THE FALL OF PETER, John 13 : 31-38. Compare Matt. 26 : 30-35; Mark 14 : 26-31, where Jesus foretells the second time the fall of Peter and the dispersion of the disciples. Compare author's *Harmony*, §§ 163, 169, with notes.

**31. Simon, Simon.** An emphatic repetition, using the first name, which

Peter had before his call to the discipleship. The Saviour avoids mentioning the name that would suggest the more stable idea.

**Satan** particularly wished to have the prominent friends of Christ. **Desired to have you,** demanded or asked for you. Compare Job 1 : 6-12; 2 : 1-6. *You* is in the plural in the original; the other disciples as well as Peter. Notice the fine contrast between *you* and *thee* in the next verse, "I have prayed for thee." The self-reliant Peter especially needed the prayers of Jesus, though he prayed for them all, John 17 : 15. **Sift you as wheat.** "As the wheat is shaken in the sieve that the chaff may thereby separate itself from the wheat and fall out, so will Satan disquiet and terrify you through persecution, dangers, tribulation, in order to bring your faithfulness toward me to apostasy."—MEYER.

**32. Prayed for thee.** As though he had said, "Simon, I show thee what the adversary is preparing for thee; now know that my prayers are on your side." What a precious announcement! Christ's petitions form a wall about the believer that Satan cannot cast down.

**That thy faith fail not, cease not entirely.** The evil one would be permitted so far to succeed in the sifting as to reveal Simon to himself and convince him of his weakness, but the golden grain should not be lost. The wheat, after its tossing and disquieting, should come forth safe. True faith may be weak, but the Lord does not suffer it entirely to fail. **When thou art converted.** When through the bitter experience of the next few days you shall be turned to a devotedness and love that will never again falter, **strengthen thy brethren.** Simon's history after the ascension of his Lord shows that he did in a remarkable degree strengthen the brethren.

ready to go with thee, both into prison, and to death.

34 And he said, I tell thee, Peter, the cock shall not crow this day, before that thou shalt thrice deny that thou knowest me.

35 <sup>s</sup> And he said unto them, When I sent you without purse, and scrip, and shoes, lacked ye any thing?

36 And they said, Nothing. Then said he unto them, But now, he that hath a purse, let him take it, and likewise his scrip: and he that hath no sword, let

37 him sell his garment, and buy one. For I say unto you, that this that is written must yet be accomplished in me, <sup>h</sup> And he was reckoned among the transgressors: <sup>i</sup> for the things concerning me have an

38 end. And they said, Lord, behold, here are two swords. And he said unto them, <sup>k</sup> It is enough.

*Christ's agony on the Mount of Olives; his betrayal and apprehension.*

39 <sup>l</sup> And he came out, and <sup>m</sup> went, as he was wont, to

<sup>e</sup> ch. 9. 3; 10. 4;  
Mt. 10. 9, 10.

<sup>h</sup> Is. 53. 12; Mk. 15. 28; 2 Cor. 5. 21.  
<sup>i</sup> John 5. 39; Rev. 19. 10.  
<sup>k</sup> Mt. 26. 52-54; John 18. 36; 2 Cor. 10. 3, 4; 1 Pet. 5. 9.  
<sup>l</sup> Mt. 26. 30, 36-46; Mk. 14. 32-42; John 18. 1.

<sup>m</sup> ch. 21. 37.

### 33. To prison and to death.

Still his impetuous professions continue. How little he knew of himself! He was honest, but blind to his own weakness.

### 34. The cock shall not crow.

Fowls are very abundant in the East at the present day. Later Jewish writers affirm, though not always consistent with themselves, that the inhabitants of Jerusalem and the priests everywhere were forbidden to keep fowls, because they scratched up unclean worms. But even if this were so, the Roman residents, over whom the Jews could exercise no power, might keep them. Mark says, "Before the cock crow twice." The first about midnight, the second about three o'clock. The latter more generally marked time, and was the one meant when only one cock-crowing, as here, was mentioned. **Thrice deny me**, three times disown me as your Lord and Teacher.

35. **Purse.** The folds of the *girille* served as a pocket or purse to carry money. **Scrip**, a bag generally made of leather for carrying provisions, ch. 9: 3. **Shoes**, sandals, see on ch. 7: 44. **Lacked ye . . . nothing.** There was full provision.

36. **But now**, etc. A crisis is coming. There will be need of every resource; there is peculiar danger. Sell the upper garment to obtain a sword. It is hardly to be supposed that our

Lord commanded them to arm themselves against the perils of that night. It is better to consider it as the utterance of a proverbial expression conveying the idea of imminent danger from enemies. They must be prepared for the worst. Some suppose that the command is to be understood figuratively, and applies to spiritual, not carnal, weapons. Beza says the whole speech is allegorical.

37. **This that is written**, in Isaiah, chapter 53. **Reckoned among the transgressors.** His crucifixion between two malefactors is the fulfilment. **Have an end**, my sufferings are culminating; they will soon be over, but yours are just beginning.

38. **Two swords.** Where they obtained them we know not, but they now have them ready. Perhaps, in accordance with the custom of the Galileans, they may have taken them in their journey through the dangerous passes to the capital. They showed them to Jesus, probably intimating their readiness to use them. **It is enough.** Surely he does not mean that this was a sufficient armament for defence. The words are rather to be taken in the sense of enough "to answer the design of a symbolical warning of approaching danger." He gave a proof that he did not intend to offer resistance by earthly weapons.

39-53. Passing over the events re-

the mount of Olives; and his disciples also followed  
40 him. "And when he was at the place, he said unto  
them, ° Pray that ye enter not into temptation.

° Mt. 6. 13.  
° Ps. 119. 117.

41 And he was withdrawn from them about a stone's  
42 cast, and kneeled down, and prayed, saying, Father,  
if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: never-

ferred to by John as transpiring in the upper room, Luke brings us to the scene of THE AGONY AND THE BETRAYAL, Matt. 26 : 36-56; Mark 14 : 32-52; John 18 : 1-11.

**The mount of Olives.** Literally, *the mount of the olives*, being descriptive of the olive trees which grew thereon. Olive trees still grow there, but less thickly than of old. Compare 2 Sam. 15 : 30; Neh. 8 : 15; Ezek. 11 : 23; Zech. 14 : 4. It is also called Olivevet (Acts 1 : 12), a place set with olives, an olive-yard. This mount is the high ridge east of Jerusalem and parallel to the city, and separated from it by the valley of the Kidron. The top is notched with three summits, the middle one of which is the highest, being about twenty-six hundred feet above the Mediterranean, five hundred and sixty feet above the bed of the Kidron, two hundred feet above the highest part of the city, and about half a mile from the city wall. The southern summit, which is lower than the other two, is called the "mount of offence," and also the "mount of corruption," because Solomon and some of the later kings defiled it by idolatrous worship. As he was wont, compare chap. 21 : 37. **His disciples followed him**, over the brook Kidron to the foot of the mount.

40. **At the place**—that is, the garden of Gethsemane. This was a *garden*, an orchard or olive-yard, according to John, where he was wont to retire. *Gethsemane* means *olive-press*, a name seemingly prophetic of Christ's agony, where he trod the wine-press alone (Isa. 63 : 3), without the city, Rev. 14 : 20. It was just across the brook Kidron, about one-half mile east from Jerusalem, at the foot of the mount of Olives. The modern garden without doubt occupies the same site or a portion of it, possibly somewhat smaller, being an enclosure of about one-third of an acre and surrounded by a low wall. In it are eight venerable olive

trees, still green and productive, but so decayed that heaps of stone are piled up against their trunks to keep them from being blown down. They were standing at the Saracenic conquest of Jerusalem, A. D. 636, since the sultan receives a tax on them fixed at that time. But as all the trees around Jerusalem were cut down by Titus at the destruction of Jerusalem, these olive trees probably sprang from the roots of those standing in the days of our Lord. Thomson thinks that the ancient Gethsemane was situated in a secluded vale several hundred yards to the north-east of the modern one. There is much evidence, however, in support of the present locality.

**Pray that ye enter not into temptation.** In view of the great crisis which he foresaw, there was good reason for this direction. A test was just before them more severe than they had yet known.

41. **A stone's cast**, about as far as one would throw a stone. From Matthew and Mark it appears that he first took Peter, James, and John with him; then, going apart from them, he **kneeled down**. Mark says he *fell on the ground and prayed*. Doubtless he knelt first, and as his agony increased fell forward, as Matthew says, "on his face." Compare Gen. 17 : 3. The posture was indicative of his extreme humiliation and anguish.

42. **Father.** He prays as the Son. **Remove this cup**, this bitter cup of anguish. Cup is a common figure of Scripture, sometimes representing joy (Ps. 16 : 5; 23 : 5; 116 : 13), and sometimes sorrow, Ps. 11 : 6; 75 : 8; Isa. 51 : 17; Jer. 25 : 15; Rev. 16 : 1. Not the cup of death, but of present overwhelming anguish, which he was suffering as our substitute, Isa. 53 : 4, 5. To suppose him overwhelmed with the dread of death and praying for its removal is contrary to the spirit he had ever manifested toward it and to all his declarations and prayers concerning it.

43 theless <sup>p</sup> not my will, but thine, be done. And there  
 appeared <sup>q</sup> an angel unto him from heaven, strength-  
 44 ening him. <sup>r</sup> And being in an agony he prayed more  
 earnestly: <sup>s</sup> and his sweat was as it were great drops  
 45 of blood falling down to the ground. And when he

<sup>p</sup> Ps. 40. 8; John  
 5. 30; 6. 38.  
<sup>q</sup> Mt. 4. 11.  
<sup>r</sup> Ge. 32. 24-28; 1's.  
 22. 1, 2; John 12.  
 27; Heb. 5. 7, 8.  
<sup>s</sup> Lam. 1. 12.

John 12 : 27, 28; chaps. 14-17. **Nevertheless, not my wil, but thine, be done.** Wonderful faith and resignation combined! The will of Jesus, who was both priest and victim, is swallowed up in the divine will.

43. **And there appeared an angel**, one of those bright beings of whom it is said, "He shall give his angels charge over thee." The anguish was not removed, but the Messiah was strengthened to bear it. He was "made lower than the angels." We do not know how the celestial ministrant aided Christ, whether by sympathy, words of cheer, wiping away the sweat, or, as one has suggested, by worshipping him to signify his recognition of Christ's lordship. His human nature must be upheld, in order that a full atonement may be made, and this angel is a means to that end. God says, in Ps. 89 : 21, of Messiah, "Mine arm also shall strengthen him." The Father sent the angel to fulfil this word.

44. **Being in an agony.** The word is very emphatic. It signifies a struggle, extreme anguish; it includes all the exertion of body and anxiety of mind which accompany a terrible contest. In Mark he says to his disciples as he enters the agony, *My soul is exceeding sorrowful unto death.* Literally, *environed with grief*, shut in with sorrow on every side. This was in view of the connection of his sufferings and death with sin. The extremest intensity, deathly; a little more would be death itself. Compare Ps. 18 : 4, 5; 55 : 4. Jon. 4 : 9. This language points to sufferings in his human nature. He had been before troubled in the anticipation of his sufferings (John 12 : 27); now he is overwhelmed with the sufferings themselves. A body and soul untainted and unmarred by sin must have been capable of endurance far beyond any of our sinful race. This endurance must have been greatly increased by the connection of the divine with the human. Hence the *sorrow unto death* was beyond anything that ever has been

or could be experienced in this world by any one of our fallen race. It was beyond all human conception. He was suffering for sinners in their place. He made their case, as it were, his own. The horror and woe of the lost and the pangs of hell were taking hold upon him so far as it was possible in his state of innocence.

**Prayed more earnestly.** The tremendous agony developed the intensest prayer. Here belongs that reference in Heb. 5 : 7, 8, "Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him who was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared; though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered."

**And his sweat was, better, it became, as it were great drops of blood.** Some think that this was not a sweat of real blood, but that the sweat rolled off *like* drops of blood. Their argument is gathered from the words "*as it were.*" But this is not conclusive. It is said of John, "they counted him *as a prophet,*" Matt. 14 : 5. See also John 1 : 14; 2 Cor. 3 : 13, where the Greek word does not mean similarity merely, but reality.

It does not say that his sweat was, as it were, blood, but *great drops or clots* of blood falling to the ground. The common opinion is that the anguish of the sufferer's mind forced the blood through the pores, and that it fell in large drops. There are similar cases recorded. Mention is made of a man at Lyons who, on hearing his death-sentence, was covered all over with a bloody sweat. For other instances, especially the modern cases, see "The Index Catalogue of the Surgeon General's Office of the United States Army," under the following headings: 1. Perspiration, Bloody. 2. Hemorrhage, Cutaneous. 3. Diapedesis. 4. Ecstasy. 5. Chromidrosis. The same Greek word, *thrombos*, "a clotted drop" of blood is now used technically in medicine to indicate a clot

rose up from prayer, and was come to his disciples,  
46 he found them sleeping for sorrow, and said unto them, Why sleep ye? rise and pray, lest ye enter into temptation.

47 And while he yet spake, 'behold a multitude, and he that was called Judas, one of the twelve, went before them, and drew near unto Jesus \* to kiss him. <sup>• Mt. 26. 47-56; Mk. 14. 43-50; John 18. 3-12.</sup>

48 But Jesus said unto him, Judas, betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss? <sup>• 2 Sam. 20. 9.</sup>

49 When they which were about him saw what would follow, they said unto him, Lord, shall we smite with

of blood in certain diseased conditions. "What an affecting spectacle, to behold the Son of God prostrate on the ground, his soul in agony and torture, and his body besmeared with dust, and tears, and sweat, and blood!"—REV. JAS. FOOTE.

45. It would be natural to suppose that the disciples would be watching and praying with great earnestness while this trying scene was enacted; but when he rose up from prayer and came to his disciples, he found them sleeping. Most surprising! But it is said for sorrow. This is some extenuation, for grief when long continued exhausts us and makes us drowsy. Matthew and Mark add this saying of the Lord to them, "The Spirit truly is ready [or willing], but the flesh is weak." How tenderly Jesus treats them!

46. **Rise and pray**, a repetition of ver. 40. Jesus re-enjoins prayer, with special reference to themselves, that they might not fall under the power of temptation. Their hour of trial was at hand, and they needed both to watch and also pray, for they needed strength and grace. The motive of the former injunction was sympathy with him; that of this is their personal preservation and safety.

47-53. **JESUS IS BETRAYED AND MADE PRISONER**, Mark 14 : 43-52; John 18 : 2-12.

47. **Yet spake**, immediately. **A multitude**. This consisted, first, of the band (John 18 : 3, 12), or Roman cohort, which, consisting of three hundred to six hundred men, was quartered in the tower of Antonia, overlooking the temple, and ever ready to put down any tumult or arrest any disturber. Probably so much of the band as could be spared was present. Then there were the captains of the temple (ver. 52), with

their men, who guarded the temple and kept order. Also some of the chief priests and elders (ver. 52), and finally their servants, such as Malchus (John 18 : 10) and others, who had been commissioned by the Jewish authorities. **Judas, one of the twelve**. Thus styled by Mark also, pointing him out, not only as one of the apostles, but also as the apostolic criminal, whose crime and guilt were the more aggravated by the position he had held and the knowledge and intimacy he had enjoyed with Jesus. **Went before them**, as their guide and leader. See John 18 : 3. **Drew near to kiss him**. *The wretch!* Will he dare to betray the pure and holy One? Yes; he will do the bidding of his master, the devil. Matthew says, "He said, Hail, Master! and kissed him." Why were not his lips blistered and his scheme thwarted? Ah! the meek Lamb endured the betrayal, with its consequences, for our salvation.

48. **Betrayest thou . . . with a kiss?** Jesus shows that he knows the traitor heart. What an expression there must have been in the Redeemer's words! *Betrayest thou with a kiss?* Do you dare to bring those polluted lips in contact with mine and play the hypocrite? Away with your hypocrisy! Unveil your heart! Do your fiendish work! John, in ch. 18 : 4-9, mentions some things which need to be noticed in the reading to complete the narrative.

49. **When they which were about him**, the disciples, who were now thoroughly awake to the danger. Perhaps they thought that their Lord would enable them to discomfit their foes and vindicate him by means of the "two swords."

50 the sword? And <sup>\*</sup>one of them smote the servant  
51 of the high priest, and cut off his right ear. And  
Jesus answered and said, Suffer ye thus far. <sup>†</sup>And  
he touched his ear, and healed him.

<sup>\*</sup>Mt. 26. 51; Mk  
14. 47; John 18  
10; Ro. 12. 19.  
<sup>†</sup>Ro. 12. 21.

52 <sup>\*</sup>Then Jesus said unto the chief priests, and cap-  
tains of the temple, and the elders, which were come  
to him, Be ye come out, as against a thief, with swords  
53 and staves? When I was daily with you in the tem-  
ple, ye stretched forth no hands against me: <sup>a</sup>but this  
is your hour, <sup>b</sup>and the power of darkness.

<sup>\*</sup>Mt. 26. 55; Mk.  
14. 48.

<sup>a</sup>John 12. 27.  
<sup>b</sup>Eph. 6. 12; Col.  
1. 15.

*Jesus is led to the high priest's house; Peter thrice denies  
him.*

54 <sup>c</sup>Then took they him, and led *him*, and brought  
him into the high priest's house.

<sup>c</sup>Mt. 26. 57, 58, 69-  
75; Mk. 14. 53, 54,  
66-72; John 18.  
13-18, 25-27.

50. **One of them.** John tells us it was Peter. Perhaps the first three writers omit the name, in order that Peter might be shielded from any odium connected with it. John wrote after Peter's death.

**Smote.** Peter, in accordance with his impetuous nature, and doubtless emboldened by the supernatural awe which Jesus had just previously exerted on the multitude, drew his sword and commenced the conflict, not doubting the power of Jesus to give the victory. **The servant of the high priest.** Probably *the servant*, as he was well known, namely, Malchus, John 10 : 10. The first three evangelists may have omitted his name, either because he was well known (and he may have become a disciple) or from prudential considerations. **Cut off his ear.** *Struck off* his right ear. The servant may have been stepping forward, as Dr. Hackett remarks, to handcuff or pinion Jesus. The blow was doubtless aimed at his head; perhaps the power of Jesus prevented a fatal stroke.

51. **Suffer ye thus far.** Spoken probably to his disciples. You have done enough of this; go no farther, suffer me to do a deed of compassion. Christ's compassion is shown even here. **He touched his ear, and healed him.** An immediate and complete cure. This miracle should have caused them to desist.

52. **Chief priests and captains of the temple.** See on ver. 47; also John 18 : 3. Some of the priests seem to have come in person. The captains

of the temple were commanders of the Jewish watch. **Elders.** Probably they also were there by authority of the Sanhedrim. **Be ye come out as against a thief?** Rather, a robber, plunderer. Such an array of force would be a becoming preparation against a notorious robber. But have I borne that character? **Staves,** sticks or clubs.

53. **Daily with you.** During that week and at other times. Why do you attack me secretly *by night*, when you have had abundant opportunity to take me in broad daylight? This was an indictment for cowardice. **Ye stretched forth no hands against me.** You did not arrest me. **But this is your hour, and the power of darkness.** The reason of their present success and Christ's quiet submission is that God's appointed time has come for the propitiatory offering of his own provided lamb. See Ps. 22 : 1; Isa. 53 : 7-12; Zech. 13 : 7. The power of darkness is *now* apparently prevalent. The words "this is your hour" suggest that the power of darkness shall not continue.

54-65. CHRIST BEFORE THE HIGH PRIEST. THE DENIAL OF PETER, Matt. 26 : 58-75; Mark 14 : 54-72; John 18 : 15-27.

54. **Took they him.** They arrested him. In the mean time all his disciples forsook him and fled, the bold Peter being among the number. John declares (18 : 12) that they bound Jesus and led him away. **The high priest's house.** John relates that they led him first to Annas, who, after having

55 And Peter followed afar off. And when they had kindled a fire in the midst of the hall, and were set  
 56 down together, <sup>4</sup>Peter sat down among them. But a <sup>4</sup> certain maid beheld him as he sat by the fire, and  
 earnestly looked upon him, and said, This man was  
 57 also with him. And he <sup>o</sup>denied him, saying, Woman, <sup>o</sup>2 Tim. 2. 10-12.  
 58 I know him not. And after a little while another  
 saw him, and said, Thou art also of them. And Peter  
 59 said, Man, I am not. <sup>1</sup>And about the space of one <sup>1</sup>Mt. 26. 73; Mk. 14  
 70; John 18. 26.

been high priest for several years, had been deposed, but who was still the legitimate high priest according to the law of Moses (the office being for life, Num. 20 : 28 ; 35 : 25), and may have been so regarded by the Jews. Before him he received an informal examination (John 18 : 12-14), and then, in order to have him officially tried and condemned in the eye of the Roman law, he is sent to Caiaphas. Annas appears to have possessed vast influence, and as father-in-law to Caiaphas doubtless exerted a very controlling influence over him. It is quite reasonable to suppose that they occupied a common official residence, and that Annas after his examination sent him across the court to the apartment occupied by Caiaphas. **Afar off.** Near enough to see what became of him, but distant enough to keep out of danger. He seems to show more courage than any of the eleven except John; he comes to the house of the high priest, ventures to enter into the court, and sits with the servants to see the result.

