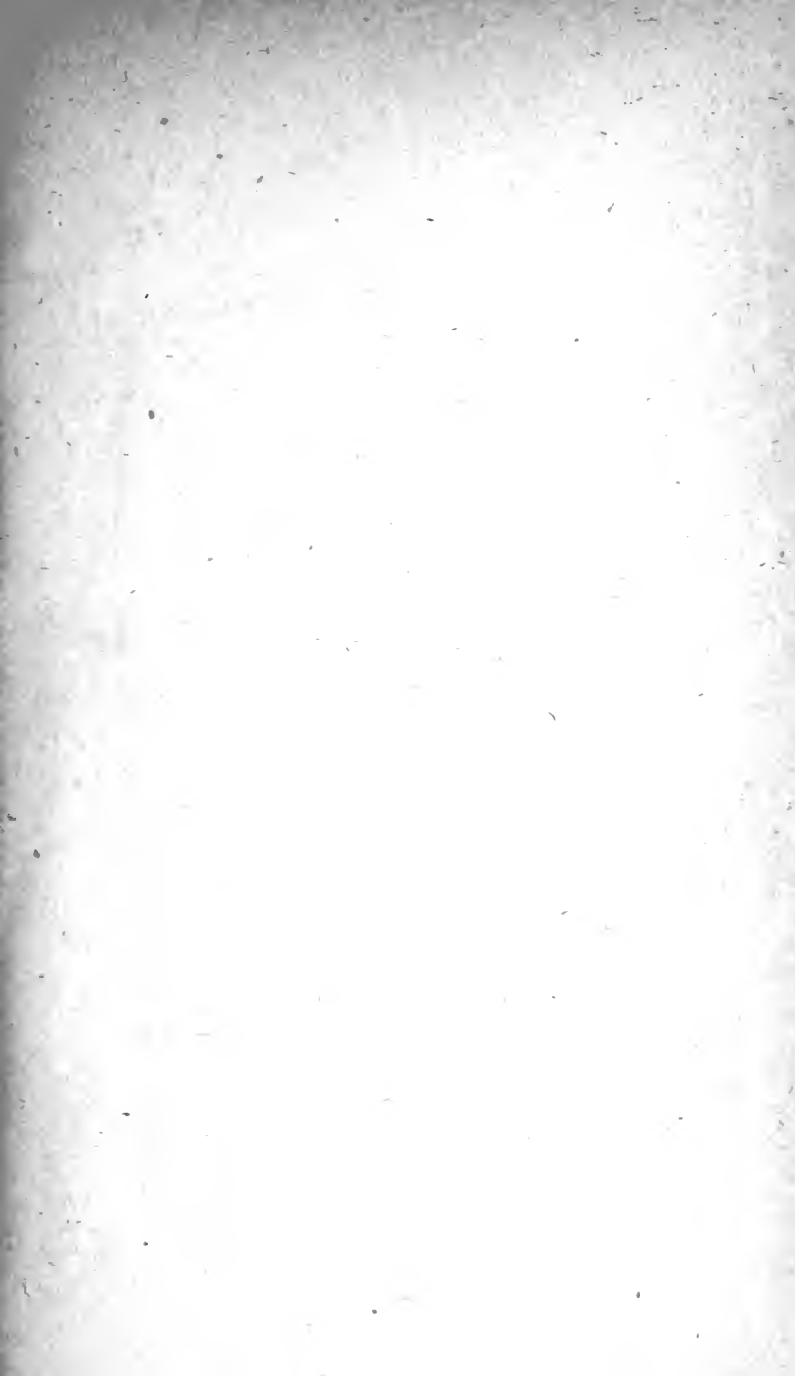


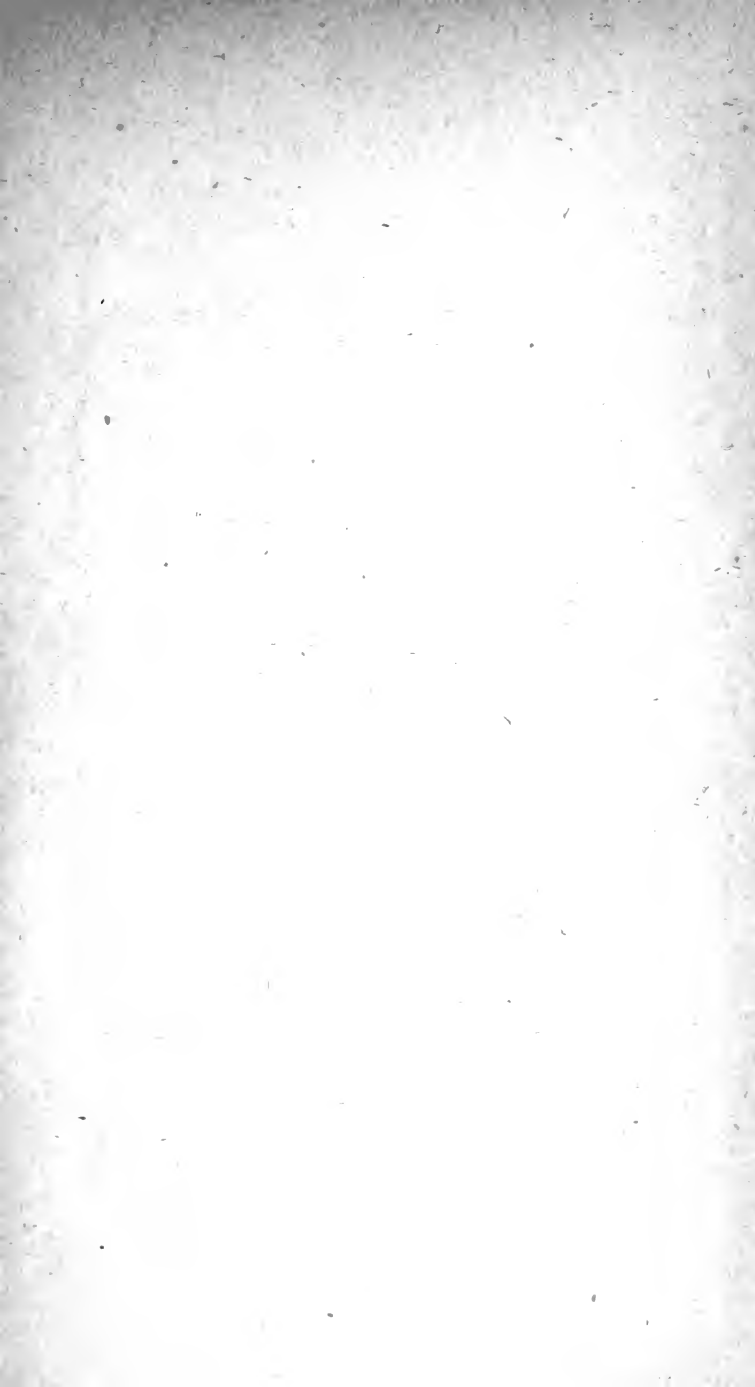
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# NOTES ON THE GOSPELS,

CRITICAL AND EXPLANATORY;

INCORPORATING WITH THE NOTES, ON A NEW PLAN,  
THE MOST APPROVED HARMONY OF  
THE FOUR GOSPELS.

BY

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ALLEGHANY CITY, PA.

MATTHEW AND MARK.

NEW YORK:  
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THE TRAVELS OF OUR LORD.

- In Infancy: *From Bethlehem to Jerusalem, Flight into Egypt, Return to Nazareth*
- At 12 Years of Age: *To the Temple at Jerusalem.*
- In His 30<sup>th</sup> Year: *From Nazareth to the Jordan, Wilderness of Judaea, Galilee, Cana (&c.)*
- In His 31<sup>st</sup> Year: *Jerusalem, Galilee, Shechem, E<sup>st</sup> Circuit in Galilee, Cana, Nazareth, Capernaum*
- In His 32<sup>nd</sup> Year: *Jerusalem, Sea of Galilee, Capernaum, Nain, 2<sup>nd</sup> Circuit in Galilee, Capernaum &c., 3<sup>rd</sup> Circuit in Galilee, Perea, N.E. Coast of Tiberias, Capernaum.*
- In His 33<sup>rd</sup> Year: *Region of Tyre & Sidon, The Decapolis towns: Capernaum, Samaria*
- At 33 Years & over: *Jerusalem, Perea, Jericho, Bethany, Jerusalem, Gethsemane, Calvary.*

**THE HOLY LAND**  
 IN THE TIME OF  
**CHRIST**

Corrected from the Latest  
 AUTHORITIES.

Scale of British Miles  
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THE aim of these Notes has been to bring together the results of Biblical investigation (so much increased of late), and to lay them in the very path of Sabbath school teachers and scholars, for their weekly lessons. It is believed that the plan of furnishing to their hand, from various and voluminous sources, the apparatus and material called for, will make the exercise attractive, and will both encourage and facilitate the study of God's word. This plan, therefore, takes up the Questions of the American Sunday School Union, so extensively in use, and especially the "Consecutive Union Question Book," lately issued, on the Gospels, to prepare Notes *with the Questions in eye*, and to weave around these Questions the material for more. The book accompanies the Questions without being dependent on them. The author hopes to stand thus in the avenue of so much scriptural instruction, and to be himself a party in the pleasant work, if so be he may be partaker, also, of the reward. He has not done the teacher's work for him, but has gathered for his use that which shall help him in his study, and make it satisfactory; while he has planned, by this means, to introduce to his notice what he needs to know, beyond all that the Questions call for.

Teachers so often have not the time for searching commentaries, or for reading discussions and diffuse annotations, that they may easily slight the study, or be discouraged in the good work. Such a Hand-Book, therefore, has been welcomed by many ministers, teachers and superintendents, with whom the author has conversed in the course of its preparation. And while the pupils in Sabbath schools and Bible classes have been mainly afloat, with Questions which are often themselves dark, and oftener such as no one seems precisely to answer, it is believed that an important good may be hereby attained, in bringing scholars to their classes well prepared—and that not only on the Questions, but on other collateral questions suggested by the Notes.

May it not also lead to the systematic study of the Gospel Histories, in parochial and other schools, and in family instruction, that the Notes have the advantage of Questions so well approved and every where so accessible as those of the S. S. Union—and these Questions arranged in short Lessons, within the reach of a daily or weekly exercise?

Another novel feature of these Notes is, the method of bringing to view a Harmony of the Four Gospel narratives. The common plan has been that of Calvin, Doddridge, Townsend and others—to bring together the parallel passages from the different Evangelists, and to comment on them, thus, in their order. Such a plan must always have the disadvantage of breaking the text, omitting some portions from each Evangelist, and destroying their respective characteristics. But this plan brings a Harmony into practical use, by placing it where it applies, and where it must all along suggest to the reader, in Captions of the Notes, the many important hints it gives. Furthermore, it goes over the other three Evangelists in the very act of examining one—bringing to view, in their place, the additional records of the others—and thus keeps up the thread of the whole history. It has also this advantage, of giving plain, brief captions to each paragraph, which call attention to the items, and of showing their order by the sections numbered throughout.

Dr. Robinson's Harmony, as corrected from Newcome, and followed by Greenleaf in his "Testimony of the Evangelists," has been adopted, with slight alterations, as being quite the best. This method has thrown the Notes into paragraphs, which have furnished an opportunity for briefly eliciting and summing up the inspired teachings under many sections, in short observations at the close of each, as much more likely to be useful than the usual sundries of remarks at a chapter's end.

Besides the more accessible and familiar works which have been constantly consulted, free use has been made of rarer helps, as, Calvin's Commentaries; Trench's Notes on the Parables, Miracles, and Sermon on the Mount; Bengel's Gnomon; Greenleaf's Testimony of the Evangelists; Englishman's Greek Concordance; Kitto's Biblical Encyclopedia; Trollope's *Analecta Theologica*; Hengstenberg's *Christology*; Blunt's *Coincidences*; Winer's *Idioms of the New Testament*; Olshausen, Townsend, &c.

Special acknowledgments are here due to the Publisher of Kitto's *Biblical Encyclopedia*—MARK H. NEWMAN, Broadway, New York—for access to the plates of that valuable work, from which there have been obtained many useful pictorial illustrations.

The author could scarcely have pressed this undertaking to completion, amidst the laborious duties of his parochial charge, but for the strong hope of promoting sound scriptural instruction through this channel also. In this, he has been constantly encouraged by the good opinions of his plan which have been widely expressed to him from the beginning. He can freely say, in the sentiment of that pious commentator on the Psalms, Bishop Horne, that the labour itself has been most profitable and pleasant. And now, the Divine and Gracious Author of the Gospel, in whose strength it has been prosecuted, and in whose name it is sent forth, can bless it to many for edification and for salvation.

MELANCTHON W. JACOBUS.

BROOKLYN, N. Y., *March*, 1848.

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## MATTHEW THE APOSTLE AND EVANGELIST.

There are four inspired histories of our Lord Jesus Christ in the New Testament. These refer to the same great subject of salvation by a Redeemer; though the authors do not relate precisely the same things. Each gives his own narrative. The history is to be gathered from them all, and their statements are found to be harmonious. Hence, the testimony is *fourfold*. It is THE GOSPEL by Matthew, by Mark, by Luke, and by John—written by these severally, yet *one Gospel* by all, and in all (see Matt. 4. 23. Mark 1. 1. Luke 9. 6).

Two of these Evangelists—the first and last—were apostles. It has been well remarked, also, that "two—Mark and John—were too unlearned to forge the narratives; and the other two—Matthew and Luke—were too learned to be deceived by imposture."

The term for "Gospel," in Greek, which is anglicized in the old English, "evangel," gives rise to the title "Evangelist," which has the sense of *go<sup>s</sup>pelizier*, or publisher of the Gospel. The Greek term, in its derivation



signifies the same as the Anglo-Saxon "Godspell"—*good tidings*—from which we have our word "Gospel."

These four histories may be regarded as *the inspired summaries of the apostles' preaching*. Immediately after the ascension of our Lord, "they went forth and preached every where," according to their Divine commission. Matthew, doubtless, laboured chiefly in Judea. When it became needful to have a permanent history of our Lord's life and death—His teachings and doings—and to give it the widest circulation for a witness, before Jerusalem should be destroyed (see ch. 24. 14, and ch. 28. 19), Matthew wrote, under the Divine inspiration, more particularly for the Jews. Soon after, Mark wrote for the Romans, as would seem from the Latin terms which he introduces, and from his gospel being written at Rome. Luke wrote for the Gentiles *more generally*, exhibiting Christ as "the seed of the woman." And John wrote last of all, supplying what might be added to the rest, and setting forth Jesus as the co-equal Son—who "was with God," and "was God."

Though different authorities have assigned various dates to this gospel, ranging from A.D. 38, to A.D. 68, the strong internal and external evidence favours the later time. It may safely be dated at A.D. 62, about eight years before the destruction of Jerusalem. It was not so necessary at an earlier period, while the apostles themselves could preach, and while "they went forth and preached every where" (Mark 16. 20). "About this time," says Lardner, "the Gospel had been propagated in many Gentile countries; the times were troublesome in Judea (under Nero), and the war was coming on. Several of the apostles were dead, and others of them who survived, were gone or going abroad, and many of the Jewish believers were about to seek shelter elsewhere. Now, was therefore a proper time to write a history of Christ and His miracles. Moreover, in this Gospel are recorded divers plain predictions of the coming overthrow of Jerusalem and the Jewish state, which could not be well published to all the world in writing, till about this time."—*Lardner's Works*, vol. 5, p. 305.

It has been argued by many, that this Evangelist, unlike the rest, wrote in Hebrew—a corrupt Hebrew or Syro-Chaldaic being the vernacular tongue in Palestine, in the time of our Lord. But though he wrote mainly for the Jews, they had already become familiar with the Greek language, which had spread abroad since the reign of Alexander. The many Jews resident in Egypt, had required a Greek version of their Old Testament Scriptures, more than 300 years before. And as this Gospel History was intended to circulate most widely, and, in the mind of the Spirit, was designed to go abroad among Gentiles also—we find sufficient reason for regarding this prevalent tongue as the original. Besides, it is confessed that other portions of the New Testament Scriptures written at and about this time, were in the Greek language. "The Epistle of James," which is supposed to date A.D. 60, and which was addressed "*to the twelve tribes scattered abroad*," was written in Greek. This Jewish Greek was not indeed the pure tongue, but mixed with Hebraisms (see Winer's *Idioms of the New Testament*). Lardner, after citing the testimonies which have been urged for the Hebrew original of this gospel, concludes against them, and argues that this cannot be a Greek translation, because the same reason which would have made a translation into Greek necessary, would have induced Matthew himself to write in Greek.

It is further to be observed, that this apostle had early become familiar with the Greek tongue by his intercourse in the office of collector, and that it was already spoken extensively among the Jews of Judea, among whom he preached immediately after the ascension. The Jewish authors, Philo and Josephus, cotemporaries of the apostles, wrote in Greek. The mere fact

that, by all confession, this Greek Gospel as we have it, was universally circulated, while no trace of a Hebrew Gospel is found, would weigh strongly in favour of the Greek original—since we might suppose that it would be written in the tongue in which it would be most needed, and most circulated. That the oldest Fathers of the church (says Olshausen) did not possess Matthew's Gospel in any other form than that in which we now have it, is fully settled. It is clear from the character of the citations out of the Old Testament, that this must be something else than a mere version. Besides, there is not the slightest trace of any opposition to it, as there must have been if the apostle had written in Hebrew, and a Greek *translation* was crowding it out, as though itself the *original*. Yet there is frequent mention early made of a Hebrew Gospel by Matthew. Lardner best accounts for this, by supposing that a Hebrew translation was made for limited use, which some came to consider as the original. Olshausen concludes that Matthew wrote in Hebrew, and afterward himself wrote in Greek.

MATTHEW was a Jew of Galilee. He was an inferior collector of customs under the Roman government, to whom the Jews were now tributary. His station was at the port of Capernaum, or, as some have thought, on the high road from Capernaum to Damascus. He is also called LEVI (Mark 2. 14. Luke 5. 27, 28) and "*the publican*," in his own list of the apostles. Matt. 10. 3. It was common among the Jews to have two names: as Lebbeus, whose surname was Thaddeus"—Matt. 10. 3—and "Simon, who is called Peter." Matt. 10. 2. When a Jew became a Roman citizen, he usually assumed a Roman name. It is, therefore, supposed that "Levi" was the original Hebrew, and "Matthew" the assumed Roman name of this Evangelist.

This gospel was evidently written with a special aim to evangelize the Jews. Hence the apostle brings forward the convincing proofs, that Jesus was the Christ, and even that *Messiah* whom their prophets had foretold. Hence he constantly refers them to their Scriptures of the Old Testament, as fulfilled in Him. But this would be a leading argument for Christianity with the Gentiles also. He constantly considers John the Baptist in reference to Malachi's predictions, and recognizes his person and work as their direct accomplishment. Besides this, Matthew abounds in citations from the prophets, which some authors here, and many in Germany, have regarded as mere "*accommodations*," or *happy applications*, of the prophetic language. It requires no very high view of inspiration, to take them as so many inspired notices of inspired predictions fulfilled in the events.

In choosing Matthew for an apostle, our Lord adopted a striking memorial of Judah's low estate, the country being now tributary, and an officer of the tribute, one of the twelve! It was at such a time of the chosen tribe's declension, that the Messiah was predicted as to come. Genesis 49. 10. Zech. 9. 9.

Our received English version of the Scriptures is a most elaborate correction of the previous translations, and that from the *original tongues*. Forty-seven men of the highest abilities were employed in the work for the space of three years, by authority of the King (James I). They were divided into six companies, and were assigned different portions. The work of each group underwent the revision of all the others, after having been first thoroughly sifted in their own immediate circle. The whole was then finally revised by twelve men—these being a committee of two from each company. Thus most learnedly and laboriously prepared, it was issued at London, A.D. 1611. After many ineffectual attempts to improve upon it, by new versions, it is admitted among scholars, that a more faithful and true translation, all in all, cannot be expected, and need not be desired.

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AND

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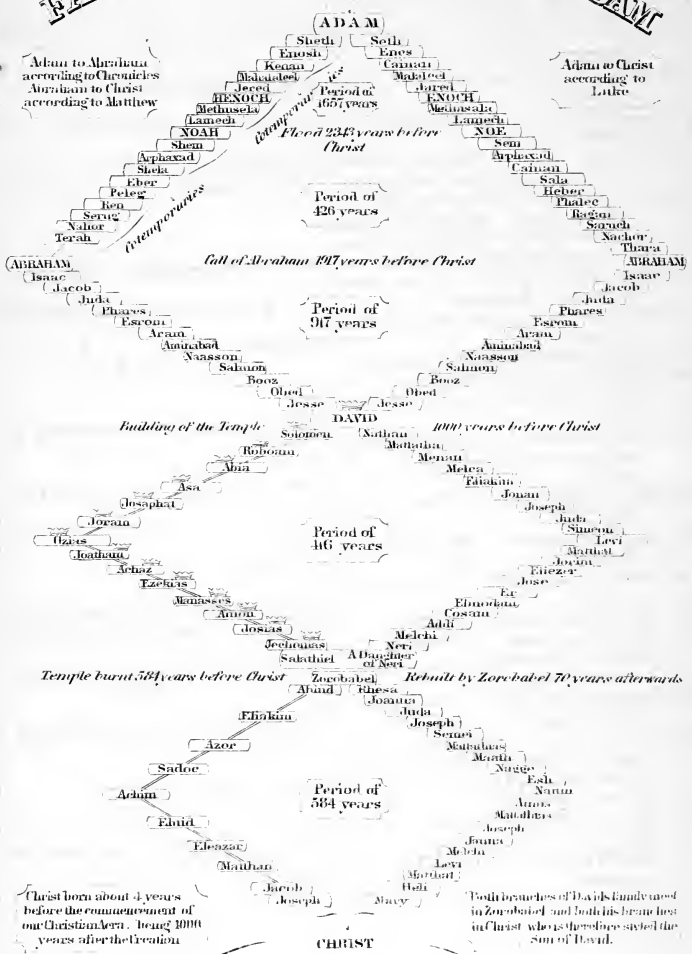
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# FAMILY DESCENT OF CHRIST FROM ADAM

Before Christ 4000 Years.



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N. B.—The “A. D.” in the book, at the top of the page, indicates the *year of Christ*, and not of the period called ANNO DOMINI. That period—or the common Christian era, which was introduced by Dionysius (as is supposed) about A. D. 516—is computed to have been set four years too late. So that Christ was born four years before this era begins to reckon. Confusion had often arisen from no distinctly noting this.

# THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MATTHEW.

## CHAPTER I.

**T**HE book of the generation<sup>a</sup> of Jesus Christ, the son of<sup>b</sup> David,<sup>c</sup> the son of Abraham.

<sup>a</sup> Lu. 3. 23, & c. <sup>b</sup> Ps. 132. 11. c. 22. 45. Ac. 2. 30. <sup>c</sup> Ge. 22. 13. Ga. 3. 16.

## CHAPTER I.

*Sections 1 to 5 inclusive, of the Gospel History are connected with the birth of John the Baptist. See Luke 1. 1-80, and see Synopsis of the Harmony.*

### § 6. GENEALOGIES.

Mat.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
1. 1-17.		3. 23-38.	

1-17. *The book of the generation is a phrase corresponding with the word genealogy. It is meant here to introduce the genealogical record by which the parentage and descent of our Lord, through Joseph, was to be shown. The Jews kept such tables, public and private, with great care, to show their families and tribes. Ezra, ch. 2. Nehemiah, ch. 7. Matthew, writing his history for the Jews, aimed to show that Christ was descended from David and Abraham, their most noted and sacred names. This was most necessary for his object, which was to convince them that Christ was the true Messiah, such as they looked for—the son of Abraham, a Jew, and the son or descendant of king David, a king of David's line, according to their prophets. See v. 6. Isa. 9. 7; 11. 1. Jer. 23. 5. Matt. 9. 27; 12. 23; 15. 22; 21. 9, 15; 22. 42, 45. Luke 18. 38. Accordingly our Lord is shown to have come in the direct line of kings, as a rightful successor to the throne. See the Annunciation, Luke 1. 32, 33. So He was understood to claim this title (John 1. 49, and 19. 21), and it was written over His head at the crucifixion (John 19. 19), "The King of the Jews" Zech. 9. 9. The promise*

2 Abraham<sup>d</sup> begat Isaac; and Isaac<sup>e</sup> begat Jacob; and Jacob<sup>f</sup> begat Judas and his brethren.