55. **Kindled a fire in the midst of the hall**—that is "*the court.*" The usual meeting-place of the Sanhedrim was an apartment in one of the courts of the temple called Gazeth, at the south-east corner of the court of Israel. In cases of emergency, or as in this case, where great secrecy was desired, it sat at the house of the high priest, who was generally president of the court.

The nights at Jerusalem are frequently quite cold because of its great altitude. John particularizes, (ch. 18 : 18) : "The servants and officers stood there, who had made a fire of coals; for it was cold and they warmed themselves." He further says that Peter stood with them, but here Luke tells us **Peter sat down among them**, thus

opening the way to the temptation which resulted in the denial. He should have pressed in and stood near his Lord.

56. **A certain maid.** According to Mark, she was one of the maids or maid-servants of the high priest. John speaks of her as the damsel who kept the door of the porch, or passage into the court. She probably observed Peter carefully when he entered with John, and afterward when he seated himself with the servants of the high priest. Something about his appearance or manner excites her suspicion. Then she thinks she remembers seeing him with Jesus. She approaches him, looks earnestly or intently upon him, and says, "This man was also with him." She tells him so (Matthew and Mark), and asks him (John) if he was not one of "this man's disciples."

57. **I know him not.** It would seem as though he were taken by surprise and pleads ignorance. He would have her think that he came in as a mere observer.

58. **Another saw him.** It is a man who now identifies him. He denies that he is a disciple of Jesus. But Matthew tells us that he even denied knowing him, and that, too, with an *oath*, calling God to witness, and with the somewhat contemptuous form, *I know not the man*. As if he had come from curiosity to learn the cause of this gathering, without any interest in it, and possibly without knowing even the name of the criminal on trial. This denial is thus a step in advance on the first. That was when he was taken by surprise, possibly somewhat confused; this after he had had a little time to reflect, and hence more deliberate. The number now questioning him doubtless excited him to his rash and wicked oath. Yet even

hour after another confidently affirmed, saying, Of a truth this *fellow* also was with him: for he is a Galilean. And Peter said, Man, I know not what thou sayest. <sup>a</sup>And immediately, while he yet spake, the cock crew. <sup>b</sup>And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter. <sup>1</sup>And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said unto him, <sup>2</sup>Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. And Peter went out, and wept bitterly.

<sup>3</sup>And the men that held Jesus <sup>m</sup>mocked him, and <sup>34</sup>smote *him*. And when they had blindfolded him, they struck him on the face, and asked him, saying, <sup>55</sup>Prophecy, who is it that smote thee? And many other things blasphemously spake they against him.

<sup>a</sup> ch. 22. 34.

<sup>b</sup> Hos. 11. 8.

<sup>1</sup> Eze. 36. 31, 32; <sup>mt.</sup> 26. 75; Mk. 14. 72.

<sup>2</sup> John 13. 38.

<sup>1</sup> Mt. 26. 59-68; Mk. 14. 55-65.

<sup>m</sup> Is. 53. 3; 1 Pet. 2. 23.

now no one appears to have intended him positive injury.

59. **Another confidently affirmed.** Spoke with great emphasis. **He is a Galilean.** His speech shows that he is a Galilean like him, and most of his disciples are Galileans. The pronunciation and accent of the Galileans were indistinct and less pure than those of the inhabitants of Judea. They confounded the gutturals and the last two letters of the Jewish alphabet. At the same time a relative of Malchus, whose ear Peter had cut off, asked, "Did I not see thee in the garden with him?" John 18 : 26.

60. **Man, I know not what thou sayest.** What are you talking about? I am totally ignorant of the man and the matter. Peter not only lied, but began to curse and swear, Mark 14 : 71. He invoked solemn curses on himself, he took solemn oaths in confirmation of his previous assertions that he did not know the man who was there as a prisoner.

**While he yet spake.** Before the words escape him the cock crows—a reminder of his base sin.

61. **The Lord turned** toward the position occupied by the false swearer, and **looked upon Peter.** Who can reproduce or describe that look? Was it an angry, disdainful, indignant look? No; it was more likely a look of mingled rebuke and compassion. The look went to Peter's heart.

**Remembered the word.** The memory is linked with the dreadful fact, and a conviction of the Saviour's knowledge and grace, in contrast with his own mean conduct, rushes into his

mind. Conscience accuses him of his cowardliness and broken vows.

62. **He went out.** He rushes to a lonely spot, and there **he wept bitterly.** From what we know of Peter we conclude that his sorrow must have been like the breaking up of the great deep. The *bitterness* of his penitence knew no relief until the assurance of forgiveness came.

63. **The men that held.** The officers and soldiers treated him as a heathen would treat a slave only under the greatest provocation. **Mocked him,** with insulting language and actions. **Smote him,** "beat him severely, so as to cut him."—FOOTE. Some struck him with their fists (Matthew), and the *servants* struck him (Mark).

64. They blindfolded him that he might be unable to defend himself. The words, **struck him on the face and,** are omitted in the best text; yet really implied in Mark 14 : 65 and here. "His visage was so marred more than any man." **Prophecy.** Speak through divine influence. **Who is it that smote thee?** Thus insult is added to insult. They make his Messiahship the object of mockery, and treat him as a base pretender and outlaw, mingling their revilings with deeds of violence.

65. **And many other things.** Some are recorded by the other evangelists. They uttered many blasphemies against him that are not recorded. Never was there a greater outburst of human wickedness than the conduct of the crucifiers afforded, impious, inhuman, God-daring in the extreme.

66-71. JESUS IS FORMALLY EX-

*Jesus before the council.*

- 66 <sup>a</sup> And as soon as it was day, <sup>o</sup> the elders of the people and the chief priests and the scribes came together,
- 67 and led him into their council, saying, <sup>p</sup> Art thou the Christ? tell us. And he said unto them, If I tell you,
- 68 <sup>q</sup> ye will not believe: and if I also ask *you*, ye will not answer me, nor let *me* go. <sup>r</sup> Hereafter shall the Son of man sit on the right hand of the power of God.
- 70 Then said they all, Art thou then the Son of God?
- 71 And he said unto them, <sup>s</sup> Ye say that I am. <sup>t</sup> And they said, What need we any further witness? for we ourselves have heard of his own mouth.

<sup>a</sup> Mt. 27. 1.  
<sup>o</sup> Ac. 4. 26; 22. 3.  
<sup>p</sup> Mt. 26. 63; Mk. 14. 61; John 10. 24.  
<sup>q</sup> ch. 16. 31; John 8. 43-47; 12. 37.  
<sup>r</sup> Mt. 26. 64; Mk. 14. 62; Heb. 1. 3; 8. 1  
<sup>s</sup> ch. 23. 3.  
<sup>t</sup> Mt. 26. 65; Mk. 14. 63.

AMINED BEFORE THE SANHEDRIM IN THE MORNING, AND FORMALLY CONDEMNED, Matt. 15 : 1. The examination at this session seems to have been the result of the previous examination referred to in vers. 54, 63-65, and related more fully by Matthew, Mark, and John. Compare author's *Harmony*, §§ 174, 175, and notes.

66. **As soon as it was day.** About five or six o'clock on Friday, April 7, in the seven hundred and eighty-third year of the founding of Rome.

**Elders . . . chief priests . . . scribes.** This was a meeting of the Sanhedrim, in order to formally condemn him to death. See on Matt. 26 : 57, 66. They also consulted as to the best means of putting him to death, and doubtless fixed upon the twofold charge of blasphemy and treason. They could condemn to death, but could not put the sentence into execution without the sanction of the Roman governor, John 18 : 31. The Jews lost the power of life and death when Archelaus was deposed, A. D. 6.

67. **Art thou the Christ?** They were fully prepared to condemn him; the question was prompted by malicious cunning, and the answer, whatever it might be, would be used against him. **If I tell you.** This reply shows that he pierced their design. They had seen convincing evidence of his Messiahship, and had rejected all.

68. **If I ask you,** as to the reason why, you will not believe me; **nor let me go,** if I bring convincing proof of my claims. This last clause is omitted by the highest critical authorities.

69. **Hereafter shall the Son of man.** He here bursts out in an an-

nouncement that the period would come when all would have to own his supremacy. **Son of man,** God manifest in the flesh, truly man as well as God. **Sit on the right hand of the power of God.** He was now *standing* as a prisoner and a criminal, but then he should sit in his glory, as Lord of lords and King of kings, at the right hand of Omnipotence, sharing and exercising sovereign supremacy.

70. **The Son of God.** This appellation was given to the Messiah from Ps. 2 : 7, making the question the more definite and expressive. The Jews did not, however, understand by it the full idea which Christ in his reply and the gospel reveals. **Ye say that I am.** An affirmative answer. It is a formal public declaration of his Messiahship and divinity. The two answers stand together. *Son of man—Son of God.*

71. **What need we any further witness,** etc. It is true they had an admission from Jesus—a confession as to his character; but it was by no means a confession of *sin* or *misdeemeanor*. Matthew (ch. 25 : 65) says that at this stage the high priest *rent his clothes*, his ordinary dress. His high-priestly robe was worn only in the temple. This was to be done standing, and the rent was to be from the neck straight downward, about nine inches in length. The high priest was forbidden to rend his clothes (Lev. 21 : 10); yet it seems to have been allowable in extraordinary cases of blasphemy and public calamity, 1 Macc. 2 : 14; 11 : 71; JOSEPHUS, *Jewish War*, ii. 15. 2, 4. The practice of rending the clothes at blasphemy was based on 2 Kings 18 : 37. The unexpected answer of Jesus,

declaring his divine glory and judgment, aroused the hatred, rage, and horror of the high priest to the utmost bounds, and he rends his garments as if too narrow to contain his exasperated emotions. This he does as if in holy indignation and horror. Terribly excited feelings and hypocrisy were doubtless mingled.

He also accused Jesus of impious language which detracted from the honor of God, implying that he was the Son of God, the sharer in the power and glory of God, and the Judge of mankind. Jesus confesses his true character, and for it is charged with blasphemy and condemned to death. The high priest takes for granted that the feelings of the Sanhedrim are the same as his own. He decides that this declaration is all the evidence necessary to condemn. Matthew says he put the question, "Ye have heard the blasphemy; what think ye?" They answered and said, *He is guilty of death*, Matt. 26 : 66.

#### REMARKS.

1. We may not, like Jesus, know the time of our death; yet, like him, let us be conversant with death, and in our example, teaching, and labors be prepared for it, ver. 15; John 18 : 4.

2. How sad it is to see men of intellect and influence opposing the truth and trying to crush its exponents and advocates! Yet history has shown many examples of this spirit. See how the same men undertook to crush the infant church, Acts 4 : 1, 5, 18.

3. Wicked and selfish rulers may well fear "the people." Tyrants cannot be happy. The populace will demand their rights; and though often blind and impulsive in their struggles, and failing to secure all they anticipate by revolution, the oppressors are completely overthrown. See Josephus' account of the destruction of Jerusalem; also history of the French revolution; ver. 2.

4. Satan rules fearfully in all the children of disobedience, but some he emphatically controls. They have given themselves up to work all iniquity with greediness. Such are ready for plots that are unspeakably wicked.

5. He is a despicable man who attempts to make worldly gain out of

professed godliness. It is entirely opposed to the principles of Christ's kingdom, and it is often the incipient symptom of such a destiny as appears in the apostate, ver. 3-7.

6. It is very dangerous to foster the avaricious spirit, ver. 5.

7. For what a small inducement do some professors of religion betray their Master! A low bid from the world, a demand of appetite or solicitation of pleasure, will lead to the sacrifice of principle. Disciples so easily bought are despised by the enemies of God, ver. 5.

8. Many a formal professor has turned against Jesus for the sake of worldly gain, ver. 5; 1 Tim. 6 : 9, 10; 2 Tim. 4 : 10; 2 Pet. 2 : 14, 15.

9. Jesus, in keeping the passover, has taught us to attend faithfully to those ordinances which are now in force, vers. 7, 14, 16; 1 Cor. 11 : 2.

10. Our hearts should be "furnished and prepared" to entertain the blessed Saviour, vers. 12, 13; Rev. 3 : 20.

11. Self-examination should precede the reception of the Lord's Supper, 1 Cor. 5 : 8; 11 : 28.

12. The Lord's Supper reminds us of what Christ has done for us. It is adapted to produce humility, inspire gratitude, and strengthen faith, ver. 19; 1 Cor. 11 : 24, 25.

13. We must feed upon Christ as the Bread of Life as well as trust in his atoning blood, ver. 19; John 6 : 51, 54; 1 John 1 : 7.

14. It is our privilege at the Lord's table to look forward to the marriage-supper of the Lamb, when the ordinance and the emblems will be no longer needed, since we shall be with Jesus and see him as he is, ver. 18; 1 John 3 : 2; Rev. 19 : 9; 21 : 3.

15. The law of Christ's kingdom, with reference to personal distinction enjoins the cultivation of humility and the serving of one another. The Master himself sets the example, vers. 26, 27; Phil. 2 : 6-8.

16. The dignity of Christ's followers as it shall appear in the future, is beyond the power of speech to express. The sitting at the king's table, "judging the twelve tribes," and the enthronement, give intimations of the ineffable happiness enjoyed in heaven, ver. 30; Matt. 19 : 28.

17. It is a great comfort to know that Satan's siftings shall not destroy the grain. The violent commotions of the sieve separate the chaff, which is blown away, but the effectual prayers of the Mediator preserve the faith from failing, ver. 31, 32.

18. Learn the weakness of human resolution and the folly of trusting thereon, ver. 33; Prov. 28 : 26.

19. To the appeal of Christ, "Lacked ye anything?" each believer can answer "Nothing." We are not straitened in him, but in ourselves. We may not have all we wish, but we shall receive all we need at the opportune time, ver. 35; Matt. 6 : 11; Phil. 4 : 19.

20. Christ has set us an example of prayer in enduring and overcoming suffering, ver. 41; Ps. 50 : 15; Isa. 26 : 16; James 5 : 13, 14.

21. Watchfulness and prayer are the best safeguards against temptation, ver. 40; Matt. 6 : 13; Eph. 6 : 18; 1 Pet. 4 : 7; Rev. 16 : 15.

22. If it was necessary for Christ to endure such agonies to save men, how hopeless the case of those who avail not themselves of his atonement! ver. 44; Heb. 2 : 3.

23. What self-denial and self-sacrifice should we make for him who has endured so much for us! ver. 46; Rom. 12 : 1; Gal. 6 : 14; 1 Pet. 4 : 1, 2.

24. Jesus has set us an example of entire submission to the will of God, ver. 42; Matt. 6 : 10; Phil. 2 : 6-8; James 4 : 7.

25. Earnest prayer and perfect resignation to the will of God are consistent with each other, ver. 42.

26. The time will come when all who are in a religious sleep will be compelled to awake, Isa. 33 : 14; Prov. 1 : 24-26; 6 : 9-11; Rev. 3 : 19.

27. If one of the twelve whom Jesus chose was a traitor, how unsafe to follow those who arrogate to themselves an apostolic succession! ver. 21; Rev. 2 : 2.

28. Hypocritical discipleship and treacherous friendship are far more odious and injurious than open hostility. They who acknowledge Christ in word, but deny him in deed, seeking to make gain and merchandise of him, are fast following in the footsteps of Judas, ver. 22; Ps. 41 : 9; Prov. 27 : 6; Matt. 7 : 21.

29. "It has always been the ear, the spiritual hearing and willing susceptibility, which carnal defenders of Christ's cause have taken away from their opponents when they have had recourse to the sword of violence."—LANGE, Ver. 50.

30. Every Christian is in the hands of his heavenly Father, who can bring the host of heaven to his aid if necessary and best, ver. 43; Matt. 26 : 53; 2 Kings 6 : 16, 17; Ps. 34 : 7; Heb. 1 : 14; 12 : 22.

31. The wicked cannot afflict or persecute God's people except by divine permission, ver. 53; Job 1 : 5-12; 2 : 6; Ps. 31 : 15; 105 : 14, 15.

32. The persecutions of Christians have generally been characterized by secret designings, malignant cunning, and open violence.

33. It is dangerous at any time to venture into temptation, especially in our own strength and when we are following Christ afar off, ver. 54, 55; Prov. 3 : 5.

34. If we go not forth in God's strength, but depend on ourselves, the smallest matter may overcome us. Peter fears, and falls before a maid-servant, ver. 56.

35. Sin is progressive. Beware of the beginning of sin, and especially of what are called little sins, vers. 55, 60; Matt. 26 : 70, 72, 74.

36. The smallest matter in God's hands may lead to repentance and the feeblest means result in salvation. The crowing of a cock brought Peter to himself, vers. 61, 62.

37. The fall of Peter should stand as a warning against a like sin, but his recovery should encourage those who have fallen to turn to God with humble repentance, Jer. 3 : 22.

38. Repentance has no merit, and can make no atonement for sin, but it should restore our confidence in those who truly exercise it, 2 Cor. 7 : 10.

39. There is a time for silence and a time to speak. Jesus treated frivolous and unjust charges with silence, but declared his character and mission, ver. 69; Mark 14 : 62; Prov. 21 : 23; Isa. 53 : 7; 1 Pet. 2 : 23; Acts 4 : 20.

40. How fearful the depravity that caused deafness to every true word of Jesus and quickened the hearing for every utterance that might be used for

*Jesus before Pilate and Herod.*

XXIII. AND "the whole multitude of them arose, and 2 led him unto Pilate. And they began to accuse him," \*Mt. 27, 1, 2, 11-14; Mk. 15. 1-5; John 18. 28-38.

his condemnation! How does the reader treat this suffering Son of God? "What think ye of Christ?" He is now seated on the right hand of the power of God, and he will come by and by as the Judge. What a change in circumstances! Read Matt. 25 : 31-46; Acts 10 : 42; 2 Cor. 5 : 10.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

Luke in this chapter continues the history of the sacrificial work of Jesus. Having been formally and finally condemned by the Jewish rulers (see Mark 14 : 64), he is taken before Pilate and charged with perverting the nation, forbidding to pay tribute to Cæsar, and declaring himself a king, vers. 1, 2. Pilate examines him and pronounces him innocent; but learning that he belonged to Herod's jurisdiction, he is sent to Herod, who was then in Jerusalem, vers. 3-7. Herod treats him with great indignity and sends him back to Pilate. The two rulers, alienated before, now become friends, vers. 8-12. Pilate again pronounces Jesus innocent; but influenced by the clamor of priests and people, he releases Barabbas and delivers Jesus to their will, vers. 13-25. Jesus is led forth to Calvary, followed by a great multitude of people, including women, who bewailed and lamented him, and is crucified between two robbers, vers. 25-33. He prays for his murderers. The rulers deride him and the soldiers mock him. One of the robbers rails on him; the other begs Jesus to remember him when he shall come into his kingdom, and is assured of admission into paradise with Jesus that day, vers. 34-43. The supernatural darkness; the rending of the veil; the loud voice; the expiring of Jesus; the conviction of the centurion that Jesus is the Son of God; the people, beholding the things done, smite their breasts; many women from Galilee watch from the distance, vers. 44-49. Joseph of Arimathea begs his body of Pilate and lays it in a sepulchre "wherein never man before was

laid," and the women from Galilee, after viewing the sepulchre, return and prepare spices and ointments, in order to embalm his body, vers. 50-56.

1. JESUS, ADJUDGED GUILTY BY THE SANHEDRIM, IS BROUGHT BEFORE PILATE, Matt. 27 : 1, 2; Mark 15 : 1; John 18 : 28. Matthew and Mark are very brief, but Luke, passing over the preliminary examination of Jesus, relates this meeting very fully. John, omitting all after the sending of Jesus from Annas to Caiaphas, goes at once with Jesus to Pilate's judgment-hall. Thus the four evangelists beautifully harmonize in giving us the different sides of the events connected with Jesus before the Jewish rulers. John relates the informal examination before Annas, implying his condemnation under Caiaphas (John 18 : 24, 28); Matthew and Mark record the preliminary examination before Caiaphas, at which Jesus was virtually condemned, implying a session in the morning; and Luke relates the regular and legal session, when the condemnation of the night session was ratified.

1. **The whole multitude of them arose**—namely, "the elders of the people and the chief priests and the scribes." See ch. 22 : 66. The Sanhedrim had held a night session; then another "as soon as it was day" (ch. 22 : 66), in order to ratify the action of the previous one, and also to devise the best means of putting Jesus to death. This session, therefore, was held about five or six o'clock on Friday the 15th of Nisan, April 7, in the seven hundred and eighty-third year from the founding of Rome. It was also held, probably, at the house of Caiaphas, for John (18 : 28) says that they led Jesus from Caiaphas to the governor's palace. Their plans being all laid, they closed their meeting and arose **and led him unto Pilate**. They could condemn to death, but could not put the sentence into execution without the sanction of the Roman governor, John 18 : 31. The Jews lost the power of life and death when Archelaus was deposed, A. D. 6. According to the Talmud, this power

saying, We found this *fellow* \*perverting the nation, and †forbidding to give tribute to Cæsar, saying \*that  
 3 he himself is Christ a King. †And Pilate asked him, saying, Art thou the King of the Jews? And he answered him and said, Thou sayest *it*.

\* Ac. 17. 7.  
 † Mt. 17. 27; 22. 15-22; Mk. 12. 17.  
 † ch. 22. 69, 70  
 John 19. 12.  
 \* 1 Tim. 6. 13.

was taken from the Sanhedrim about forty or more years before the destruction of Jerusalem. It would seem that the whole Sanhedrim present went in a body to Pilate, who was now in his official residence in Herod's palace. Some suppose that they took him to the tower of Antonia, adjoining the temple area on the north. But from John 18 : 28 it seems evident that it was the governor's palace, or prætorium, on Mount Zion, in the western part of the city. The governors generally resided at Cæsarea, but removed to Jerusalem during the great festivals to preserve order and exercise judicial functions. Hence Pilate would be occupying the governor's—that is, Herod's—palace.

**Pilate.** Matthew adds "the governor," or procurator. Matthew often styles him simply "the governor;" Mark never; Luke but once. See on ch. 3 : 1.

At the trial of Jesus, Pilate showed a lack of moral courage to do what he knew to be right. This led to his indecision and to the various expedients to release Jesus, till at last he yields to the demands of the Jews through fear of losing his standing as Cæsar's friend. Pilate doubtless made an official report of the crucifixion of Jesus to the emperor Tiberius. So Justin Martyr and other early writers affirm, but the one that is now extant is spurious.

At this point Matthew relates the confession, remorse, and suicide of Judas, Matt. 27 : 3-10. See also Acts 1 : 18, 19.

2-5. JESUS IS EXAMINED BY PILATE. THE FIRST TIME, Matt. 27 : 11-14; Mark 15 : 2-5; John 18 : 28-38. The accounts of Matthew and Mark are very similar. John is very full. Luke first gives the accusation against Jesus, and then so arranges his narrative as to relate the sending of Jesus to Herod.

2. **And they began to accuse him.** John relates that the Sanhedrim would not enter the governor's house lest they should be defiled, and that therefore Pilate went out to them.

They wish him to ratify and execute their sentence. This he refuses to do without knowing their accusation and the evidence. They therefore bring this formal accusation: **We found this fellow (this man) perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Cæsar, saying that he himself is Christ a king.** They do not bring the charge of blasphemy, on account of which he had been judged guilty of death by the Sanhedrim (ch. 22 : 71; Mark 14 : 63, 64), but of perverting the nation, or inciting to sedition, and of treason against Cæsar as king of the Jews. They thought that the former charge, being religious, Pilate would not entertain, but that the latter he must entertain, relating as it did both to Cæsar and himself. Adroitly and cunningly they suppress their real motive in seeking to accomplish his death.

3. **And Pilate asked him, saying, Art thou the King of the Jews?** Is the charge thus preferred against thee true? Before answering, Jesus brought out clearly before Pilate's mind the distinction between a civil and a spiritual kingdom, declaring that his was the latter, John 18 : 33-36. And then he answered, **Thou sayest,** a strong affirmative answer. The object of the verb, according to Hebrew idiom, is understood, *Thou sayest it*, it is as thou hast said. Mark tells us that at this point "the chief priests accused him of many things," omitting nothing which would blacken his character and make him appear a dangerous man in the eyes of Pilate. But to all their charges Jesus answered nothing, deeming them unworthy an answer, inasmuch as they had their origin in a thoroughly malignant spirit. Pilate wondered at his silence, especially after he himself asked him if he had nothing to answer. He probably desired Jesus to deny the charges, in order to help him in declaring his innocence and his acquittal. But Jesus was under no obligation to help Pilate to do his duty. He should

- 4 Then said Pilate to the chief priests and to the people, <sup>b</sup>I find no fault in this man. And they were the more fierce, saying, He stirreth up the people, teaching throughout all Jewry, <sup>c</sup>beginning from Galilee
- 6 to this place. When Pilate heard of Galilee, he
- 7 asked whether the man were a Galilean. And as soon as he knew that he belonged unto <sup>d</sup>Herod's jurisdiction, he sent him to Herod, who himself was at Jerusalem at that time. <sup>e</sup>ch. 4. 14, 15.
- 8 And when Herod saw Jesus, he was exceeding glad: for <sup>f</sup>he was desirous to see him of a long *season*, because <sup>g</sup>he had heard many things of him; and <sup>h</sup>he hoped to have seen some miracle done by him. <sup>i</sup>ch. 8. 1. <sup>j</sup>ch. 9. 9. <sup>k</sup>Mt. 14. 1; Mk. 6. 14. <sup>l</sup>Lk. 4. 23.

have followed his own convictions and released him. The silence of Jesus continued till Pilate some time after referred to his power to crucify or release him, John 19 : 10, 11.

4. Then said Pilate to the chief priests and to the people, I find no fault in this man. Thus does Pilate declare his conviction of the innocence of Jesus. This conviction was not expressed till after the private interview Pilate sought with Jesus, and which John alone relates, ch. 18 : 33-38. See on note ver. 3.

5. They were the more fierce, or violent. Pilate's declaration of the innocence of Jesus had not fulfilled their expectation. He had not been convinced that Jesus, in styling himself a king, had committed any civil offence, much less treason. On the contrary, he "had found no fault" in him. His accusers therefore became more violent, saying, He stirreth up the people, teaching throughout all Jewry (*Judea*), beginning from Galilee. Finding that the charge of usurping royal dignity made no impression on Pilate, they fall back on the first charge, that of his being a disturber of the public peace in counselling discontent against the government.

6-12. JESUS BEFORE HEROD. This account is peculiar to Luke, the other evangelists omitting reference to it.

6. Whether the man were a Galilean. Probably the Jews by mentioning Galilee hoped to beget prejudice in Pilate toward Jesus, knowing that he had no love either for Herod or the Galileans. If so, they were again disappointed. Without any apparent emotion he hears the name of Galilee, and

at once resolves to send Jesus to the tetrarch of that province, who, on account of the passover, was now in Jerusalem. See on ver. 1.

7. And as soon as he knew that he belonged to Herod's jurisdiction. Better, *Learning that he belonged to, etc.* Sent him to Herod, Herod Antipas. See on ch. 3 : 1. It would seem that Pilate's reason for sending Jesus to Herod was not, as some supposed, in order to get rid of a troublesome case, for which supposition there is no evidence, but rather to conciliate Herod, between whom and himself there had been unfriendliness, and perhaps also to obtain a favorable opinion for the accused.

8. And when Herod saw Jesus, he was exceeding glad. *He rejoiced greatly.* Why, the evangelist proceeds to state: for he was desirous to see him of a long season, better, *had desired for a long time to see him, because he had heard many things of him, or, had heard concerning him, and he hoped to have seen (to see) some miracle (sign) done by him.* His reasons for so long wishing to see Jesus were, as might be supposed from his character, purely selfish. He was not only weak and sensual and cunning, but superstitious, cruel, and revengeful. See ch. 3 : 19; 9 : 9; 13 : 32; cf. Matt. 14 : 9. His revengeful spirit was now to display itself. See ver. 11. The fame of Jesus, the report of his miracles, preaching, and doings, had long awakened his curiosity, and on one occasion at least aroused his anxiety, ch. 9 : 9. The object of his curiosity, the famed Jesus of Nazareth, is now before him. He hopes to induce him to per-

9 Then he questioned with him in many words; <sup>b</sup> but <sup>b</sup> Is. 53. 7.  
 10 he answered him nothing. And the chief priests and  
 11 scribes stood and vehemently accused him. <sup>1</sup>And <sup>1</sup>ch. 22. 63-65; Is.  
 Herod with his men of war set him at nought, and <sup>53. 3; Mt. 27. 27,</sup>  
 mocked *him*, and arrayed him in a gorgeous robe, and <sup>28; Mk. 15. 16,</sup>  
 12 sent him again to Pilate. And the same day <sup>k</sup> Pilate <sup>17; John 19. 2, 3</sup>  
 and Herod were made friends together: for before <sup>k</sup> Ac. 4. 27.  
 they were at enmity between themselves.

*Pilate seeks Jesus' release, but finally delivers him to death.*

13 <sup>1</sup>And Pilate, when he had called together the chief <sup>1</sup>Mt. 27. 23; Mk.  
 14 priests and the rulers and the people, said unto them, <sup>15. 14; John 18</sup>  
<sup>38; 19. 4.</sup>

form some miracle for his express satisfaction, having evidently no higher conception of him than as a great wonder-worker or magician.

9. Then he questioned with him in many words, rather, *questioned him in many words*. What these questions were we are not told, but we can readily conjecture that they were weak and frivolous, corresponding with the ruler's own character. But he answered him nothing, doubtless because Herod's questions were frivolous and prompted chiefly by curiosity, and asked perhaps in a taunting and contemptuous manner. Compare 1 Pet. 2 : 23.

10. And the chief priests and scribes stood and vehemently accused him. Verse 15 shows that by Pilate's command they were to appear before Herod—the accusers with the accused—and obtain, if they could, Herod's consent to his condemnation, or otherwise bear witness to what would be said and done in the case by that ruler. It was a command they were eager to obey, determined as they were to leave nothing undone, in order to secure his death. They stood before Herod and violently accused him, doubtless, of blasphemy—Herod being a Jew—and of sedition and disloyalty, all combined, fearing lest even Herod might be too lenient and just toward their victim.

11. And Herod with his men of war, that is his body-guard. Set him at naught, treated him with indignity and scorn. Mocked him. They see in him only an object of contempt and derision, and evidently do not regard the charges brought against him as worthy of serious consideration Accord-

ingly, he is arrayed in a gorgeous robe. The color of this robe is uncertain. It may have been the royal purple, or, as the original indicates, a brilliantly white vestment. Whatever its hue, it was put upon him in contempt of his kingly dignity and in accordance with the charge the Jews brought against him. Sent him again to Pilate. Having found no just cause for his condemnation, Herod ought to have released him, or at least to have pronounced him innocent. In returning him to Pilate he becomes involved in Pilate's guilt. See Acts 4 : 27 and compare Ps. 2 : 1, 2.

12. Pilate and Herod were made friends together, became friends with each other. The cause of their estrangement is not known. It may have been the massacre of the Galileans, "whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices," ch. 13 : 1. Whatever the cause, Pilate had not only performed an act of courtesy toward Herod, but given him the long-desired opportunity of showing his hatred of "the King of the Jews," and thus won back his friendship.

13-23. JESUS AGAIN BEFORE PILATE. BARABBAS PREFERRED TO JESUS, Matt. 27 : 15-26; Mark 15 : 6-15; John 18 : 39, 40. Mark and also Luke particularly describe the character of Barabbas. Matthew records the dream and message of Pilate's wife. The four accounts beautifully supplement one another. See author's *Harmony*, § 180.

13. Pilate, when he had called together the chief priests and the rulers and the people. Not only the Jewish rulers, or the Sanhedrim, but "the people," or as many as manifested an interest in this trial. He is

<sup>m</sup> Ye have brought this man unto me, as one that  
 perverteth the people: and, behold, <sup>n</sup> I, having exam-  
 ined *him* before you, have found no fault in this man  
 15 touching those things whereof ye accuse him: no, nor  
 yet Herod: for I sent you to him; and, lo, nothing  
 16 worthy of death is done unto him. <sup>o</sup> I will therefore  
 17 chastise him, and release *him*. <sup>p</sup> For of necessity he  
 18 must release one unto them at the feast. And <sup>q</sup> they  
 cried out all at once, saying, Away with this *man*,

<sup>m</sup> vers. 1, 2.

<sup>n</sup> ver. 4; Ac. 13. 28

<sup>o</sup> Mt. 27. 26; John  
19. 1.

<sup>p</sup> Mt. 27. 15-26; Mk.  
15. 6-15; John  
18. 39, 40.

<sup>q</sup> Ac. 3. 14.

about to communicate to them formally his judgment respecting the accused.

14. **Ye have brought . . . as one that perverteth the people.** Their first charge on bringing him to Pilate. See ver. 2. **Before you.** These words seem to be emphatic, and imply that they themselves could see that the examination had been fairly and carefully conducted. **Have found.** Notice the contrast, "we found" in ver. 2, and "I found" here and in ver. 4. The second time does Pilate express his belief of the innocence of Jesus, and it is yet more plain to him that for envy the Jews had delivered him, Matt. 27 : 18; Mark 15 : 10.

15. **No, nor yet Herod.** The best text reads, *For he sent him back to us.* As tetrarch of Galilee, he had peculiar reasons for ascertaining the truthfulness of the accusations, yet not even Herod had been able to discover that anything **worthy of death is done unto him, has been done by him.** Herod had thus united with Pilate in the verdict of *not guilty.*

16. **I will therefore chastise him and release him.** "Here Pilate began to grant too much."—BENGEL. He appears to be desirous of conciliating the Jews, and perhaps he thinks that Jesus, as an enthusiast, who had aroused the anger of the Jewish rulers and disturbed the calmness of the populace, deserved some punishment. But it is more probable that on the principle of expediency he here proposes to appease the Jews by inflicting a less punishment than that of death. The chastisement proposed is undoubtedly that of scourging, which it was a Roman custom to inflict upon a criminal before crucifixion. Roman scourging was more severe than Jewish. The number of lashes was not limited to forty. The whips were armed with bones or lead,

to render the blow the more fearful, and to lacerate the flesh. The criminal was generally bound to a low block, in a stooping posture, and received the fearful blows upon the naked back. The scourging before crucifixion was generally exceedingly cruel, and criminals frequently died under it. Luke does not say that the scourging was inflicted, but from the other evangelists we learn that it was, immediately after the release of Barabbas. Jesus was probably scourged by soldiers appointed by Pilate for the purpose. It took place outside of the governor's house, and was a fulfilment of a prediction of Jesus (Mark 10 : 34), and of prophecy, Isa. 50 : 6; 53 : 5. Pilate seems to have been affected by the cruel scourging; and thinking that what touched his heart might affect the hearts of others, he determines to make one more appeal to the Jewish people by showing him lacerated and bleeding, arrayed in a garb of mockery. But in vain. See John 19 : 1-16.

17. **For of necessity he must release one unto them at the feast.** Although there are good grounds for suspecting the genuineness of this verse, it was unquestionably a custom for the governor to release some notable criminal at "the feast" of the passover. The origin of this custom is unknown; it is not mentioned in history. The custom was probably established by the Romans to conciliate the Jews, since persons would often be in prison whom the Jews would desire to liberate from Roman law. On the strength of this custom, Pilate tries to save Jesus without offending the Jews. Instead of boldly doing what he knew to be right, he weakly resorts to an expedient.

18. **And they cried out all at once.** The chief priests, the rulers,

19 and release unto us Barabbas: (who for a certain sedition made in the city, and for murder, was cast into prison.)

20 Pilate therefore, willing to release Jesus, spake  
21 again to them. But they cried, saying, Crucify *him*,

and the people were of one mind, and they raised the loud, wild cry of **Away with this man, and release unto us Barabbas.** From Matthew we learn that Pilate himself had suggested the release of Barabbas, asking them, "Whom will ye that I release unto you? Barabbas or Jesus, who is called Christ?" Matt. 27 : 17. Matthew and Mark also relate that the chief priests and elders persuaded "the people" or "the multitude" to ask Barabbas and destroy Jesus. These sticklers for the law deliberately violate their own law, in preferring to release a murderer and put to death the Messiah, Lev. 24 : 17; Num. 35 : 16-24. See how Peter puts the case in Acts 3 : 13-15. Just at this point Matthew brings in the message to Pilate from his wife, concerning her dream, warning him against having anything to do with that just man. It would seem that while Pilate was receiving this message the Jewish rulers were active in counteracting the appeal of Pilate in favor of Jesus. *The multitude* were those who had come together during the arrest and trial, doubtless composed very largely of the street rabble, who are now as ready to condemn him as they were a few days before to praise him. The disciples and friends of Jesus, who took the lead in his triumphal entry into Jerusalem, and whom the Jewish rulers so feared that they dare not to arrest him openly, were without doubt mostly absent, through fear or ignorance. Yet persuasion was necessary to induce even the rabble to ask for the discharge of such a notorious criminal as Barabbas, and the death of such a righteous one as Jesus. The name Barabbas means *son of his father*. Some think he was a son of a rabbi. "They rejected the true Son of his Father, and chose a robber, who bare the name of father's son, in his place." —WORDSWORTH.

19. **For a certain sedition . . . and murder.** Mark records that he was one of a number engaged in insurrection and murder, and was now bound

in prison with his fellow-insurgents. Matthew styles him "a notable prisoner;" John, "a robber." As he is spoken of so prominently, he was quite likely a leader. The charge of insurrection would be offensive to Pilate. Barabbas may have been engaged in one of those popular movements which were the beginnings or germs of that political party called Zealots, whose excesses were so enormous during the last years of Jerusalem. — JOSEPHUS, *Jewish War*, iv. 3. Such a supposition will partly explain the popular clamor in his favor.

20. **Willing to release Jesus, spake again to them, desiring to release Jesus.** The Romans had found the Jews very difficult to manage, the emperors often conceding to their wishes. Hence Pilate was not merely willing but desirous to satisfy their wishes, and thus to gain the favor of both the leaders and the masses. We find the same disposition manifested respecting Paul by Felix and Festus, Acts 24 : 27 ; 25 : 9. Thus we perceive that Pilate was actuated by a selfish motive. But, on the other hand, were the message of his wife, the voice of conscience, and the manifest innocence of Jesus. Mark relates that at this point Pilate asked them, "What will ye, then, that I should do to him whom ye call the King of the Jews?" At first, instead of acquitting Jesus, he adopts the expedient of having the people demand his release at the feast. This fails, and expediency leads to expediency. Instead of acting as a righteous and independent judge, he now asks those who had no jurisdiction over the case, "What will ye, then, that I shall do?" etc. Though he desires to acquit him, he was doubtless also desirous of pleasing the people, because they might accuse him of disloyalty to Cæsar. The complaints of the Jews received particular attention at Rome. Archelaus had been deposed partly on account of the complaints of his subjects against him. A selfish motive, therefore, operated

- 22 crucify him. And he said unto them the third time,  
 Why, <sup>1</sup> what evil hath he done? I have found no cause <sup>1</sup> Pet. 3. 18.  
 of death in him: I will therefore chastise him, and let  
 23 *him go*. And they were instant with loud voices,  
 requiring that he might be crucified. And the voices  
 24 of them and of the chief priests prevailed. And <sup>2</sup> Pi- <sup>2</sup> John 19. 16.  
 late <sup>3</sup> gave sentence that it should be as they required. <sup>3</sup> Ex. 23. 2.

against his moral courage, and doubtless made him willing to conciliate the Jews, to whom he was odious, by granting their request, at least in a modified form.

21. **But they cried, saying, Crucify him, crucify him, Crucify, crucify him.** How successful the chief priests had been in stirring up the people is evident from this and ver. 23. They might have asked, Let him be stoned, which was the Jewish mode of execution and their penalty for blasphemy, or they might have simply said, Let him be put to death, but they demand crucifixion, the Roman punishment for sedition, since this was the crime they charge upon him. Thus also they gratify their hatred against Jesus. Moreover, as they demanded the release of Barabbas, who would doubtless have been crucified for his crimes, so they ask for Jesus the punishment which Barabbas would have received. Thus is Barabbas preferred to Jesus. Yet in this were the Scriptures and the predictions of Jesus being fulfilled, John 18 : 32 ; Matt. 20 : 19. He dies an ignominious death, his body is unmitigated and not a bone broken, and he is made a curse by hanging on the tree.

22. **And he said unto them the third time.** This was the third proposal he had made to release Jesus, and a third time it is rejected by the clamorous multitude. **Why, what evil hath he done?** Literally, *for what evil, etc., and well expressed in English, what evil, then, hath he done?* Another step downward of the vacillating Pilate. Instead of acquitting Jesus, he had partially laid aside his rights as a judge and asked the decision of the people, Mark 15 : 12 ; see on ver. 20. And now, having heard their decision, he accepts the situation and strives to reason with them. If they insist on his death, they must show some crime meriting such a punishment; and cer-

tainly he had not done anything demanding crucifixion. Instead of stopping to reason, he should have retraced his steps and acted the part of a righteous judge. **Chastise him, and let him go, release him.** Though Pilate found no evil in him, yet, on the principle of expediency he again proposes to conciliate the Jews by the milder punishment of scourging. But the people saw their advantage and made the most of it.