3 And Judas begat<sup>g</sup> Phares

<sup>d</sup> Ge. 21. 2-5. <sup>e</sup> Ge. 25. 26. <sup>f</sup> Ge. 29. 35, & c. <sup>g</sup> Ge. 38. 29, 30, & c.

was made to David of a Son to sit perpetually on his throne, and this could be completely realized only in Christ. Compare 2 Sam. 7. 13, 14, with Heb. 1. 5. See also 1 Kings 2. 4 and 8. 25. Jer. 33. 17. Compare Acts 2. 30.

"Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ." Gal. 3. 16. See Gen. 22. 18.

The genealogies of Matthew and Luke differ, and we find that it is not without design. The explanations are hinted at by the evangelists themselves in their respective records. Matthew traces out the line of "Joseph, the husband of Mary" (v. 16), intimating, that because Joseph stood to Mary in the legal relation of husband, he would show Christ's legal descent through him according to the tables. Luke traces out the line of "*Jesus, being as was supposed the son of Joseph*" (ch. 3. 23). He intimates thus, that because Jesus was in reality the son of Mary, he would trace her parentage, as he does, through Heli her father, and Christ's natural descent through her. In Matthew, observe the language is direct, "Jacob begat Joseph." In Luke it is "*Jesus, being as was supposed the son of Joseph—of Heli.*" Thus Christ is traced back to David and Abraham by Matthew, for the special benefit of the Jews, and by Luke he is traced even to Adam, for the benefit of the Gentile world. By Matthew he is found to be the son of David (Isa. 11. 1), and the seed of Abraham (Gal. 3. 16), and by Luke, the seed of the woman (Gen. 3. 15), and the Son of

and Zara of Thamar; and Phares begat<sup>h</sup> Esrom; and Esrom begat<sup>i</sup> Aram;

4 And Aram begat Aminadab; and Aminadab begat<sup>j</sup> Naasson; and Naasson begat Salmon;<sup>k</sup>

5 And Salmon begat Booz of<sup>l</sup> Rachab; and Booz begat Obed<sup>m</sup> of Ruth; and Obed begat Jesse;

6 And Jesse begat<sup>n</sup> David the king; and David the king begat<sup>o</sup> Solomon of her *that had been the wife of Urias*;

7 And Solomon begat<sup>p</sup> Roboam; and Roboam begat Abia; and Abia begat Asa;

8 And Asa begat Josaphat; and Josaphat begat Joram; and Joram begat Ozias;

9 And Ozias begat Joatham; and Joatham begat Achaz; and Achaz begat Ezekias;

10 And Ezekias<sup>q</sup> begat Manasses; and Manasses begat Amon; and Amon begat Josias;

<sup>h</sup> Ge. 46. 12. <sup>i</sup> Ru. 4. 19. <sup>j</sup> 1 Ch. 2. 10. Nu. 1. 7. <sup>k</sup> Ru. 4. 20. <sup>l</sup> Jos. 6. 25. Ru. 4. 21. <sup>m</sup> Ru. 4. 13. <sup>n</sup> 1 Sa. 17. 12. <sup>o</sup> 2 Sa. 12. 24. <sup>p</sup> 1 Ch. 3. 10. &c. <sup>q</sup> 2 Ki. 20. 21. 1 Ch. 3. 13.

Man (Luke 9. 56). See Plate, that Mary is descended in a right line from Solomon. Luke 1. 32; 2. 5. Rom. 1. 3. Calvin holds this to be most important.

*Jesus Christ.* This is the ordinary name given in Scripture to the incarnate Son of God. Both evangelists remind us, in the genealogies, of Christ's miraculous conception. Matthew passes to it thus remarkably, "Joseph, the husband of Mary, of whom (that is, of Mary, for the pronoun in the Greek is feminine) was born Jesus, who is called Christ." (v. 16.) And Luke has it in equally striking terms, "Jesus being, *as was supposed*, the Son of Joseph, &c. *Jesus* is a proper name (v. 21); and *Christ* is an official title, meaning, "the Anointed." Acts 2. 36. It corresponds with the Hebrew word *Messiah*. This name, therefore, asserts

11 And<sup>1</sup> Josias begat Jechonias and his brethren, about the time they were carried away to Babylon;

12 And after they were brought to Babylon, Jechonias begat<sup>r</sup> Salathiel; and Salathiel begat Zorobabel;<sup>s</sup>

13 And Zorobabel begat Abiud; and Abiud begat Eliakim; and Eliakim begat Azor;

14 And Azor begat Sadoc and Sadoc begat Achim; and Achim begat Eliud;

15 And Eliud begat Eleazar; and Eleazar begat Matthan; and Matthan begat Jacob;

16 And Jacob begat Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ.

17 So all the generations from Abraham to David *are* fourteen generations; and from David until the carrying away into

<sup>1</sup> Some read, *Josias begat Jakim, and Jakim begat Jechonias.*

<sup>r</sup> 1 Ch. 3. 17. &c. <sup>s</sup> Ne. 12. 1.

the Messiahship of Jesus. And all the functions of that office were associated in the mind of the Jew with *anointing*, by which their kings and priests were consecrated, or set apart. See Psalm 45. 7. Isa. 61. 1.

*The son of David, the son of Abraham,* means the descendant of these. So Joseph is called in v. 20, "Thou son of David." But David's greater son was Christ.

17. *Fourteen generations.* "In the first fourteen generations, the people of Israel were under prophets; in the second, under kings; in the third, under the Asmonean princes. The first fourteen brought their kingdom to glory under the reign of David; the second, to misery, in the captivity of Babylon; and the third, to glory again under the Messiahship of Christ. The

Babylon are fourteen generations; and from the carrying away into Babylon unto Christ are fourteen generations.

18 Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When

[ Lu. 1. 27, & c.

first division begins with Abraham, who received the promise, and ends with David, who received it again with greater clearness. The second begins with the building of the temple, and ends with its destruction. The third opens with a deliverance from temporal enemies and return from captivity, and terminates in their spiritual delivery from every enemy by Christ, to whom each successive generation pointed as the Prophet, King, and Priest of His people."—Townsend's Arrangement of N. T. Lightfoot, 1. 418.

§ 7. AN ANGEL APPEARED TO JOSEPH.—  
*Nazareth.*

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
1. 18-25.			

18. *On this wise*—thus.—¶ *His mother Mary.* She is spoken of also in Matt. 2. 11, 13, 14, 20, 21; in Luke 1. 22—and 1. 43 the salutation of Elizabeth, which explains itself—Luke 2. 39, 48 and 51, on occasion of their visit to Jerusalem at the Passover—in John 2. 1, at the marriage of Cana in Galilee—in Matt. 12. 46, and in John 19. 25, 26, when she stood at the cross. But no where is she mentioned as entitled to worship. She is no where called in Scripture, the Virgin Mary, as a title or worshipful name. We have no account of any peculiar honours being paid her earlier than the 5th century. Luke 1. 28, is the usual form of salutation, employed by the angel (see Judges 5. 24), in reference to the announcement he was about to make. As to invoking her mediation, it is expressly declared in Scripture, that there is one Mediator, 1 Tim. 2. 5, the man Christ Jesus (1 John 2. 1). See also Matt. 4. 10. Rev. 19. 10. And God alone is the proper object of reli-

as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph,\* before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost.

19 Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not wil-

\* 5th year before the account called A. D.

gious worship. Exodus 20. 3. In Acts 1. 14, after the ascension, she appears with the disciples as one of the social worshippers in the upper room at Jerusalem, waiting for the promise of the Father. The wise men found Mary, his mother, with the child, at Bethlehem, but they worshipped only the child, ch. 2. 11.—¶ *Espoused*—pledged to be married. They were bound, by this, as man and wife, among the Jews. Deut. 20. 7; 22. 25, 28. And the espousal or pledge was made usually ten or twelve months before marriage. (Gen. 24. 55, margin.) Judges 14. 8.—¶ *Before they came together.* The virgin had not yet been delivered by her parents to her husband, but still remained under their roof. The marriage ceremony had not yet taken place; and as yet Joseph knew her not (v. 25). In these circumstances "she was found with child." And it is here stated that this was "*of the Holy Ghost,*" according to the angel's announcement. Luke 1. 26, 28. The most virtuous will be liable to unjust suspicion, and to undeserved reproach.

19. *Joseph her husband*—"being a just one," literally. This is in reference to the law. The old Wickliff version reads *righteous*. Being a strict observer of the rites of his nation, he was unwilling to company with a woman who seemed to have been defiled. He was not a man disposed to connive at sin, and yet he was inclined to avail himself of a provision in the law for having her disgrace private. He was not willing to make her case one of publicity, and of prosecution as an adulteress. Deut. 22. 23, 24. Lev. 20. 10. Ezek. 16. 38, 40. John 8. 5. Good men, we see, are liable to form erroneous judgments of others' character and conduct.—¶ *To put her*

ling to make her a public example, was minded<sup>u</sup> to put her away privily.

20 But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a<sup>v</sup> dream, saying, Joseph,

<sup>u</sup> De. 24. 1. <sup>v</sup> ver. 16.

*away privily* (or privately)—to give her a bill of divorce, in private (Deut. 24. 1), delivering it into her hand or bosom, as was the custom. In such case, two witnesses only were necessary; and they witnessed only the act of divorce, and need not know the reason. We should always judge charitably, and choose lenient rather than severe measures, where there is the least room for doubt.

20. *But while he thought, &c.* Here God interposed, at the very critical moment, so as to secure satisfaction to Joseph, and to shield the reputation of Mary.—¶ *The angel of the Lord.* This definite reference is naturally to the angel Gabriel, who had officiated in this matter, announcing the birth to Mary (Luke 1. 26-28).—¶ *Appared*—manifested himself to Joseph as being from God, so as at least to leave him in no doubt of the message being from heaven. Our necessity is God's opportunity. When we are anxiously seeking out our duty, God will show us the way.—¶ *In a dream.* This was a common method of divine communication under the Old Testament (Gen. 31. 24. 1 Kings 3. 5), before the full revelation of God had come to us in the Scriptures. We have no right to suppose that there is any such communication now. A superstitious faith in dreams has led to many mischievous results. The scriptural explanation is, that "a dream cometh through the multitude of business." Eccles. 5. 3. To receive new revelations, as those of Swedenborg, is to set aside the authority of Scripture. "*Filthy dreamers*" (Jude 8) will only multiply, and still demand our faith.—¶ *Thou son of David.* "He was of the house and

thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife; for that which is<sup>1</sup> conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost.

21 And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name<sup>2</sup> JESUS: for he shall

<sup>1</sup> Begotten. <sup>2</sup> i. e., Saviour.

lineage of David." Luke 2. 4. The angel calls Joseph by this title as *emphatically* a descendant of David, in the relation he was to bear to Christ. This address would open his mind to receive the astounding declaration that follows. It is not improbable that Joseph and Mary were the only survivors of David's race; for though they had relatives, yet these, as far as the record informs us, were intermixed with other families and tribes in Israel; and if so, Jesus was the only remaining sprout of the root of Jesse.—Davidson's Connection, Vol. iii. p. 21.—¶ *Fear not*—of being implicatec in any crime; for (compare Luke 1 35) the truth of the case makes her innocent and you honoured.

21. *And she shall bring forth.* The angel now announces both the future birth, and the name appointed for the Son by divine authority. *Jesus* means *Saviour*. In Hebrew the name Joshua means the same thing; ar hence, in Acts 7. 45, and Heb. 4. 8, our translation reads *Jesus*, where it should read *Joshua*, i. e., the leader of the Jews into Canaan. The name was given for the reason stated here.—¶ *For He shall save His people.* This shall be His office work, and this is His design in coming into the world. His people are such as are given to Him by the Father (John 6. 37; 17. 6). They are elsewhere called His chosen. 1 Pet. 2. 9. His elect, Mark 13. 20. His children, 1 John 3. 10. A peculiar people, Tit. 2. 14. The Jews were known of old as the people of God. They were chosen by Him, and separated from the nations—regarded and treated as His. Comp. Deut. 14. 2 and 1 Pet. 2. 9. So, Christ's people now are such as belong to Him by the



save <sup>w</sup> nis people from their sins.

22 Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, <sup>x</sup> saying,

*w* Ac.5.31; 13.23,38. *x* Is.7.14.

Father's gift, John 6. 37, and by His own redemption. 1 Pet. 1. 18, 21. These He shall securely save.—¶ *From their sins.* We are lost by sin. He saves His people from the curse of sin, and from its controlling power (Rom. ch. 6). This He does, by making a complete atonement, such as brings a free pardon and saves from the condemnation of sin (1 Pet. 3. 18); and by providing such an operation of the Holy Ghost in the heart, as subdues sin and removes it. John 15. 16; 16. 13.

22. *That it might be fulfilled.* It is here expressly declared, that this event was brought about in fulfilment of Isaiah's prophecy (7. 14), and in order to fulfil it. Of course the prophecy must have contemplated this event, and could not have had a complete fulfilment short of it. Ahaz refused to ask a sign as to the deliverance then at hand. But a sign was given. And, observe, it was *given to the "house of David"* (that is, the Jewish nation), and for a remoter purpose (see Isaiah 7. 13). A miraculous birth is evidently referred to, in the language of the prophet, "*A virgin, &c.*" And here there was thrown in, for the Jewish people, a remarkable prediction of Christ, that should stand on record to confirm His claims. As to Ahaz, it was quite sufficient to indicate the *interval* of the deliverance; viz., the time of a child's minority. This could be shown in the case of any child, and was sufficiently indicated in the general terms, without any further sign to him, saving the fare of "butter (or curds) and honey," as signifying the state of the land, waste and uncultivated, until that deliverance. Besides, a promise of Christ to the Jews, was always a constructive pledge or sign that the nation

23 Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel; which being interpreted, is, God <sup>y</sup> with us.

*1 Or, his name shall be called. y* Jno.1.14

should be delivered and not destroyed, since the Jews held that they existed as a nation for the Messiah's sake. From the prophet Micah (5. 2, 3) it is plain that some virgin birth was expected, as a miraculous fulfilment of Isaiah's prediction.—¶ *A virgin.* This explains to Joseph her supposed adultery. The prophet had distinctly declared the virginity of our Lord's mother. Hence, it was to be understood as a purely miraculous event. Yet why impossible, any more than the creation of Adam or Eve? "A body hast thou prepared me," saith Christ, when He cometh into the world (Heb. 10. 5). There is no good ground for the Romish tenet of Mary's perpetual virginity. The last verse of this chapter goes to contradict it. Besides, Christ is called her *first-born*, and this is a term commonly used to indicate the primogeniture, and in such connexion implies the order of birth, with reference to other children (Gen. 27. 32). Besides, the brethren and sisters of our Lord are spoken of. Mark 6. 3. Matt. 12. 46. "James, the Lord's brother." Gal. 1. 19.—¶ *Emmanuel.* This is the Hebrew name from the prophecy. It means, literally, *God with us*. In this sense, this must have been the fulfilment to which the prophecy ultimately looked. This referred Joseph more distinctly to the miracle as the explanation. So it directly proves the union of the divine and human natures in Christ.—¶ *They shall call his name;* i. e., this shall be His nature and character. He shall be *God with us*. The force of the phrase includes this, as in Isa. 9. 6. "His name shall be called Wonderful." Christ is the God-man prophesied as to come. "The Word was made flesh." John 1. 14. This incarnation is the grand sign of deliver-

24 Then Joseph, being raised from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife :

25 And knew her not till she had brought forth her first-born :

z Ex.13.2. a Lu.2.21.

ance to His people, and the divine explanation of all that is miraculous in Christ's birth, or wonderful in Himself or in His work. If we are united to Christ by faith, says Calvin, we possess God. Jesus Christ is God equally with the Father.

24. Joseph is here represented as at once assured in faith and prompt in obedience. He could believe the divine message, though he had nothing for it but God's word. Hence, his convictions and purposes were entirely changed, and cheerfully he enters upon the course divinely prescribed.

son: and he called his name JESUS.<sup>a</sup>

CHAPTER II.

NOW when Jesus was born\* in Bethlehem of Judea, in the days of Herod the king, be-

\* 4th year before the account called A. D.

This is the faith of the Gospel. In all this, Joseph showed the temper of every true Christian. Believing is followed by repentance, and instant obedience is the proper mark of sincerity.

25. Knew her not till, &c. The perpetual virginity of Mary finds no warrant here. It is meant here to be asserted, that Christ was not Joseph's own son; and it is implied, that Joseph had children afterward.—¶ Jesus. This name was given by direction of God, v. 21, and on the eighth day, Luke 2. 21.

	Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
§ 8. The Birth of Jesus.—Bethlehem.....	.....	.....	2. 1-7	
§ 9. An Angel appears to the Shepherds.—Near Bethlehem.....	.....	.....	2. 9-20	
§ 10. The Circumcision of Jesus.—Bethlehem.....	.....	.....		
His presentation in the Temple.—Jerusalem..	.....	.....	2. 21-38	

CHAPTER II.

§ 11. The Magi, or Wise Men.—Jerusalem, Bethlehem. ....

2. 1-12

1-12. When Jesus was born. (See Luke 2. 1-20, and note also the intermediate events, §§ 8, 9, and 10, in the Harmony.)—¶ Bethlehem of Judea—a town six miles southward from Jerusalem, on the road to Hebron. It was generally called Bethlehem-judah, so designated to distinguish it from a Bethlehem in Galilee, tribe of Zebulon. Hither Joseph and Mary had come up from Nazareth, at the decree of the Roman emperor, Augustus, to be taxed (or enrolled), Luke 2. 1-7, for they were of the house and lineage of David, and they belonged to Bethlehem in the family registry, as David was born there. The name Beth-

lehem means, literally, "house of bread," and was so called, perhaps, on account of the fertility there, which travellers describe as being remarkable. A more sacred reference we may find in "that Bread of Life" (John 6. 48) having been there brought forth. This place was called, also, the city of David, because it was David's birth-place (1 Sam. 16. 18), "a son of Jesse, the Bethlehemite."—¶ In the days of Herod, the king. This civil condition of things at Christ's birth, was as important to be noticed as the place—both as in fulfilment of prophecy. This Herod was a foreigner, and mad

hold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem,

2 Saying, Where is he that is

king by the Romans, who now held the Jews in subjection. And in him was fulfilled Jacob's prophecy. Gen. 49. 10. But the sceptre had not departed from Judah, until the Shiloh had come. Herod was the son of Antipater. He was now established in the kingdom of Judea, which had been over sixty years under the Roman power. Augustus was emperor of Rome, and this Herod had now reigned, though in dependence on the Roman government, about thirty-four years. Now the decree from Rome for an enrollment of the people, as tributary to the foreign power, was a mark of their actual subjection. Cæsar's penny showed their subserviency. Matt. 22. 20. (See Luke 2. 1.) Herod had gained a character for bravery and cruelty, while he had restored Jerusalem to much of its ancient magnificence by his splendid projects. He was called "the Great," and it was he who had repaired the temple, so as to give it much of its former glory.—¶ *Wise men.* Wickliff's version, 1380, reads "*astromyens*" (or *astronomers*), also called *magi* from the Greek term *magoi*, whence also our word *magicians*. These men were of an ancient and sacred order, the most influential in the civil, religious, and literary world. Among the Medes, they were, like the Levites under the Mosaic institutions, intrusted with the care of religion. They had also the arts and sciences, and all philosophy under their charge. They paid much attention to astronomy. Their name denotes their priestly character. (Mag, or Mog, in the Pehlvi, denotes priest.) This Magian learning was known in history as the law of the Medes and Persians. It was a necessary part of a princely education to be taught in their learning; and this was the privilege of none but kings. They were spread over other eastern countries. Such

born <sup>b</sup> King of the Jews? for we have seen his <sup>c</sup> star in the east, and are come to <sup>d</sup> worship him.

b Ze.9.9. c Nu.24.17. Is.60.3. d Jno.5.23.

are spoken of in Daniel 1. 20, &c., as "*magicians and astrologers*,"—different classes of this order. See Daniel 2. 18. Their visit here may be regarded as an homage paid by the highest order in the world, to the *day-star* risen upon earth. In this was immediately fulfilled the prediction of Malachi, "From the rising of the sun (or the East), even unto the going down of the same, my name shall be great among the Gentiles," &c. (Mal. 1. 11). So, Isa. 60. 3, "The Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising."—¶ *The east.* Oriental countries, are generally understood by this term. East of Judea is here meant. From the land of the Chaldees whence Abraham was called, they may have come. Jer. 1. 35. Dan. 2. 12.—¶ *To Jerusalem.* Because here was the temple; and this was the holy city; and here were the sacred oracles and officers from whom they could ascertain the prophecies. It might appear that they had derived their knowledge of "the King of the Jews" from the Jewish Scriptures, or from scattered Jews, who had so far informed them of the expected Messiah. But how then did they know the star, and not know where He should be born? Though a general expectation was spread abroad, that some great King should arise in Judea, yet this would not account for their amount of information. Virgil, who lived a little before this, owns that a child from Heaven was looked for, who should restore the golden age, and take away sin. But these Magi were moved, doubtless, by a divine impulse. They received special illumination and direction from Heaven, leading them to follow the star, and to inquire at Jerusalem. A revelation from God is not enough of itself. The Spirit must lead us to seek Christ, and direct us to the spot.

2. We have seen his star. Though

3 When Herod the king had heard *these things*, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him.

4 And when he had gathered •

e Ps. 2.2.

a comet, or eclipse, or meteor, was regarded as the portent of some great event, yet we do not read of any such general impression made by this singular appearance. Hence, we conclude that it was a sign granted to these. They were otherwise "*warned of God*" afterward. (See v. 12.) Around the shepherds shone "the glory of the Lord." To the wise men rose this "star," which they were assured of as "*His*." To Saul of Tarsus "a light beyond the brightness of the sun" appeared at mid-day. We do not read of others going to Jerusalem, attracted by this sight in the sky. Yet it was a powerful revelation to *these*, bringing them from the East, the representatives of the highest earthly order. Balaam had prophesied of Christ (Numbers 24. 17), "There shall come a star out of Jacob," &c.; and this sign they saw. An expectation was abroad that a mighty king should arise in Judea; and doubtless such a prophecy was current, as the ground of it, among the Jews. Kepler has calculated that a remarkable conjunction of Jupiter and Saturn occurred about that time. But such a sight seems not to suit the narrative. They made themselves known as visitants and inquirers from the oriental world. "We, in the East, have seen his star." Herein was a testimony to the Jews at Jerusalem, that the Messiah had indeed come. The star was a token to the Magi. The visit of the Magi was a token to the Jews. Christ must be revealed to the soul by His appropriate marks, or we shall never set out after Him.—  
¶ *To worship Him.* The word refers rather to a civil homage (Luke 14. 10), than to a religious act, though it may include both. It means to acknowledge and honour Him as King, by prostration before Him, and by presents. This was the custom of that

all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born.

day, in paying homage to kings. They saw *His star*, and sought for *Him*. We should not be content with anything short of Christ himself. It has been calculated by Benson, that they came from the thirty-ninth to the forty-second day after the birth of Jesus.

3. *When Herod the king had heard, &c.* Their visit and inquiry were soon made known to Herod. He was startled and troubled, because all this confirmed to him the general expectation. And such a royal advent was the peril of his throne. He was himself "king of the Jews." Besides, he was now about seventy years old. He had reached the throne through violence and blood. He had murdered his wife, Mariamne, and two of his sons, and he had reason to expect retribution. The alarm was general. All Jerusalem, it might be said, was troubled with him. Some feared new upturnings, with the slaughter and confusion of revolutionary times. Some dreaded the rapacity and malice of Herod, which might break out by this means.

4. *The chief priests and scribes.* The Sanhedrim was composed of these. It was the court of highest civil and ecclesiastical authority among the Jews; and this body of seventy was doubtless appealed to in this important case. The scribes, who were lawyers of the Mosaic code, kept the public records, and were writers or scribes of the Scriptures, besides being teachers or schoolmasters, called "doctors of the law." Being most familiar with all the Jewish Scriptures, they would be able at once to tell where the prophecies had appointed the birth of Christ. The class of *chief priests* included, besides the acting High Priest, all that had already acted as such, besides the heads or chiefs of the twenty-four courses into

5 And they said unto him. In Bethlehem of Judea: for thus it is written <sup>f</sup> by the prophet;

6 And thou Bethlehem, *in* the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a governor, that shall <sup>l</sup> rule <sup>ε</sup> my people Israel.

7 Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise men, inquired of them diligently what time the star appeared.

8 And he sent them to Bethle-

*f* Mi.5.2. *Jno.* 7.42. *1 Or, feed.* Is.40.11. *g* Re.2.27.

which the priesthood had been divided by David (2 Chron. 8. 14). The Jews looked for Christ at this time—but as a temporal king.—¶ *Demanded.* Inquired, or required to know. All the circumstances forced conviction on his mind of Christ's having come. He wished to act promptly in his cruel designs against such a rival. Hence he would know where Christ could be found.