23. **Instant, urgent, with loud voices.** From Matthew also we learn that the people were becoming tumultuous, taking the form and spirit of a mob. The word *release*, which Pilate had just used again, maddened them to fury. **Requiring that he might, should, be crucified.** Their cry still was, "Crucify him." Nothing short of death by crucifixion would satisfy their rage and bitter hate. "You have given us the choice of the prisoner to be released and the privilege of deciding what shall be done with Jesus. We have expressed our wishes; now do your part in executing them."

24. **Pilate gave sentence.** We are not to understand that a formal and independent sentence was pronounced, but that Pilate gave his assent to their demands. But before giving this assent, Matthew relates that Pilate, finding that his expedients availed nothing, and that a popular tumult was imminent, took water and washed his hands, according to the usage of the Jews (Deut. 21 : 6-9) and of some other nations, signifying that he repudiated all responsibility for the death the people demanded. This was an impressive act, and should have caused the Jews to pause and consider. Possibly Pilate hoped that it might produce a good effect. But he had no right to pronounce what he knew to be an unrighteous condemnation, and to relieve himself of the responsibility of a judge was impossible. Washing of hands

25 And he released unto them him that for sedition and murder was cast into prison, whom they had desired; \* Ac. 3. 14. but he delivered Jesus to their will.

*The crucifixion.*

26 \* AND as they led him away, they laid hold upon

\* Mt. 27. 32-34; Mk. 15. 21; John 19. 17.

and repudiation, however solemn and public, could not relieve him or cleanse his conscience from guilt. The responsibility and the guilt of shedding innocent blood, which Pilate repudiated, the Jewish people assumed by uttering that fearful imprecation, "His blood be on us and on our children." This was the cry of the multitude, and, properly speaking, of the nation, though made in partial ignorance (Acts 3 : 17), for nearly one-half of the population of Judea and Galilee probably attended the passover. Josephus estimates the number who attended at about three millions. For eighteen centuries have they been suffering what they then madly imprecated on themselves. Forty years after, their city was taken and destroyed by the Romans, and such multitudes were crucified that room failed for the crosses and crosses for the bodies.—JOSEPHUS, *Jewish War*, v. 11, 1. Doubtless some of these very persons or their children were among those who were crucified.

For the sake of a correct harmony, it may here be noticed that before the surrender of Jesus there were scenes in his trial before Pilate passed over by Luke, which took place in the following order: The scourging; the mocking of the soldiers in the pretorium; Pilate's appeal to the sympathy of the Jews; their declaring him worthy of death because he made himself the Son of God; Pilate's greater fear and his bringing Jesus again into the judgment-hall; Jesus speaking of Pilate's power and the greater sin of the Jews; Pilate's seeking again to release him; the declaring of the Jews that Pilate is not Cæsar's friend if he let Jesus go; Pilate's bringing Jesus to his judgment-seat on the pavement; the Jews' answer to Pilate's final appeal: "We have no king but Cæsar." Then follows what is stated in the following verse and by all the evangelists. See author's *Harmony*, § 181.

25. Him that for sedition and

murder, Luke suppresses his name, perhaps "in righteous displeasure." The insurgent, the robber, the murderer, walks forth a free man by permission of Pilate, but he delivered Jesus to their will. *Delivered up* the One whom he had just pronounced a just man to suffer what priestly hate and an incensed populace required!

26-33. JESUS LED TO CRUCIFIXION, Matt. 27 : 31-34; Mark 15 : 20-23; John 19 : 16, 17. Luke's account is the fullest; Mark describes Simon of Cyrene most particularly.

26. Led him away, out of the city. Thus it became him to suffer without the gate, Heb. 13 : 12; Lev. 16 : 27. Criminals were executed outside the city, Lev. 24 : 14; Num. 15 : 35; 1 Kings 21 : 13; Acts 7 : 58. The four soldiers (John 19 : 23), headed by the centurion on horseback, who had charge of the crucifixion, led Jesus forth. A tradition which has been traced no farther back than the fourteenth century represents Jesus as passing along the *Via Dolorosa*, the Sorrowful Way, a narrow and crooked street from St. Stephen's gate to the church of the Holy Sepulchre. The tradition is unreliable. Jesus could not have passed along this way if he was tried at the palace of Herod on Mount Zion.

Laid hold upon. Matthew and Mark say they *compelled*—that is, they *pressed into service*. The word so rendered is of Persian origin. According to the postal arrangements of Cyrus, horses were provided at certain distances along the principal roads of the empire, so that couriers would proceed without interruption both night and day. If the government arrangements failed at any point, the couriers had authority to press into their service men, horses, or anything that came in their way which might serve to hasten their journey. A like authority was exercised over the Jews by the Roman governors. The word, originating in this custom, passed from the Persian

one Simon, a Cyrenian, coming out of the country, and on him they laid the cross, <sup>7</sup> that he might bear it <sup>7 ch. 9. 23.</sup> after Jesus.

27 And there followed him a great company of people, and of women, which also bewailed and lamented 28 him. But Jesus turning unto them, said, Daughters

into the Greek, and into rabbinical language, meaning *compulsory service* in forwarding royal messengers, and also to *press into service* for any purpose. Thus they did not arbitrarily assume power, but under the direction of the centurion, who had the necessary authority under Roman law, they pressed this man into their service. The reason for selecting him was probably because he was a stranger and foreigner, and happened to meet them just at the time when some one was needed. He *was passing by*, and it was convenient to press him into service. It is not necessary to suppose him a disciple or a slave.

**One Simon, a Cyrenian**, a native of Cyrene, an important city in Northern Africa between Egypt and the territory of Carthage. Many Jews resided there. They were accustomed to visit Jerusalem in large numbers at the great festivals, and had there a synagogue, Acts 2 : 10; 6 : 9. Simon may have taken up his residence at Jerusalem, but very probably he had recently come from Cyrene to attend the passover. Mark very particularly designates him as the "father of Alexander and Rufus," well-known disciples among the early Christians. A Simeon in Acts 13 : 1, Rufus in Rom. 16 : 13, and Alexander in Acts 19 : 33; 1 Tim. 1 : 20; 2 Tim. 4 : 14, are mentioned, but whether they are to be identified with Simon of Cyrene and his sons is conjectural. **Coming out of the country.** Literally, *coming from the field*, not necessarily where he had been at work, but with the general idea of coming from *the country* to the city, without regard to distance. Simon appears to have been just entering the city as Jesus was passing out bearing his own cross, John 19 : 17. **On him they laid the cross, that he might bear it after Jesus.** The cross was of various forms. (1) It was originally a simple stake; (2) afterward it was made of two pieces of wood crossed

like the letter T; or (3) like the letter X; or (4) the transverse beam crossed the perpendicular one at some distance from the top, thus, T. The latter was doubtless the one used on this occasion, since the title was placed over the head. The uniform tradition is that this was the form of the Saviour's cross. The cross which Constantine commanded to be placed on his standard represented the first two letters of the Greek *Christos* (*Christ*) ΧΡ.

Jesus bore his cross to the gate, when he was relieved or aided by Simon. Compare Isaac carrying the wood in Gen. 22 : 6. It was usual for persons condemned to crucifixion to bear their own cross. A tradition says that Jesus sunk to the ground under it. It is quite possible that, having fallen exhausted from great weariness and the loss of blood—for he had been very cruelly scourged—it was put on Simon. Yet it is more in accordance with the language of Luke to suppose that Simon bore only the part of the cross which was behind Jesus, and thus lightened the burden.

27. The incidents embraced between this verse and verse 32 are recorded only by Luke.

**Followed him a great company of people.** Influenced, doubtless, some by a vulgar curiosity to witness a public execution, others by a desire to see the death-agonies of the condemned, for whom they entertained such bitter hatred, and yet others—a noble minority—by compassion and sympathy; among the latter, **women, who also bewailed and lamented him.** Wailing was accompanied by *beating the breast* in token of grief, as the word here rendered *bewailed* signifies. They beat their breasts and gave way to loud lamentation, thus expressing the sincerity and depth of their sorrow on account of the sufferings of one whom they regarded as innocent and cruelly condemned to death. Woman was not only "last at the cross and earliest at

of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children. <sup>a</sup>For, behold, the days are coming, in the which they shall say, <sup>a</sup>Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bare, and the paps which never gave suck. <sup>b</sup>Then shall they begin to say to the mountains, Fall on us; and to the hills, <sup>c</sup>Cover us. <sup>d</sup>For if they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the <sup>e</sup>dry?

<sup>a</sup>ch. 21. 22, 24; Mt. 24. 19.  
<sup>b</sup>See Deu. 28. 53-57.  
<sup>c</sup>Is. 2. 19; Hos. 10. 8; Rev. 6. 16, 9. 6.  
<sup>d</sup>Rev. 6. 16; Is. 2. 10, 19, 21.  
<sup>e</sup>Pro. 11. 31; Jer. 25. 29; Eze. 20.

47, 48; 21. 3, 4; 1 Pet. 4. 17, 18. <sup>a</sup>Eze. 20. 47; 21. 3, 4; 1 Pet. 4. 17, 18.

the grave," but on the way to the cross dropped her tears.

**28. Daughters of Jerusalem.** It was common among the Hebrews to speak of the women of a city or country as its daughters. These women belonged to Jerusalem, and had probably heard Jesus preach and witnessed some of his miracles. There is no evidence that they were his disciples; but convinced of his blameless character and of the causeless hatred of his enemies, who were now exulting in his sufferings, they had dropped "one last flower upon his path of thorns." He forgets those sufferings for the time being, and in tender pity turns to them to admonish them of sorrows in store for them and their children in an address longer than any he uttered, so far as recorded, from the time of his betrayal to his death.

**Weep not for me.** He recognizes the fact that their sympathy did not extend to the two criminals led with him to execution, but was confined to him. Therefore he says, "Weep not for me." **Weep for yourselves and for your children.** Our Lord has in view the awful calamities soon to come upon the Jewish people in the utter destruction of their city by the Romans. Then will they begin to experience those sufferings which they had imprecated on themselves in their mad-dened cry to Pilate. See Matt. 27 : 25. Some of the women whom our Lord here addresses would be involved in these calamities, and certainly their children. Josephus tells us that during the siege of the city "famine alone devoured the people by whole houses and families; the upper rooms were full of women and children that were dying by famine, and the lanes of the city were full of the dead bodies of the aged. The children also and the young

men wandered about the market places like shadows, all swelled with the famine, and fell down dead where-soever their misery seized them."—*Jewish War*, B. v., 12, 3. This, however, was but the "beginning of sorrows," Matt. 24 : 8.

**29. The days are coming, days are coming.** The point of time referred to, when the grievous condition of things here foretold shall be fulfilled, is evidently the destruction of Jerusalem. The prediction, however, is couched in general terms, and admits of application to any times of distress and calamity in the history of the Jewish people. **Blessed are the barren.** "Not to elicit new fruitless emotion. He now adds, not a woe upon those with child (as in chap. 21 : 23), but a somewhat softer 'blessed' upon the unfruitful, not without a still retrospect, perhaps, to the 'blessed' which a Galilean mother had uttered upon his mother, ch. 11 : 27. Yet this prophecy of evil is not, therefore, the less terrible. He foretells days in which the highest blessing of marriage should be regarded as a curse, and on the other hand a sudden though a terrible death as a benefit."—VAN OOSTERZEE in *Lange*.

**30. To the mountains, Fall on us.** The language expresses the idea of terror and despair in view of impending judgments and woes. So great will these be, that people in their wild dismay will seek shelter from falling mountains and hills, choosing rather to be overwhelmed and crushed by them than to endure these woes. Compare Isa. 2 : 19 and Hos. 10 : 8 with Rev. 6 : 16; 9 : 6.

**31. If they do these things in a green tree, or in the green tree.** The green tree is not easily burned, and withal is fruitful. If such a tree is not spared, much less will the dry and

32 'And there were also two others, malefactors, led <sup>f</sup>Is. 53. 12; Mt. 27.  
33 with him to be put to death. And <sup>g</sup>when they were <sup>h</sup>when they were <sup>h</sup>38.  
come to the place, which is called Calvary, there <sup>b</sup>they <sup>b</sup>Mt. 27. 33.  
<sup>b</sup>they <sup>b</sup>Mt. 27. 35.

fruitless one escape destruction. Jesus is that green and fruit-bearing tree. Upon him have come "these things," these sufferings. If he, the innocent and holy One, is subjected to such sufferings, what may not they expect who have no life in him, but are as trees that are dry and withered and dead? The fires of divine wrath must utterly consume them, whether they are these Jews and Roman soldiers or impenitent sinners and rejecters of Christ in future ages. The Jewish people were now rejecting him and leading him forth to the death of the cross. Upon them will come fearful judgments even in this world, foretoking the "sorer punishment" that will be inflicted upon all who finally reject him. Compare 1 Pet. 4 : 12-18.

32. **Two others, malefactors.** By Matthew and Mark they are called "thieves;" more accurately, *robbers*. They were probably two associates of Barabbas left to suffer while he was released. The governor was accustomed to crucify criminals at the passover. It was deemed a suitable time, as an impression might be made on the multitudes assembled at Jerusalem. Compare Deut. 17 : 13.

33-49. **THE CRUCIFIXION AND THE ATTENDING CIRCUMSTANCES,** Matt. 27 : 35-56; Mark 15 : 24-41; John 19 : 18-30.

33. **Calvary.** The literal meaning of this word is a *skull*. The corresponding word in Hebrew, rather, Aramean, is *Golgotha*, which Mark renders for his Gentile readers "place of a skull," Mark 15 : 22. Calvary, in the common version, is from *Calvarium*, the Latin for skull. Some suppose that it was so called from the skulls of criminals executed or buried there. But these must have been buried according to Jewish law. Why, then, should the place be named from the skull rather than from any other part of the skeleton? Why in the singular and not in the plural? Others, therefore, suppose it so called because it was a rounded and skull-like knoll. But there is no intimation in the Scriptures that it was a hill. Still,

the latter explanation is the best, unless we suppose it received the name from some skull which had been found there, or lain there exposed for a time, contrary to Jewish usage. From the Gospels we learn it was nigh the city (John 19 : 20), near a thoroughfare (Mark 15 : 29), by a garden, where was the sepulchre hewn in the rock, ver. 60; John 19 : 41. Tradition places it north-west of the temple, where the church of the Sepulchre is at present situated. But this is improbable, since the site of the church must have been within the city, and Golgotha was without the gate, ch. 28 : 11; John 19 : 17. The site that obtains the most favor at present is one north of Jerusalem, near the Damascus gate, at the grotto of Jeremiah. This meets all the conditions. Another site on the northeast of the city is thus described: "The palace of Pilate and the judgment-hall stood at the north-west angle of the harem area, where the house of the pasha still stands. . . . It would seem that the soldiers had not far to go from the palace to Golgotha. The gate of St. Stephen's (in the eastern wall) is about two hundred yards from the palace, and leads directly into the country. Without the gate one road runs eastward across the Kidron, another northward along the narrow brow of the hill. Between these is an open space, rugged and rocky. Just below it, in the shelving banks of the Kidron, are several rock tombs. This spot would seem to answer all the requirements of the narrative. The passers-by on both roads would be within a few yards of him, and his acquaintance could stand 'afar off' on the side of Olivet and see with utmost distinctness the whole scene."—Prof. J. L. PORTER, in Alexander's *Kitto's Cyclopædia*.

Dr. J. P. Newman would place it toward the north-east corner of the city. He says: "There desolation is complete and the seclusion profound. The Kidron valley winds around those rugged declivities, and the opposite sides of Olivet are barren and cheerless. Midway the hill there is a pro

crucified him, and the malefactors, one on the right hand, and the other on the left.

jecting rock, not unlike in form a human skull. . . . Reading the four evangelists from the brow of this desolate rock, all the details appeared fulfilled with an exactitude not unworthy an intelligent faith. . . . It is nigh the city that had rejected him. Before him rose Olivet, beneath his eye Gethsemane, while the Mount of Ascension rose before him, crowned with the glory of his exaltation. Around the cross, both on the summit of Bezetha and on the slopes of Olivet beyond, is room for the multitude who had assembled to witness the melancholy spectacle, and for those women who, beholding afar off, 'bewailed and lamented him.' From the adjacent walls of the city the chief priest, scribes, and elders beheld him, and mockingly said, 'He saved others, himself he cannot save.' On the road which passed beneath the cross came those Jewish travellers who, on reading Pilate's superscription, wagged their heads in disdain, saying, 'Thou that destroyest the temple and buildest it in three days, save thyself.' Here the rocks are torn and riven. . . . In the hillside are tombs. Down in the sequestered vale of the Kidron are gardens, where some old sepulchres still remain, any one of which answers the description of the Saviour's tomb, John 19 : 41."—*From Dan to Beersheba*, pp. 128-130.

**There they crucified him**, nailed him to the cross, either before or after its erection, thus unconsciously fulfilling the prophetic words of David, "They pierced my hands and my feet," Ps. 22 : 16.

Crucifixion was the severest and most ignominious punishment among the ancients. It was not a Jewish but rather a Roman mode of execution, and was inflicted on slaves and the vilest criminals. "It is an outrage," said Cicero, "to bind a Roman; to scourge him is an atrocious crime; to put him to death is almost parricide; but to CRUCIFY him, what shall I call it?" To a proud Roman the cross was a symbol of infamy, and crucifixion an unspeakable disgrace.

The cross was generally first driven

into the ground, and then the criminal was lifted up and fastened to it by nails through the hands and feet, the latter being either separate or united, and about a foot or two above the ground. Sometimes the victim was first fastened to the cross, which was then sunk into the earth with a sudden shock, causing the most agonizing torture. Whether a single nail was driven through the feet of Jesus or they were nailed separately cannot be determined; but that they were *nailed*, and not *tied*, as some have conjectured, is evident from ch. 24 : 39, and from the fact that nailing was usual in Roman crucifixion. Compare Ps. 22 : 16, and Hackett's *Smith's Dictionary of the Bible* on CROSS and CRUCIFIXION. In order that the hands might not be torn away, a large wooden pin was commonly inserted in the upright timber, passing between the legs to support the weight of the body. The unnatural position and tension of the body, the laceration of the hands and feet, which are full of nerves and tendons, and the consequent inflammation, the pressure of the blood to the head and stomach, causing severe pain and terrible anxiety, and the burning and raging thirst,—all these, with no vital part wounded, made crucifixion a most excruciating and lingering death. Sometimes the wretched victim would hang three days before death came to his relief. The unusual quickness of our Saviour's death arose from his previous exhausting agonies and his deep mental anguish. This terrible mode of punishment continued till it was abolished by Constantine, the first Christian emperor.

It was the third hour of the day, nine o'clock in the morning (Mark 15 : 25), when they arrived at Golgotha and fastened Jesus to the cross. John says (ch. 19 : 14) about the sixth hour. The discrepancy can be explained by supposing that some early transcriber mistook the sign for three for that of six, the two being very nearly alike (some manuscripts of John read *third* hour), or that the time of crucifixion was somewhere between the two broad divisions, the third and sixth hours, and that Mark

- 34 Then said Jesus, Father, <sup>1</sup>forgive them: for they know not what they do.  
 And <sup>2</sup>they parted his raiment, and cast lots.
- 35 And <sup>1</sup>the people stood beholding. And the <sup>2</sup>rulers also with them derided *him*, saying, He saved others: let him save himself, if he be Christ, the chosen of God.

<sup>1</sup>Mt. 5. 44.  
<sup>2</sup>Mt. 27.35-38; Mk. 15. 24-28; John 19. 18-24; also Ps. 22. 18.  
<sup>1</sup>Ps. 22. 12, 13, 17; Zec. 12. 10.  
<sup>2</sup>Mt. 27. 39-44; Mk. 15. 29-32.

designates the time by the beginning and John by the ending of the period, or that John uses the Roman mode of reckoning the day from midnight to midnight. See author's *Harmony*, note on § 181. Matthew, Mark, and Luke agree in fixing the commencement of the darkness at the sixth hour, after Jesus had hung some time on the cross.

And the malefactors, one on the right hand, and the other on the left. The soldiers who crucified Christ also crucified these criminals. Jesus is made the central sufferer, and by implication the greatest criminal. "He was numbered with the transgressors," Isa. 53 : 12. Compare Mark 15 : 28.

34. **Father, forgive them.** While they were nailing him to the cross he forgets, as it were, his own pains in his anxiety for their souls, and prays for their forgiveness, thus fulfilling Isa. 53 : 12, "Made intercession for the transgressors." The word *them* comprehends, without reasonable doubt, all who had sought his death, and all who were now engaged in inflicting it; the Jewish people with their priests, the Gentiles with their procurator, the soldiers with their commanders, all were included in this prayer. **They know not what they do.** They knew not the enormity of their sin, so great was the blindness of their minds. This ignorance, though it did not excuse them, mitigated somewhat their sin. Compare Acts 3 : 17; 1 Cor. 2 : 8. The persecutions of the disciples of Christ in all ages proceed from ignorance of the Father and the Son, John 17 : 3. This petition is the first of our Lord's seven sayings on the cross, of which three are given by Luke. See ver. 46.

**They parted his raiment.** Persons were crucified naked. It was an ancient belief and tradition that a linen cloth was bound about his loins. From John 19 : 23, 24, it appears that the four

soldiers who were engaged in the crucifixion *divided* some of the garments among themselves, but cast lot for his coat, or tunic, being an inner garment without a seam and woven throughout. With more particularity than Matthew and Luke, Mark says, "Casting lots upon them what every man (*any one*) should take." Thus was fulfilled Ps. 22 : 18. The garments were the perquisites of the executioners.

35. **And the people stood beholding.** Both Matthew and Mark speak of the people scoffing him as they passed by. There is no contradiction. Luke does not deny this, but reports simply what he knew, while the words that follow compel the inference that if they were at first silent, they afterward united with the rulers; for the rulers also with them derided him. The words *with them*, though rejected by critical authorities, are not required to show that there is no discrepancy between Luke and the other evangelists; for the fact that the rulers also derided implies that the people too joined in this derision. That the dignitaries of the Sanhedrim should thus mingle with the populace in their scoffs shows how bitter their hatred and how terrible their malignity. **He saved others.** They had been compelled to acknowledge his supernatural power. See, for example, ch. 11 : 15; John 12 : 10. They taunt him with having lost it now when he needs it for his own deliverance. They treat him as an impostor. **Himself** is put in derisive contrast to others. Compare ch. 4 : 23. **If he be Christ, or if he is the Christ, the chosen of God.** In allusion to his claim to Messiahship. If this man is what he represented himself to be, the Christ, or the Messiah, and the chosen of God, let him now prove that his representations were not utterly false, and that he is peculiarly God's chosen one, by coming down from the cross. The Jews, especially their

36 And the soldiers also mocked him, coming to him,  
37 and offering him vinegar, and saying, If thou be the  
King of the Jews, save thyself.

38 <sup>a</sup> And a superscription also was written over him in letters of Greek, and Latin, and Hebrew, **THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS.**

<sup>a</sup> Mt. 27. 37; Mk. 15. 26; John 19. 19.

rulers, knew of the Christ as God's chosen one; and if this were he, God would certainly deliver him. Thus it appears that they mocked his Sonship, or his claim to divinity, his ability to save even himself, his trust in God, and his kingly character. Compare Matt. 27 : 39-44; Mark 15 : 29-32.

36. **The soldiers also mocked him.** This statement is peculiar to Luke. They mocked him in two ways: first, by offering him vinegar. "*Posca*, a mixture of vinegar and water, the common drink of the Roman soldiers, not the medicated drink of wine and myrrh which was given to intoxicate and benumb, and which Jesus refused because he would die undisturbed and unclouded in his mind."—JAHN. The evangelist does not state how this drink was offered. It was not, evidently, placed to his lips, for this would have refreshed the thirsting sufferer and been no mockery. Probably, as the word rendered *offering* would seem to indicate, they brought it near and jestingly drank to him or before him, thus adding to his suffering by the mere exhibition of a refreshing draught.

37. **The King of the Jews.** The soldiers, in the second place, ridiculed him as king, using almost the very language of the chief priests (see Matt. 27 : 42), by whose example probably they were influenced. The rulers had just derided him as the Christ. The soldiers now jeered him as the King of the Jews. Again we see that "against him both the Gentiles and the people of Israel were gathered together," Acts 4 : 27. **Save thyself.** Thou who pretendest to be a king, show thy power as such and save thyself even now out of our hands.

38. **And a superscription also was written over him.** Rather, and there was an inscription written over him. Pilate appears to have written this himself, John 19 : 22. It was customary to publish in some way

the crime for which a person was crucified. Sometimes a public crier announced it; sometimes it was written on a tablet and hung about the neck of the criminal as he was led to execution; and very commonly it was, as in this case, written on a white tablet and put above the criminal's head on the cross. In some cases these three may have been combined. **In letters of Greek, and Latin, and Hebrew.** These words are not found in several of the early manuscripts, and are therefore supposed by some critical editors to be interpolated from John 19 : 20. They are, however, found in other manuscripts and in the earliest versions. But the evidence for their genuineness in Luke is not conclusive. **The King of the Jews.** Mark is the most concise. Matthew has, "This is Jesus the King of the Jews;" Luke, "This is the King of the Jews;" and John, "Jesus of Nazareth (*the Nazarene*), the King of the Jews." The difference in these titles may be explained: (1) That some of the evangelists, and even all of them, may have given the sense rather than the words. (2) That the accusation was written in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin (John 19 : 20); and while the inscriptions were one in sense, they may have been very likely varied in expression, and hence the translation of them would vary. The Latin was the official language of the empire; the Greek the language of the cultivated classes, and very common in the province; the Hebrew, or Aramean, the vernacular language of the Jews and the common people. It is quite likely that John's inscription, containing the contemptuous phrase "the Nazarene," was the one written in Hebrew, and which would be understood by the Jews of Palestine. Pilate purposely wrote the sarcastic title, purporting that the Jews were crucifying their king, and also that he was a Nazarene. The absurdity of the charge appeared upon its very face; yet when the Jews desired it

39 And one of the malefactors which were hanged  
 40 railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself  
 41 and us. But the other answering rebuked him, saying,  
 41 same condemnation? ° And we indeed justly; for we  
 receive the due reward of our deeds; <sup>p</sup>but this man

•Le. 26. 40, 41;  
 Ezra 9. 13; Ps.  
 32. 5.  
<sup>p</sup>vers. 4, 47.

changed, Pilate would not consent. They had pressed him to crucify Jesus, working on his fears, and saying, "If thou let this man go, thou art not Cæsar's friend;" and now he has the opportunity to return the taunt, and he does it, and perseveres in it, John 19 : 12, 20-22. Pilate at the same time unconsciously proclaimed him the King of the Jews (Matt. 2 : 2), the Messiah, whose claims they could not escape, and whose power they could not resist. For the regular sequence of events recorded in vers. 33-38, see the author's *Harmony*, § 183.

39-43. The account here given is peculiar to Luke.

39. **One of the malefactors.** Both Matthew and Mark record that the robber, here called malefactor—a word of wider signification—reviled Jesus. But Luke speaks of the railing of only one, while he represents the other as reproving his companion and seeking and obtaining mercy from Jesus. Some suppose that Matthew and Mark, in general and popular language, use the plural for the singular. Compare Matt. 9 : 8. But even this is not necessary. For both at first may have joined in reproaches; but one of them, being afterward convinced of the Messiahship of Jesus, repents. The climax of the picture is reached in the reproaches of his fellow-sufferers.

**Railed on him.** The agonies of crucifixion even did not suppress his revilings nor subdue his enmity toward Jesus. **If thou be Christ.** Nearly all the critical editions read, *Art not thou the Christ?* The sense, however, is not essentially different. If thou art the Christ, show thy power as such, and **save thyself and us.** This was said in mockery, and probably with a contemptuous tone.

40. **The other . . . rebuked him.** The rebuke was conveyed in the question, **Dost not thou fear God,** rather, *Dost not even thou fear God?*—that is, Dost not even thou, any more

than the heartless scoffers around, fear to offend God by mocking a fellow-sufferer in his dying pains, and that, too, when thou art in the same condemnation? The reviling robber was rebuked by the other for his lack of the fear of God. This would have restrained him from joining with the priests and people and soldiers in their cruel and unseemly mockeries of a dying man.

41. **And we indeed justly,** an honest confession of the guilt of both before God, and of the righteousness of their condemnation both by the law of God and that of men. **For we receive, are receiving, the due reward of our deeds.** Our sins have found us out, and we are suffering their legitimate consequences. **But this man,** etc. In his view Jesus is entirely innocent and has been condemned without just cause. It does not appear when he became so convinced. He may previous to his own arrest have heard from others concerning the blameless character and wonderful works of Jesus, and of the unreasonable and wicked prejudices of the rulers against him. And now, after being an eye-witness of his sublime patience and meekness under sufferings, and hearing his pathetic prayer for his murderers, the conviction is forced upon him that Jesus is all he ever claimed to be—the Son of God and the Sovereign of a kingdom yet future. Or it is probable—some would say more probable—that even since the suspension on the cross, and without any previous knowledge of Christ, God, with the design of signalizing his mercy and illustrating the sovereignty of his grace, suddenly flashed the conviction upon his mind that Jesus, now, like himself, in the agonies of death, was not merely human, but also divine, the true Messiah and Saviour, and that he himself was a sinner, and as such dependent upon this same crucified Jesus for salvation. Nothing important is involved in knowing the precise time of

42 hath done nothing amiss. And he said unto Jesus, <sup>q</sup>Lord, remember me <sup>r</sup>when thou comest into <sup>s</sup>thy  
 43 kingdom. And <sup>t</sup>Jesus said unto him, Verily I say  
 unto thee, <sup>u</sup>To-day shalt thou be <sup>v</sup>with me in para-  
 dise.

<sup>q</sup>ch. 19. 10; Job 33. 27-30; Ps. 32. 5; 50. 15; Is. 1. 18; Mic. 7. 18; 1 Tim. 1. 15, 16; Heb. 7. 25. <sup>r</sup>2 Cor. 5. 9. <sup>s</sup>John 14. 3; 17. 24; 2 Cor. 12. 4; Rev. 2. 7.

<sup>t</sup>ch. 13. 13; Ps. 106. 4, 5; Ro. 10. 10-13; 1 John 5. 1, 11, 12.  
<sup>u</sup>ch. 12. 8.  
<sup>v</sup>Ps. 2. 6; Is. 9. 6, 7.

this robber's conversion. That he discerned the Messiahship of Jesus, had faith in him as such and in the future establishment of his kingdom, admits of no reasonable doubt. It is interesting to notice that while all around the cross were heaping insults on the "beloved Son" the voice of this robber alone is heard in behalf of his innocence.

42. **And he said unto Jesus, Lord.** Omit *Lord* and read, *and he said to Jesus*. Some critical editors (Tischendorf, Tregelles, Alford) put *Jesus* in the vocative, and thus the reading would be, *And he said, Jesus. Remember me*. With either reading the sense is the same. The robber prays to Jesus, not for deliverance from the cross nor for any present good, but for a blessing which can be conferred only after his death, which he recognizes as inevitable; his faith grasps a blessed future. **When thou comest into thy kingdom.** Not *into* but *in thy kingdom*. He takes it for granted that Jesus, though now suffering an ignominious death, will live again and come in his kingdom—that is, will come again in his glory to establish his kingdom. This is the obvious meaning of his words. His spiritual insight, as well as his faith, is truly wonderful. He perceives the deep meaning of the inscription over the cross. His conception of the kingdom is clearer than that of the apostles at this time. His faith rises superior to theirs, reaching onward from the cross, on which Jesus was then bearing our sins, to that time when "he shall appear the second time without sin unto salvation." His prayer is that he may be then remembered or be permitted to enter into the joy of his Lord.

43. **And Jesus said unto him.** He replies at once and far exceeds the request of the penitent. **To-day.** It is unreasonable and absurd to connect

these words with *I say*. Such a punctuation would never have been thought of but for the strong bearing of this passage against the Romish doctrine of purgatory. The penitent knew that Jesus was speaking "to-day," and needed not to be told he was not speaking on some other day. **To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise.** The word *paradise*, which is of Oriental origin, denotes a park or pleasure-ground. In the Septuagint it is used for the garden of Eden, Gen. 2:8. Very naturally the word came to be applied to any place of beauty and happiness. The Jews applied it to that part of Hades, *the underworld*, "or abode of the dead, where the souls of the righteous await the resurrection."—ALFORD. The word in Hebrew corresponding with Hades is *Sheol*. Whatever may have been the conceptions of the early Hebrews with regard to the separation between the righteous and the wicked in Sheol, those of a later period plainly conceived of such a separation. To them Hades and Sheol alike designated the place of the righteous and wicked dead, the former inhabiting the regions of the blest, called paradise, while the latter dwelt in the abyss called Tartarus. Paradise was also styled Abraham's bosom. The Jews spoke of all true believers as going to Abraham, and to be in Abraham's bosom—a metaphor borrowed from the manner of reclining at meals—was equivalent to being in paradise, in the general receptacle of happy but awaiting souls. Compare ch. 16:22.

It is to be supposed that Jesus spoke in terms such as the penitent himself would understand. In promising him, therefore, that he should be with him that day in paradise, he evidently understood that Jesus would that day enter into the abode of the righteous after death, and that he himself would be with him there on that day—an as

- 44 <sup>7</sup> And it was about the sixth hour, and there was a darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour. 7 Mt. 27. 45-50; Mk. 15. 33-37; John 19. 30.
- 45 And the sun was darkened. 7 Mt. 27. 51-56 Mk. 15. 38-41.
- And <sup>2</sup> the veil of the temple was rent in the midst.

surance doubly comforting in that he would not be left to linger in agony two or three days, as crucified persons often did, but after a few hours at most of suffering would pass into the same blessed abode. Jesus did not speak of *heaven*, the final abode of the righteous after the resurrection, but of *paradise*, the blessed but temporary dwelling-place of disembodied, redeemed souls between death and the resurrection. In this intermediate state they are indeed happy and blessed, but they have not entered into the fulness of glory. They are not yet glorified. They are neither joined to their spiritual bodies and made fully like unto Christ, nor have they entered into that kingdom which was prepared for them from the foundation of the world. For these they must await the resurrection, the redemption of their bodies. Compare author in *Christian Review*, April, 1862, p. 251 ff.

About this time probably occurred that interesting incident related in John 19 : 25-27—Jesus committing his widowed mother to the care of the beloved disciple.

44. **The sixth . . . until the ninth hour**, from twelve o'clock to three in the afternoon. Jesus had hung about three hours upon the cross. **Darkness over all the earth**, *the whole land*, over all the land of Palestine, or over all the earth—that is, over that part of it where there was then day. The Greek word may have either the limited or the more extended sense. The *darkness* was supernatural. It could not have been an eclipse of the sun, for that occurs only at new moon, and it was then the passover, which was observed at full moon. Nor was it the natural precursor of the earthquake, for that was miraculous, Matt. 27 : 51-53.

45. **The sun was darkened**, after the darkening of the earth, which suggests a thickening of the atmosphere or a dark gloom obscuring even the sun. Or, according to a preferable text, *the sun's light failing*, the cause of the darkness. "Yea, crea-

tion itself bewailed its Lord, for the sun was darkened and the rocks were rent."—CYRIL ALEX. As the *night* of our Saviour's birth was enlightened with the glory of the heavenly hosts (Luke 2 : 9), so now the *day* of his death is darkened with the gloom of a forsaken world. The darkness represented the eclipse of the Sun of righteousness, the darkness and distress which overwhelmed his soul when the Father forsook him and left him to meet alone the powers of death and hell.

Several heathen writers mention an extraordinary darkening of the sun about this time. Eusebius quotes the words of Phlegon, a chronicler under the reign of Hadrian: "There occurred the greatest darkening of the sun which had ever been known; it became night at midday, so that the stars shone in the heavens. Also a great earthquake in Bithynia, which destroyed a part of Nicæa." This language may apply to a darkening of the sun either by an eclipse or by a supernatural power, and it is said to have occurred at about the time of our Saviour's death. May it not be a heathen testimony to the wonderful phenomena of that event? Tertullian, Origen, and others also boldly appealed to the Roman archives for the proof of the eclipse of the sun, as it was called, at the time of our Saviour's death.

**The veil of the temple**, a large, thick inner curtain which divided the holy place from the holy of holies, Ex. 26 : 31, 33; Heb. 9 : 3. The Greek does not denote the whole sacred edifice, but the *temple* proper, or sanctuary. **Rent in the midst**, through the middle, and according to Matthew and Mark, "from the top to the bottom," about sixty feet. This could not have been the result of an earthquake. It was rent by the same supernatural power that produced the earthquake and raised some of the dead.

This occurred at the ninth hour, about three in the afternoon, the time of offering the evening sacrifice, when the priest would be in the holy place burning incense, and the people praying

46 And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, <sup>a</sup>Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit. <sup>b</sup>An<sup>d</sup> having said thus, he gave up the ghost.

<sup>a</sup>Ps. 31. 5; Ac. 7. 59; 1 Pet. 2. 23.  
<sup>b</sup>Mt. 27. 50; Mk 15.37; John 19.30

without. Into the holy of holies the high priest entered alone once a year to make an atonement, Ex. 30 : 10; Lev. 16 : 15-17; Heb. 9 : 7. The rending of the veil symbolized the entering of Jesus, the great High Priest of his people, into the holy of holies on high, there to present the atonement which he had made through his blood for their sins, Heb. 9 : 12-14, 25, 26. It will be seen, therefore, that the rending should occur after his death, as it evidently did, according to Matthew and Mark. The Aaronic priesthood and atonement were no longer needed. Each worshipper became himself a priest, a new and living way of access to God was opened, the middle wall of partition between Jews and Gentiles was broken down, Heb. 10 : 12-14, 19-22; Eph. 2 : 14; 1 Pet. 2 : 5. The rent of the veil, seen by the priests, would very likely be known through rumor and substantiated by the great company of priests who afterward became obedient to the faith, Acts 6 : 7. Jesus himself may have revealed it to his disciples after his resurrection.

**46. Cried with a loud voice.** Both Matthew and Mark tell us of this loud cry of the dying Christ, but Luke alone relates what the cry was. Compare Matt. 27 : 50; Mark 15 : 37. **Father, into thy hands I commend (commit) my spirit.** This was evidently his last utterance on the cross. Knowing that all things were now accomplished, that nothing more was required of him in order "to make reconciliation for the sins of the people" but to lay down his life, he commits his spirit to the keeping of his Father. "Whoever could think that Jesus, with these words, breathed out his life for ever into the empty air, such a one certainly knows nothing of the true living Spirit, and consequently nothing of the living God and of the living power of the crucified One."—ULLMAN in *Lange*.

Luke, it will be seen, makes no mention of that cry of anguish, "Eli, Eli, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" nor of his thirsting and of

the offering to him of the vinegar or sour wine of the soldiers, which must not be confounded with the offering of vinegar by the soldiers in mockery related in ver. 37, nor of the saying, "It is finished."

The most probable order of the seven sayings of Jesus from the cross is as follows: (1) Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do, Luke 23 : 34. (2) Verily I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise, Luke 23 : 43. (3) Woman, behold thy son. . . Behold thy mother, John 19 : 26, 27. (4) My God, my God, why hast (didst) thou forsaken me? Mark 15 : 34; Matt. 27 : 46. (5) I thirst, John 19 : 28. (6) It is finished, John 19 : 30. (7) Father, into thy hands I commend (commit) my spirit, Luke 23 : 46.

**Gave up the ghost.** Literally, *breathed out, expired*. The expression used by Luke is in beautiful harmony with "yielded up his spirit" (Matt. 27 : 50) and "gave up his spirit," John 19 : 30. Jesus died voluntarily (John 18 : 18), and so the language of all the evangelists indicates.

That Jesus should have died in six hours (ver. 44; John 19 : 33) instead of lingering two or three days upon the cross was owing to the great mental agonies he endured, in comparison to which the physical pains of crucifixion were light. Intense anguish has itself been known to produce death. If the agonies of the garden caused a bloody sweat and so affected him that an angel appeared to strengthen him, how must the greater agonies of the cross, when forsaken by the Father, have affected his already exhausted body!

Dr. Stroud, an eminent European physician, in the year 1847, advanced the theory that Jesus died of a broken or ruptured heart. It has been found that under violent and intensely excited emotions the heart is sometimes rent or torn by the violence of its own action. The blood flows into the pericardium, the bag or sack which encloses the heart, and by its pressure gradually stops the beating. The blood then coagulates, and the watery matter is sep-

47 \*Now when the centurion saw what was done, he glorified God, saying, Certainly this was a righteous man. \*Mt. 27. 54; Mk 15. 39.

48 And all the people that came together to that sight, beholding the things which were done, <sup>a</sup>smote their <sup>a</sup>ch. 18. 13.

arated from the thicker substance. If the pericardium should then be pierced, there would flow out blood and water, which harmonizes with and best explains the singular phenomenon mentioned in John 19 : 34. This theory also strikingly harmonizes with the predictions in Ps. 22 : 14; 69 : 20. It also gives additional prominence to the *blood* of Christ, since, then, his death was literally caused by the flowing of his blood. Nor is it opposed to the Saviour's declaration, "No man taketh my life from me; I lay it down of myself;" for he voluntarily took upon himself all this anguish, even unto death itself. The theory well deserves consideration.