5. They replied immediately and distinctly, and cited their authority from the Scripture.

6. They refer to Micah, 5. 2, sufficiently to inform him of the place, as "Bethlehem in the land of Judah." This was the point; and as to the rest of the passage, only the substance of the prophet's words is given, or need be, viz., That this town, though small in civil distinction—"though thou be little among the thousands (princes) of Judah"—should be highly honoured as the birth-place of the Messiah—the Ruler of Israel—the King of the Jews. The term "thousands," refers to the civil divisions of the tribes into *thousands*," 1 Sam. 10. 19; and "princes" were the chiefs or rulers of these.

7, 8. Herod now summoned the wise men *privily*, (that is, privately,) not willing to show his anxiety, or to produce political agitation. He took secret counsel of them—inquiring diligently (sparing no pains to) discover

hem; and said, Go and search diligently for the young child; and when ye have found *him*, bring me word again, that I may come <sup>h</sup> and worship him also.

9 When they had heard the king, they departed: and, lo, the star, which they saw <sup>i</sup> in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was.

10 When they saw the star, they <sup>j</sup> rejoiced with exceeding great joy.

*h* Pro. 26.24. *i* ver. 2. *j* Ps.67.4.

of them), as to the time of the star's appearance. His object was to infer the age of the child; for his dreadful plot was to make sure its destruction, by destroying all the children within or about that age.—¶ *Search diligently.* He would feign now to fall in with their devout purpose of finding the child; and he even pretends to wish an opportunity of worshipping also. But he wished to lay violent hands upon him. God saw and heard these plans of Herod, and He knows all the secret devices of iniquity, and all the motives and purposes of every heart.

9. *They departed.* It is not likely that they were led by the star to Jerusalem. They went to the holy city because they were warned of God so to do, or because they knew that this was the place to inquire, as the seat of the Jewish religion. And behold, the token, whatever it was, that first appeared to them, now unexpectedly re-appeared, and moved perceptibly on, till it took a marked station over the very house. It was all a peculiar arrangement to suit the case. It must have been near the earth to indicate the dwelling, and yet it could not have appeared to others as it did to them. It was most important that they should be notified of the house, because they could not have ascertained that from any inquiries. God's directions are

11 And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh.

1 Or, *offered.* k Ps.72.10. Is.62.6.

most particular, and as definite as the case requires.

10. *They rejoiced.* This was, most of all, a revelation to their souls, and it filled them with joy. Every indication of God's guidance is a source of joy to his followers. The same mark that had been given them at first, was again vouchsafed, and they were doubly assured. "Then shall we know if ye follow on to know the Lord."

11. *Fell down.* This was the attitude of homage to kings—pros-



tration before them. (Esther 8. 3.) "Mary his mother" only is named, to show that Joseph's relation was not that of an own father. Yet, though they saw "the child and his mother," they worshipped only the child! They never thought of "the virgin Mary" as an object of worship. The mother is mentioned only to identify the child—the seed of the woman—the Emmanuel of *virgin birth*.—¶ *Gifts.* This was customary homage to a prince. See 1 Sam. 10. 27. 1 Kings 10. 2. They treated this babe of Bethlehem, though so obscurely born, as a royal child. These articles were presented as the most valuable products of the country, or as the most appropriate gifts. They were such as the Queen of Sheba presented to Solomon. Here was incense and a pure offering.

12 And being warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own country another way.

13 And when they were departed, behold, the angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, and take

l c.1.20.

(Mal. 1. 11.)—¶ *Gold.* To devote our wealth to the Lord, is a proper act of worship, and should never be considered a mean service for the sanctuary.—¶ *Frankincense.* A gum from the trunk of a tree, obtained by slitting the bark. It was used for incense in worship, and is very fragrant when burned. Levit. 16. 12. It was found chiefly in Arabia.—¶ *Myrrh* was obtained in the same way, though it sometimes dropped from the tree. It was valued mainly for embalming the dead. John 19. 39. We should offer Christ our best gifts. "Let all that are round about Him bring presents."

12. *Warned of God.* They had a special direction from God in vision, to keep aloof from Herod and from his plans. He expected them to return by way of Jerusalem (vs. 8). Such a revelation they doubtless had of Christ's birth at first, of which the star was only confirmatory. How faithfully God takes care of his children, and baffles the counsels of the wicked.

§ 12. THE LIGHT INTO EGYPT. HEROD'S CRUELTY. THE RETURN.—*Bethlehem. Nazareth.*

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
2. 13-23.		2. 39-40.	

13. *Appeareth to Joseph.* It is not said whether the wise men saw him at all. He is kept back in the history, as sustaining no important part in an evangelical view. Yet he was the husband of Mary, and he would be necessary to lead their flight. Egypt was within three or four days' reach

the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word: for Herod <sup>m</sup> will seek the young child, to destroy him.

14 When he arose, he took the young child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt:

15 And was there until the death of Herod, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, <sup>n</sup> Out of Egypt have I called my son.

*m Job 33.15,17. n Hos.11.1.*

of Joseph's family, S. W. of Bethlehem, and yet it was out of Herod's jurisdiction, and many Jews were living there. Besides, it was the land where Abraham and Sarah had been saved from Pharaoh (Gen. 13. 1); where Jacob had taken refuge from famine, and Joseph had saved the holy seed (Gen. ch. 45); where Israel had been oppressed by Pharaoh, and whence they had set out under Moses for the promised land (Exod. 5. 6, and 12. 41).

15. *Until the death of Herod.* Herod died a most remarkable and loathsome death (Josephus' Antiq. 17. 10), in evident visitation of God, and about the thirty-seventh year of his reign. It is not probable that the family of Joseph remained more than a year in Egypt. The child was clearly under two years when Herod sought his life. He waited a sufficient time for the return of the wise men, and died soon after the brutal massacre of the infants. The whole occurred likely within about two years. "The wicked is driven away in his wickedness." Prov. 14. 32.—

¶ *That it might be fulfilled.* Though this prophecy, in Hosea 11. 1, was applicable originally to the Exodus of Israel from Egypt, yet it had also a reference to this event, viz., the Exodus of Christ from Egypt. The events are to be regarded as one in the plan of Jehovah for preserving

16 Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wroth, and sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently inquired <sup>o</sup> of the wise men.

17 Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy <sup>p</sup> the prophet, saying,

18 In Rama was there a voice

*o Ver.7. p Je.31.15.*

His church and defeating its oppressors. And Israel's departure out of Egypt foreshadowed the subsequent departure of Christ, so that in the mind of the Spirit dictating the record, they could both be couched under the same prophecy. How marvellously God's plans are fulfilled, while those of his enemies are frustrated.

16. *Mocked.* Foiled—baffled in this plot. He now devised another method, prompted by his rage at this vexatious disappointment. He determined now to make sure of destroying Christ, by putting to death all the male children in all the region, or coasts, from two years old and under, as he understood this child to be within two years of age.—¶ *According to the time.* So he had calculated from all that he could ascertain of the wise men. He took the time of the star's appearing, and reckoned the interval since. Bethlehem had about two thousand inhabitants in and around the village, and Townsend calculates that about fifty infants were slain.

17. *Then was fulfilled, &c.* This event was in fulfilment of the prophecy in Jer. 31. 15, and 40. 1. It is not a mere accommodation of the language. The first and immediate reference was, indeed, to another event. But this more remote occurrence was included also. Like lights far off and in a row, the distant objects could be re-

heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not.

19 But when Herod was dead, behold, an angel of the Lord appeareth in a dream to Joseph in Egypt,

ferred to as one. At Rama, a small town six miles north of Jerusalem, the Jewish captives were gathered in chains after the conquest of Jerusalem by Nebuzar-adan. The town was in Benjamin—and Rachel, the mother of Benjamin, is depicted by Jeremiah—himself a chained captive among them—as rising from her grave, which was between Bethel and Bethlehem (Gen. 35. 16), and weeping for her children or descendants—refusing consolation because of their death. The prophet is made to use language which should contain also a reference to this sad event. Both calamities were full of wo for the Jewish people, and the Holy Ghost referred to both in one. How comprehensive is God's foreknowledge, "who declares the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the

20 Saying Arise and take the young child and his mother, and go into the land of Israel: for they are dead<sup>a</sup> which sought the young child's life.

21 And he arose, and took the young child and his mother, and came into the land of Israel.

22 But when he heard that Ar-

<sup>a</sup> Ex. 4. 19.

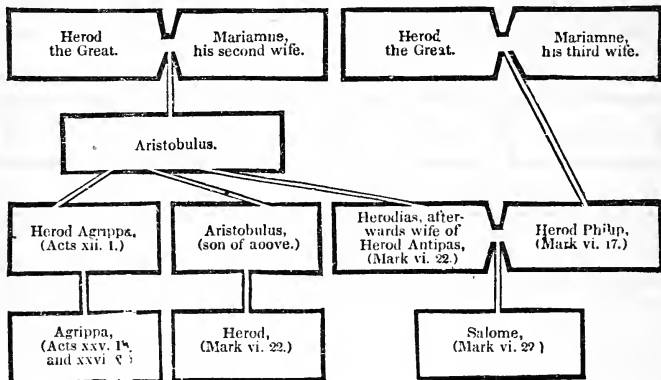
things that are not yet done" (Isa. 46. 10). Are not these slaughtered innocents the first martyrs for Christ?

19. See note, v. 15. Herod had died, and it was now safe for the family to return. Joseph is so instructed by an angel. All his path is under direction of God, and under guardianship of angels (Psalm 91). It seems likely that Herod's son, Antipater, had shared in the father's malicious designs, but Herod had put him to death a few days before his own decease. How the families of the wicked are swept away! "The name of the wicked shall rot." See cuts below.

20. God had promised him word (v. 13). Joseph accordingly returned to the holy land, or land of Israel, but not to Judea.

21. See Map.

22, 23. Archelaus. Herod had made





Archelaus did reign in Judea in the room of his father Herod, he was afraid to go thither: notwithstanding, being warned of God in a dream, he turned aside into the parts of Galilee:

r c. 3. 13. Lu. 2. 39.

his surviving sons heirs to his kingdom. They were called Herod also, and are so known in Scripture. To Herod Antipas fell Galilee and Perea. To Herod Archelaus fell Judea, Samaria, and Idumea. Joseph heard of this Archelaus, upon the throne in Judea, resembling his father in cruelty—having slaughtered three thousand persons at the first passover after Herod's death—and he was afraid to go within his jurisdiction. While in this perplexity he was specially directed by God, and turned aside into the parts or country of Galilee, where Herod Antipas reigned, who was a milder prince, and under whom Joseph could feel more secure. Galilee was the northern section of Palestine, Samaria being the middle, and Judea the south. See Map, and Bible Dictionary.—¶ Nazareth was the place of Mary's former residence (Luke 1. 26). This naturally influenced Joseph's course, and thither he would naturally have gone. Yet for this he had a higher direction, and a reason that had needs be stated here, to show the constant perils and persecutions of the holy child. Nazareth

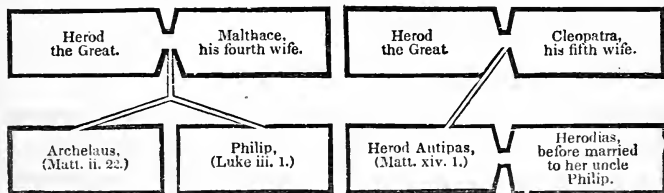
23 And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene.†

‡ Jno. 1. 45. † Nu. 6. 13. Ju. 13. 5. 1 Sa. 1. 11. Am. 2. 10-12. Ac. 24. 5.

was a town in the lower part of Galilee, about sixty miles N. from Bethlehem. It was an obscure and despised place, which led Nathanael to ask, "Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?" John 1. 46. And hence, Christ being a Nazarene, it is noted by way of reproach, as fulfilling not any one prophecy, but the substance of them all—"A reproach of men, and despised of the people." Psalm 22. 6. Isa. 53. 2, 3, 4. "Jesus of Nazareth" was used as a title of contempt; and Matthew, writing for the Jews, brings out the Old Testament points, and the ample fulfilment of their prophetic Scriptures. Here, at Nazareth, our Lord remained till he was about twenty-nine years old, in comparative obscurity; and then, at thirty, entered upon His public ministry. Six months previously, John the Baptist appeared as His herald and forerunner, to which our evangelist now passes, in chapter 3. Meanwhile, Luke records an intermediate event.

§ 13. At twelve years of age Jesus goes to the Passover.—Jerusalem.

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
		2. 41-52.	



## CHAPTER III.

[N those days came " John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judea,

<sup>u</sup> Lu.3.2. Jno.1.18.

## PART II.

*Announcement and Introduction of our Lord's Public Ministry.*

Time, about one year.

§ 14. THE MINISTRY OF JOHN THE BAPTIST.—*The Desert. Jordan.*

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
3. 1-12.	1. 1-8.	3. 1-18.	

## CHAPTER III.

1. *In those days.* This phrase hints to the reader, that a long interval of time is passed over in the history, as unimportant to be noticed. This covers the period of Christ's minority, which He spent at Nazareth, following His father Joseph's trade of carpenter (compare Matt. 13. 55 with Mark 6. 3), and attracting no special public notice, save in the visit to Jerusalem and the temple, at *twelve years of age.* (§ 13.) This was the period fixed, by common consent, as the age of discretion with males, when Jewish youth became "sons of commandment," and were bound to the observances of the ceremonial law. The object of the evangelists was to record Christ's public ministry. Hence they pass over a period of some seventeen years altogether—from his twelfth to his twenty-ninth. And Matthew here skips a space of over twenty-five years—from the return from Egypt until the public appearance of John the Baptist. Luke gives the time from the national data (ch. 3. 1). These events are connected with civil history. John was six months older than Jesus. For an account of his parentage and birth, see Luke, ch. 1. His parents were Zacharias and Elizabeth. He was called "the Baptist," because this was his office, as distinct from Christ's—baptizing and preaching the baptism of repentance for the

2 And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

3 For this is he that was spoken

remission of sins. Mark 1. 4. Paul distinguishes the two offices, 1 Cor. 1. 17, "Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel." Baptism had been familiarly practised among the Jews, and known as the initiatory rite, and John came to introduce men to the gospel dispensation. (See Malachi 3. 1, and Mark 1. 2.) Baptism formerly admitted proselytes to the Jewish religion—now it admitted Jews to the gospel religion.—¶ *In the wilderness of Judea.* A rough, mountainous, and thinly populated district, along the Jordan. Luke says, "He came into all the country around Jordan."

2. John's message was, *Repent ye.* Malachi, the last prophet of the Jews, had pointed him out, as acting in just such a capacity, as Christ's messenger (3. 1)—as the Elias (4. 5)—*preaching repentance*—"turning the hearts of the fathers to the children, and of the children to the fathers" (4. 6). His business was to call for a general reformation among the Jews, who had become degraded and corrupt. His exhortation was based upon doctrine—"Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." (See also Mark 1. 4). He heralded the remission of sins in Christ who was to come; the approach of Christ's prophesied kingdom—not earthly and carnal, as the Jews had thought, but spiritual and heavenly; and on this ground, and in keeping with this new state of things, he charged them to alter their views, their hopes, and their conduct. This is *to repent.* The Jews held that the Messiah would expect "a repenting generation." And in one of their books they have this sentiment, "If Israel repent but one day, presently the Messiah cometh." There are two senses of the term, *repentance.* The one is this thorough *change of mind*—of the hopes, pur-

of <sup>v</sup> by the prophet Esaias, say- ing, The voice of one crying in

or in 40.3.

poses, and course of life. The other is *remorse*. Judas repented in the last sense. It was "the sorrow of the world that worketh death." No anguish of feeling is anything, save as leading to Christ and to a change of life. And a hearty change *implies* substantial sorrow for past impenitence and depravity. Every one should repent because he has a wicked nature—because he has lived wickedly; and because forgiveness is proclaimed to sinners in Christ; while Christ himself, the Saviour and Judge, is *at hand*. And there is no valuable sign of true repentance apart from a thorough reform of character and conduct. Repentance is not the ground of forgiveness. Yet sinners should repent of their sins if they would obtain forgiveness, because this is most fit and requisite, that the renunciation and confession of sin should go before the assurance of forgiveness, even as John the Baptist's work goes before Christ's. Though the forgiveness is proclaimed freely, and the goodness of God is urged as an incentive to repentance, yet only they who repent of sin can enjoy a sense of pardon, or know the meaning of forgiveness for themselves; and only they are actually forgiven. So, wise parents require of their children repentance. Yet often the parent's willingness to forgive freely, is that which provokes the heartiest repentance in the child. There is nothing in a sinner's repentance which obligates God to forgive. It does not take away sin. Neither is it *because* he repents, but *because Christ has died*, that he is forgiven. Hence, the message is, "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. John preached the baptism of repentance, (for) *in reference to* the remission of sins by Christ, who was at hand. Mark 1. 4. The coming of Christ is so spoken of, because this was what the prophets had pointed to. (Dan. 7. 13, 14.) David the king was to have a son and successor greater than Solomon, to sit forever on his

throne. 1 Kings 2. 4; 8. 25; Jer. 33. 17. By *the kingdom of heaven*, is meant the gospel dispensation as the kingdom of Christ upon earth. It was now no longer distant, as it had been to prophets, but *at hand*, and very near. It was to be established in the death and resurrection of Christ. John was its immediate forerunner, to announce its coming; and so it was to be immediately expected. That kingdom is now set up. Since John's time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man (of all nations) presseth into it (Luke 16. 16). "For from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force" (Matt. 11. 12). They who urgently press into it, and earnestly lay hold of its benefits, are true Christians, and only they belong to it. "The word is nigh thee." Rom. 10. 8. The *gospel of the kingdom* is now preached. This kingdom, though set up, and proclaimed, and already come in its plans *and offers*, has not yet fully come in its results. So we are to pray, "Thy kingdom come," "that the kingdom of grace may be advanced, ourselves and others brought into it, and that the kingdom of glory may be hastened."—*Shorter Catechism*.

3. *This is he*. Esaias (called Isaiah in the Old Testament or Hebrew tongue, this being the Greek) had spoken of John distinctly, though not by name. It was more than seven hundred years before John's time that Isaiah prophesied. Here is another instance of a prophecy, referring just as truly to an event far subsequent as to the one nearer at hand. Though the passage in Isaiah (40. 3) referred more immediately to the deliverance and return of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity, yet the fuller application was to this greater event. And the subjects of the prophecy were kindred in themselves. The chosen people coming out of that captivity which so represented the bondage of sin; and the same covenant people

the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.

4 And the same John had his raiment of camel's hair, and a

¶ 2 Ki. 1. 8. Mat. 11. 8.

coming out now from that legal dispensation "*which gendereth to bondage.*" Galatians. Hence both events could bear to be couched under the same prophetic language. We learn now, from this evangelist, that John was *he* whom the prophet announced, though *then* the prophecy seemed to apply only to the events more immediately at hand. *The Lord*, of whose coming John gave notice, was Christ himself. The prophet Isaiah seemed to hear the voice of the wilderness preacher.—¶ *Prepare ye the way.* This is an image drawn from Eastern customs. Monarchs on a march sent a herald before them, to prepare their way, to have their path levelled and straightened, and to announce their coming. John preached this preparation of Christ's way, as he was to "turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and of the children to the fathers, lest He come and smite the earth with a curse" (Mal. 4. 6). He stirred up the people to expect Him "suddenly," Mal. 3. 1, and he called for a removal of all obstructions out of the way of His coming. He made His paths straight, as he notified them of the nature of His reign, so different from that which they had thought; and he exhorted them to make ready for His direct ministry of grace among them.

4. *Camel's hair.* John's clothing is here described as an expressive symbol of his work. To the Jews all this mode of living in the wilderness, and with coarsest clothes, strikingly indicated his work of preaching repentance. So the prophets wore this clothing (2 Kings 1. 8. Zech. 13. 4). So Christ intimates (Matt. 11. 8), "They that wear soft clothing are in king's houses." This camel's hair was woven into a coarse fabric, and served for clothing to the poorer

leathern girdle about his loins; and his meat was locusts \* and wild honey.

5 Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judea, and

¶ Le. 11. 22.

classes. As a kind of sackcloth, it was the garb of mourning and penitence. John comes forward, therefore, as repentance personified. "In that which he does, he shows the people what they should do."—*Hengstenberg.* As he was "the Elias which was to come," reference is also made to the garb of the prophet Elijah, whose work he represents. See 1 Kings 21. 27, where Ahab copies the repentance which the prophet set before him. See also 2 Kings 1. 8, "He (Elijah) was a hairy man, and girt with a girdle of leather about his loins."—¶ *His meat* (or food) *was locusts*, Levit. 11. 22, which the Jews were expressly allowed to eat. This was the coarsest fare, and all in keeping. It was significant of his work. The prophet Elijah was fed by ravens. The Saviour represents this fare of John as a continual fasting, Matt. 11. 18, "*John came neither eating nor drinking.*" Locusts were eaten by the poor, mostly without much preparation, roasted and taken with salt. See *Union Bib. Dictionary.*—¶ *Wild honey.* This was either taken from rocks and stumps of trees, or it was such as is sometimes found in the East, collecting on the foliage of a *honey tree*, of which we are told, 1 Sam. 14. 25, 26, and 27, and flows profusely. Locusts might sometimes fail. This was a food belonging to a wild and waste region. See Isa. 7. 15.

5. *Jerusalem, &c.* A great multitude thronged to receive John's baptism. The inhabitants of Jerusalem in large numbers, and crowds from different parts of Judea, and all about the river and valley of Jordan, attended upon his preaching, and received his ordinance. Many had such expectations of Christ's coming, and so remembered what was declared by their last prophet, of the herald,

all the region round about Jordan,

6 And were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing <sup>y</sup> their sins.

*y* Ac. 1.5; 2.38; 19.4,5,18.

and of his preparatory work, that they went out to him at once. Many others had been drawn after him by the novelty of his dress and of his doctrine. So Christ intimates in Matt. 11. 7, when "He inquired of the multitudes concerning John, What went ye out for to see?"

*Jerusalem.* The capital of the kingdom of Judah; called also *Salem*, Gen. 14. 18 and Ps. 76. 2; and *Jebus*, from the Jebusites, who held it before it was possessed by Israel (Josh. 18. 28). The name means, "habitation or inheritance of peace." The city was built on four principal hills: *Bezetha*, on the north; *Moriah*, on the east; *Zion*, on the south; *Acra*, on the west. Across the valley or ravine, by which Moriah was separated from Zion, a bridge was built, for easier access to the temple, which stood on Mount Moriah. "The mountains round about Jerusalem" were highest on the east, where lay the Mount of Olives, commanding the finest view of the city, and from which our Lord beheld it and wept. The temple was on that side; and the valley separating Moriah from Olivet was the valley of the Kedron; and there, at the foot of Mount Olivet, across the brook from the city, was the garden of Gethsemane. The valley of Jehoshaphat lies along the south-east, and the valley of Hinnom toward the south-west, separating the city respectively from the "Hill of Offence" and the "Hill of Evil Counsel." See Plate. The circumference of the ancient city was nearly three and a half geographical miles. The circumference of the present walls does not exceed two and a half—though Mount Zion is now unenclosed, and a portion also at the north. The population is estimated most correctly at fifteen thousand.—¶ *Jordan.* The only river of any note in Palestine, gives the name to a broad valley through which it flows. This valley is some

sixty miles in length, and from five to ten miles in breadth.

6. *Were baptized.* This ordinance had formerly been in use among the Jews. It was known as an initiatory rite. Proselytes to the Jewish religion were received in this way. Hence, they understood the ordinance as signifying an espousal of a new religion, and so it was a mode of public profession. More or less the outward rite involved the idea of cleansing. The use of water had this significance. In the Christian church it is plainly symbolical of the Spirit's agency, and of this Divine influence graciously imparted from above. "Except a man be born *again*" (margin, *from above*). "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean." Ezek. 36. 25. The word *baptize*, is the Greek term *baptizo*, not translated, but transferred to our language. Therefore it tells nothing of the *mode*. Observe the terms. Two elements are mentioned in the New Testament baptizing, viz., water, and the Holy Ghost. "I indeed baptize you *with water*, but He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost." From knowing of the mode in the use of one of these elements, we may infer the *mode* in the use of the other. The baptizing with the Holy Ghost is elsewhere spoken of, as by the Spirit's being *poured out*—"Until the Spirit be poured upon us from on high." Isa. 32. 15. "I will pour out my Spirit upon you." Prov. 1. 23. "I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh." Joel 2. 28. Zech. 12. 10. Or its *being sent*—"I will send the Comforter." Or its *descending*—as at Christ's baptism, where the sign and thing signified met—"The Holy Ghost descended like a dove and rested upon Him." Or its *being sprinkled upon* the person. Ezek. 36. 25. "So shall He sprinkle many nations." Isa. 52. 15. And *rain* was a common emblem of it in the Old Testament. Hence, we conclude,

7 But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto

z Is. 59. 5. c. 12. 34; 23. 33. Lu. 3. 7.

that the baptizing with water is by its descent, outpouring, sprinkling upon the person. The doctrine of the ordinance requires it to be administered, not by applying the person to the water, but the water to the person. This is the symbolical purport. The element denotes, not the atoning, but the cleansing influence. It is the water, not the blood. And renewing grace is to be received only at the sovereign hand of God. And the children of God are described in the Revelation, as having His name in their foreheads. It may here be mentioned, that the word *baptisterium*, from which the term *baptistry* is had, signifies, "not a bath sufficiently large to immerse the whole body, but a vessel or labrum containing water for pouring over the head (Plin. Ep. 6). See Smith's Dictionary of Greek and Roman Antiquities. John's baptism was not fully the same as that in the Christian church; for some of John's disciples were re-baptized. Acts ch. 19. And the commission for the Christian church, was to baptize in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Matt. 28. 19. (See notes on verse 11.)—¶ *Confessing their sins.* In the baptism of repentance (says Bengel) they confessed their sins. In the baptism of Christ they confessed Christ. John preached repentance; and they who received his baptism owned their sinfulness, and professed a change of mind and conduct. They put off former things, and gave an indication, and admitted a sign, of *newness of life*. This confession was open and free, as the term in Greek implies—not private and auricular, and not constrained, but voluntary. Yet all this *looked toward* Christ, "in whom we have forgiveness of sins." "*Sin* is any want of conformity unto, or transgression of, the law of God."—*Shorter Catechism.* "All unrighteous-

ness is sin." 1 John 5. 17. "Sin is a transgression of the law." 1 John 3. 4. And where persons of riper years receive baptism (and to such, of course, the ordinance was first offered), they should sincerely acknowledge past sin, with purposes and promises of a new life. The following verses show that this was John's view of it.

a Je. 51. 6. Ro. 1. 18.

7. The PHARISEES were a powerful religious sect, of predominant influence in the Jewish state. They were the recognized teachers, proud of their legal knowledge, and boasting a superior sanctity; outwardly practising austerities, but inwardly indulging the worst passions. They believed in the resurrection, and in angels good and bad, as the *Sadducees* did not. Acts 23. 8. They held also to a divine government of *fate*, and they claimed favour of God, on the ground of descent from Abraham. They observed the strictest letter of the Mosaic law; and besides held to various traditions (ch. 15. 2), washed themselves religiously before meals, fasted twice a week, on Thursdays and Mondays (see ch. 9. 14, and ch. 23. 15, 23), made much of vestments and of sacred appendages (ch. 6. 1, ch. 23. 3, 24), but were hypocritical (ch. 23. 14, 27, &c.), narrow-minded, selfish, bigoted, and vain, fond of pleasures and lax in morals (ch. 5. 20, ch. 15. 4, 8, ch. 23. 3, 14, 23, 25). And a religion such as theirs, was declared by our Lord wholly worthless for admittance to heaven (Matt. 5. 20). Their name is from the Hebrew word, *pharash*, which means, to *separate*; and these, and such as "these, are they that separate themselves, having not the Spirit." Jude v. 19. Josephus says they were akin to the Stoics among the Greeks (Vita Joseph., § 2). See Matt. 9. 11, and 23. 5, 15, 29. The SADDUCEES were fewer, but more wealthy, and of higher rank, yet had no influence with the multitude.

8 Bring forth therefore fruits<sup>1</sup> meet for repentance :

9 And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father : for I say unto

<sup>1</sup> Or, answerable to amenment of life.

They were bitter opposers of Christ, and denied the immortality of the soul, and all the doctrines of another life (Acts 23. 8). This being the character of these sects, John was surprised at their coming to his baptism. Hence he calls them by a name descriptive of their real disposition, "A generation of *vipers*," Isa. 14. 29, rather than the generation of faithful Abraham, which they claimed to be. A viper was a venomous serpent. And so, they were children of the old serpent (Rev. 12. 9), who is the devil, "the father of lies." Cunning and poisonous with their doctrines, and ready to dart their malicious venom at everything good. —¶ *The wrath, to come.* He preached the wrath of God to come upon the wicked (2 Thess. 1. 10, 11). He alludes to Malachi 4. 6, as the wrath expected. Their coming to him, looked like a disposition to flee from that wrath, by receiving the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. Observe, it was not a mere *water baptism* that John preached, but one which implied a fleeing from the wrath to come upon sin, by taking the warning of repentance. And sinners are saved from the wrath to come, not by any baptism of water, but by fleeing for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before us.

8. *Fruits.* He tells them, therefore, to bring forth fruits meet for repentance; that is, to begin with their conduct and principles, in a way appropriate to repentance, and to show in their lives the appropriate results of such a change. And as fruit is the best evidence of the nature and quality of a tree, so they should thus best evince their sincerity. —¶ *Repentance,* is a change of mind which is best proved by turning away from sin and Satan to God.

9. *Abraham to our father.* The Jews

you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.

10 And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees :

boasted in Abraham. They were his descendants according to the flesh, and he was "the friend of God," and the covenant was to him and to his seed. So these boasted in their mere hereditary descent, as a sufficient righteousness before God. But "God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham." He is not confined to nations, or to means, or to a law of succession in the church. They should not think that He was confined to Abraham's natural seed. The true succession now, is that of true piety; and Abraham's true children are such as God has raised up and created anew. (See John 8. 39.) "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise" (Gal. 3. 29). God can, and will, gather a chosen people from the Gentiles, which the Jews thought to be quite as impossible as that He should make church members out of stones. They mistook and perverted the Abrahamic covenant, which was to be of permanent force in the church, and which now includes, with believing parents, their infant offspring. But we cannot be saved, if we continue in sin, even though our parents be pious.

10. *And now.* This is the doctrine—that the time had come for getting at the root of things. Men's hearts should be laid open, and so they should be judged, and not according to the mere outward appearance. John notifies them of this new state of things. They were to be treated as trees are by the woodman.—¶ *Unto the root.* The axe laid unto the root, denotes that every thing is ready now for cutting down such as are heartless and fruitless. That the trial shall be of the heart and life. Men cannot hope any longer to stand upon a mere profession, or external relation, or upon

therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewn down, and cast into the fire.

11 I indeed baptize you with water<sup>c</sup> unto repentance: but he

b Jno.15.6. c Lu.3.16. Ac.19.4.

an outward show of ceremonies and pretensions. Now, the rule that is to be pressed is this, "By their fruits ye shall know them." Men must give substantial and actual evidence of their being Christians, or they will be cut down. Nor is this a dispensation for mere outward reform—lopping off bad branches—putting aside offensive habits—as the end to be reached. But it is a time for judging of real character, and for coming to final decisions.—¶ *Every tree.* A man that lacks piety is here represented by the tree that bears no good fruit. Corruption and wickedness are the natural fruits of the human heart (Mark 7. 21-23); and he on whom the good fruit of true piety is not found, will be cut down and cast into the fire, as rotten and worthless trees are used for *fire-wood*. Still the reference to Malachi's prophecy is kept up (Mal. 4. 1). "The day cometh that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be as stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch." In Luke's narrative, we find that this sentiment started a general inquiry, "What shall we do, then?" He directed them to honesty, benevolence, and mercy.

11. *Cometh after me.* "The messenger of the covenant," of whom John was the forerunner. Mal. 3. 1.—¶ *Mightier.* His extra prerogative and power are pointed to. He is the Master whom John only served, and whose greater work he introduced. The difference between the two baptisms is, that John's is outward—Christ's inward. John sprinkles nothing but water; and cannot reach the heart. The ordinance he

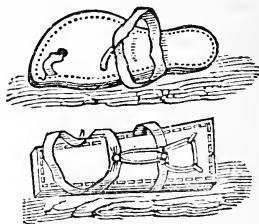
that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you<sup>d</sup> with the Holy Ghost, and with fire:

12 Whose fan is in his hand,

d Ac.1.5.

uses looks toward a repentance which he cannot impart. Christ shall pour out the *Holy Ghost*, who shall renew the heart; and He shall come with fire, which shall try and purify the reins. Again the reference is to Malachi. "He shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver." Mal. 3. 3. "He is like a refiner's fire," &c. (3. 2). Acts 1. 5, and 11. 16. And He shall consume the incorrigible and worthless—"shall burn as an oven." Mal. 4. 1.—¶ *Shoes.* The shoes or sandals then worn were loose slippers, consisting of a piece of wood or leather, like the sole of a shoe, bound to the bottom of the feet by thongs (called *the latchet*, Mark 1. 7), as a boy's skate is fastened. These were put off on entering the house, and to unloose them was the most menial work—troublesome, and often filthy. John declares that he is not worthy to do even this lowest service to such a one as Christ (John 3. 30).

This cut is taken from the Union Bible Dictionary.



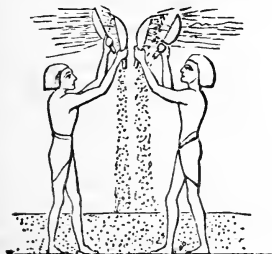
12. *Whose fan.* This carries out the idea. This is a winnowing instrument (Jer. 15. 7). A hand-scoop by which the grain could be so thrown up and exposed to the wind.



and he will thoroughly purge<sup>e</sup> his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff<sup>f</sup> with unquenchable fire.

<sup>e</sup> Mal. 3. 2, 3. <sup>f</sup> Ps. 1. 4. Mal. 4. 1. Mar. 9. 4.

as to separate the chaff. Wheat and chaff were to be most strictly separated. Again the reference is to Malachi. "Then shall ye return and discern between the righteous and the wicked," &c. (Mal. 3. 18). "For behold the day cometh that shall burn as an oven (Mal. 4. 1), &c. Thus He will thoroughly cleanse His threshing-floor (Isa. 21. 10)—that is, His church, so as to have it pure; and the merely nominal and hollow professors should be sifted out, and blown away like chaff before the wind. Jer. 15. 7. Luke 22. 31.—¶ *His wheat.* The sincere and true children of God should be gathered like good grain into the granary, or place of preservation. God will *house* His people. "They shall be kept (or garrisoned, as the term is) by the power of God through faith unto salvation" (1 Pet. 1. 5). But the *chaff*—the wicked that are mixed with the good in the church—He shall burn (Isa. 5. 24) with extinguishable fire (parable of the tares, Matt. 11); which, because it is *unquenchable*, must be *eternal*. Matt. 25. 41, 46. Mark 9. 48. 2 Thess. 1. 8, 9. See Job 26. "A fire not blown (not to be blown out), shall consume him." "The ungodly are not so: but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away." Ps. 1. 4. This was the last process of cleansing grain "thoroughly."



13 Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan, unto John, to be baptized<sup>g</sup> of him.

14 But John forbid him, saying, I have need to be baptized

<sup>g</sup> Mar. 1. 9. Lu. 3. 21.

"The fan doth cause light chaff to fly away: So shall the ungodly in God's winnowing day." *Flavel.*

The preceding cut is from Kitto's Encyclopedia, showing the mode of using the *fan*.

### § 15. THE BAPTISM OF JESUS.—*The Jordan.*

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
3. 13-17.	1. 9-11.	3. 21-23.	

13. *Then cometh Jesus from Galilee* We learn from John 1. 28, that John the Baptist was baptizing at Bethabara, beyond Jordan. This was a town in the tribe of Reuben, and near the Dead Sea. Here, it is supposed, over against Jericho, the Jordan was crossed by the Israelites, under Joshua. The name means, "a place of passage." From Galilee, in a southerly direction, Christ came. He had been at Nazareth till now. He was entering His thirtieth year (Luke 3. 23). And here we have his submission to John's ordinance, to "fulfil all (legal) righteousness." See Exodus 29. 4. It was also a formal inauguration, and public entrance upon His gospel offices, as sanctioned by the law. John could introduce Christ. His office was that of a forerunner and herald. Our Lord was now at the age of the priests at their entrance into office (Numbers 4. 3). There was an analogy also in the personal types. It was the age of *Joseph* at his appearing before Pharaoh (Gen. 41. 46), and the age of *David* when he began to reign (2 Sam. 5. 4). This was now about the feast of Tabernacles, at which time of the year Christ was born. The most exalted piety will earnestly seek the appointed ordinances. Psalm 27. 4.

14. *I have need, &c.* John evidently looked for Christ, and was led to recognize Him, before the baptism on

of thee, and comest thou to me?

15 And Jesus answering, said unto him, Suffer *it to be so* now:

His application for the ordinance. But there was yet a Divine certificate to be given, for his own full assurance, and for the faith of ages. In John 1. 31, he says, "*I knew Him not,*" which refers to the fact of their having been personally apart—that Christ had a long time come, yet had not presented himself, and was dwelling so many years in Galilee, unknown to the people, or even to John, His forerunner, as the Messiah—not yet manifested, but to *be manifested*. He alludes to the fact, that His obscurity at Nazareth had almost obliterated the impressions of His miraculous birth and its circumstances. John knows Him *now*, and objects to the request, on the ground of Christ's superiority to him, and especially of His superior *office work*. "If one of us is to be baptized of the other, I am the one that needs to be baptized of thee." He knows him now, but not as he shall know Him soon from heaven. John recognized Christ's work as better than his. The gospel baptism is better than that of the law. The gospel hope is better than that of Sinai.

15. *Suffer it*. Our Lord insisted, and it was not in John's right or power to refuse. A sense of personal unfitness should never keep us from performing any enjoined duty. He who commands, also warrants and helps. It became them both, for in the great plan of redemption they co-operated. This act was now required. It was admitted because of its propriety in the view of our Lord. He was not obligated to the law, but put himself voluntarily under it. He was "made of a woman, made under the law" (Gal. 4. 4). Yet He was no mere man, but the God-man. He submitted to the law's requirement in His official work.—¶ *It becometh us*. It was becoming as they were related, and as they held their respective offices, thus to do.—¶ *To fulfil all righteousness*.

for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him.

16 And Jesus, when he was

That is, to comply with all the legal ceremonial requirements. This was the legal ceremony for induction to the priest's office. He would honour the typical ordinance, and submit himself to that appointed institution. "Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision." Rom. 15. 8. He would also consecrate the ordinance, as a perpetual institution in the church, for the Christian membership, who are declared to be "a royal priesthood" (1 Pet. 2. 9), and so, He would put himself among the baptized. Let none regard this as a needless ceremony.—¶ *Then he suffered him*—or allowed Him to be baptized.

16. *Out of the water*—literally, *ascended from the water*. The same words are used as in Luke 2. 4, "Joseph went up from Galilee." And Acts 25. 1, "He ascended from Casarea to Jerusalem." Hence there is no proof in this of their having gone the farther into the water, much less of Christ's having gone under the water. We may readily suppose, that in that hot country, they even walked into the shallow edge of the stream, for the greater convenience of applying the water by sprinkling. So Philip and the eunuch went *both* into the water. Acts 8. 38.—¶ *And, lo*. Christ prayed at His baptism (see Luke 3. 21), and possibly it was for some open and public recognition, such as this which He received from heaven, "while He was praying."—¶ *The heavens were opened unto him*. This was given for His own assurance, and personal recognition, while it served also as a testimony to his Divine Sonship, and the acceptance of His official work. Mark 1. 11, presents it as occurring to Christ, with this additional, that the language is addressed personally to Him, "Thou art my beloved Son, in Thee I am well pleased." John the Baptist also saw the descent of the Spirit upon

baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God<sup>h</sup> descending like a dove, and lighting upon him:

17 And, lo, a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved<sup>i</sup> Son, in whom I am well pleased.

<sup>h</sup> Is. 11.2; 42.1; 61.1. <sup>j</sup> no. 3.34. <sup>i</sup> Ps. 2.7. Lu. 9.35. Ep. 1.6. 2 Pe. 1.17.

Him. John 1. 32. Christ sets us an example of prayer, and the splendid answer is our encouragement.—

¶ *The Spirit of God.* The Holy Ghost, Third Person of the Blessed Trinity. This was His special anointing by the Spirit, for the Messianic offices (Isaiah 61. 1). Here the symbol and its signification met. The descent upon Him was “*in a bodily shape like a dove*” (Luke 3. 22), so that John could be witness to it, and have his confidence assured by this most remarkable phenomenon. Note the personality of the Holy Ghost. Christ *saw the Spirit* descending. The voice of God the Father out of heaven was doubtless heard by all, as a public testimony (See John 12. 28-30). This formula of recognition was repeated when Christ was transfigured. Matt. 17. 5. Luke 9. 35, 36. 2 Pet. 1. 17. It was an open declaration of Christ’s being the Messiah predicted, and *that He was accepted in heaven as Mediator*. Thus, at the opening of His public work, a public exhibition is given of the adorable Trinity. The Father speaks—the Son is baptized—the Holy Ghost alights upon Him. The Father is here declared as fully satisfied with Christ’s official work of mediation for sinners. Observe, “*In him,*” not *in us*—in the Saviour, not in the sinner—God is *well pleased*. Observe, Christ’s atoning office, and the Spirit’s quickening, renewing work, go together. “*He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost.*”

4\*

## CHAPTER IV.

THEN was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness, to be<sup>k</sup> tempted of the devil.

2 And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungered.

3 And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the

<sup>j</sup> 1 Ki. 18.12. Ez. 11.1,24. Ac. 9.39. <sup>k</sup> Mar. 1.12 Lu. 4.1.

## CHAPTER IV.

§ 16. THE TEMPTATION OF CHRIST.—  
*Desert of Judea.*

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
4. 1-11.	1. 12, 13.	4. 1-13.	

1. Jesus, after thus being openly acknowledged and inducted, both personally and officially, at His baptism, enters at once upon His work, and enters into temptation. He was “*led up by the Spirit*” (i. e., the Holy Ghost), which shows that this whole transaction was founded in the plan of God. He “*was full of the Holy Ghost*” (Luke 4. 1), who had ministered so prominently at His conception and baptism, and had just appeared descending on Him. And as “*for this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil*” (1 John 3. 8), the conflict opens at once.—¶ *Led up.* This term is the same used in Luke 4. 5, of the tempter’s agency. This temptation was an act of Christ’s sacrificial work, “*Who, through the eternal Spirit, offered himself without spot to God.*” Heb. 9. 14 —¶ *To be tempted.* Not as “*a man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed*” (James 1 14), but to be tried, proved, and especially here to be assaulted with most malignant efforts to seduce Him to evil. This was done by *the devil*—the adversary, accuser, and enemy of mankind. He is a real person, and not merely an influence. He is called the Old Serpent (Rev. 12. 9); Satan

Son of God, command that these stones be made bread

(Job 1. 6-12); Beelzebub (Matt. 12. 24); The Prince of the power of the air (Ephes. 2. 2). He is the leader of the legions of fallen angels, and of the wicked spirits in hell (Rev. 12. 9. and 20. 10). He tempts men by suggesting evil thoughts, or stirring up evil desires through the senses (as our first parents, Gen. 3)—the children of disobedience (Ephes. 2. 2)—and David to number the people (1 Chron. 21. 1). Or by instigating to wicked acts, as *Judas* (Luke 22. 3)—*Ananias* (Acts 5. 3). Or by deceiving (Rev. 12. 9). See 1 Pet. 5. 8. Our depraved nature aids him in his temptation. We fall in, naturally, with his schemes, and yield to the motives he urges. He gets an advantage of us if we are not constantly on the watch against his devices (2 Cor. 2. 11). Hence, in the Scripture, we are charged to "watch and pray, that we enter not into temptation," and to "resist the devil" (1 Pet. 5. 9), with the promise, that so doing, "he shall flee from us" (James 4. 7). Christ was tempted, so as "to be able to succour them that are tempted" (Heb. 2. 18). As the first Adam had been tempted, and had fallen, the second Adam enters (by the Divine plan) into temptation, to show His steadfastness and superiority to the first Adam. "He was tempted in all points, like as we are, yet without sin." See Heb. 2. 18 and 4. 15.

2. *Fasted*. Abstained from food. There was a fast required by the Mosaic law, on the great day of annual atonement (Levit. 23. 27, 29). This exercise of fasting seems always to have retained some prominence (Acts 27. 9). There were also private fasts, though the law did not require them. After the exile, fasts became very frequent, as a regular part of the current religious worship. Fasts were regarded as a useful exercise, to prepare the mind for special religious impressions (Dan. 10. 2, sq. Matt. 27. 21. Acts 13. 3; 14. 23). From one day

4 But he answered and said, It is written,<sup>1</sup> Man shall not live

1 De. 8. 3.

to forty days had been observed; but the last period, with a special sanctity, in reference to certain events in Jewish history. Thus Moses fasted on the Mount (Exod. 34. 28, Deut. 9. 9, 18); and Elijah (1 Kings 19. 8). Yet it was greatly abused in the prophet's day (Isa. 58. 4), and by the Pharisees in our Saviour's time (Matt. 6. 16). It may be abused by its excesses, in weakening the flesh—by making a virtue or merit of the exercise—and by mistaking the outward humiliation for the inward mortification before God. Our Lord seems to have abstained utterly from food, as Luke declares expressly, that "*He did eat nothing* (Luke 4. 2). This was part of Christ's humiliation—Being found in fashion as a man, He humbled himself even beneath the common lot of men. It was also part of His induction to office—"A prophet like unto Moses." And He submitted to our personal woes as part of His mediatorial work—"Himself took our infirmities and bare our sicknesses." Matt. 8. 17. The first Adam fell by eating—Christ begins by fasting.

3. Satan is here called *the tempter*, as his business was temptation; and by this work he is known among men. So he assaulted the first Adam (Gen. 3). Hence we may know that solicitations to evil are always of the devil. Observe, he suits himself to our circumstances, and we need always to be on our guard. We should specially fear his suggestions when he pretends friendship, and offers his plans for our help. We should pray not to be led into temptation, because we are not yet delivered from evil. As to the temptation of Christ, we are to remember that it was by the Divine plan for His official work, and that He was "*led by the Spirit into the wilderness*" with this in view.—¶ *U* thou be the Son of God. He had just been proclaimed the Son of God by a

by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

5 Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, <sup>m</sup> and set-

*m* Ne.11.1. c.27.53.

voice from heaven. It was a fundamental point, involving a recognition of His person and work, and the acceptance of His offices in heaven. Wherefore Satan joins issue upon this. Observe, this point of Christ's true and proper Divinity involves the whole Christian religion. Satan and all Christ's enemies will principally contest this. They who deny that Christ is God, must repudiate *all His claims*, as did the Jews.—¶ *Command.* The devil acknowledges that He who is the Son of God must be omnipotent—God himself. *If thou be—command.* This was a temptation to Christ, only as an *assault* from the devil—not as an attraction in itself. It challenged Him to distrust the plan and promise of the Father. The act would have been wrong, *as it was proposed and understood, viz., to break through the Divine plan.*

4. *But he answered.* This is quoted from Deut. 8. 3. These are the words of Moses, spoken of the *manna*, which was furnished Israel when a hungered in the wilderness, and which was so extraordinarily supplied. This was sent to show, that beyond all common resources, God has boundless means of providence, and that *He* is to be lived upon, in His word of promise and in His work of power and grace. "I am *that bread.*" John 6. Give us day by day the bread which every day requires. Only *they* know how to live, who live upon God's covenant. *He* gives himself to us for a portion, "I am the Lord thy God." Temptation often assaults us *through the appetites*, and appeals to us on the ground of *necessity*. But always is it to be resisted by the express word of Scripture.

5. *Taketh Him up.* Not against His will, for the word has no such meaning. There was a personal

teth him on a pinnacle of the temple,

6 And saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, <sup>n</sup> He

*n* Ps.91.11,12.

agency of the devil; and Christ, though led to the holy city, was not led into sin. Christ submitted to this as *He* submitted to death. The city of Jerusalem was called the holy city, as it was the seat of the Jewish religion; and "holy" in the ceremonial sense of being set apart for a sacred use. The inscription on their coins was, "*Jerusalem the holy.*"—¶ *Pinnacle* (or *wing*) of the temple. The temple was that immense building on the top of Mount Moriah, which had been rebuilt and adorned till it rivalled that of Solomon on the same site. "This wing was probably the projecting tower, called the king's portico, which, says Josephus (lib. xv., ch. 2, § 5), "was one of the most remarkable works ever seen under the sun. For, whereas, the valley (of Jehoshaphat or Cedron) was so deep and precipitous that one could not bear to look down it, on the very edge of this precipice Herod raised the immense height of this tower, so that if any one from the peak of this roof should look down through both these depths at once, he would be seized with dizziness," &c. This was some seven hundred feet in height. (See Union Bib. Dictionary, and Plate of Ancient Jerusalem.)