47. **The centurion saw what was done.** The centurion was a Roman officer, a commander of a hundred men. The one here mentioned had charge of the crucifixion. Matthew speaks of other phenomena than that of the rending of the veil following the death of Christ. The earth quaked, the rocks rent, graves were opened, and many bodies of the saints which slept arose and came out of their graves after his resurrection and went into the holy city and appeared unto many. Mark says that "when the centurion which stood over against him saw that he so cried out, and gave up the ghost, he said, Truly, this man was the Son of God." There was something in this last cry and in the manner of his death that impressed the centurion as superhuman. What seems to have specially arrested his attention was the strong voice of the expiring Jesus and his firm confidence in God. "The Lion of Judah is even in his departing a dying lion. The expression of a wonderful power of life and spirit in the last sign of life, the triumphant shout in death, was to the warrior, who had learned to know death from a totally different side upon the battle-fields, a new revelation."—LANGE. The centurion gives vent to his feelings, **Certainly this was a righteous man.** He was not an impostor, but what he claimed to be, the

Son of God. Compare Matt. 27 : 54; Mark 15 : 39. In this conviction he concurs fully with that of the penitent robber. "The leader in the array of witnesses for the glory of the death of Jesus is this heathen centurion." There was an impress of divinity on his death as well as on his life which has been felt and recognized by the observing of every age. Even the infidel Rousseau exclaimed, "If Socrates lived and died like a sage, Jesus of Nazareth lived and died like a god."

Justin Martyr and other early writers affirm that Pilate made an official report to Tiberius of the condemnation and death of Jesus. This is very probable. He was deeply impressed not only by the dream of his wife, but also by the charge that he "made himself the Son of God," John 19 : 7, 8.

48. The statement in this verse is peculiar to Luke. **All the people, the multitude, or throngs, that came together.** Jews from all lands were accustomed to gather at Jerusalem at the time of the passover. See on ver. 24. There were few who had not heard of the fame of Jesus; still fewer, of his trial and condemnation. Naturally they would flock to his crucifixion to witness his demeanor in his last hours, many to feast on his agonies. Something else than **that sight** or the spectacle of a man dying on the cross arrested their attention and filled them with awe. They beheld **the things that were done.** The awful darkness over all the land, the earthquake, the rocks rent, and together with these wonderful phenomena the superhumanly loud voice of the dying victim, so different from the faint voice of one sinking in death even in ordinary circumstances, especially after such exhaustive sufferings as he had undergone from scourging and crucifixion,—all this seems to have aroused their fears lest, after all, he may have been a good man and not an impious pretender, as their rulers had told them.

**Smote their breasts, as Orientals**

49 breasts, and returned. \*And all his acquaintance, and the women that followed him from Galilee, stood afar off, beholding these things. • Ps. 38. 11; Mt. 27. 55; Mk 15. 40; see John 19. 25.

*The burial.*

50 'And behold, *there was* a man named Joseph, a † Mt. 27. 67-61; Mk. 15. 42-47; John 19. 38-42.  
 51 counsellor; *and he was* † a good man, and a just (the same † had not consented to the counsel and deed of them); *he was* of Arimathæa, a city of the Jews: • ch. 2. 25; Ac. 10. 2, 22; 11. 24. † Ex. 23. 2.  
 † who also himself waited for the kingdom of God. † ch. 9. 25, 38; Is. 25. 9; Mk. 15. 43.  
 52 This *man* went unto Pilate, and begged the body of

usually do in great sorrow or in the presence of superhuman power. They appear to have been conscience-stricken and apprehensive of divine judgments. They returned to Jerusalem, doubtless with mingled feelings of wonder, grief, and fear, some of them perhaps to become the subjects of saving grace on the day of Pentecost.

49. **All his acquaintance.** Luke alone makes this statement, but mentions no names. He means, evidently, Christ's personal friends, whether of Jerusalem or other places. **The women from Galilee.** "Among whom was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the less and Joses, and Salome (who also, when he was in Galilee, followed him and ministered to him), and many other women who came up with him unto Jerusalem." Compare ch. 8 : 2, 3; see also Mark 15 : 40, 41. It is not improbable that they were present during the whole time of the crucifixion. In their devotion these women watched him to the last, and lingered near till they saw him laid in the grave. See on ver. 55. **Afar off,** probably from the side of the Mount of Olives.

50-56. **THE BURIAL OF JESUS,** Matt. 27 : 57-61; Mark 15 : 42-47; John 19 : 31-42. John's account is the fullest. He relates that the Jews requested the legs to be broken and the bodies removed, so that they might not remain upon the cross on the Sabbath. The request was granted, but the legs of Jesus were not broken because he was already dead; but one of the soldiers pierced his side, and thus two predictions of Scripture were fulfilled, John 19 : 31-37. He also relates that Nicodemus brought spices and assisted in the burial. Mark is next to John in

fulness, and relates with minuteness the begging of the body of Jesus by Joseph of Arimathæa. The four accounts, though remarkably distinct and independent, harmonize beautifully and confirm one another.

50. **Joseph, a counsellor,** an honorable member of the Sanhedrim. **A good man, and a just,** a good and just man. "Every good man is also just; but the converse is not true."—BENGEL.

51. **Not consented to the counsel and deed of them, to their counsel and deed.** Had he done so, Luke would not have called him a good and just man. **Of, from, Arimathæa,** probably from Ramah, called Ramathaim Zophim, the birthplace of Samuel, 1 Sam. 1 : 19. The first book of Maccabees (11 : 34) speaks of it as transferred, together with Lydda, from Samaria to Judea, which may account for Luke's calling it "a city of the Jews," ch. 23 : 51. It has generally been located at the modern Lydda, about twenty-four miles north-west of Jerusalem. Its location, however, is uncertain. From the narrative in 1 Sam. 9 : 4-6; 10 : 2 it would seem that it lay south or south-west of Bethlehem. **Waited for the kingdom of God,** waited with expectation for the Messiah's kingdom. He was a *disciple of Jesus*, but secretly, for fear of the Jews, John 19 : 38. Matthew states also that he was rich, Isa. 53 : 9.

52. **Went unto Pilate.** Mark says, "went in boldly unto Pilate"—that is, dared, had the courage and confidence to go to Pilate, probably his official residence, and ask the body of Jesus. When Christ's own disciples are scattered and in dismay, two secret and timid followers are emboldened to at-

53 Jesus. <sup>k</sup> And he took it down, and wrapped it in <sup>k</sup> Mt. 27. 59; Mr. 15. 46. linen, <sup>l</sup> and laid it in a sepulchre that was hewn in <sup>l</sup> Is. 53. 9. stone, wherein never man before was laid. And that day was <sup>m</sup> the preparation; and the sabbath drew on. <sup>m</sup> Mt. 27. 62.

tend to his burial. Joseph seems to have known what had occurred—that Jesus was dead, that the bones of the others had been broken, and that they were about to be taken down for burial. Mark relates that “Pilate marvelled if he were already dead.” He had not yet heard of the death of Jesus from the centurion. He had given the order to break the bones to hasten death, but he wondered that Jesus was dead so soon, and calls for the centurion to ascertain the facts of the case. He wanted to act cautiously. The question whether he had been long dead, with the implied answer, indicates that Jesus had then been some time dead. Having learned that Jesus was really dead, Pilate gave the body freely, as a present, without demanding money for it. Bodies under such circumstances were frequently sold; and as Joseph was rich, Pilate might have been expected to extort a price for it. The standing of Joseph as a member of the Sanhedrim doubtless had its weight; and Pilate’s troubled conscience would naturally excite the desire to give Jesus a decent burial. We cannot but admire the providence which so ordered the circumstances of our Saviour’s crucifixion and burial that there could be no doubt about his death and no deception in regard to his resurrection.

53. **Wrapped it in linen**, a winding-sheet, in which the body was wrapped. The mummy-cloths of the Egyptians were universally linen. Mark says (15 : 46) Joseph “bought fine linen.” John relates (19 : 39) that Nicodemus now joined Joseph, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pounds weight. The sheet was wrapped about in such a way as to enclose the spices next to the body. This was hurriedly done, and preparatory to the more formal embalming by the women after the Sabbath, for which there was not now time.

**A sepulchre.** Matthew and John state that it was a new tomb. It was fitting that Jesus should be laid in a tomb where no one had before been

buried. It would also prevent the assertion after his resurrection that some one else had been raised. Matthew alone relates that it was Joseph’s. John says it was in a garden, and in the place where he was crucified. The nearness of the place and of the Sabbath may have led Joseph to bury him in his own new tomb (John 19 : 42); but once laid there, we need not suppose that Joseph would have removed it, but rather, in his devotion, would have kept it there, had Jesus not risen. Thus was fulfilled Isa. 53 : 9, which may be translated, “And his grave was appointed with the wicked, but he was with the rich in his death.”

**Hewn in stone, the rock.** The tombs of the Jews were generally cut out of the solid rock; sometimes below the level of the ground, but oftener above the ground and on the sides of hills and mountains. They were generally large and commodious, with one or more apartments with cells for depositing the dead.

The tomb of Joseph was doubtless a family vault. Both Matthew and Mark relate that “he rolled a stone unto the door of the sepulchre.” This seems to imply that the tomb was excavated horizontally or nearly so. The stone was so heavy that the women, on going to the sepulchre, were perplexed to know how to obtain its removal. Dr. Hackett saw a tomb at Nazareth cut in the rock and a large stone rolled against its mouth. But most of the tombs he examined near Jerusalem must have had doors, as is evident from the grooves and perforations for the hinges that still remain. “It is possible,” he adds, “that the tomb used in the case of the Saviour, which is said to have been new, was not entirely finished, and the placing of the stone at the entrance may have been a temporary expedient.”—*Scripture Illustrations*, p. 108.

54. **That day was the preparation, or it was the day of preparation.** The preparation was Friday, the day before the Jewish Sabbath, which was Saturday; the day for making ready

- 55 And the women also, <sup>a</sup> which came with him from Galilee, followed after, and <sup>o</sup> beheld the sepulchre, <sup>b</sup> and how his body was laid. And they returned, and <sup>p</sup> prepared spices and ointments. And rested the sabbath day <sup>a</sup> according to the commandment.

<sup>a</sup> ch. 8. 2.  
<sup>b</sup> Mk. 15. 47.  
<sup>c</sup> 2 Chr. 16. 14; Mk. 16. 1.  
<sup>d</sup> Ex. 20. 8-10; Jer. 17. 24.

for the Sabbath, Mark 15 : 42; John 19 : 31.

## REMARKS.

55. **The women . . . from Galilee.** The women specially referred to are doubtless Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joses and Salome. Compare Matt. 27 : 61 and Mark 15 : 40, 47. **Followed after** the party bearing the body of Jesus from the cross to the grave. **Beheld the sepulchre, and how the body was laid.** They stayed to mark the spot of his burial, so that they might visit it and anoint the body after the Sabbath. Matthew says they were "sitting over against the sepulchre," as if to watch it.

56. **Returned.** This indicates that they did not long remain at the sepulchre. The Sabbath, which began at sunset on Friday evening, was close at hand. The preparation of the **spices and ointment** must yet be made, if made at all before the Sabbath. It is possible that they bought spices on Friday before sunset and prepared them after sunset on Saturday. But Mark makes the more exact statement (ch. 16 : 1), and Luke, being somewhat indefinite, does not contradict it. The latter says nothing about purchasing; neither does he say when the women prepared their spices, but throws in the fact that they observed the Sabbath. Or if the above explanation fails to satisfy, we may suppose that some of the women provided spices late Friday afternoon, and others, after consultation, not being satisfied, bought other spices on Saturday night. The two Marys very likely remained too long at the sepulchre to make purchases on Friday, Mark 15 : 47.

Matthew (27 : 62-66) records the sealing and guarding the sepulchre. The chief priests and Pharisees beseech Pilate to make the sepulchre secure. He grants their request, seals the stone, and stations a watch.

For a discussion on the day of Christ's crucifixion, see *Notes on Mark*, by the author, pp. 311-313.

1. The delivering of Jesus to Pilate by the Jewish rulers was of itself a satisfactory evidence that the Messiah had already come. The sceptre had departed from Judah, and the Lawgiver from between his feet, ver. 1; Gen. 49 : 10.

2. The righteous need not think it strange if they are falsely and maliciously charged, ver. 2; ch. 6 : 22; Matt. 5 : 11; 1 Pet. 4 : 12-14.

3. Like Jesus, we should have the courage to witness a good profession, ver. 3; ch. 9 : 23; 1 Tim. 6 : 13.

4. Christ's disciples should aim to live so as to be, as he himself was, above just reproach, ver. 4; 1 Pet. 2 : 15.

5. The wicked are instrumental in furthering the divine purposes, vers. 6-12; Gen. 50 : 20; Ps. 76 : 10; Rom. 9 : 17.

6. "They are wretched who seek in Christ naught but the gratification of sense."—BENGEL. Ver. 8.

7. Jesus was speechless before Herod. The day will come when Herod and all who neglect the time of their visitation will be speechless before Jesus, ver. 9; Matt. 22 : 12.

8. To make light of Christ is to manifest the enmity of the heart toward him, ver. 11.

9. Jesus was mocked and treated with the greatest indignity, in order that we might be raised with him to the highest glory, vers. 11; Phil. 2 : 9, 10; Heb. 2 : 10; 12 : 2; Rev. 5 : 8-14.

10. Human friendship may have no higher basis than fellowship in wickedness, ver. 12.

11. The case of Pilate illustrates how unsafe and unbecoming is mere expediency in matters of morals and religion, vers. 13-25.

12. Jesus endured cruel scourging that we might be healed, ver. 16; Ps. 129 : 3; Isa. 50 : 6; 53 : 5.

13. How often is Barabbas preferred to Jesus; self, the world, and the devil,

to the Saviour! vers. 18, 25; Acts 3 : 14 ; 7 : 51, 52.

14. How many, instead of following the dictates of their consciences, yield to popular opinion and bring ruin upon themselves and others! vers. 14, 22, 23-25.

15. How fickle are they who make the popular current, instead of truth, their principle of action, crying out at one time, Hosanna to the Son of David! and at another, Crucify him! vers. 21, 23; ch. 19 : 38; Mark 11 : 19; Acts 14 : 11, 19.

16. "Popular fury grows more furious the more it is complimented."—HENRY. Vers. 18, 23.

17. Many who are actuated by conscience to do right vacillate between it and the popular will to their own destruction, vers. 24, 25.

18. The release of Barabbas illustrates the plan of salvation. The guilty are set free, the innocent suffers, vers. 24, 25; Rom. 3 : 26; 5 : 6-8.

19. We must follow Christ, bearing his cross, if we would reign with him and share his glory, ver. 26; ch. 8 : 34-38; Phil. 3 : 10, 11; Heb. 13 : 13, 14.

20. The possession of a tender, sympathetic nature that weeps over the sufferings of Christ is no evidence in itself of love for, and faith in, him, ver. 27.

21. How many pass the present in security, without any apprehension of future misery! vers. 28, 29.

22. Present prosperity may blind us to the possibility of future adversity, ver. 29.

23. Those who will not seek refuge in Christ from sin will in vain seek it from "the mountains and the rocks" when the great day of his wrath shall come, ver. 30; Rev. 6 : 16, 17.

24. How fearful must be the sufferings of those whom God shall judge for their sins in eternity! ver. 31; Heb. 10 : 29.

25. Jesus was reckoned with transgressors, so that we might be reckoned innocent for his sake, vers. 32, 33; ch. 22 : 37; Isa. 53 : 12.

26. Jesus suffered the death of a slave, in order that he might give us true freedom, ver. 33; John 8 : 36; Gal. 5 : 1.

27. Jesus teaches us, both by precept

and example, to pray for our enemies, ver. 34; ch. 6 : 28; Matt. 5 : 44.

28. In Jesus on the cross, suspended between heaven and the earth, we behold a mediator between God and man, ver. 33; 1 Tim. 2 : 5.

29. Jesus was stripped of his garments, pointing to the spiritual nakedness of the race, and to the white garments he has purchased to cover us, ver. 33; Gen. 3 : 7, 10; Phil. 3 : 9; Rev. 3 : 18.

30. Jesus saved not himself, so that he might save others, vers. 35-39; Rom. 5 : 6; 1 Cor. 15 : 3; 2 Cor. 5 : 15; 1 Thess. 5 : 10.

31. Adversity is not a proof of God's displeasure, nor is a want of success always an indication of final failure, vers. 35, 36; Job 42 : 10; Ps. 3 : 2-4; 42 : 10, 11.

32. All classes, Jews, Gentiles, priests, rulers, people, soldiers, and servants, were turned against Jesus, in order that he might be a Saviour to all, vers. 34-39; Gal. 3 : 28; 1 John 2 : 1, 2.

33. The most painful sufferings may harden, rather than soften, the heart, ver. 39.

34. A true penitent will acknowledge the justice of his condemnation, vers. 40, 41.

35. Repentance and faith are inseparable acts of the mind, ver. 42.

36. Salvation is possible in a dying hour; but how presumptuous and dangerous it is to trifle with the soul's affairs up to that time! vers. 39, 43.

37. The salvation of the penitent robber on the cross wonderfully illustrates the sovereignty and power of divine grace, ver. 43.

38. Those who are united to Christ by faith can never be separated from him. The moment they are "absent from the body" they are "present with the Lord," ver. 43; 2 Cor. 5 : 6, 8; Phil. 1 : 23.

39. The genuineness of conversion is not to be suspected because it takes place suddenly, ver. 43.

40. The darkness around the suffering and dying Jesus should remind us of the spiritual darkness of our world, and of Christ, its true light, vers. 44, 45; John 8 : 12.

41. Christ in his death paid the ransom for sinners, made a full atonement for sin, and was made a curse for us,

*Visit of the disciples to the sepulchre.*

\* Mt. 28. 1, 2; Mk.  
16. 1, 2; John 20  
1, 2.

XXIV. NOW <sup>r</sup>upon the first day of the week, very

ver. 46; Gal. 3 : 13; Heb. 9 : 6-15; 1 Pet. 3 : 18.

42. Inasmuch as the way into the holiest of all has been opened through the rent veil of the Redeemer's flesh, let us draw near to God boldly and in strong faith, ver. 45; Heb. 4 : 16; 9 : 12; 10 : 19-22.

43. In the death of Jesus we see evidences of his divinity. The centurion saw it. How much more should we, with our greater evidences! ver. 47; Heb. 1 : 1-4.

44. In Joseph of Arimathæa we behold a man of wealth devoting his property to the Lord, vers. 50-53; 1 Kings 18 : 13; 1 Tim. 6 : 17-19.

45. God will at all times have a people in the world, vers. 50-53; Rom. 9 : 27; 11 : 5.

46. Jesus often has disciples who are but little known, ver. 50; 1 Kings 19 : 18.

47. Let us be suitably affected with the lifeless body of Jesus on the cross, and accept of the glorious fruits of his death, ver. 53; 2 Tim. 1 : 10; 1 Pet. 2 : 24.

48. God, who so wonderfully guarded the body of Jesus, will in like manner guard the dust of all them that sleep in Jesus, vers. 50-53; 1 Thess. 4 : 14.

49. The Christian should not fear the grave, since Jesus has been there before him, ver. 53; 1 Cor. 15 : 56, 57.

50. How great the devotion of women, both at the cross and at the sepulchre, in his sufferings and death as well as in his life! vers. 49, 55, 56; ch. 16 : 1.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

In comparing Luke's account of the resurrection with those of the other evangelists, the same remarks are appropriate which have been made by the author on the parallel passages of Matthew and Mark (Matt. 28 : 1; Mark 16 : 1) in the previous volumes of this series. The differences of representation in the several narratives, growing mainly out of different selections of the multitudinous facts connected with the marvellous

event, evince the independence of the writers; and taken together with the self-consistency and simplicity of each, and the substantial agreement of all, they strengthen our confidence in these writers as truthful reporters. In studying the Gospels side by side we find several passages in which two of them would seem to present incompatible accounts of an occurrence; these, however, become all plain when a third gives us some additional feature of the scene in which now the former two perfectly harmonize. If here we had the particular testimony of all the actors in the exciting events of the first Lord's Day morning, we have reason to believe that almost every trace of discrepancy would disappear. But the following remarks of an eminent English scholar well deserve consideration: "The existence of difficulties in brief records of such a crisis is no more than a natural consequence of its character. The events of the first great Easter morning were evidently so rapid in their sequence and so startling in their lessons that a complete history would have been impossible. Even in ordinary circumstances the effects produced by the same outward phenomena and the impressions which they convey to different persons in moments of great excitement are so various that we are in some measure prepared for apparent discrepancies in the recital of the facts which accompanied what was the new birth of believers no less than of the Saviour."—WESTCOTT, *Introduction to the Study of the Gospels*, p. 327. Compare author's *Harmony*, § 188-201.

Verses 1-11 are partly parallel to the accounts given by the other evangelists. The rest of the chapter is mostly peculiar to Luke, he alone relating our Lord's conversation with the two disciples on their way to Emmaus (13-35), and with the apostles on his first appearance among them (36-48), and alone completing the account of our Lord's ascension, 50-53.

1-11. THE WOMEN VISITING THE TOMB LEARN FROM ANGELS THAT JESUS HAS RISEN, AND CARRY THE NEWS TO THE APOSTLES, Matt. 28

- early in the morning, they came unto the sepulchre, \*bringing the spices which they had prepared, and 2 certain *others* with them. And they found the stone 3 rolled away from the sepulchre. And they entered in, 4 and found not the body of the Lord Jesus. 'And it came to pass, as they were much perplexed thereabout, "behold, two men stood by them in shining garments. 5 And as they were afraid, and bowed down *their* faces to the earth, they said unto them, Why seek ye the

\* ch. 23. 56.