6. From this height Christ was challenged by Satan to cast himself down; and now the challenge was based upon Scripture. It is found in Psalm 91. 11, 12. It was an attack upon Christ on the *Scriptural* ground, where *He* had just resisted the tempter. It was a challenge to *presumption*, as before it had been to *distrust*. This passage is a promise to the righteous, of God's providential care extending to all their steps (Ps. 91. 11). Satan now dares the Saviour to test the truth of that promise, and as *He*

shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in *their* hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.

7 Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.

8 Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the

o De. 6. 16.

had just expressed His implicit confidence in God's word to this effect, to give a signal proof of it now. And again observe, He dares Him to prove His *divinity*. But God's promises are not to the presumptuous; nor will they encourage presumption. As Christ here encounters *temptation* for His people, so He sets a pattern of resistance, and draws for them the lessons which are to serve them in all their life. The angels have doubtless many services of protection and deliverance to perform for the righteous. They are the pure, unfallen spirits in heaven. See the case of Daniel (3. 28); of Peter (Acts 5. 19).

7. *It is written again.* Christ replies by another quotation of Scripture (Deut. 6. 16). To tempt means to try—to dare. Thou shalt not PROVOKE God by a vain foolhardiness, and by putting His promises to a rash and daring test. This is vastly different from an humble trust.

8. *An exceeding high mountain.* This is Christ's next position in the assault of Satan. There were lofty peaks, as Nebo (Deut. 34. 1-3), which commanded a most extensive view. And here the suggestion was made to Him of universal, temporal power. "All the kingdoms of the world" could not have been seen with the natural eye—even the kingdoms of Palestine—"in a moment of time" (as Luke has it), even if a point of observation could have been found. Nor could even the widest view from any known peak have been surveyed so

kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them;

9 And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.

10 Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan; for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.

p De. 6. 13. 1 Sa. 7. 3.

instantaneously. The temptation lay in the *foul suggestion*, which Christ so instantly repelled. The *glory* of the kingdoms (their wealth, and pride, and power) was shown Him. It was most likely, when He was on some such commanding summit, with vast worldly greatness lying in the view, that this suggestion of the adversary was made. It implied no sin in Christ, and it led to none. Christ had not where to lay His head.

9. *Will I give thee.* Satan claimed all earthly glory as his (Luke 4. 6), to keep or to give away, and as *given* to him. Though Satan is "the prince of this world," as having a temporary dominion here, and having many subjects, yet the kingdoms belong to Christ (Ps. 22. 28), "and he is the Governor among the nations." "All power is given unto Him in heaven and on earth." Satan's promises are impious delusions. "He is a liar, and the father of it" (John 8. 44).

10. Christ again resists, with the Scripture. He shows from the law (Deut. 6. 13; 10. 20), that as a man He could not warrantably worship any but God himself, because there was no other proper object of religious worship, and no man can serve two masters (Matt. 6. 24). The *first* commandment involves the whole law. Even devil-worship is here proposed to Christ by offers of the world! Even the best on earth may be assailed by the most horrible temptations. And worldly offers often involve seven horrid things. Yet Satan succeeds

11 Then the devil leaveth him, and behold, angels came and ministered unto him.

q He. 1.6, 14.

with men in these. But "whosoever will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God." We should repel them at once, on the authority of the Most High, and with "the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God" (Ephes. 6. 17).

11. *Leaveth Him.* Luke adds, "for a season" (ch. 4. 13). There was a victory. But it did not annihilate Satan, or chain him down as yet. Only God's covenant preserves the Christian from the worst effects of Satan's rage and malice, and He will not suffer them to be tempted above what they are able to bear. 1 Cor. 10. 13. 2 Pet. 2. 9. John 10. 28, 29. Ob-

12 Now when Jesus had heard that John was cast into prison, he departed into Galilee:

1 Or, *delivered up.*

serve the condescension of Christ to be tempted for us. The holiest on earth may fall into temptation. vs. 1. Resistance has a promise of success, now, by virtue of Christ's triumph. Heb. 2. 17, 18; 4. 15, 16. We may expect repeated assaults and buffetings. They were thrice repeated here, and then, the devil departed only for a season. Those especially who have had tokens of acceptance from above, may expect the adversary. vs. 1-2. There is, in the Scripture, a direction and reply for every form of Satan's attack (vs. 4, 7, and 10), and the Word of God is the sword of the Spirit, vs. 11.

	Matt.	Mara.	Luke.	John.
§ 17. Preface to John's Gospel. . . . .	.....	.....	.....	1. 1-18
§ 18. Testimony of John the Baptist to Jesus.— <i>Bethabara, or Bethany, beyond Jordan.</i> . . . . .	.....	.....	.....	1. 19-34
§ 19. Jesus gains Disciples.— <i>The Jordan—Galilee.</i> . . . . .	.....	.....	.....	1. 35-52
§ 20. The Marriage at Cana of Galilee. . . . .	.....	.....	.....	2. 1-12

PART III.

*Our Lord's first Passover, and the subsequent transactions until the second.*

Time. One year.

§ 21. At the Passover Jesus drives the traders out of the temple.— <i>Jerusalem.</i> . . . . .	.....	.....	.....	2. 13-25
§ 22. Our Lord's Discourse with Nicodemus.— <i>Jerusalem.</i> . . . . .	.....	.....	.....	3. 1-21
§ 23. Jesus remains in Judea and baptizes. Further testimony of John the Baptist. . . . .	.....	.....	.....	3. 22-36
§ 24. JOHN'S IMPRISONMENT AND CHRIST'S DEPARTURE INTO GALILEE. . . . .	.....	6. 17-20	3. 19-20	4. 1-3
	4. 12			
	1. 4	4. 14		

12. John's imprisonment is a leading event in this part of the history. It gives, now, the avowed occasion for Christ's commencing his public work.

This verse connects these two ministries, and shows their relation. It marks a period in the history. At this important juncture, and in order

13 And leaving Nazareth, he came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is upon the sea-coast, in

the borders of Zabulon and Nephthalim :

14 That it might be fulfilled

to keep the harmony of the subsequent events more clearly in view, we refer here to Parts III. and IV. of the "Synopsis." The particulars of the Harmony, as they occur in the Notes, should be compared with this table. These memoirs of our Lord are given by Matthew with little regard to their order in the narrative. Hence these Parts (III. and IV.) will need the closer attention.

NOTE.—When a passage is to be commented on that has already been passed in the *Harmony*, the caption will be put in BRACKETS.—See § 26, p. 47.

The important point of order here to be noted is, that Christ's preaching appears as depending on the cessation of that of John. This was John *the Baptist*, as distinguished from John *the Evangelist*. For an account of his imprisonment, see ch. 14. 3-5. Mark 6. 17-19. John had reproved Herod for marrying his brother Philip's wife; to do which, he had put away his own wife, and Herodias had put away her own husband. See Mark 10. 12. As John decreased Christ increased. The kingdom of this Herod (Antipas) was Galilee and Perea.

	Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
§ 25. Our Lord's Discourse with the Samaritan woman. Many of the Samaritans believe on Him.— <i>Shechem or Neapolis</i> . . . . .				4. 4-42
§ 26. Jesus teaches publicly in Galilee. . .	4. 17	1. 14, 15	4. 14, 15	4. 43-45
§ 27. Jesus again at Cana, where he heals the son of a nobleman lying ill at Capernaum.— <i>Cana of Galilee</i> . . .	.....	.....	.....	4. 46-54
§ 28. JESUS AT NAZARETH. HE IS REJECTED, AND DWELLS AT CAPERNAUM. . . . .	4. 13-16	.....	4. 16-21	

13. The intermediate passages show Christ's work of teaching and baptizing in Judea. Hearing of John's imprisonment, He departed thence into Galilee, where He had formerly resided, and whence He had come to be baptized by John (ch. 3. 13). In John 4. 1-3 a further reason for this movement is given, connected with John's work. It was the rumor among the Pharisees of His works, that led Him to retire. He had done sufficiently for the time, and He would not prematurely excite their fears and malice.—¶ *Nazareth*. Hither He first came, and here He preached. This was the place "where He had been brought up." His countrymen disliked his doctrine of distinguishing grace, and would not receive His message, but cast Him out (Luke 4. 14-30). It is more natural to reject

Christ and His doctrines of grace, than it is to love our own flesh and blood—"for neither did His brethren believe in Him." John 7. 5.—¶ *Capernaum*, i. e., "the town of consolation," was situated near the N. W. corner of the Sea of Gennesareth, or Galilee (John 6. 17), in the confines of the tribes of Zabulon and Nephthalim, in the neighbourhood of Bethsaida, not far from the junction of the river Jordan with the sea. It lay N. E. from Nazareth. Zabulon and Nephthalim were adjacent tribes, composing a part of Galilee. (See Gen. 49. 13. Joshua 19. 20, 32. And see Map.) Capernaum was in the borders or near the boundary of these lands. Here he dwelt, passing here most of the three years and over of His public ministry.

14-16. This prophecy, which was



which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, <sup>r</sup> saying,

15 The land of Zabulon, and the land of Nephtholim, *by* the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles;

<sup>r</sup> Is. 9. 1, 2.

thus fulfilled, is found in Isaiah 9. 1, 2. The sense of the passage is, that the land which in the former time He de-based—the land of Zabulon and the land of Nephtholim—the maritime district—the country adjacent to the sea, and *beyond* the Jordan (or *around its head*), called “Galilee of the Gentiles”—this land he shall make, or hath made glorious. This was the district which first suffered in the Assyrian invasion. This district, or Upper Galilee, was bounded N. by Mount Lebanon and the countries of Tyre and Sidon, W. by the Mediterranean Sea, E. by Abilene, Ithurea, and Decapolis, and S. by Lower Galilee. It was called Galilee of the *Gentiles* (or the nations), from its having a more mixed population—less purely Jewish than the others. Casarea Philippi was its principal city. See 1 Kings 9. 11.—¶ *Sat in darkness.* This expresses spiritual blindness and extreme distress. They were involved in ignorance of true religion, most distressing and destructive, in which, if they continued, they must perish. Hence it was fitly called, the region and shadow of death—like the grave, a region where moral death dwelt and cast his dreadful shadow. The country of Galilee was noted for a turbulent, coarse, rebellious, and benighted people. See Luke 13. 1 and 23. 6. The Gospel of Christ was the great light which had sprung up. Christ is “the true light.” John 1. 9 and 3. 19. 1 Pet. 2. 9. 1 John 1. 5 and 2. 8. Heathen lands—Pagan and Mohammedan—may now be said to be in this condition. Nothing but the Gospel can enlighten them. Many of these countries are now open to receive it. Yet multitudes in Christian lands, who have the Gospel, are sitting in darkness. And this is the condemna-

16 The people which sat in darkness <sup>s</sup> saw great light: and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death, light is sprung up.

17 From that time Jesus began

<sup>s</sup> Is. 42. 6, 7. Lu. 2. 32.

tion. John 3. 19. Christ himself is the great source of all the light that men need. John 8. 12. “*The light of the world.*” John 1. 8. Isa. 42. 6; 49. 6. Mal. 4. 2. Christians are described accordingly, as “in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom they shine (or, *SHINE YE*) as lights (or light bearers) in the world, holding forth the word of life.” Phil. 2. 15. Observe, that sin and misery go together, and Christ is the only salvation. What a privilege is the light of the Gospel. See Isa. 60. 2. The most enlightened are in darkness until Christ arise upon their souls. Only He who commanded the light to shine out of darkness can shine in our hearts. 2 Cor. 4. 6.

#### [§ 26. JESUS TEACHES PUBLICLY IN GALILEE.]

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
4. 17	1. 14-15	4. 14-15	4. 43-45

17. *From that time.* This calls more direct attention to the commencement of Christ's preaching. It was important, as connected with John's ceasing. But here it is, as yet, stated only in general terms. Hence this announcement may be regarded as coming in order, properly, before the account at Nazareth (vs. 13-16). Peter, at Casarea, after the resurrection, preaches the Gospel as “that word which was published throughout all Judea, and *began from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached.*” Acts 11. 37.—¶ *To preach,* is to proclaim a message on a religious subject (as, “preaching the Gospel,” Luke 9. 6). Christ usually went about from place to place, preaching in their houses of worship. Luke 4. 15. *Mark* 4. 15. “And He taught in their synagogues.” He went about teaching

to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

18 And Jesus walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers.

1 c. 3. 2; 10. 7. u Jno. 1. 42.

in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom." Matt. 4. 23. Mark 1. 14.—¶ *Repent.* He commanded them to repent. This is to *turn from* former views, and trusts, and ways of wickedness, and embrace His doctrines and practice. Mark has it, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel." Ch. 1. 15. Sinners should repent because God commands it, and because all sin is heinous and ruinous, and because repentance toward God is their highest interest and duty. Christ used a Gospel motive. Repent, *because* the Gospel of the kingdom is preached, and free forgiveness is proclaimed. Because this method of grace, with its dispensation of the Spirit, is here at hand, they should turn to it from their sins and errors. It was *at hand*, as He was then announcing it and setting it up. This command must still be preached to all, for God "now commandeth all men every where to repent. Acts 17. 30. Men are to *believe the gospel*; that is, they are to receive with thankfulness and confidence the glad tidings of atonement and pardon by Christ. Faith is required of men, not as a mitigated task-work—not at all as a performance—but as the only means of receiving the great salvation, which has been freely and fully provided in Christ. Repentance is demanded, not as a meritorious service, but as a hearty response to this gospel news; not as a price wherewith to obtain the hope, but as the necessary "*fleeing*

19 And he saith unto them. Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.

20 And they straightway left their nets, and followed him.

21 And going on from thence, he saw other two brethren, James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, in a ship with

v Lu. 5. 10. 1 Co. 9. 20-22. 2 Co. 12. 6. w Mar 10 v. 28-31. x Mar. 1. 19, 20.

for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before us." This secures a new life.

¶ 29. THE CALL OF SIMON PETER AND ANDREW, AND OF JAMES AND JOHN, WITH THE MIRACULOUS DRAUGHT OF FISHES.—Near Capernaum.

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
4. 18-22	1. 16-28	5. 1-11	

18. *The Sea of Galilee.* This sheet of water lies near the sources of the Jordan, bordering on Galilee. It is also called the Sea of Chinnereth (Numbers 34. 11), and in the New Testament, the Sea of Galilee (Matt 4. 18), the Sea of Tiberias (John 21 1), and the Sea or Lake of Gennesaret or Gennesareth (Luke 5. 1), which last is but a variation of the Hebrew name. Its length is about eleven or twelve miles, and its breadth from five to six. For the calling of the four apostles, Simon and Andrew (brothers), and James and John (brothers), see Luke ch. 5.—¶ *Simon called Peter* (or Cephas)—*Peter* being the Greek word for a stone, and *Cephas* being the Syriac for the same John 1. 42. Here the four are spoken of as called in the same connexion Luke has mentioned only the two, without denying of the other two. A comparison of the narratives shows a striking harmony, which argues for their respective veracity. By Matthew they are spoken of as casting a net into the sea. Luke tells how they cast the net at Christ's bidding. Matthew speaks of James and John mending their nets. Luke tells how the

Zebedee their father, mending their nets; and he called them.

22 And they immediately left the ship and their father, and followed him.

23 And Jesus went about all

*y c.9.35. Lu.4.15,44.*

were broken by the exceeding draught. And Luke tells us that Christ saw *two ships*, ch. 5. 2, and that these pairs of brothers were partners (ch. 5. 7). It was not of chance that Christ met these, who should be his apostles. Who can doubt that the Shepherd was out seeking His sheep?

19. *Follow me.* This was the brief but significant command which Christ commonly gave to those whom He called as disciples. As they were engaged in their ordinary business, this called them to accompany Christ at whatever sacrifice, and to become His steadfast followers. They were first effectually called as disciples, and then made apostles (Mark 3. 13-19). See § 40, p. 52. They became, by His appointment, *fishers of men*, as it was their business to preach the gospel, and to win souls to Christ. (See Jer. 16. 16.) "Thou shalt catch men;" Luke 5. 10; that is, "draw men over to the gospel." Christ's ministers must first be Christians. The office has no such virtue as can dispense with piety.

20. They complied *straightway*—immediately. See Ps. 119. 60. Their *nets* were their means of livelihood. This was an effectual calling. And we are to learn from their promptitude, to follow instantly at Christ's call, whether it be to the great duty of repentance, or to any particular work. We are required to leave all and follow Christ. That is, to let nothing keep us back from Christ, or divert our interest from Him. And we are to follow His direction in all duty, and His plan of salvation by grace alone, and His holy example in all things.

21. *John his brother.* This was "the beloved disciple."—¶ *With Zebedee their father.* On comparing this verse

Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness, and all manner of disease among the people.

*z c.24.14. Mar.1.14. a Ps.103.3. c.8.16,17.*

with ch. 8. 21, ch. 20. 20, and ch. 26. 55, it is inferred that there is an undesigned coincidence, which attests the veracity of the evangelist. Now Zebedee is alive; but the next passage quoted shows that one of the *disciples* (few as yet) had lost his father, and wished to bury him; and the next passages cited speak of "*the mother of Zebedee's children*," showing incidentally that the father had died.—See *L'uni's Veracity*.

22. *Left the ship and their father* Luke has it, "When they had brought their ships to land" (ch. 5. 11). Christ's call is superior to that of business, and His authority is higher even than that of a parent. We must obey God rather than men. We are even promised rewards, here and hereafter, for such a forsaking of friends and possessions, where this is the only choice. Matt. 19. 29. This is not to induce disobedience in children, or to encourage disrespect to parents. A needless and headstrong resistance of parental authority, even in religious things, is to be condemned. Yet it will sometimes be the effect of true religion in a family to separate the membership. In Matt. 10. 35, it is declared by Christ, as a foreseen result of His work, that He has come "to set a man at variance against his father," &c. Where there is no way left, but either to forsake parents or to forsake Christ, we are to part with father and mother rather than with the Saviour. It is not often, in a Christian land, that children, who act kindly and discreetly in following Christ, are driven to forsake their parents for Him. They should seek to show the excellence of their religion, and win their parents to the Saviour.

24 And his fame went through- | unto him all sick people that  
out all Syria : and they brought | were taken with divers diseases

	Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
§ 30. The healing of a demoniac in the Synagogue.— <i>Capernaum</i> . . . . .	. . . . .	1.21-28	4.31-37	
§ 31. The healing of Peter's wife's mother, and many others.— <i>Capernaum</i> . . .	8.14-17	1.29-34	4.32-41	
§ 32 JESUS, WITH HIS DISCIPLES, GOES FROM CAPERNAUM THROUGHOUT GALILEE. . .	4.23-25	1.35-39	4.42-44	

23. This was a second circuit in Galilee. The third is recorded, Matt. 9. 35. The day after healing Peter's wife's mother (§ 31), He went out to a retired place for prayer. Mark 1. 35. —¶ *Synagogue*, is so called from a Greek word, *sunagoge*, meaning an assembly. Our word "church" has, in the Greek, a similar derivation from a word meaning to call out from, and so to gather into a body, a separate community. This place of worship, in our Saviour's time, was not of any recent establishment among the Jews. Little is said about synagogues in the Old Testament. There were "high places," spoken of commendably, as 1 Sam. 9. 19, and 10. 5, 13, 1 Kings 3. 4, &c., which may have been the synagogues. The temple was the exclusive place for *sacrificing*. But for keeping the Sabbath as a day of holy convocation (Psalm 26. 12 and 68. 26), in different communities, and for celebrating those solemnities obligatory, besides the three festivals at Jerusalem, must there not have been synagogues—places of worship—else must they not have lost the law, the Sabbath, and their religion? In the synagogue service, the Old Testament was read and expounded, and prayer was offered. The books of Moses, and part of the prophetic books, were systematically read through each year. These were the parish churches in our Saviour's time. Christ found them in universal use. Nearly five hundred of them were in the single city of Jerusalem before it was destroyed by the Romans. It is not wonderful that the Christian church, which our Lord instituted, should have been constructed after this model, and not

after that of the temple. He attended with the apostles at these churches, and there they addressed the people from the Scriptures read. Luke 4. 15-22. Acts 13. 14, 15. The great advantage derived from the synagogues was the preservation of the true religion among the people. The law was thus preserved, and the Sabbath, and all the institutions of their religion. The truths of Scripture were circulated among the people by this means, where otherwise they must have been kept back. Hence we find that in Ezra's time a reformation in this respect was needed, because the people had been without their houses of worship and habits of worship during the captivity. Nehem. ch. 8.—¶ *Gospel of the kingdom*. By this is meant, that gospel which proclaims the reign of Christ, and by the preaching of which the kingdom of Christ is set up and established among men. The gospel belongs to this kingdom, as the grand feature of this new dispensation. The coming of this kingdom was mainly in the preaching and power of the gospel among men.—¶ *Teaching*. Instructing—expounding the Scripture; which was done in a sitting posture, after it had been read *standing*. He taught them the law, and preached to them the gospel. He healed the sick by the word of His power, to give proof of the gracious nature and Divine authority of His work.

24. *Syria*. In the New Testament it is the name of the Roman province (Matt. 4. 24. Luke 2. 2. Acts 15. 23, 41, and 18. 18, and 20. 3. and 21 3. Gal. 1. 21), which was governed by Presidents, and to which Phenicia

and torments, and those which were possessed with devils, and those which were lunatic, and

those that had the palsy; and he healed them.

25 And there followed him

and, with slight interruption, Judea also were attached. It included the country between the Euphrates and the Mediterranean, from the mountains of Taurus and Amanus in the N., to the desert of Suéz and the borders of Egypt on the S. Mark (1. 28) reads, "into the country surrounding Galilee."—¶ *Lunatic*. Those afflicted with epilepsy or a mental derangement, which was supposed to increase with the increase of the moon—moon-struck. Hence our word has a Latin derivation from *luna*, which signifies the moon, and the Greek term here is similarly derived.—¶ *The palsy*. A paralysis, either of the whole system or of one side, or of the trunk and limbs, or a cramp or contraction and stiffening of the parts. Various diseases of this nature are included under his term in the New Testament. It is known at the East as a very fearful and fatal disease, which terminates suddenly after the most racking pains.—¶ *Possessed with devils*. Some are fond of making this a mere popular theory, and one which our Saviour and his apostles only chose not to contradict—speaking of diseases as though they were from a possession of evil spirits. But Jesus addresses the demons as such (Matt. 8. 32. Mark 5. 19. Luke 4. 35). So does Paul. Acts 16. 18. Jesus bids them be silent, Mark 1. 25—to depart and enter no more into the person. Mark 9. 25. See Luke 10. 18, and the context; and Matt. 12. 25—context; and Matt. 12. 43, 44—context; in all which places the demons are spoken of, in connexion with Satan, as satanic beings, and their nature is explained. The New Testament writers distinguished between the diseased and the demoniaics. Mark 1. 32. Luke 6. 17, 18. And Jesus himself does so. Matt. 10. 8. The demons knew Christ to be the Son of God. Matt. 8. 29. Mark 1. 24; 5. 7. And "the Christ." Luke 4. 41. The de-

moniacs confess that they were possessed with demons. Mark 5. 9. So do their relatives. Matt. 15. 22. The sacred writers assert that such were brought unto Jesus, Matt. 4. 24. Mark 1. 32—or met Him. Luke 8. 27. Jesus commands them not to make Him known as Messiah. Mark 1. 24. He rebuked them. Matt. 17. 18. The evangelists declare that the demons departed from the victims at His command. Matt. 17. 18. Mark 9. 25, 26. Luke 4. 35; 11. 14. And Christ himself so asserts. Luke 13. 32. To the demons themselves were ascribed personal acts. They spake, conversed, asked questions, gave answers, asserted their personal knowledge of Christ, and their dread of Him. Matt. 8. 29. Luke 8. 28. They are spoken of as having locomotion; changing their locality; going out of one person possessed; and entering into other bodies. Matt. 8. 32. This only shows us what influence over men is held by the prince of the power of the air; and Christ, by this means, exhibited His supremacy over the legions of darkness. Christ *healed* the people by miraculous power, and this power He exerted to attest His divinity, and to prove His claims and work. "Believe me for the *very works' sake*" (John 14. 11).—A *miracle*, is a supernatural work—an effect produced above, or against the laws of nature—requiring the same Divine power as instituted those laws, to suspend or contravene them. Christ wrought miracles *by His own power*, and this proved Him to be God. The apostles wrought miracles *in His name*, Acts 3. 6, which also attested His divinity as the source of their work. The argument is, that a miracle is of God, and that this stamp of Divine prerogative would not be set upon any doctrines or claims that were false. Hence, a miracle wrought, as the raising of Lazarus from the grave by a word, after several days' burial—or of

great multitudes<sup>b</sup> of people from Galilee, and from Decapolis, and from Jerusalem, and from Judea, and from beyond Jordan

<sup>b</sup> Lu. 6. 17, 19.

the widow's son from the bier—or the feeding of thousands from a few loaves—was sufficient proof of Christ's word and work, and this has always been a leading external evidence of Christianity. How gracious is the work of our Lord. He would heal diseases, to show how He came to take away the curse.

25. *Decapolis*. From *deka*—ten, and *polis*—city; designating, not the country, but certain *ten cities*, which resembled each other in being inhabited mostly by Gentiles, and in having peculiar institutions and privileges. Pliny gives the list—Damascus, Philadelphia, Raphana, Scythopolis, Ga-

CHAPTER V.

AND seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain: and when he was set, his disciples came unto him.

dara, Gerasa, Hippos, Dion, Pella, Canatha. But authors are not agreed as to all these. In the time of our Lord, the Decapollitan towns were not far from the Sea of Galilee (Mark 5. 20; 7. 31). They were mostly, if not altogether, east of Jordan.

Of these "*great multitudes*," few, probably, were true disciples. Most followed Him for curiosity, from the novelty of His teachings and doings. After this we find our Lord at Capernaum and elsewhere, healing and working miracles, calling Matthew, and afterward choosing the twelve, and on that occasion delivering His Sermon on the Mount. Note the Harmony.

	Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
§ 33. The healing of a leper.—Galilee. . . .	8.2-4	1.40-45	5.12-16	
§ 34. The healing of a paralytic.—Capernaum. . . . .	9.2-8	2.1-12	5.17-26	
§ 35. The call of Matthew.—Capernaum.	9.9	2.13-14	5.27-28	

PART IV.

Our Lord's second Passover, and the subsequent transactions until the third.

Time. One year.

§ 36. The pool of Bethesda; the healing of the infirm man; and our Lord's subsequent discourse.—Jerusalem. . . . .	.....	.....	.....	5. 1-47
§ 37. The Disciples pluck the ears of grain on the Sabbath—on the way to Galilee.	12.1-8	2.23-28	6.1-5	
§ 38. The healing of the withered hand on the Sabbath.—Galilee. . . . .	12.9-14	3.1-6	6.6-11	
§ 39. Jesus arrives at the Sea of Tiberias, and is followed by multitudes.—Lake of Galilee. . . . .	12.15-21	3.7-12		
§ 40. Jesus withdraws to the Mountain and chooses the Twelve—the multitudes follow him.—Near Capernaum. . . . .	.....	3.13-19	6.12-19	
§ 41. THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT.—Near Capernaum. . . . .	5.1 to 8.1		6.20-49	

CHAPTER V.

1. It must be observed that some space of history has intervened between

these chapters. Christ, meanwhile has wrought miracles, recorded by the other evangelists, as seen in the Har-

2 And he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying,<sup>c</sup>

3 Blessed are the poor<sup>d</sup> in

<sup>c</sup> Lu. 6. 20, &c. <sup>d</sup> Is. 57. 15; 66. 2.

mony, viz., at Jerusalem, Capernaum, and elsewhere in Galilee (§ 33 to § 40). He has called Matthew, and has chosen the twelve.—¶ *The multitudes.* These are not those mentioned in verse 25, preceding, but *other multitudes*, spoken of in Matt. 12. 15, 21, and Mark 3. 7, 12. See § 39, p. 52. The common mistake on such points, shows how important it is to study this evangelical history *harmonized*, and not as though it were a consecutive record of events. This discourse of our Lord is commonly known as “the *Sermon on the Mount*,” because it was a set discourse, expository of the law and the gospel, pronounced by Him from the slope or summit of a hill, in the suburbs of *Capernaum*.—¶ *His disciples* are now spoken of as a class who had become His regular attendants and followers. All the multitude were not His disciples, yet He meant to instruct them, and especially His followers.—¶ *When he was set.* This was the custom of the Jewish doctors, who *sat*, in token of their authority.

2. *Opened his mouth.* This hints of a weighty doctrine, and a special discourse. (See Job 3. 1. Acts 8. 35). Christ here set forth the spiritual nature of His kingdom, and its accordance with the true spirit of the law and prophets.

3. *Blessed.* This is Christ’s *benediction*. It supposes His authority to bless. Such are *happy* who are blessed of Him, for *theirs is the kingdom of heaven*. This includes all the gospel blessings—“*grace, mercy, and peace.*”—¶ *Poor in spirit.* Luke says, *Blessed be ye poor*, or the poor (6. 20). These things are often connected. A gracious poverty of spirit is remarked as being associated, in God’s plans of grace, with poverty of worldly lot. “For he hath chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith.” And there are facilities noticed in Scripture which

spirit : \* for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

4 Blessed are they that mourn :

<sup>e</sup> Ja. 2. 5.

such have for salvation (Matt. 19. 23. Zeph. 3. 12. Luke 18. 24. Ps. 10. 14), though often the poorest are the proudest—for true religion is not the growth of outward circumstances. Worldly poverty cannot produce piety. This disposition here called “*BLESSED*,” is that *humility* which is characteristic of Christians—that lowliness and meekness which Christ himself patterned for us in the flesh, and which we are exhorted to *put on, and to be clothed with*. It is unpretending—not boastful of desert before God—submissive to His will and plan, and the opposite of high looks and high mindedness. This would show that His gospel makes the *low*—who are judged badly off, truly happy. Such are “*blessed*”—or *happy*, as the term more literally is. They are *happy* in the nature of the case, and Christ pronounces them *blessed*, as His benediction. This is a vital element of Christian character.—¶ *For theirs.* Such *have* the kingdom of heaven already set up in their hearts. “He that believeth *hath* everlasting life,” and to such Christ accords the benefits of His kingdom (Ps. 132. 15, and 138. 6). Men should be humble, because they are frail and empty, and in the hands of God; because they have nothing sure, but are liable to adversity and death; and because they are sinners, and deserve nothing but wrath. Besides, the truly humble have the greatest blessings promised them; even that with them God himself *dwell*eth, as in His honoured and favoured abode. Poverty can be a blessing only, as leading us to such durable riches and righteousness. Ps. 9. 18; 10. 14; 68. 10; 69. 32; 72. 4; 107. 41; 140. 12. Matt. 11. 5. James 2. 5. “He giveth grace unto the humble.” James 4. 6. This poverty of spirit is not a mere melancholy, or a mere sanctimony, but the very essence of inward piety, which is most

for they shall be comforted.

f Is 61 3. Eze. 7. 16. g Jna. 16. 20. 2 Cor. 1. 7.

opposite to the self-sufficiency and pride of nature. It may be assumed and counterfeited, but can be really had only by the Spirit of the Lord. The characteristic temper and style of the poor man, applied to spiritual things, gives the portrait of a true Christian.

4. *They that mourn.* Primarily, those who mourn for their sins. Affliction and earthly sorrow do not give claim to the Divine favour, as some would think. Any cup, however bitter in this life, can never entitle us to comfort in the life to come. Some think they have had their share of evil things here, and they look on this account for happiness hereafter. But this is a false hope. The mourning cannot fall short of a godly sorrow *to be blessed*. Yet mourners, who in their affliction look for relief and comfort to Him who speaks the promises, shall find consolation. It is blessed to mourn for sin, not because this merits anything—as though penance and penitence were deserving of God's love, or even of forgiveness—but because such a sense of sin comports with God's own estimate of it, and so falls in with His method of salvation by a Redeemer. It bewails and flees from sin, and looks for a Saviour from its penalties and power.—¶ *They shall be comforted* with the grateful tidings of pardon, and news of salvation in the gospel (ch. 11. 28-30). And Christ here sets forth this as one of the peculiar benefits of His regard. *Christians* are blessed when they mourn in affliction, because they have the Comforter (John 14. 26, &c.), the Holy Ghost, to take of the things of Christ and show them unto them. Christ would show that his gospel can give a happiness to mourning itself—a rare plan that can turn stones to gold (Rom. 5. 3, 5). *His* sufferings and sorrows have made ours sacred and sweet. See Isaiah 40. 1, 2.

5. *The meek.* The unresentful, and

5 Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.

h Ps. 37. 11.

patient under abuse. This is not insensibility to our just claims, but a subdued temper that is enjoined. See John 18. 23, where Christ contended for His rights; and Acts 16. 37, where Paul strenuously demanded his. Moses was the Old Testament pattern of meekness (Numb. 12. 3). Israel murmured at him for bringing them out of Egypt to die in the wilderness, but he bore it meekly, and prayed for them. We should “show all meekness unto all men, for we ourselves were also sometime foolish, disobedient,” &c. Titus 3. 23. But Christ is the great model of this grace. He represents himself in this attractive character, Matt. 11. 19, “I am meek and lowly in heart.” The passions of our evil nature are to be restrained toward our fellow-men. His yoke is to be taken upon us, and so we “shall find rest to our souls.”—¶ *Inherit the earth*—or the land; alluding to the land of promise, which was Canaan of old, comprehending all good in the eye of the Jews. The land of promise now, is the inheritance of the promises, including all good here, and heaven itself hereafter. Though the meek give up their rights sometimes, rather than contend, yet they get more by inheritance—the earth—the land. This is *rest*—a single term for the whole world of benefits and blessings. As to temporal things, the meek man has an advantage in his equanimity and peace. He saves himself the troubles that come from hot haste and strife. An inward satisfaction in his Christian hope is the world to him. A man that will resent every affront, will never lack affronts to resent. He will always be unhappy. Prov. 22. 24, 25; 15. 1; 25. 8, 15. The same promise is found in Psalm 37. 11. The true Christian temper is the only security for earthly happiness.

6. *Hunger and thirst.* This expresses a very earnest and ardent desire. This is Scripture usage. Ps. 42



6 Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.

† Ps. 145. 19. Is. 65. 13.

1, 2; 63. 1, 2. Those who ardently pursue and earnestly seek after righteousness, as men naturally strive to satisfy hunger and thirst, shall be filled. This is the principle of the gospel dispensation. "He satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness." This longing, says Augustine, is the dilating of the vessel that it may contain the more. Righteousness, understood either as godly living or as justification with God, should be most strenuously longed for, because it is the highest possible good. The righteousness of Christ is our only hope, and holiness is our true happiness. They who do not so long for righteousness, must be quite content with their character and standing before God, and they seek no Saviour. — ¶ *Shall be filled.* They who strongly desire holiness and pardon, shall most assuredly be supplied, because all God's vast arrangements of grace are for this end. He has blessings abundantly to give, and it is most agreeable to all His counsels, and plans, and promises, to give freely. No desire, therefore, of the human heart is so sure of being met and filled as this. Luke 1. 53. Isa. 55, and 65. 13. Jno. 4. 14; 6. 35; 7. 37, 38. Ps. 17. 15. Such are filled in this life with a gratification of their devout wishes. They receive of Christ's fulness, grace for grace. They are enabled to fulfil duty, and shall have the pasture that Christ gives. Rom. 14. 17. Jno. 4. 34. Comp. Matt. 3. 15. And hereafter they shall be filled with salvation, and triumph, and all blessedness. The invitation now is, "Come, buy and eat, without money and without price." Isa. 55. 1. "Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it."

7. *The merciful.* They who take a share in the sorrows of others. Though it would seem to increase their own troubles, yet God gives a

7 Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.

8 Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

j Ps. 41. 1, 2. k Ps. 24. 3, 4. He. 12. 14. 1 Jno. 3. 2, 3.

blessing to go with it, that can make it, contrary to all worldly opinions, a source of happiness. To our fellow-men who are in distress we should show mercy, accounting such as we meet in affliction to be our neighbours. "Blessed is he that considereth the poor, the Lord will deliver him in time of trouble" (Ps. 41. 1). Matt. 10. 42. A cup of cold water to a disciple shall not lose its reward. — ¶ *Shall obtain mercy.* Such shall obtain mercy from God, not only, but from man also, whom God will dispose to compassionate such in their times of distress. Mere benevolence to our fellow-men can never gain us pardon of sin and salvation with God. We cannot so merit heaven. But God will, in providence, reward with mercy those who show mercy. Ps. 37. 26. And when benevolence is exercised out of love to God (Ps. 112. 15), in thankfulness for His distinguishing favours, and in imitation of Christ, it will be regarded as done on His account. And he that giveth to the poor on such principle, will be considered as lending to the Lord (Prov. 19. 17). Our Lord has taught us to show mercy, by an instructive parable of the good Samaritan, Luke 10. 35; and of the two servants, Matt. 18. 23. What mercy has He shown to us all. They who so constantly experience the mercies of God, should be merciful to their fellow-men. And it is a disposition the most important to cultivate. Hence Christ's arrangement for the church—"The poor ye have always with you, and whosoever ye will, ye may do them good" (Mark 14. 7). It is more blessed to give than to receive. Acts 20. 35. Our reward is *mercy*, and not wages. A true Christian cannot be unmerciful. The overbearing, and severe, and heartless, have no promise here.

8. *Pure in heart.* (As opposed to

9 Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.

10 Blessed are they which are

l Ps. 34. 14.

the mock purity of the Pharisees.) Those whose thoughts, feelings, motives, and principles are pure. If only the outward conduct should be guarded and governed by the gospel, the kingdom would but very partially come. This purity of heart is the distinction of true Christians. However men may pretend to it, and flatter themselves of having it, none are righteous by nature, no not one. Rom. 3. 10. The Spirit of God alone can cleanse the heart. Ps. 51. Christ purifies unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works, and this He does by sending the Holy Ghost into their hearts. A person may be pure in his conduct to the eye of man, and not pure in heart to the eye of God. So a man may be pure in heart, and do what is wrong unintentionally. But to be good at heart, and wicked in life, is impossible. "By their fruits ye shall know them" (See ch. 7. 20).—¶ *They shall see God*, as a friend into whose presence they shall come (Rev. 3. 4). It was counted a privilege and honour, among eastern nations, to see the face of kings—to "stand before kings," Prov. 22. 29, and to stand in the king's presence. 2 Kings 25. 19, margin. *To see God*, includes the blessedness of knowing Him here, and of being "ever with the Lord" hereafter. "To lift up the face of one," is a common Hebrew expression for acquittal and approval in judgment. So these shall be pronounced the people of God at the judgment day. See Heb. 13. 14. They shall be admitted to favour. His sceptre shall be stretched out. See Esther 5. 2. In the East, where monarchs were seldom seen, and seldom approached by their subjects, it is no wonder that an introduction to them should have been an image of high honour and happiness. (Bloomfield.) Our word *sincere*, is derived from the

persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

11 Blessed are ye, when men

m 1 Pe. 3. 13, 14.

Latin, signifying *without wax*, alluding to honey that has no admixture of the comb.

9. *The peacemakers.* Those who, "as much as lieth in them, live peaceably with all men," and also seek by all means to promote peace among others. There are such who strive to conciliate where there is variance, and who are noted as the healers of many a breach. They often encounter the reproach of their fellow-men, but they have this promise from God.—¶ *They shall be called the children of God*—partakers of His nature who is "the God of peace." (See Rom. 15. 33. 2 Cor. 13. 11.) This is on the ground, that any genuine likeness to God indicates the new creature. The temper is lovely in itself. But the motives and principles must be God-like. We should live peaceably because we are all sinners. Christians are commanded to show all meekness unto all men, because they also were once foolish, &c. (Titus 3. 2). A peaceable temper and example, springing from peace with God, will do much to cultivate peaceableness around us; and Christians are enjoined to follow peace with all men (Heb. 12. 14); and by all means in their power to have men make their peace with God.

10. *Persecuted.* This is what the Christian is led to expect. "All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution" (2 Tim. 3. 12). "Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you." Yet more. To be followed with abuse, and to have men seek to do them injury, because of their religion, or their performance of duty, is the lot of the righteous often. But it must be truly for righteousness' sake, and not for the sake of ambitious plans, or strange doctrines, or censorious language, or proud and exclusive pretensions, if

shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you<sup>1</sup> falsely, for my sake.

12 Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Lying. n 2 Co.4.17.*

the promise annexed would be secured. If men are really persecuted for righteousness' sake, they must be truly righteous; and so it may be said that theirs is the kingdom of heaven. They have the kingdom of grace set up in their hearts, and through faith and patience they shall inherit the promises.

11. *Revile you.* To say hard and bitter things of you—cast reproaches upon you—set you out as vile—give you a vile character—this is a kind of persecution. Calumny, hard speeches, and mockery are here meant, and these Christ suffered. But He reviled not again (1 Pet. 2. 23). We ought not to court abuse, or to glory in it, as though it were necessarily a credit. Nor is it allowable to speak disparagingly of men with a view to their disparagement, even though we may speak the truth. Yet if a bad character is given us, and not falsely, but in truth, we have ourselves to blame (1 Pet. 2. 20). And in such case there is no comfort for us in this blessing. If our names are cast out as evil for Christ's sake, in performance of plain duty, and because we follow Christ, then we are blessed in the consciousness of rectitude, and in the promise of Divine favour. Augustine says, "It is the *cause* which makes the *martyr*." Our only comfort under reproaches and accusations of men is, that they are false, and suffered in Christ's cause, and as He suffered them in the way of duty, and with a Christian spirit of meekness and love. But it is no certain mark of a good cause that it meets with strong opposition.

12. *Rejoice and (exult).* The reward is at hand, not as though it were in payment of debt, but all of grace

in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.

13 Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it

o Mar.9.50.

which shall crown the sufferings of the Christian with great glory, and with all that shall abundantly recompense him. "Take my servants, the prophets, which have spoken in the name of Christ, as an example" (Jas. 5. 10).—¶ *The prophets* were the religious teachers of the Jews, and were sent by God with special messages and predictions to the people. But the Jews persecuted them. So Christ complained—"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets," &c. Ch. 24. 37. See the case of Elijah (1 Kings 18. 17; 19. 1-18; 21. 20); Elisha (2 Kings 2. 23); Jeremiah (Jer. 20. 2, 10; 26. 8-15; 32. 3; 37. 11-15; 38. 4-13); Daniel (Dan. 6. 1-17), who was persecuted for speaking the plain truth. And Christ testified that the people hated Him because He told them the truth (John 8. 40); and they even sought to kill Him. They stoned Him—drove Him out of their midst—falsely accused Him—and finally scourged and crucified Him, on this avowed account. And the wicked take such offence at the truth being told to them, because it condemns them, and would make them discontented with themselves. We should behave respectfully and kindly toward those who tell us of our sins and faults.

13. *The salt.* Salt has the quality of preserving and purifying what would otherwise rot. It also gives savour or relish to food—seasoning it. It has also a penetrating power. Christ applied His discourse now to the apostles, to whom the dispensing of religious doctrines would soon be committed. It would be their part to "salt the earth," not to infect it with a depraved and vicious taste. So Christians should cast a healthful savour

be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.

of true piety around them, maintaining sound doctrine, sober conduct and conversation, and earnest prayer, which would tend to preserve and purify the world. The church should be to society what salt is to daily food. The church is the only adequate means for preserving the world from destruction. The gospel ministry salts the earth. The offerings on the altar were salted with salt. Leviticus 2. 13.—¶ *Lost his savour*—or quality. This would often be the case with salt, such as was used at the East. It was taken out of mines, mixed with much foreign substance, and when exposed to the elements would lose its saltiness, and would thenceforth be good for nothing but for hardening paths, and for being trodden under foot of men. Christians are like this, when they have lost their humility and life, and do not show any power in their religion. Then the case is excessively bad. Like rotten branches on the vine, men gather them and cast them into the fire, and they are burned. “Men cast them out.” They do no good any longer, and are only a reproach to Christ’s cause, and an irreparable damage is done. Young Christians may so live as to grow in grace, and gain great maturity and power in their religious course, by hungering and thirsting after righteousness, and by pressing forth constantly to the things that are before—overcoming the world by their faith, and winning others by their humble piety. “Let your speech be as to grow with grace, seasoned with salt.” Col. iv. 6.—¶ *Good for nothing*. The loss of the salt, or genuine spirit of Christianity, cannot be supplied by any expedient whatsoever; and whatever the profession of such, they are utterly worthless, insipid, rotter. Luke 14. 35.

14. *The light of the world*. This is

14 Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.

15 Neither do men light a can-

∫ Ph. 2. 15.

spoken of Christians generally, and of Christian ministers especially. They are not the original and true light. This Christ is (John 1); as distinct from any messenger, as John the Baptist. “John was the lamp, and Christ the light; as John was the voice, and Christ the Word.”—*Augustine*. Light enables us to see persons and things, and shows us the world around—our path, our dangers and prospects—and helps us to discriminate. Christians are said to shine in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, as lights in the world, holding forth the word of life. They are “light in the Lord” (Ephes. 5. 8). It is by maintaining the truth, and exemplifying true piety, and representing the way to heaven, that Christ’s people are luminaries. They receive their light from Christ, and should show it by good works and a manifest sincerity. They should labour to diffuse it.—The Jews applied this title to their Rabbins, and among the Greeks and Romans, celebrated persons, especially teachers, were called “*Lights of the world*.” Christians are the luminaries which God has set in the world to give light, and He would enlighten others by their instrumentality. They are charged with the duty of sending the light of the gospel all over the world, and of setting a bright example. But they were not only set to give light; they are objects of universal notice, remarked by all.—¶ *A city, &c.* Such a spectacle as a city on a high summit must command attention. Many cities are built on a height—on a crown or a slope of a hill. They can be seen from afar; and the public buildings and towers attract special notice. So with Jerusalem. It was a great city—a noble sight—the city of the great king—its palaces and bulwarks on an eminence. Christians

dle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house.

<sup>1</sup> The word in the original, signifieth, a measure containing about a pint less than a peck.

are like such a city. All their actions are watched, and their example is prominent and important, and cannot be hid; and hence, if they fall into sins, the mischief must be widespread, and multitudes must suffer. Like such a city on fire, their ruin must be seen all abroad.

15. The use of light is, not to be hidden, but to reveal itself and things around it. The use of their religion was to enlighten others. Christ would not have given them light to have them hide it, and make no proper use of it, any more than men would light a candle to hide it under a basket or bushel. It is here hinted, that disciples of Christ are in danger of putting their Christian light under their corn measure, and of having their good example, and Christian influence, obscured by worldly objects. (Compare Luke 11. 33, 36 with this.) One Christian lights a house.

16. *Let your light so shine.* Christ's disciples can let their light shine by a holy example in all points, and by a consistent course of conduct. Christians should walk with this object in view, that men may see the power of true piety in their life, so as to be won to follow them as they follow Christ. The good example of a Christian proves the truth against all gainsaying, and furnishes a living argument for Christianity, which has led many to embrace the religion of Christ and to glorify God. Thus the disciples are to "show forth the praises of Him who called them out of darkness into his marvellous light." They are not to parade their good deeds boastfully before the world (see Matt. 6. 1); but since their example must so powerfully operate, as they are seen from afar, and known, they must not be careless of their influence with others, but must strive to

16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

q 1 Pe. 2. 12.

have it uniformly good, enlightening in duty and true happiness, and winning to Christ.

On verses 13-16, **OBSERVE**, (1.) The Christian church, in its ministry and membership, is ordained to be the conservative element of society--to season, purify, and preserve the world, by holy character, sound doctrine, good example, personal exertion in every good cause, and earnest prayer for men. (2.) It is the quality of true religion to season and preserve whatever it touches. This healthful influence is shown in the facts. How salutary and savoury is the smallest measure of Christian influence in daily life, as a seasoning of salt at the table. (3.) If the professing Christian has lost this quality, and does not exert this peculiar power, there is no earthly remedy. The Christian name, without the power, is the poorest thing on earth. (4.) The Christian church is the grand illuminating agency for the world. Gross darkness would reign without the Scriptures, which it keeps and promulgates, and without the various lights of science, and learning, and universal truth, which it affords. It is the essential quality of true religion to be *luminous*. It cannot exist without giving light. It only quite ceases to illuminate when it has gone out in darkness. (5.) A Christian, from *his exalted station*, must have a wide influence; and so his light, like that of a beacon or light-house (Phil. 2. 15), must have broad effect. A profession of religion is watched, and must be powerful for good if consistent. But a beacon that is not lighted does harm. Vessels run on the rocks or shore, where, if it had been kept bright, it would have directed them. The Christian life is an abiding and living testimony, a bright example, and a lure to heaven. A true Chris-

17 Think not that I am come to destroy ' the law or the ' prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to ' fulfil.