† See parallel, Mt. 28. 5-7; Mk. 16. 5-7.

\* Ge. 18. 2; John 20. 12; Ac. 1. 10.

1-10; Mark 16 : 1-11; John 20 : 1-18.

1. **Now**, more exactly, *but*. This is in close continuation of what we read in ch. 23 : 56, that after preparing spices (on Friday evening before the Sabbath began) they had rested over the Sabbath. **Very early in the morning**, in the dim twilight it would seem from a comparison of John 20 : 1 and Matt. 28 : 1, although it is very likely that the visit was not terminated until it was fully daylight, possibly sunrise, Mark 16 : 1. **They came—** *i. e.*, the women referred to (ch. 23 : 55) and named, Mark 16 : 1, and v. 10 below. **Spices**, such as were used in preparing the dead body for burial. They seem to have regarded the disposition which had been made of their Lord's body on Friday evening (ch. 23 : 32, 33; John 19 : 38-40) as only temporary. Were they not indeed "slow of heart to believe" what he himself had plainly spoken to his disciples, since they supposed that any permanent arrangement was needed for his burial? **And certain others with them.** A careful examination of the best manuscripts renders it highly probable that these words are added by a later hand, perhaps from ver. 10, and not to be regarded here as Luke's writing.

2. **The stone**, which served as a door to the sepulchre, Matt. 27 : 60; Mark 15 : 46. It was rolled to and fro, and closed an entrance apparently in the side of the rock-hewn chamber of death.

3 **And they entered in**, not Mary Magdalene, who is said (John 20 : 2) to have run when she saw the stone rolled away to tell Peter and John that their Lord had been taken away out of the tomb. **And found not the body.** At what hour the Lord of life had asserted his power over death we are not

informed. Perhaps the earthquake spoken of (Matt. 28 : 2) had been the thrill of nature accompanying his bursting of the bonds of the grave and simultaneous with the angel's rolling away the great stone. He needed not that this should be done for him, who now came and went at pleasure, "the doors having been shut," John 20 : 19.

4. **Two men**, angels in the form of men, Matt. 28 : 2-5; Mark 16 : 5. Or may they have been glorified men, like Moses and Elijah, who appeared on the mount of transfiguration, and according to our Saviour's word that in the resurrection "they shall be like the angels"? At all events, the latter passage, with the statement here, may fairly afford us some hint of the appearance of the saint in glory. **In shining garments**, strictly, in *lightning* garments, which gleamed as with the brilliance of lightning. As to the number of the angels, Matthew, having spoken (28 : 26) of the one who rolled away the stone, continues to think of him as the speaker in what follows; Mark had apparently received the account in that tradition, while Luke and John inform us that within the tomb, at least, there were two that appeared. At a crisis which so intensely interested heaven it may be innocent to imagine that multitudes again of "the heavenly host" were busy about the scene of our Lord's triumph, and taking part, sometimes one and sometimes another, in the intercourse with his amazed disciples.

5. **And as they were afraid, and bowed down their faces to the earth.** The fear grew out of the strangeness of their Saviour's removal, together with the unearthly splendor of the angelic visitants, before whom they dropped their faces in reverence. **Why seek ye?** Their manner, **doubt-**

- 6 <sup>a</sup>living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen : <sup>a</sup> Rev. 1. 18.  
<sup>b</sup>remember how he spake unto you when he was yet <sup>b</sup> ch. 9. 22 ; Mt. 16  
7 in Galilee, <sup>c</sup>saying, The Son of man must be deliv- 21 ; 17. 23 ; Mt  
ered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, 8. 31 ; 9. 31.  
and the third day rise again. <sup>c</sup> ch. 18. 31-33.
- 8, 9 And they remembered his words, <sup>a</sup>and returned <sup>a</sup> Mt. 28. 8 ; Mk 14  
from the sepulchre, and told all these things unto the 10.  
10 eleven, and to all the rest. It was <sup>b</sup>Mary Magdalene, <sup>b</sup> ch. 8. 2, 3.  
and Joanna, and Mary *the mother of James*, and other  
*women that were with them*, which told these things  
11 unto the apostles. <sup>a</sup>And their words seemed to them <sup>a</sup> ver. 25 ; Mt. 16  
as idle tales, and they believed them not. 11 ; Ps. 126. 1.

less, and their words to each other, showed the object of their coming. **The living**, equivalent to a declaration that Christ had revived and risen. **Among the dead**. He had been laid in a *new* tomb where there had been no "dead," but this particular tomb was thought of as representing "the grave" in general, the home of the dead.

6. **Remember how he spake unto you**, etc. See ch. 9 : 22 ; 18 : 31 ff. The angels had taken better account of what the Saviour had said to them than the disciples to whom he spoke.

7. **Son of man**. It has been noticed as an interesting fact that Jesus did not thus designate himself after his resurrection. Compare ver. 26. Stephen alone (Acts 7 : 56) used the expression once. **Must be delivered**. The necessity lay in the divine plan of human redemption, which involved the death of Christ. **Sinful men**, meaning the members of the Sanhedrin, "the rulers of the Jews." Sinners they were of singular criminality, although what they did "with wicked hands" was in pursuance of "the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God," Acts 2 : 23.

8. **And they remembered his words**. They doubtless also now for the first time *understood* the significance of language repeatedly uttered by Christ, so plain to us that we can hardly imagine prejudices and prepossessions strong enough in their minds to hinder the instant apprehension of his meaning.

9. **And returned from the sepulchre**. This they appear to have done with trembling haste (Mark 16 : 8), but, as was natural, with mingled emotions of great fear and great joy,

Matt. 28 : 8. **And told all these things unto the eleven**. "The eleven" here means probably the "disciples;" at least we may conveniently imagine that Peter and John had gone to the tomb upon the report of Mary Magdalene (John 20 : 2 ff.) just as these women had left it, and had not yet rejoined their brethren. Meanwhile, Mary Magdalene, who remained after Peter and John left the sepulchre, was rewarded by an interview with the risen Saviour (John 20 : 14 ff.), which she had hastened to report, so that she overtook the other women here mentioned, or came so soon after as to join her communication with theirs. See the next verse here, and compare Mark 16 : 10 ; John 28 : 18. The "all things" would thus include Mary's account of the appearance of the risen Jesus to herself. **And to all the rest**, an interesting glimpse of the indefinite number of persons in Jerusalem who were interested in the crucified Nazarene. Of them probably were the two disciples mentioned below, ver. 13.

10. **It was Mary Magdalene**, etc. —viz. that "told all these things." On **Joanna** compare ch. 8 : 3. **Mary the mother of James**, strictly, "James' Mary," was the wife of one Alpheus (compare Mark 3 : 18), who seems also to have been called Cleophas or Clopas, John 19 : 25. There should, according to the now approved text, be a greater pause after **James**, and then we should proceed, leaving out the **which** : "and the other women with them said these things to the apostles." It would appear from Matt. 28 : 9 f. that a part of the women who had been with these to the tomb separated from them in return and met the Saviour on their way.

12 <sup>4</sup>Then arose Peter, and ran unto the sepulchre; and <sup>4</sup>John 20. 3-7.  
stooping down, he beheld the linen clothes laid by themselves, and departed, wondering in himself at that which was come to pass.

*Appearances of Jesus to his disciples after his resurrection.*

13 <sup>\*</sup>And, behold, two of them went that same day to <sup>\*</sup>Mk. 16. 12, 13.  
a village called Emmaus, which was from Jerusalem

11. **And their words**, including, as we have seen, the report of Christ's being alive again. **And they believed them not.** The difficulty with which they were persuaded of this fundamental fact of Christianity—our Lord's resurrection—shows us the more clearly how impossible it was that they could be deluded when at last the greatest doubter among them had been constrained to say, "My Lord and my God!"

12. **PETER VISITS THE TOMB, FINDS JESUS GONE, AND RETURNS HOME.** Recorded only by Luke, but referred to by Paul in 1 Cor. 15 : 5. **Then arose Peter, and ran**, etc. More exactly, "*But Peter* (notwithstanding the general unbelief) *rising up ran*," etc. This statement should, in consistency with that view of the harmony on which we have gone above (see particularly note on ver. 9), have come in earlier, parallel to John 20 : 6 ff. It was probably the appearance of its being out of place here which caused its omission from some of the early manuscripts and versions. **Departed, wondering in himself.** Rather, "departed to his home." **At that which had come to pass**, not yet fully convinced, as would seem, that our Lord had arisen, yet wondering how the body could have been removed while the cloths in which it had been wrapped still lay in the tomb.

13-35. **JESUS APPEARS TO TWO DISCIPLES ON THEIR WAY TO EMMAUS AND TRAVELS WITH THEM THITHER.** Recorded only by Luke.

13. **Two of them**—*i. e.*, of "the others" (ver. 9), not apostles, ver. 33. The name of one is mentioned (ver. 18) as Cleopas; the other is entirely unknown. **Went**, "were journeying." **Emmaus.** A place of this name, and apparently the same place, is mentioned by Josephus (*Jewish Wars*, vii. 6. 6) as then existing, but it has not

been positively identified in modern times. Rev. Dr. H. C. Fish, in his *Bible Lands Illustrated*, gives reasons for supposing that the Emmaus of Luke was about Solomon's Pools, the valley of Etham, modern Urtas, a short distance south of Bethlehem. "In leaving Bethlehem (after passing through an olive orchard) we rode most of the way along the old aqueduct (bursting at different places with life-giving waters) which Solomon built for carrying water to Jerusalem. This and adjacent springs made all the country exceptionally fruitful. . . . Josephus no doubt alludes to these pools and to the other improvements which formerly existed in their neighborhood in saying: 'There was a certain place about fifty furlongs distant from Jerusalem, which is called Etham. Very pleasant it is in gardens, and abounding in rivulets of water. Thither did he (Solomon) use to go out in the morning, sitting on high in his chariot.' The distance of these pools from Jerusalem answers very well to this description, and this spot satisfies its conditions. . . . I have almost no doubt that this spot is the lost Emmaus of Luke's Gospel, xxiv. 13-33. The Arabs have given to the place the name El-Hammour (the *bath*), which is exactly the word Emmaus in Greek; and the distance from Jerusalem is just about that spoken of by Luke as travelled by the disciples on the afternoon of the resurrection day—'threescore furlongs,' about seven miles. The disciples returned to Jerusalem that night, and the walk out and back could easily be made in a few hours. Mr. Meshullam, a Christian Jew, who has lived here over thirty years, believes it to be the true Emmaus. . . . Dr. Bonar (Andrew A.), among others, is satisfied that this is the Emmaus of Josephus and the Emmaus of Luke, to which the two disciples were retiring a little way out of Jerusalem when Jesus overtook them. Is it not an inter-

- 14 *about* threescore furlongs. And <sup>f</sup>they talked together  
 15 of all these things which had happened. And it came  
 to pass, that while they communed *together* and reason-  
 ed, <sup>g</sup>Jesus himself drew near, and went with them.  
 16 But <sup>h</sup>their eyes were holden that they should not know  
 him.  
 17 And he said unto them, What manner of communi-  
 cations *are* these that ye have one to another, as ye  
 18 walk, <sup>i</sup>and are sad? And the one of them, <sup>k</sup>whose  
 name was Cleopas, answering, said unto him, Art thou  
 only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the  
 things which are come to pass there in these days?  
 19 And he said unto them, What things? And they  
 said unto him, Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, <sup>l</sup>which  
 was a prophet <sup>m</sup>mighty in deed and word before God  
 20 and all the people: <sup>n</sup>and how the chief priests and  
 our rulers delivered him to be condemned to death,  
 21 and have crucified him. But we trusted <sup>o</sup>that it had

<sup>f</sup>ch. 6. 45; Deu. 6  
7; Mal. 3. 16; 4  
Thes. 5. 11.

<sup>g</sup>ver. 36; Mt. 18. 20.  
<sup>h</sup>ver. 31; John 26.  
14; 21. 4.

<sup>i</sup>John 16. 22.  
<sup>k</sup>John 19. 25.

<sup>l</sup>ch. 7. 16; Mt. 21.  
11; John 3. 2; 4.  
19; 6. 14; Ac. 2.  
22.

<sup>m</sup>Ac. 7. 22.  
<sup>n</sup>ch. 23. 1; Ac. 13.  
27, 28.

<sup>o</sup>ch. 1. 68; 2. 38;  
Ac. 1. 6.

esting thought that Jesus, upon his second birth (Ps. 2 : 7), should have been going to Bethlehem, where he was born?"—*Bible Lands Illustrated*, pp. 371-377.

**Threescore furlongs**, or *stadia*, something less than seven miles.

14. **And they** (on their part, in slight antithesis to Jesus in next verse) **talked** (were conversing) **together**, etc. "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh."

15. **They communed together** (*conversed*, as in preceding verse) **and reasoned** (argued the question), **Jesus himself** (the very subject of their discussions) **drew near and went** (travelled, or made the journey) **with them**.

16. **Their eyes were holden**. They were so affected that their eyes did not perform their natural function. The release from this impediment is intimated in ver. 31: "their eyes were opened." **Know**, recognize. Mark, indeed, tells us (ch. 16 : 12) that he appeared to them "in another form." Oh how changed from that in which they had seen him writhing on the cross or pale in death! But the language here plainly implies that there was a preternatural obstruction in them to the recognition of their Lord.

17. **What manner of communications**, literally, *what words*, **are these that ye have one to another**, *which ye exchange with*, literal-

ly, *throw back and forth to each other, as ye walk, and are sad*, of gloomy look. The throwing words back and forth is but a description of their "reasoning," argument, or friendly dispute. The preferable text ends the question with **walk, and adds, *And they stood still with sad faces***, surprised and perhaps annoyed at the interruption.

18. **And the one of them**, properly, *and one*. **Cleopas**, not the same name as Cleophas, in the Greek Clotas (John 19 : 25), nor designating the same person. **Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem**, rather, *art thou alone a stranger in Jerusalem*, tarrying transiently, so as to be ignorant of what every other one has heard all about? The "alone" must be understood as applying to the following clause also, *and knewest not*.

19. **What things?** Jesus would draw from them a statement of the feeling which he knew perfectly well, as if he delighted to hear it from their lips. So had he proceeded with Mary, John 20 : 15-17. **Who was**, literally, *became*, "turned out," **a prophet mighty in deed and word**, performing miracles, and speaking as never man spake, **before God and all the people**, commending himself as such a prophet to the judgment of God and of men.

20. **Delivered him**, namely, to the Roman power. **And crucified him**. What they caused to be done they did.

been he which should have redeemed Israel. And  
 22 beside all this, to-day is the third day since these  
 things were done. Yea, and certain women also of  
 our company made us astonished, which were early  
 23 at the sepulchre: and when they found not his  
 body, they came, saying, that they had also seen a  
 24 vision of angels, which said that he was alive. And  
 certain of them which were with us went to the sepulchre,  
 and found it even so as the women had said:  
 but him they saw not.  
 25 Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart  
 26 to believe all that the prophets have spoken: ought  
 not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter  
 27 into his glory? And beginning at Moses and all  
 the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the  
 Scriptures the things concerning himself.  
 28 And they drew nigh unto the village, whither they

¶ ch. 9. 22.  
 ¶ ver. 9, 10; Mt. 28.  
 8; Mk. 16. 10;  
 John 20. 18.  
 ¶ ver. 12; John 20. 3.  
 ¶ Mt. 8. 26.  
 ¶ ver. 46; ch. 22. 37;  
 Ac. 17. 3; Heb.  
 2. 9, 10; 1 Pet. 1. 11.  
 ¶ ver. 45.  
 ¶ Ge. 3. 15; 22. 18  
 26. 4; 49. 10,  
 Num. 21. 6-9.  
 Deu. 18. 15, 18, 19.  
 ¶ Ps. 16. 7, 10; 22;  
 132. 11; Is. 7. 14;  
 9. 6, 7; 40. 10, 11;  
 50. 6; 53; Jer. 23.  
 5, 6; 33. 14, 15;  
 Eze. 34. 23; 37.  
 25; Dan. 9. 24-26;  
 Mic. 6. 2-4; 7.  
 20; Zec. 9. 9; 13.  
 7; Mal. 3. 1-3; 4. 2.

21. **But we trusted, we, however,** we on our part, *were hoping*. That it had been he which should, that he (emphatic) *was the one who was to redeem Israel*, in that mistaken sense of a national deliverance and worldly religious exaltation which is indicated, Matt. 20 : 20-28; Acts 1 : 6. **And beside all this**—*i. e.*, his having been delivered up and crucified. **The third day.** Not as though they were expecting his resurrection on that day, but that so long a time had passed without any relief to their anxieties.

22. **Yea, and, but also,** as if this thought again had awakened some hope. **Certain women,** the company spoken of in ver. 9, before Mary Magdalene had come in. The mark between this and the next verse should be no more than a semicolon, since it was the word which the women brought which "astonished" them.

23. **Which said that he was alive,** properly, *who say that he is alive*.

24. **Certain of them which were with us,** meaning, probably, Peter (ver. 12) and John, John 20 : 3. **Even so as the women had said,** namely, that the tomb was empty, or did they also see the vision of angels and not mention it among the many marvels of that morning? **But him they saw not,** as they perhaps hoped they should, after the word from the angels.

25. **Then he, he himself,** he on his part, said. **Fools,** void of understanding, intellectually deficient, **slow**

**of heart,** lacking susceptibility of the spiritual affections. **To believe all that the prophets have spoken,** with emphasis on "all." They could easily believe what had been predicted of his power and glory, but not what of his humiliation, sufferings, and death.

26. **Ought not Christ, the Christ, to have suffered**—*i. e.*, *was it not necessary*, in order to his fulfilling the prophecies concerning him. **These things,** which he has suffered, and which now fill you with despair. **And to enter into his glory?** Were not both necessary, the former as well as the latter, and the latter in consequence of the former? Compare 1 Pet. 1 : 11: "The sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow." "To enter into his glory" was to ascend the throne of his spiritual and heavenly dominion, which involved the idea of his rising again from the dead.

27. **And beginning at Moses, etc.**—that is, beginning with Moses, and having shown how his writings bore on the subject, repeating the process with the prophets in succession. **In all the Scriptures,** including the Psalms and other poetical books. What a discourse must that have been from such a preacher, at such a time, on such a text! Who would not wish to know precisely what the passages were in the various Old Testament books which the Saviour most dwelt upon as relating to himself? See marginal references.

28. **And he made as though he**

went: and <sup>a</sup>he made as though he would have gone further. But <sup>a</sup>they constrained him, saying, Abide with us: for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent. And he went in to tarry with them.

30 And it came to pass, as he sat at meat with them, <sup>b</sup>he took bread, and blessed *it*, and brake, and gave to them. And <sup>c</sup>their eyes were opened, and they 32 knew him; and he vanished <sup>d</sup>out of their sight. And they said one to another, <sup>e</sup>Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the Scriptures?

<sup>a</sup> Ge. 32. 26; 42. 7  
Mk. 6. 48.  
<sup>b</sup> Ge. 19. 3; Ac. 16  
15.

<sup>b</sup> Mt. 14. 19.

<sup>c</sup> ver. 16.

<sup>d</sup> See ch. 4. 30;  
John 8. 59.

<sup>e</sup> Ps. 39. 3; Prov. 27.  
9; Jer. 20. 9;  
Heb. 4. 12.

would have gone further, acted as if he were going further. He simply carried on the part, which he had assumed, of a chance fellow-traveller, and would go on unless they invited him to tarry, which he doubtless knew they would. God acts generally with his people on the plan that his benefits are of more use to them if they first earnestly ask for them.

29. But (properly, and) they constrained him, etc. The copulative conjunction implies that the appearance of his being about to go further naturally led to their urging him to remain with them. The emphasis is on **abide with us**, as if the whole were thus expressed; and they urgently said, Remain with us. It is not indicated whether one or both of them lived there, although it seems probable that this was the case. **Toward evening**, to be understood consistently with the statement in ver. 33. **The day is far spent, declines.** They plied him with such arguments as might be effectual with a wayworn fellow-man; but what really moved Christ, we may be assured, was that they so earnestly desired his company. This prevailed, and he went in to tarry (*abide*, as before) with them.

30. As he sat at meat with them, literally, *reclined with them*, at the beginning of the meal. He took bread, properly, *the bread*, and blessed it, and brake, and gave (was giving) to them. Our Saviour seems to have assumed the place of housefather with them as he had been wont to do with his disciples, and according to a Jewish precept which said, "When they eat together, they are bound to give thanks," he gave God praise for his gifts. That we are not to

suppose a proper "eucharist" here is probable from the fact that the giving of thanks seems to have been at the time of reclining, and that it was the bread for the meal, not any particular portion, which he blessed.

31. And their eyes were opened, and they knew him. This implies that they were the subjects of a special divine operation, the reverse of that by which their eyes "were holden" (ver. 16); but as even our Lord's extraordinary actions often had preparations and accompaniments which naturally suited with them, so here the singular fact of his taking the mastership of the table, perhaps something familiar in the manner of his blessing and distributing their food, and a more searching scrutiny of his looks, may have contributed to their recognition of the Lord. And he vanished out of their sight. The form of the original expression favors the opinion that he disappeared in an extraordinary manner, as he seems to have entered the room that evening where the disciples were assembled, "the doors having been shut," John 20:19.