18 For verily I say unto you,

r Mat. 3. 15. s Is. 42. 21. t Ps. 40. 6-8.

tian must have commanding power with men, even when unconscious of it himself. So prominent an object, like a city built on a hill, cannot be hid.

17. *Think not.* They might easily think so. Our Lord invited the Jews to receive a religion which should greatly interfere with all their carnal notions of the Mosaic economy. Their objection would be, that this would really abrogate or make void their old faith and that of their fathers. The law and the prophets was that system of faith and practice taught by Moses in the law, and by the prophets in their messages. He assures them that his doctrine agrees perfectly with them—that it even *fulfilled* them, and was necessary to them for their completion. They must not be alarmed, then, as though this preaching and teaching were a revolt from their religion. Christ came to fulfil the law—to open its full sense by His exposition of it—to magnify the law by His obedience of its requirements in His life, and by His endurance of its penalty in His death, and to fulfil it “as the end of the law,” or the aim and accomplishment of it, for justifying righteousness to the believer. So there is nothing in the gospel which derogates in the least from the law; but even its plan of justification by faith without works, establishes the law (Rom. 3. 31). And so He fulfilled the prophets, by showing the truth of their predictions, and bringing them to pass in himself; for He was the great object of prophecy. “The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.” The moral law is of perpetual force, and the true sense of the old economy is brought out in the new. Grace to obey comes by Christ.

18. *Till heaven and earth pass.* This is a proverbial phrase often occurring in Scripture, and sometimes in the

Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle.” shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.

19 Whosoever therefore shall

u Lu. 16. 17.

classics, to signify that a thing can never happen. Ps. 120. 26. Luke 16. 17. Matt. 24. 35, &c. Luke has it, “*It is easier,*” &c. It was a received opinion among the Jews, that the visible universe would never pass away, but be renovated, and so last forever. We often say that a thing will never happen *so long as the world stands*. Christ would strongly express to the Jews His deference to the law, and His determination to maintain it, in every part of it, without any fail. This was necessary to correct their prejudices and meet their objections. The gospel is not understood or appreciated, except it be seen as fulfilling the law (Romans 3. 31).

—¶ *One jot or tittle.* The least possible part. *Jot* is the name of the smallest letter in the Hebrew alphabet (י), and so it is used to express the smallest possible thing. So ‘alpha’ and ‘omega’ are the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet, whence Christ is called the alpha (α) and the omega (ω)—the first and the last. *Sc tittle* is a minute *point* by which one Hebrew letter is often distinguished from another (as ו) from ש). See James 2. 10, “offend in one *point*.”

The sense is, that not so much as the dot of an (i) or the cross of a (t) shall fail from the law. All shall be fulfilled. The phrase, “*Till heaven and earth pass,*” does not allow us to infer that there is a definite limit set to the law’s enforcement, and that we are to look forward to any such a time as the passing away of the visible universe, for the passing away of the law.—The law to which Christ referred was the *moral law*; for this it is that He proceeds at once to expound, and to show how the gospel fulfils it. To know what law of Moses is not abrogated, we have only to ask whether it is such as is founded on

break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach *them*, the same shall be called

great<sup>v</sup> in the kingdom of heaven.

20 For I say *un*to you, That except your righteousness shall exceed<sup>w</sup> *the* righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye

v 1 Sa. 2.30. w c.23.23-28. Ph.3.9.

moral principles, and so equally binding upon all nations and all times, or whether it is local and national. The ceremonial law was constructed to meet the peculiar case of the Jews, and so it was ordained for that people. So far as it contained doctrine, as in its types and shadows, it is fulfilled in Christ. This Paul proves in the Epistle to the Hebrews (see 9. 10 and 10. 1). And so far as it was a system of religious ceremonies, it has passed away. So the *judicial* law of the Jews was governmental and political. This passed away with the Jewish state so far as it was local. But where it contained statutes of moral and universal force, they remain binding. But the *moral* law was founded in the nature of things, and confirmed and enforced by Christ's gospel, and can never pass away. This law, no mere man since the fall has ever perfectly obeyed. But Jesus Christ most entirely obeyed it, and in Him have we righteousness and strength. No sinner can be saved but by the merit of His obedience and death. This we must humbly apply for, and heartily rest in, for salvation. Though "some sins in themselves, and by reason of several aggravations, are more heinous in the sight of God than others," yet "every sin deserveth God's wrath and curse, both in this life and that which is to come." —*Shorter Catechism*.

19. Sin or error, *taught*, is worst. No command of God is little in itself. For "whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one *point* (one jot or tittle), he is guilty of all" (James 2. 10). The Pharisees made void the law by their traditions. They made distinctions, too, between great and small commandments. The Jews

reckon the least commandment of the law to be that of the bird's nest (Deut. 22. 6, 7). And they omitted the weightier matters of the law—judgment, mercy, and faith—while they strictly tithed the mint, anise and cummin. No duty is to be despised. By these least commandments, our Lord meant those which the Pharisees counted least, and which men are wont to count of least importance. —¶ *Shall be called least*. As he disparages the law, so shall he be disparaged under the gospel. In the kingdom of heaven, or in the church under this economy of Christ, he shall be set at nought. As he makes void the law, so his profession shall be made void. See Isa. 9. 15. Mal. 2. 8, 9. Our duty is to do and teach all that God has commanded. Professing Christians cannot indulge "small sins," and find favour with God. Ministers cannot shun to declare the whole counsel of God. Practice and precept, too, must go together. It is not enough to do what is right between man and man. We must set an example of piety toward God; and we may all teach others by this means. To 'do and teach' the truth, gives a high grade under the gospel dispensation.

20. Here the drift of the former verses is explained. Our Lord demanded higher views of the Divine requirements, and a better course of conduct than the scribes and Pharisees showed. They had a corrupt doctrine of righteousness, and made a hypocritical parade of self-righteousness. —¶ *Exceed*. Literally—*abound more than*. The Wicklif translation, 1380, has it, "be more penitentious." Abel's sacrifice (Heb. 11, 4) is literally a more abounding or fuller sacrifice—translated, *more excellent*.

shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.

21 Ye have heard that it was said <sup>1</sup> by them of old time, <sup>2</sup> Thou shalt not kill; and who-

<sup>1</sup> Or, to them. <sup>2</sup> Ex. 20. 13. De. 5. 17.

It is the same idea found in both passages, and in both to show the defectiveness of the opposite. Whether Cain's or the Pharisees', something was essentially lacked. Unless your doctrine and practice go beyond that of mere formalists and time-servers, ye shall have no part nor lot in the gospel. *True righteousness* "is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter, whose praise is not of men, but of God" (Rom. 2. 29). It is composed of such tempers as Christ had just pronounced blessed, as humility, meekness, holiness, mercy, purity, &c. And we must have such views of God's requirements, and of our own lives, as to see that in Christ alone we have complete righteousness and strength. Observe, our Lord now proceeds to point out the true force and meaning of the law, and to expose the vain traditions of the Pharisees—to show how it was *they* who would destroy, and *He* that would fulfil. They who are not fit for the kingdom by an embrace of Christ, and imitation of Him, must perish.

21. *Ye have heard.* He first takes the sixth command (Exod. 20. 13), and refers them to the exposition of it that was familiar among them, and of old standing. This command was the first broken openly by Adam's race. And its violation stands first on the list of natural depravities. "Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts—murders" (ch. 15. 19). The sum of the commandments is love. Their ideas of this law went no further than the clause which they added to explain it. So it applied only to actual murder, and subjected the murderer to an inferior punishment.—¶ *The judgment.* This was a lower court of the Jews, deciding causes of small moment. The actual murderer

soever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment:

22 But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause, <sup>1</sup> shall

<sup>1</sup> 1 Jno. 3. 15.

was held liable to this court, and that was all.

22. *But I say unto you.* Christ now puts forward His exposition of the law, as in contrast with that which had been received among them. He was the law's authorized expounder. He was God in the flesh; and who could explain the law as well as he? He shows that the precept extends properly to the thoughts, and feelings, and language, as well as to outward acts. This is the great point. "He judgeth not according to outward appearance, but looketh on the heart."

1st. As to the feeling. Because anger, indulged and carried out, leads to murder; and because with God the inward feeling has the essence of the outward act; therefore it comes under the condemnation. Not only the act, but whatsoever tendeth thereunto, is condemned (1 John 3. 15). See the case of Cain, and of Joseph's brethren, where the evil passion led on to murderous deeds.—¶ *His brother.* His fellow-man. All men are our brethren, as of the same human family. Mal. 2. 10. 1 Cor. 8. 6. The idiom arose from the Jews regarding all Israelites as brethren. So the word *neighbour*, as Christ explained it in the parable of the good Samaritan. It is not taught here, that anger may be indulged where men think they *have a cause*. It is rather hinted, that anger at a brother is causeless. See Psalm 7. 4; 25. 3; 119. 78. We may be angry at the sin, but not at the person. The general idea is clear. He that is easily angry, or bitterly angry, and more at *persons* than at *things*, is to be condemned.

2d. As to the language of anger.—¶ *Raca.* A term of reproach, meaning a contemptible, worthless fellow



be in danger of the judgment : and whosoever shall say to his brother, <sup>1</sup> Raca, shall be in dan-

*1 i e., vain fellow. 2 Sa. 6. 20.*

To use scornful language towards others, is an offence before God, though it is thought so lightly of, and is so frequently done, as though it were no harm. But it is here shown to be included under the sixth commandment. The religion of Christ enjoins kindness, gentleness, and courteousness to all. "Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and all evil speaking, be put away from you."—¶ *The council.* Literally, the *Sanhedrim*, before whom weightiest matters came—the highest court of the Jews. The idea is, that this offence, counted so slight by the Pharisees, as though it had nothing at all to do with the commandment, is reckoned by Him a Sanhedrim offence, worthy of being brought before that highest tribunal—an offence weighty as those they referred to that highest court. This council was composed of seventy members, from the chief priests, elders, and scribes. The acting high priest was usually president of the Sanhedrim. This tribunal could pass sentence of death, but could not execute, now that Judea was under the Romans. They could only pronounce a decision, and transmit it to the procurator, with whom it rested to execute or not.—We learn that abusive language will be taken notice of by God, and that it renders a man liable to the highest judgment, though he may have thought it would never come into account. "Every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment" (ch. 12. 36).—¶ *Thou fool.* This term, in the Scripture sense, carries with it an accusation of depravity and wickedness. Thou *wretch* or *sinner* (Ps. 14. 1. Josh. 7. 15).—¶ *Shall be in danger of hell fire.* Literally—*shall be worthy of the Gehenna of fire.* The object here was to classify these offences, and to show that this last, though

ger of the council : but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire.

judged so trivial among them, was worthy the severest doom of which they knew, called the *Gehenna of fire.* Among the Jews there were three grades of condemnation—the judgment, the council, the fire of Hinnom. The word *Gehenna* is made up of two Hebrew words, meaning together *the valley of Hinnom.* This lay at the south-west of Jerusalem, below Mount Zion, and was the infamous place where human sacrifices were offered to the idol Moloch (2 Kings 16. 3. Jer. 7. 31. 2 Chron. 28. 3; 33. 6). The Rabbins tell us that a statue of the idol, made of brass, was placed on a brazen throne, having the head of a calf, with a crown upon it. The whole structure was hollow, and in the pedestal, as a furnace or oven, a fierce fire was kindled. When the image became heated red hot, the infant victim was thrown into its arms. This place was also called Tophet, Jer. 7. 31, 32, from *toph*, a *drum*, because drums were beaten furiously to drown the cries of the tormented victims. This horrid worship afterward became discarded (2 Kings 23. 10), and the place was used as a receptacle for all the filth of the city. Carcasses were thrown out there. The bodies of vilest criminals were cast into that sink of pollution. Some were also executed there, as a distinction of vileness. And on account of the awful pestilential stench that the place threw up, from so much rottenness, fires were kept perpetually burning. Hence it is called the *Gehenna of fire*—a fit symbol of hell. The word *Gehenna* was used by our Lord most distinctly for hell itself. It is used in the New Testament twelve times; always by our Lord, except once by James (3. 6); and always as meaning the place of eternal torment, except here, where it refers distinctly to the valley of Hinnom, as *representing* that abode of the lost. These three

23 Therefore, if thou bring thy gift <sup>z</sup> to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee,

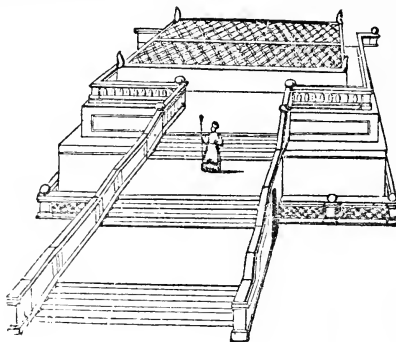
<sup>z</sup> De. 16. 17.

grades of condemnation among the Jews were here used by our Lord, to show divers grades of offences under the sixth commandment, which the Pharisees did not at all allow. In the eye of God's broad and searching law, these forms of evil passions, though they issued not in actual murder, should be held equal to those crimes which they condemned by "the judgment," "the council," and the "fire of Hinnom." And harboured or concealed anger, contemptuous and abusive language, and bitter reviling and imprecations, should be adjudged to condign punishment in the world to come, such as these earthly verdicts could only in a manner represent. If we have anything against our neighbour, the Scripture directs us what to do. We are to go and tell him, and seek reconciliation (ch. 18. 15-17).

23, 24. DUTY TO GOD.—Our Lord would teach, that the sixth command is obeyed only by maintaining kindness and good understandings with our neighbour. The Pharisees thought that if sacrifices were offered, and external rites observed, they did well. But here is a *first* duty to God. As to

24 Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.

outward worship, we should not put it first, as though it were enough and every thing. We should make it our very first business to promote conciliation and love. If we have even gone so far as to begin our religious worship, and there remember that another *has ground of complaint against us*, we are to go about the settlement of this first of all, for the worship will be rejected of God if we have not *followed peace with all men*. "*Put on (love) charity, which is the bond of perfectness.*"—¶ *If thou bring thy gift to the altar*. This was the prominent act of external worship, among the Jews. The altar was the place where they presented their offerings, and whatever they brought was called a *GIFT*. The representation here given of the altar is from *Killo*. For another form, see under Matthew 23. 18, taken from the same work.—¶ *Be reconciled*. Be agreed. **OBSERVE**, The *offender* is enjoined to be reconciled. So sinners are urged to be reconciled to God. The meaning here is, to seek reconciliation and agreement—to make acknowledgment of the wrong, and apply for favour. "Seek peace and pursue it." Philo says, that when



25 Agree with thine adversary quickly, while thou art in the way with him; lest at any time the adversary deliver thee<sup>a</sup> to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison.

26 Verily I say unto thee, Thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing.

<sup>a</sup> Pr. 25. 8. Lu. 12. 58. 59.

a man injured his brother, and, repenting of his fault, voluntarily acknowledged it, he was first to make restitution, and then to come into the temple, presenting his sacrifice and asking pardon. Thus we are here taught that no worship of God is acceptable, while we neglect our duties to one another, and live in discord with our fellow-men.

25. THE PART OF PRUDENCE.—This verse exhorts to a speedy settlement of difficulties, and inculcates a placable spirit and a promptness to make amends. Long and grievous strifes at law come often from men's being too tenacious of their own rights, and too regardless of others'; being obstinate and unyielding in settlement.—**¶ Adversary**—accuser or creditor.—**¶ In the way**—that is, on the road to the court or judge. By the Roman law, the aggrieved could compel the other party to go with him before the Prætor—but they might agree by the way to settle, which was often done. Do not be slow to do justice, for the matter will grow more serious. "How great a matter a little fire kindleth." "The beginning of strife is as when one letteth out water" (Prov. 17. 14). That personal difficulties grow serious by delaying the settlement, is here set forth by taking a case of debt, where, if the claim is not attended to, the creditor or adversary may deliver the debtor to the judge, and the judge to the officer or sheriff, and the sheriff to the prison—and so from step to step it reaches extremes. No

27 ¶ Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery:

28 But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh<sup>b</sup> on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.

29 And if thy right eye<sup>1</sup> offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable

<sup>b</sup> Job 31. 1. Pr. 6. 25. 1 or, do cause thee to offend.

purgatory is taught here, for this relates wholly to dealings with fellow-men. Children are to understand, that they often sin by not making up at once, when there is any wrong done. If any one has wronged them, they are quickly to forgive, and if they have done any thing wrong to others, they are quickly to own it, and ask pardon, and promise to do so no more. Augustine interprets this of the Law, as the adversary, with a spiritual application which it may include.

26. *Not come out thence.* This shows the serious consequence of letting difficulties grow by delaying to settle them. Our Lord speaks of various strifes that arise among men, and uses these phrases of court to illustrate the subject. How much better, even as the part of prudence, to agree with the creditor, or attend to any claim upon us, than have things come to such an issue. How wise, also, to be reconciled to God, before it is too late. See ch. 18. 34; 25. 46.

27-30. The seventh commandment (Exodus 20. 14), our Lord expounds on the same great principles. He judgeth not according to the outward appearance, but looketh on the heart. The lust of the flesh and the lust of the eye are here condemned as a violation of the commandment. Not only the act of adultery, but the unchaste desire (or the adulterous eye, 2 Pet. 2. 14). Even the looking, that is to indulge these impure thoughts and passions, is a breaking of the

for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not *that* thy whole body should be cast into hell.<sup>c</sup>

30 And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not *that* thy whole body should be cast into hell.

c Ro.8.13. 1Cor.9.27.

command. That looking with a lustful eye was the crime of David, which led on to adultery, and that, to murder, 2 Sam. 11. Psalm 51.—¶ *Thy right eye.* The most important organ of sense. See Zach. 11. 17.—¶ *Offend.* The Greek word is *scandalizo*. The Cranmer translation, 1539, has it "*hynder.*" The Geneva, 1557, has it "*cause thee to offend.*" This is the true sense. Some would argue that they could not avoid this entering of sin at the eyes. But better part with your very right eye than sin. Therefore strive most earnestly to crucify the flesh (Gal. 5. 24), and mortify the members (Col. 3. 5), and "abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul" (1 Pet. 2. 11).—¶ *Pluck it out.* This indicates the strongest opposition. Not surely to mutilate our bodies, but to deny ourselves severely, lest we go into temptation; and to put away all occasions of sin—to crucify not only the flesh, but the affections and lusts, striving by all means to lay aside the sins which most easily beset us, and sacrifice the dearest things that prove occasions to sin. Submit to denials, and use even violent means that would be like putting out the eye itself, rather than yield. "The metaphor" (says Flavel) "is from chyrurgeons, whose manner it is, when the whole is in danger by any part, to cut it off, lest all perish."

30. The same sentiment is here repeated. It teaches that we had better lose our *limbs* than sin with them, and that no loss or damage is so grievous

31 It hath been said, Whosoever shall put away his wife let him give her a writing of divorcement:<sup>d</sup>

32 But I say unto you, that whosoever shall put away his wife,<sup>e</sup> saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced, committeth adultery.

d De.24.1. Je.3.1. Mar.10.2-9. ec.19.9. 1Cor.7.10,11.

ous as the loss of God's favour—that therefore we must not yield our members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin, nor by any means let sin reign in our mortal body, that we should obey it in the lusts thereof. Rom. 6. 12, 13.—¶ *It is profitable*—it will be to your advantage to give up this source or means of sinful gratification, whatever it be, rather than be cast, with all the unmortified passions of the flesh, into hell.

31, 32. Moses had said it (Deut. 24. 1). And this had been so construed by the Jewish teachers, as to admit of separation between husband and wife on the slightest grounds, if only a bill of divorce was given. How this evil prevailed in the time of Malachi, see Mal. 2. 14-16. They were "suffered" by the judicial statute, or magistrate's rule, to put away the wife on account of ceremonial uncleanness. This, because of their social condition and hardness of heart, was tolerated then. But the permission (says Scott) was construed into a command, and sadly abused. What had been allowed as a civil matter under Moses, to avoid a greater evil, had been pronounced by them every way right, and thus the original institution of marriage had been degraded and disesteemed. Yet, as the legal writing of divorcement was required by Moses, and a wife could not be put away without the formality and delay of this, *it was a lower witness to the sanctity of marriage*; so that Christ and Moses legislate in the same direction

33 ¶ Again, ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself, <sup>r</sup> but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths:

34 But I say unto you, Swear

f Le. 19. 12. Nu. 30. 2. De. 23. 23.

But Christ here laid down the rule, that divorce, saving for one cause, fornication, does not break the marriage covenant—the woman is counted by Him a *married woman* still! He that marries her, commits adultery, and *she is caused to commit adultery* by this unlawful divorce. They that give divorces or grant them for any other cause than fornication, come under this sentence of our Lord. They who grasp at every liberty they can find, will never keep God's commandments. How little will such regard their duty, or guard their hearts from sin. Marriage is most sacred as a standing symbol in the world, of Christ's union with the Church.

33. *Forswear thyself*—swear falsely—perjure thyself. See Levit. 19. 12. Deut. 23. 23. They interpreted the law as applicable to false swearing only where the proper name of Jehovah was used. If this were omitted in the oath, they counted the perjury a small offence. So they distinguished oaths into weightier and lighter, making an exact scale of their obligation on the conscience. And they deemed the perjury, or false swearing, the only profanity. An *oath* is a solemn affirmation, in which God is called to witness to the truth of what is said, and to visit with His vengeance if the oath be false.—¶ *Perform unto the Lord*. Sacredly to stand by and fulfil what is engaged in the oath. Our Lord would teach that light swearing, as well as false swearing, was forbidden—that taking His name in vain (Exodus 20. 7), applies to all irreverent oaths, even where His proper name is not introduced. For His name is that whereby He maketh Himself known, and includes His “titles, attributes, ordinances,

not at all: <sup>s</sup> neither by heaven; for it is God's throne:

35 Nor by the earth; for it is his footstool: neither by Jerusalem; for it is <sup>h</sup> the city of the great King.

g c. 23. 16–22. Ja. 5. 12. h Re. 21. 2, 10.

words, and works.” Instances are given to this effect in the verses following.

34. *Swear*—take oath—not at all. This is not to forbid all oaths, but of such kind as are named. They used various forms of swearing by solemn objects, as by the temple, by heaven, by the head, by Jerusalem; and they made the most capricious distinctions in these oaths—as that it was right to swear by the temple, but not by the gold of it—and by the altar, but not by the gift upon it. (See ch. 23. 16–23.) Our Lord would teach that this was indirectly swearing by God—for the Heaven was *His throne*, and the earth was *His footstool*. He does not here forbid judicial oaths, but mainly these conversational oaths which he instances, and others only as verging toward such. He teaches that an oath, if it be any thing but a wanton mockery and profanity, is in substance a solemn appeal to God. And hence, though a man may swear lightly by some inferior object, or though the law under which he swears may not require him to believe in God, and eternity, and a judgment, yet an oath is an oath, however it be called, and those who make light of it do profane God's name. Besides, in swearing by an inferior object, we ascribe to it the prerogative of God. “He that sweareth in the earth, shall swear by the God of truth” (Isa. 65. 16).

35. *Jerusalem*. This city had its sanctity from being the seat of His majesty and the place of His holy temple. God is the great King and Governor of the nations. Psalms 47. 7; 48. 2; 95. 3. Job 13. 9.—¶ *By thy head*—or by thy life. “As I live” “may I die if it be not true.” We

36 Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black :

37 But let your communication be, Yea, yea ; Nay, nay : for whatsoever is more than these, cometh of evil.†

38 ¶ Ye have heard that it hath

† Ja. 5. 12.

have not our lives in our power, even to alter the essential colour of a hair. Therefore we have no right to pledge our lives for our sincerity. And to use such oaths in conversation is the grossest trifling with God and sacred things. But many profane people now use a list of such oaths, which they flatter themselves do not violate the third commandment, because the name of God is not used. Such persons are ungodly and condemned. Profane swearers are generally of low, debased character in every important respect.

37. *Your communication.* Your talk. Be content with a solemn, honest, explicit, yes or no. There is really no need of more. Extravagant talk and profuse appeals and affirmations to establish what we say, come of evil. They spring from bad dispositions, wrong views, evil motives or habits, and are from the Evil one. The oath of itself, is a recognition of man's untruthfulness.

38. *An eye for an eye.* God had enjoined this (Deut. 19. 21. Levit. 24. 20. Exod. 21. 24) as a rule for magistrates to punish personal injuries by inflicting the like, and not more or less at their pleasure. But this rule was seized upon by individuals to gratify private revenge, and to do to others as others did to them. This *lex talionis*, or law of retaliation, was mostly in private hands, according to their customs, and was a source of great mischief.