32. Did not our heart burn, literally, *was not our heart burning*, etc., *within us*? This was the experimental proof and confirmation to them that it was Jesus who had been with them. By a figure natural to all languages, excitement, activity, tenderness of the feelings, is called warmth. When this reaches a high degree, the heart is said to burn. Compare Ps. 39:3; Jer. 20:9. And while he opened. Omit the *and* according to high authority, *the opening the Scriptures* and *the talking to them* being represented as the same thing.

33. And they rose up the same

- 33 And they rose up the same hour, and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven gathered together,  
 34 and them that were with them, saying, The Lord is  
 35 risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon. And <sup>† 1 Cor. 15. 5.</sup> they told what things *were done* in the way, and how he was known of them in breaking of bread.
- 36 <sup>‡ Mk. 16. 14-18</sup> And as they thus spake, Jesus himself stood in the <sup>John 20. 19-23.</sup> midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace *be* unto  
 37 you. But they were terrified and affrighted, and sup-  
 38 posed that they had seen <sup>‡ Ac. 12. 15.</sup> a spirit. And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts  
 39 arise in your hearts? Behold my hands and my feet,

**hour, and returned to Jerusalem.** Impatient to share their happy knowledge with their brethren, they must probably have left their meal unfinished, and hastily retraced the seven miles that they might find the eleven before they had retired for the night. Bengel appositely observes: "They do not now fear the journey in the night, from which they had before dissuaded their unknown companion." **And found the eleven gathered together.** Christian meetings, prompted by community of faith and sentiment, had already begun; "the first day of the week" was already turning to that blessed character and use in which it was to stand to the end of the world. Where the place of gathering was it is vain to ask, although the two disciples seem to have known whither to direct their steps.

34. Those disciples were met with the very message which they had hastened to bring; for we must understand the **saying** and what follows as referring to the eleven. **The Lord is risen indeed, really rose, and hath appeared to Simon, and appeared to Simon.** The form of expression throws the visions of Jesus back into the earlier part of the day. The appearance to Peter is probably that mentioned by Paul, Luke's instructor and companion (1 Cor. 15 : 5), and had taken place subsequently to what is related, ver. 12.

35. **And they, the two disciples, in their turn, told, etc. In breaking of bread, literally, in the breaking of the loaf.**

36-49. JESUS APPEARS IN THE MIDST OF THE APOSTLES, INSTRUCTS THEM, AND GIVES THEM HIS FINAL

CHARGE, Mark 16 : 14; John 20 : 19-25; 1 Cor. 15 : 5.

36. **As they thus spake, while they were saying these things, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them.** Luke appears to have intended to intimate the same miraculous suddenness of our Saviour's appearance which John (20 : 19) expressly declares in speaking of the same event. It is not said that he came into the midst, but that he *stood in the midst* of them. While they were talking about him, there he was. As if to reassure them by the familiar tones of his voice, he utters the usual salutation, now likely to recall his farewell blessing (John 14 : 27), **Peace be unto you.**

37. **Terrified, cowering.** The very manner of his appearance filled them with awe, which for the moment almost swallowed up their joy, and made them recoil from his presence. Evidently much unbelief had remained in the hearts of those who had only heard reports of his having risen. His being suddenly found with them while they were discussing the word about his having just been seen a number of miles away, at the first blush rather disconcerted than convinced them. **They supposed that they had seen a spirit, rather, that they then beheld a spirit.** They evidently shared the popular belief in ghosts. Compare Matt. 14 : 26.

38. **Why do thoughts arise, etc.?** Thoughts here are doubts or hesitations as to whether it was really Christ or not.

39. **Behold my hands and my feet.** Surely those cruel marks could leave no doubt that he was indeed the one who hung upon the cross two days

that it is I myself: <sup>l</sup>handle me, and see; for <sup>k</sup>a spirit  
 40 hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have. And  
 when he had thus spoken, he showed them *his* hands  
 41 and *his* feet. And while they yet believed not <sup>l</sup>for  
 joy, and wondered, he said unto them, <sup>m</sup>Have ye here  
 42 any meat? <sup>n</sup>And they gave him a piece of a broiled  
 43 fish, and of an honeycomb. <sup>o</sup>And he took *it*, and did  
 eat before them.  
 44 And he said unto them, <sup>p</sup>These *are* the words which  
 I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, <sup>q</sup>that all  
 things must be fulfilled, which were written <sup>r</sup>in the  
 law of Moses, and *in* the prophets, and *in* the psalms,  
 45 concerning me. Then <sup>s</sup>opened he their understand-

<sup>l</sup> John 20. 20, 27.  
<sup>k</sup> 1 Thes. 5. 23  
 Heb. 12. 9.

<sup>l</sup> Ge. 45. 26.  
<sup>m</sup> John 21. 5.  
<sup>n</sup> John 21. 9, 13.  
<sup>o</sup> Ac. 10. 41.

<sup>p</sup> ver. 6.  
<sup>q</sup> Ac. 3. 18.  
<sup>r</sup> ver. 26; Le. 16. 3  
 5-16; Ps. 2. 22; 110;  
 118. 22, 23; Hos.  
 3. 5; Hag. 2. 7.  
<sup>s</sup> Ac. 16. 14.

before. A look would be enough to show that this was he himself. But lest they should still imagine that he was Jesus only in a spiritual phantasm, his condescending kindness goes further and calls on them to do what he had not allowed to Mary. **Handle me, and see**, get the evidence which you desire of my substantial reality. **For a spirit hath not**, etc. The very idea of a spectre or ghost has always been that it was merely an unreal semblance of flesh and blood, too ethereal to affect any of the senses except sight.

40. As he had already called on them to *see* hands and feet in the preceding verse, this verse must probably import that, as he did afterward to Thomas, he offered his scarred members for particular scrutiny, by handling even, to conquer their incredulity.

41. **And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered.** Their state seems to have been one of joyful amazement at the presence of their Lord, which they could no longer question, while yet they felt that it was "too good to be true," that there must be some unreality, some illusion, in it. To remove this last hesitation Jesus lovingly condescended to give them one more practical lesson by eating with them. **Have ye here any meat?** Properly, *anything to eat?*

42. **And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish.** The clause, **and of an honeycomb** is wanting in the oldest manuscripts, and is omitted in the best text. This was probably the remnants of the disciples' frugal evening meal.

43. **And he took it, the food, and did eat before them.** The act was

well suited to remove the last remaining shade of doubt that this was *substantially* their risen Lord, and seems to have had the intended effect.

44. What follows, to the end of ver. 49, seems to have been a part of this interview. After eating, **he said unto them, These are the words—i. e.,** in these events you have the fulfilment of the words. **While I was yet with you**, a natural yet striking and profound note of the difference between the ended term of his humiliation and the glorified state in whose vestibule he now stood. Those words purported **that all things must be fulfilled, etc. Law . . . prophets . . . psalms,** in accordance with the customary Jewish division of the Old Testament into the *law* (Pentateuch), the *prophets*, meaning what are now generally called the prophets (except Daniel), and the historical books (except Ruth) as far as the end of Second Kings, and the *writings*, including all the other books of our canonical Scriptures. The most highly prized of these "writings" was the book of Psalms, which sometimes, as here, stood for them all, and is with great propriety named now because it is of their prophetic and typical significance only that our Saviour now thinks. This is proved by the words **which were written . . . concerning me.**

45. **Then opened he their understanding.** How? Who may explain the divine skill in enlightening that darkness of understanding and quickening that torpor of faith (ver. 25) which had hindered their reception of the truth? Did he patiently explain away their prejudices in detail, or by a

46 ing, that they might understand the Scriptures. And  
 said unto them, <sup>1</sup> Thus it is written, and thus it be-  
 hooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead  
 47 the third day: and that repentance and <sup>2</sup> remission  
 of sins should be preached in his name <sup>3</sup> among all  
 48 nations, <sup>4</sup> beginning at Jerusalem. And <sup>5</sup> ye are wit-  
 49 nesses of these things. <sup>6</sup> And, behold, I send the  
 promise of my Father upon you. But tarry ye in the  
 city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from  
 on high.

<sup>1</sup> ver. 26. 27

<sup>2</sup> Ac. 13. 38, 39.  
<sup>3</sup> Ge. 12. 3; Is. 42  
 6, 22; Jer. 31. 34  
 Hos. 2. 23; Mic  
 4. 2; Mk. 16. 15  
<sup>4</sup> See Mt. 10. 5, 6;  
 Ac. 3. 26; 13. 46.  
<sup>5</sup> Ac. 1. 8, 22.  
<sup>6</sup> Is. 44. 3, 4; Ac. 1. 4.

*Our Lord's ascension.*

50 And he led them out <sup>b</sup> as far as to Bethany, and he

<sup>b</sup> Mk. 16. 19; Ac.  
 1. 9, 12.

sudden flash of illustration upon some central utterance of prophecy, send clearness and persuasion through the system of their thoughts?

46, 47. **Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer,** etc. The revised text requires us to read: *Thus it is written that the Christ should suffer, and rise, etc., and that repentance and remission, etc. Repentance,* a change of mind, of views, feelings, purposes, in regard to God's claims and invitations in Christ such as to fit men who are sinners for membership in the kingdom of God. See notes on Matt. 3 : 2-6. **Remission,** forgiveness, release from the penalty of sins. **Be preached,** be proclaimed, publicly announced as obtainable. **In his name.** Strictly, upon his name, on the ground of his agency in making forgiveness possible, and of his authority as the Mediator of the new covenant. **Beginning at (or from) Jerusalem,** as Christ himself had done (John 2 : 13 ff.), and as was intrinsically right in the economy of redemption, Acts 13 : 46; Rom. 1 : 16; 2 : 9. **And ye are witnesses of these things.** "These things" must naturally include all which has just been named as written concerning the Christ; the fulfilment of all this they are to testify, but especially, as the subsequent history shows, the great central fact about which all the rest cluster—the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. See Acts 1 : 8, 22; 2 : 32; 3 : 15; 5 : 32, etc. To bear witness of these things was thus the characteristic function of the apostles, and is the duty of all Christians so far as they were represented by those disciples.

49. **The promise,** what was promised, **of my Father**—i. e. the marvellous influence of the Holy Spirit. Compare Acts 1 : 4 : 2 : 1-4, 33; Joel 4 : 1 ff.; also 20; 44 : 1 ff.; Ezek. 36 : 27; 39 : 29. Special emphasis rests on the **I** in this sentence—*I the risen One. Tarry ye.* Literally, *sit ye,* not merely "stay," but "keep still," "make no attempt at the work." **In Jerusalem,** that they may be ready for the bestowment of the Holy Spirit, which would take place here. That this direction was not incompatible with their going into Galilee at *Christ's command* (Matt. 28 : 10, 16) is evident from ver. 50 of this chapter. **Until ye be endued.** The last word means *be clothed,* "have put on," a common figure to represent "being put in possession of." Compare Rom. 13 : 14; Gal. 3 : 27; Eph. 4 : 24; Col. 3 : 12. **With power.** This means not directly the Holy Spirit, but the moral power—clearness of view, confidence, skill, earnestness—which would result from his operation. Compare ch. 1 : 35. **From on high,** the heavenly height to which Christ will have gone, Acts 2 : 33; Eph. 4 : 8.

50-53. **THE ASCENSION,** Mark 16 : 19, 20; Acts 1 : 9-12. Luke here and in the Acts relates fully what Mark records briefly.

50. Luke takes no account of the forty days through which, as he himself shows (Acts 1 : 3), the risen Jesus used to meet his disciples and speak to them of the kingdom of God. **And he led them out (of the city) as far as to Bethany,** not merely, therefore, as would seem, to the summit of the ridge of Olivet, but down somewhat on

51 lifted up his hands, and blessed them. °And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from  
 52 them and carried up into heaven. °And they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great  
 53 joy. And were continually °in the temple, praising and blessing God. †Amen.

°2 Ki. 2. 11; John 20. 17; Eph. 4. 8  
 Heb. 1. 3.

†Mt. 28. 9, 17.

°Ac. 2. 46, 47; 5  
 42.

†Mt. 6. 13.

the eastern slope. **And he lifted up his hands, etc.** Compare Lev. 9 : 22 : "And Aaron lifted up his hands toward the people and blessed them." The "lifting up the hands toward" in the case of a company was, like the laying on of hands where one person was intended, a sign of the direction of the pious wish which was expressed. The "blessing" was of the nature of a prayer for their welfare.

51. **While he blessed them**, even in the midst of his prayer for them, **he was parted**, better, actively *he parted, from them, and*, apparently by a subsequent movement, after he was separated a short distance from them, was **carried up into heaven**.

52. **And they**, now left alone by their Lord, **worshipped him**. Either they bowed down and offered prayer and praise to him before he had disappeared from view, or, more probably, after he had ceased to be visible, they paid to the *ascended* Saviour the first act of worship in that series which should be continued thenceforth on earth and in heaven for ever and ever. **With great joy**. Their sense of personal loss was swallowed up in the overwhelming conviction of the blessedness and glory of their Lord. This involved also the guarantee of their own participation in the same glory, John 14 : 3, 19. They might now experience the truth of what he had recently so strangely spoken : "If ye loved me ye would rejoice because I said unto you, I go to my Father," John 14 : 28.

53. **And were continually in the temple**. They did not think of themselves yet, nor even for some time after the day of Pentecost, as other than Jews, peculiarly favored, indeed, and already belonging to that kingdom of the Messiah into which they still hoped that their whole nation would be brought. **Continually**—*i. e.*, as an old commentator remarked, "at all the seasons of assembly when it was allowed them to be there." Perfectly consistent, there-

fore, with Acts 1 : 13, and not implying that Acts 2 : 44, or even 2 : 1, must refer to the temple. The best text omits **praising and**.

#### REMARKS

1. The Christian observance of Sunday was well begun by an *early rising* of the loving women whose hearts were intent on service to Christ, ver. 1.

2. The most formidable obstacles which oppose the fulfilment of God's plans vanish as if of their own accord when his time arrives, ver. 1. Compare Matt. 27 : 60, 66; Mark 16 : 2, 3.

3. The absence of Christ's body from the tomb, at which they were now so much surprised and grieved, was afterward seen to be essential to the very foundation of Christian hope, the very soul of the gospel message, ver. 3. Compare Acts 2 : 24, 32 ff.

4. What the believer looks upon as a great disappointment and loss, even the withdrawal of his Saviour, often proves the very means of a more happy fulfilment of his desires, vers. 2, 3. Compare John 20 : 2, 13, 16.

5. From the glorious appearance of angels whenever we are allowed a glimpse of them in Scripture, we may form some idea of the future splendour of the saint after hearing the Saviour say that "in the resurrection they are as (Luke, equal to) the angels of God in heaven," ver. 4. Compare Matt. 22 : 30; Luke 20 : 36.

6. Many, while hanging over the coffin or lingering about the tomb, think of their deceased friends, even Christians, as among the dead, when really those friends are not there, but are now for the first time truly alive, ver. 5. Compare Rev. 7 : 15; 21 : 4.

7. From how many mistakes would Christ's disciples be kept if they remembered words spoken by him precisely suited to their case! vers. 6, 7.

8. When we consider the failure of these disciples to receive the testimony

of angels in regard to a fact of which they now remembered their Lord had plainly spoken to them, we may well suspect ourselves, and may be patient with the prejudices which keep even good men from believing the manifest truth of God, ver. 11.

9. The same lesson is powerfully confirmed when we see that even Peter, with the added testimony of his own eyes, was not yet raised above perplexity and doubt, ver. 12.

10. Those who carry thoughts of Jesus with them on their journeys may find him near to them even there. The open field may become the scene of sweetest and most profitable communion with heaven, vers. 13, 14, 15. Compare Gen. 28 : 10-17.

11. It well becomes the disciples of Christ, when they are together, to talk of his death and resurrection; thus they may improve one another's knowledge, refresh one another's memory, and stir up one another's devout affections, ver. 14.

12. Jesus is sure to be near those who are earnestly concerned about his interests. In the dark times of the New as of the Old Testament, the Lord hearkens and hears the saints that speak often one to another, ver. 15. Compare Mal. 3 : 16.

13. The disciple may often have the Saviour nearest to his side when he does not recognize the divine presence, but most laments his separation from the Lord, ver. 16.

14. God is wont to draw out from the needy soul a statement of its troubles and its wants, in order to prepare it more distinctly for the supply which he is ready to bestow, vers. 17-19; Ezek. 36 : 37.

15. That the whole population of a large and crowded city were occupied for days with the fate of our Lord, a proof to us of the trustworthiness of the accounts which come to us unrefuted out of that ordeal, vers. 17, 18.

16. Priests and rulers, who ought to represent God on the earth, have not unfrequently been the most mischievous enemies of him and his cause, not least so when they were professedly most devoted to his service, ver. 20.

17. Hope in God, when most sorely disappointed, is sometimes most near to being fulfilled, ver. 21.

18. To believe *all* which is revealed in Scripture is essential to our proper edification, ver. 25.

19. Suffering, glory, toil, rest, humiliation, exaltation, the cross, the crown,—this, which was the necessary order for the Redeemer, is so also, on different grounds, for his redeemed, ver. 26. Compare Phil. 2 : 5-9; Rom. 8 : 17; Rev. 3 : 21.

20. How full is the whole Scripture of light and comfort if only we have a present Christ to interpret its pages for us! ver. 27.

21. Jesus is easily prevailed upon to grant blessings which the outward course of his providence would not lead us to expect, vers. 28, 29.

22. We may reason with our Saviour in prayer, and ply him with arguments which would naturally move a wise, good, kind man, ver. 29. Compare Gen. 18 : 23 ff.

23. "Constraining" importunity in prayer secures the Saviour's abiding presence, ver. 29. Compare Luke 18 : 1 ff.

24. How blessed the privilege of having Christ with us at the table, to converse there of Christ and with Christ, and so turn an ordinary meal into a Lord's Supper! ver. 30. Compare Rev. 3 : 20.

25. How transient in this world of temptation, toil, and change are apt to be those glimpses of God which we gain at some favored moments of life! Then our eyes are opened, Christ is with us, eternity is near, we see what is invisible, and glory from on high gilds everything; the next moment it is nothing but dull earth around, with haply a sweet and heart-warming memory, in the strength of which we go many days, vers. 30-32.

26. A spiritual and practical unfolding of the Scriptures is the Lord's way of making the hearts of Christians to burn with holy interest in his cause, ver. 32. Compare Jer. 25 : 29.

27. Intercourse with Christ awakens the desire to make him known to others, especially to mourning disciples, vers. 33, 35.

28. Those who carry glad news concerning Christ are sometimes strengthened and enriched by the testimony of others; he that watereth shall be watered, ver. 34. Compare Prov. 11 : 25

29. The Saviour commonly manifests himself and speaks peace to his disciples when they are gathered together, thinking of him, speaking of him, filled with desire to see him, ver. 36. Compare Matt. 18 : 20.

30. When Christ comes to us, his ways are sometimes so unexpected and strange that we fail to recognize him and recoil from his presence, ver. 37.

31. Let us lay to heart anew the condescension and patience of our Saviour, not that we may provoke his kindness, but lest we despair on account of our own stupidity, vers. 38-43.

32. The agreement of prophecy and fact in the circumstances of Christ's death and resurrection is one of our strong grounds of confidence in the religion of the gospel, ver. 44.

33. Sometimes the Scriptures need to be expounded, sometimes the mind needs to be opened by the Spirit of God, in order to a profitable understanding of the word of God, ver. 45. Compare ver. 27; Acts 16 : 14.

34. "Thus it is written" ought to bring an end to all doubt, the cordial obedience of all the powers of the soul, ver. 46.

35. Repentance, the turning of the

mind from sin, with desire and purpose to live unto God, and the remission of sins, are inseparably connected in the plan of salvation. Neither can be without the other, ver. 47.

36. How much has yet to be done, in which all that love Jesus should be heartily and constantly engaged, before repentance and the remission of sins shall have been proclaimed among *all* the nations! ver. 47. Compare Matt. 28 : 19, 20.

37. Meanwhile, it is for all his disciples to remember that they are witnesses, and to testify, as they have power and opportunity, to the facts concerning Christ, ver. 48. Compare Mark 5 : 19; Acts 2 : 32; 22 : 15; 1 Pet. 5 : 1.

38. In entering upon each stage of our great work we need to be clothed with power from on high, which, happily, we need not "tarry" for now if only we supremely desire the blessing, ver. 49.

39. Christ's last words to his disciples were a blessing, which, being unfinished as he rose, still streams down in cheering, strengthening influence on the faithful who are left behind, vers. 50, 51.

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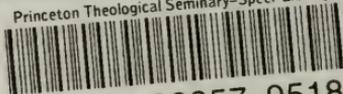




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