‡. As to person- 39. *Resist not evil, or al indignity.* the evil-doer who afflicts you. This is against rendering evil

been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth :

39 But I say unto you † that ye resist not evil : but whosoever shall smite thee † on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also.

40 And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away

† Ex. 21. 24. & Pr. 20. 22 ; 24. 29. Ro. 12. 17-19. † Is. 50. 6

for evil to any man, and even more against taking a stand of hostile opposition to match another's misconduct. As in the former passages, the doctrine laid down is not absolute, but qualified by what immediately follows. To practice non-resistance in all cases, is often to encourage the wicked.—¶ *Smite thee.* Greek—*rapisci*—*rap* or *slap thee*. This was regarded as a special affront. 2 Cor 11. 20. The phrase is used here proverbially. We are to present a front of greatest patience and forbearance. Instead of *smiting back*, as is common among men, it had better be borne meekly. "This one staff of Moses shivers the ten thousand spears of Pharaoh." A personal indignity had rather be suffered than to *pay back in the same coin*. This does not refer to self-defence for protection of life and family. Our Lord's example is to the point, "Who when he was reviled, reviled not again." 1 Pet. 2. 23. Micah 5. 1. See Rom. 12. 17-19.

2. As to injury 40. *Sue thee at the law of estate.*

The principle is here applied to property. Where an ill-designing and malicious man takes every opportunity to wrong by lawsuits, and gets an advantage so far as to take away your coat, let him have your cloak also, rather than contend. These were the two chief garments in use at that time. The coat was the *under*, and the cloak the *upper* or *over*, a sort of wrapper, and loose. See Cuts 1-3. It was often used by the poor at night for a covering. Hence the law of Moses provided that in case it was given as a

thy coat, let him have *thy* cloak also.

41 And whosoever shall com-

pel thee to go a mile, go with him twain.

42 Give to him that asketh.

12. 18 and 13. 1. Patience and gentleness under the severe exactions of men, are inculcated.

42. *Give.* A broad rule of benevolence is here laid down, which will be safe for all cases. The heart must be open to give. We should cultivate the habit of giving. This is meant as a rule against the rule of many, *not to give.* We had better even give to one that shall prove undeserving, than turn away the worthy poor unhelped. Many object that there are impostors; but this does not discharge us of our obligation. Such a general presumption in favour of giving should be set aside only by a weighty and sufficient reason. The spirit noticed in James 2. 15, 16, is rebuked that says, "Be ye warmed," &c., but gives nothing. Christians should ask themselves what they have that they have not received. "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above (James 1. 17), and cometh down from the Father of lights." He gives us more than others, that we may have wherewith to dispense His bounties. So He makes us stewards, and will hold us to account. We should take all

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Exod 22 26



Numbers 15. 38

thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou<sup>m</sup> away.

43 ¶ Ye have heard that it hath been said, <sup>n</sup> Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy:

*m* De. 15. 7, 11. *n* De. 23. 6.

fit means for applying our liberality in the best way. Augustine says that the point lies here, "*We are to give to every man, but not to give everything*"—not always to give what is asked, but to send none away without some good word or deed from us.—¶ *Borrow*. We should be ready to lend. This is another shape of liberality. The poor may be helped in this way, where they are worthy and industrious, and ask no more. Luke has it, "and lend, *hoping for nothing again* (6. 35).—¶ *Turn not thou away*—from such an application; but show a disposition to entertain it in Christian kindness. Christians should be liberal, considering how great things God hath done for them, and how destitute they would be without the special, distinguishing liberality of God.

43. *It hath been said*. See Levit. 19. 18, where only the first clause is found in the law, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour (as thyself)". They had added the following clause. As the Theocratic people, they were to hate their enemies only as God's enemies. So we find David often praying for destruction to come upon his enemies. Yet not his private foes so much as God's. Here Christ teaches us that we must love the man while hating the evil that is in him. But the Jews indulged private hatred. It was their carnal inference, and they had made it part of the law. They pretended that the command to love their neighbour bound them to hate their enemies. And while God called their fellow-man their neighbour, they contended that none but Jews and friends were such. They termed all the heathen their enemies, and their hatred toward them was proverbial.

44 But I say unto you, Love<sup>o</sup> your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray<sup>p</sup> for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;

*o* Ro. 12. 14, 20. *p* Lu. 23. 34. Ac. 7. 60.

And this they pretended to have deduced from God's command for avoiding and driving out the heathen.

44. *Love your enemies*—in the sense explained, blessing, benefitting, and praying for them. An enemy is one who hates us, and seeks to injure us. Bear good-will toward such, not rendering evil for evil to any man, but contrariwise blessing. See David's treatment of Saul, and its effect upon his enemy, who exclaimed, "Thou art more righteous than I, for thou hast rewarded me good, whereas I have rewarded thee evil" (1 Sam. 24. 17). We are not required to cherish and treat them as friends. Yet we must not treat them as enemies, but rather regard them as fellow-sinners.—¶ *Bless them*. Give them good words. See Acts 7. 60. We should remember how God treats us, "for he is kind unto the unthankful and evil," and by so doing we shall heap coals of fire on their heads.—¶ *Do good*. Be disposed to benefit them that are ill-disposed toward you and seek your injury.—¶ *Despitefully use you*—insult and abuse you. Pray for such as execrate you. By this means they may be made better, for God can renew their hearts in answer to your requests. Pray for blessings upon such as pour abuses and imprecations upon you. Return the opposite conduct, good for evil, "contrariwise blessing." 1 Pet. 3. 9.—¶ *Persecute you*—injure you and follow you with wrongs. One of the most beautiful gems of oriental literature is contained in a passage from the Persian poet Sâ'î quoted by Sir William Jones, the sentiment of which is embodied in the following lines:



45 That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise<sup>9</sup> on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.

46 For if ye love them which

*q* Job 23.3

The sandal tree perfumes, when riven,  
The axe that laid it low;  
Let man who hopes to be forgiven,  
Forgive and bless his foe.

45. *That ye may be the children.* This is the temper of God, and to resemble Him, or to have evidence of being born of Him, we must show such a disposition. "He is kind to the unthankful and to the evil." This is shown in the sunshine and the rain, which are His. He sends daily a thousand mercies upon the vilest sinners. And as we see daily this goodness of God to offenders, we should practise accordingly. This is contrary to carnal nature. Yet this is God's plan in the world. To show His wrath, and to make His power known, He endures with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction (Rom. 9. 22). But at the judgment He will make the closest distinction. "Then shall ye return and discern between the righteous and the wicked" (Mal. 3. 18. Matt. 25. 46).

46. *For if.* To return good for good is natural, and a mere exchange which none are too bad to make, as it suits their interest; but to render good for evil is most contrary to nature, and is the Christian's temper as distinct from the world.—¶ *Publicans.* Luke says *sinner*s. The Publicans were tax-gatherers, and their business was to get from every body and not to give—to take in, and not to give out; and yet even these, who only knew of exacting dues from every man, even they would render love for love, and pay back in the same coin the kindness shown to them. Publicans and sinners (or *peathens*) are terms often associated.

love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same?

47 And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more *than others*? do not even the publicans so?

48 Be ye therefore perfect, r

*r* Ge. 17.1. De. 18.13. Lu. 6.36,40. Col. 1.28.

They were counted a vile class, partly because they were covetous and rapacious—deceitful and cruel as a class. It is our natural pleasure and interest to love those who love us. It is our Christian duty and privilege to love those who do not love us. Otherwise, what do we more than others? What special triumph is it over evil passions? What gain is our religion to us? Especially, what *reward* have we by this rule? What treatment could we expect of God on the same principle?

47. *Salute.* This word is often rendered *greet*, and sometimes *embrace*, as a token of friendship and affection. It is meant to express the common offices of civility and good understanding, being on *good terms* and treating kindly. If you greet none but your friends with marks of favour, what do ye *special*, or extra, or beyond others, to show the power and value of your religion? A follower of Christ is bound to do more than others, because the religion of Christ is better than others, and makes men better.

48. *Be ye, &c.* This is the language of the law. Deut. 18. 13. "Thou shalt be *perfect* (marg. *upright*, or *sincere*) with the Lord thy God." Therefore adopt no such false standard as the Pharisees, who qualify the law and make it void by their traditions. Be ye consistent and complete in your piety, in like manner as your Father in heaven.—¶ *Perfect.* There is nothing here to prove that sinless perfection is attained in this life. Paul constantly uses this term (*τελειοι*) to denote an advanced, matured piety, as distinguished from *babes* (*νηπιαι*) in

even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.

#### CHAPTER VI.

**T**AKE heed that ye do not your <sup>1</sup>alms before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward <sup>2</sup> of your Father which is in heaven.

<sup>1</sup> or, righteousness. Ps.112.9. <sup>2</sup> or, with.

Christ. These were "men of full age." "Leaving the principles or elements (rudiments), let us go on unto *perfection*." Noah is spoken of as "a just man and *perfect* (or *up-right*, margin) in his generation," where the latter clause is explanatory. (Gen. 6.9.) He was pious in all his relations of life. Luke reads, "Be ye therefore *merciful*" (6. 36). —¶ *Even as.* (ὡσαύτῃ, Gr.) *In like manner as, &c.* We are to have a holy God—our Father in heaven—for a pattern; and we are never to rest satisfied with our attainments until we reach His spotless perfection in the heavens. "He that dwelleth in God, dwelleth in love, for God is love."

#### CHAPTER VI.

1. *Your alms.* Our Lord having taught us what we are to do, proceeds now to teach us how we are to do it. Doing alms is giving money, food, clothing, or any such supply to the destitute. Those bounties to the poor which you commonly give, give with the right spirit. Our Lord would correct evil motives in doing good things. He would teach that the virtue lies not in the outward act, for the inward temper and aim may destroy all the goodness in His sight. "Ambition maketh alms vain." Doing alms, or distributing supplies among the poor, to be *seen of men*, where the object is to make a show, and attract public notice—this has no praise-worthiness before God. A Christian should let his light shine. He should therefore be willing that others should know of his doings, for example's sake. But this is plainly different

2 Therefore when thou doest *thine* alms, <sup>3</sup> do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.

<sup>3</sup> or, cause a trumpet to be sounded.

from noising them abroad. Augustine likens those who boast their good deeds, to the foolish hen, who has no sooner laid her egg, than by her cackling she calls some one to take it away.—¶ *Otherwise, or else*, he loses God's approbation of the act. The merciful, who are humbly and heartily so, out of Christian charity, shall obtain mercy (Matt. 5. 7).

2. *Do not sound a trumpet.* This is a phrase used in many languages to express boasting and parade. We need not suppose that any trumpet was actually blown.—¶ *Hypocrites*, pretenders, dissemblers, false characters. The term was first used for *stage-actors*, who often wore masks, and whose business it was to act a false part, to assume the character of another, and counterfeit his conduct. It may be remarked that stage-players and gladiators were introduced to the public by sounding of trumpets.—¶ *Synagogues*, and streets. Alms were specially distributed in the synagogues or places of religious concourse. The poor would flock there, naturally hoping for charities from the good. So, the lame man at the temple gate (Acts 3). In the Apostles' time, collections for the poor and needy formed part of the worship on the Sabbath. The *streets*, also, at the corners, and where roads met, served as a resort; and there, amongst the crowd, the utmost ostentation was shown by the proud and heartless donors.—¶ *Their reward.* This noisy praise in the streets they look for, and they get it to their heart's content; and this is all they shall get. God gives them their request, but sends leanness into their

3 But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth :

4 That thine alms may be in secret : and thy Father, which seeth in secret, himself shall reward <sup>a</sup> thee openly.

5 ¶ And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites *are* : for they love to pray, standing in the synagogues and in the corners of

<sup>a</sup> Lu.8.17; 14.14.

the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily, I say unto you, They have their reward.<sup>b</sup>

6 But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret ; and thy Father, which seeth in secret, <sup>c</sup> shall reward thee openly.

7 But when ye pray, use not

<sup>b</sup> Pr.16.5. Ja.4.6. <sup>c</sup> Ps.34.15. Is.65.24.



soul (Psalm 106. 15). These cuts are taken from the plates of Kitto's Encyclopedia, showing the postures prevalent among the Orientals. *Standing* in prayer is doubtless the scriptural mode for public worship. 1 Ki. 8. 14.

3. Alms should be given *in secret*; that is, *unostentatiously*, without a disposition to blaze the good act abroad.—¶ *Let not thy left hand know* is a proverbial phrase, to express a modest privacy—not making it known even to ourselves—not making it a merit, or taking the praise to ourselves. This non-appropriation of it—this internal, humble unconsciousness of a good work, contrasts essentially with the trumpeting forth of the Pharisees. Such vain ambition is to be cured by remembering God's omniscience. He needs no proclamation of our good deeds to inform Him, and He looketh on the heart. *He sees*, and shall reward thee openly when the secrets of all hearts shall be revealed (25. 34).

5. The same warning is directed

against their showy habits of prayer. It is not the place that is here condemned, but the feeling that gives the act such vain prominence. Pomp and parade in prayer for vain-glory is an awful abomination before God. They chose the most thronged places, and had no relish for secret prayer: they wished to be seen of men, so as to get the character of great devoutness and piety.

6. *Thy closet*—a retired apartment for prayer. This was commonly, among Orientals, a room rising, like an observatory of a modern house, above the main building. It sometimes had two or three apartments. "The little chamber" (2 Kings 4. 10), "the summer chamber" (Judges 3. 20), "the upper chamber" (2 Kings 23. 12), "the inner chamber" (1 Kings 20. 30), may refer to this. It was a place for retirement and undisturbed devotion in private. Christ would teach that we should rather seek secrecy, than court a vain publicity. We should pray *alone*, because we

vain repetitions, <sup>d</sup> as the heathen *do*: for they think that they shall be heard for <sup>e</sup> their much speaking.

8 Be not ye therefore like unto

<sup>d</sup> Ec. 5. 2. <sup>e</sup> 1K. 18. 26, &c.

have private business with God, and every one of us must give account of himself to God. Besides, the advantage is, that one alone can better command his thoughts, and pour them out more freely and fully "where none but God can hear." It is called *secret* prayer, because it is secluded and apart from the notice of men. But social and public prayer are no less a duty. The main object here is to rebuke pretension and parade in prayer. We read of Christians being gathered for prayer (comp. Acts 1. 4, and 2. 1. Acts 1. 24; 12. 5, 12). In prayer we are to shut out the world and all vain thoughts.

7. *Vain repetitions*—an empty round of phrases recited, parrot-like, or an idle repeating of the same words, without thought. The term (*baltologesele*) is supposed to be taken from the primary sounds of infancy—an incoherent babble. The Old English translation renders it here "Babble not too much." "An endless tumult and hubbub of words," says Augustine, "is often substituted for the unspeakable utterances of the spirit."—¶ *The heathen*—the Gentiles, or the nations, as the term is, who were foreigners and aliens from the commonwealth of Israel. Jews should not *be or do* as the unenlightened heathen. Christians should not *act* like the world. It was not against *repetition*, but *vain repetition*, that our Lord here spake. This the Gentiles often practised; and the merely formal among nominal Christians will often copy the Pagans. We may pray and pray again for the same thing. We may repeat our desires and words in the same prayer. This sometimes is done devoutly from very earnestness, and in the way of importunity. It is against idle and empty

them: for your Father knoweth <sup>f</sup> what things ye have need of before ye ask him.

9 After this manner therefore pray ye: Our <sup>g</sup> Father <sup>h</sup>

<sup>f</sup> Lu. 12. 30. Jno. 16. 23-27. <sup>g</sup> Lu. 11. 2, &c. <sup>h</sup> Ro. 8. 15.

words repeated to spin out a heartless prayer, or to make a merit of long prayer, that Christ is speaking. Those to whom he alluded calculated "to be heard for *their much speaking*." Much praying is a different thing, and is commanded.

8. A Jew ought to know and do better than a Gentile. God was his Father. How consoling to a sincere heart, that God knows its real desires, beyond the poor clothing of words. But though He knows what we need, before we ask, it is right to ask what we want. God's knowing about it does not alter our duty to ask for it; and He has made His promises with this requirement, that we shall ask if we would receive. "That which is unsought would mostly remain unacknowledged also." "Ask and ye shall receive," is a command no less than a promise. "We are to pray," says Bengel, "not that we may teach the Father, but worship Him."

9. Here follows the "LORD'S PRAYER," so called because dictated by Christ to His disciples, and so having the Lord for its author. John had delivered some frame-work of prayer to his disciples, and one of Christ's followers requested the same from Him (Luke 11. 1). This was very commonly done by the Jewish teachers.—¶ *After this manner*—like this—in this style—not as the Gentiles or Pharisees. This was intended as a *guide* to devotion. A skeleton and frame-work of all prayer—a normal petition. Our Lord was teaching them *how* to pray, not *what* to pray. He did not mean that all our prayers should be in these exact words. Luke has given the same prayer in *different* words (Luke 11) Christ and the Apostles used other words of prayer (Matt. 26. 39; 42. 44.

which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name :

10 Thy kingdom<sup>k</sup> come : thy

† Ps. 115. 3. † Ps. 111. 9 ; 139. 20. † c. 16. 23. Re. 11. 15.

Acts 1. 24, 25). This should always be the substance of a well-ordered prayer; brief, concise, comprehensive, and to the point. It consists of a preface, six petitions, and a doxology, and it is found substantially in the 19 prayers of the Jewish Liturgy, except the clause, "as we forgive our debtors."—¶ *Our Father*. God will, first of all, be owned in his true character, as the paternal source of all His creatures—Creator, Preserver, Governor, Benefactor, and the covenant Father of believers. And we cannot go on with our prayer until we recognize Him in His endearing relations to us. We never have the heart to pray, nor can we ask aright, until we see Him as our reconciled Father in Christ Jesus. Under the old Covenant, they could only say Master; under the new, we say *Abba Father* (Rom. 8. 15. John 1. 12). It is *our* Father, not *my* Father. It is meant to be the prayer of brethren, who in Christ are knit together into one body, adopted in Him into the same family.—¶ *In heaven*. Most Exalted, the High and Lofty One. This expresses utmost reverence, and acknowledges His omniscience, omnipresence, omnipotence, and all His loftiest attributes. (See Psalms 2. 4; 115. 3.) This address was common in the Jewish prayers with the same meaning; yet God is every where present as a spirit, and a dispenser of spiritual blessings to His worshippers. "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them," &c. His glory is such that the "heaven of heavens cannot contain Him" (2 Chron. 2. 6). We are thus taught to look for God, not in ourselves, but out of and above ourselves. "This is a protest," says Augustine, "against pantheistic notions, against all philosophical schemes, of the identity of

will be done, in earth as it is in heaven.

11 Give us this day our <sup>m</sup> daily bread :

† Ps. 103. 20, 21. † m Pr. 30. 8. Is. 33. 16.

our spirit and the Spirit of God." The Spirit witnesseth with the spirits of believers that they are the children of God.—¶ *Hallowed be thy name*. Let that whereby thou makest thyself known be held sacred, kept holy, and every where revered. God's name means "His titles, attributes, ordinances, words and works;" because a name is that whereby any one is made known; and this first petition begs that God and all divine things may be held sacred, venerated and adored among men and in all the universe. We are, first of all, and in all our conduct, and all our prayers, to have respect to God's glory. To keep the Sabbath holy is to hallow it; and so of all that belongs to true religion.—¶ *Thy kingdom come*. The kingdom spoken of in Scripture, is the kingdom of Christ—the reign of grace which He has set up in the world, called the kingdom of heaven, and the kingdom of God. This petition recognizes His Divinity, and shows that He is to be regarded as one with the Father. Let Satan's kingdom be destroyed, and the kingdom of grace be advanced, ourselves and others brought into it and kept in it, and let the kingdom of glory be hastened (see Shorter Catechism). Men oppose this kingdom because they dislike its holy restraints and pure government, and so they help on the kingdom of Satan by serving sin. The darkness, degradation and vices of heathen countries show that this kingdom has not come among them, because it is "righteousness, and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost" (Rom. 14. 17). We can help forward every Christian enterprise as we have opportunity and ability, and we can always put up his petition, and so we can extend the kingdom by our labours and our prayers.—¶ *Thy will be done*. God's will is the only true

12 And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors :

n C. 18. 21-35. Lu. 7. 40-48.

standard of conduct for all creatures; and on this fallen earth we must have from Him the power to do His will. We must pray for ability "to know, obey, and submit to His will in all things, as the angels do in heaven." The Scriptures contain His will as here spoken of. We are to seek the circulation of the Scriptures, and their widest influence, and the most complete subjection of men to their divine rules. Most men seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's. Yet, if they had their desire, it would end in their own ruin not only, but in that of the universe. On the other hand, if God's will were done by all as by angels, this earth would be like heaven, where the angels dwell. They do His will most perfectly (Psalm 103. 20). And we are here taught not to be content with doing our duty as others do it, but *as angels do it* (chap. 5. 48). We are to aim at being perfect, "like as our Father in heaven" and "the angels in heaven are perfect;" and we are to pray that more and more God's will may be every where and in every way obeyed. Christ had a human will subordinated to the Divine will in Him, yet not abolished by it.

11. After having first sought the glory of God in our petitions, we may pray even for *bread*. Whatever we need for our daily sustenance we may ask of Him. Unless He favour us, we cannot obtain a morsel by greatest industry and toil; therefore we ought daily to thank *Him* for all that we get. We should feel this dependence upon Him for every thing, and we should desire to receive every good gift as from His hand, even though we may earn it from others. Every good gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights. Jas. 1. 17. This brief prayer covers all temporal mercies, and includes all that we need ask. Such a style of petition for earthly things, teaches us *moderation*.

13 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from

o C. 26. 41. Lu. 22. 40, 46. p Jno. 17. 15.

—¶ *Daily*. This word means *essential*—sufficient for our support. Luke says, "Give us day by day our daily (or sufficient) bread." It is meant to include all daily supplies, as well for the body as for the soul. This whole prayer is meant for more than one. "Our Father"—"give us"—"forgive us"—"deliver us," &c.; and being here set forth for a style of daily prayer, we are taught to *pray socially*, day by day. This can be done in the family; and it is daily, family prayer that seems supposed here, where the family head asks daily for such bounties as are needed. "Having food and raiment, let us be therewith content" (1 Tim. 6. 8). Daily piety is requisite—we are to live daily and hourly upon God.

12. *Debts*. In Luke another word is used, which reads "trespasses." That is here the meaning (see vs. 14). The Scriptures often speak of sin in this light. Trespasses, or sins, are debts. Sinners are debtors. They owe God vast amounts of love and service, which they have never paid Him, and never can pay. "What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me" (Psalm 116. 12). To forgive a debt is to free the debtor from payment, and blot out the charges against him. God forgives the debts or sins of His people, by blotting them out, and not *remembering against them their iniquities*, of which they repent. Christ has satisfied the claims of Justice for all who trust in Him, and He can claim forgiveness for all who are His, while it is all of grace to them. He has taken away the condemnation (Rom. 8. 1), and now God can be just and yet justify. Reference is here made to daily trespasses, for no man liveth and sinneth not.—¶ *As we forgive*. We must be able to say, as it reads in Luke, "for we also forgive." Our Lord dwells here on this duty (see vs. 14 and 15) God confines us in it

evil: for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever, Amen.

Re. 5. 12, 13.

specially and solemnly here to the great gospel law of forgiveness. Our forgiving others will not, of itself, save us; no virtue can atone, and no worship is acceptable with hatred or ill-will in our hearts, or wilful quarrels with others (vs. 23); and no prayer for forgiveness need be offered unless we are ready to forgive. Matt. 18. 35. Mark 11. 25, 26. So Christ has joined together this important duty of forgiving others, and this most important prayer of a sinner to be forgiven. Christ, in forgiving us, sets us 'he most perfect example of forgiving injuries. "How terrible may this prayer become to us (says Augustine), if we be unforgiving." We are taught, in all our prayers, to examine well our own tempers. How important to put up this prayer in the right spirit! If we are unforgiven or unforgiving, we must surely perish! "Depart from me, ye workers of iniquity" (Matt. 25). This petition alludes to daily trespasses as the bread to daily bread. How can perfectionists use the Lord's prayer? 1 John 1. 8.

13. *Temptation.* Let not our course lie through temptation. *Christ was led up by the Spirit* into the wilderness, to be tempted—yet He was tempted "of the devil;" and in the execution of His official work, His mediatorial course was marked out through that field of trial. And as we know our sinfulness and weakness, it is fit that we should not ask forgiveness for the past, without imploring this exemption from trial for the future. This is an implied confession of our frail and erring nature, and of our imperfect state. It is the sin of many that they do not dread and deprecate temptation, but run into it. If they prayed against it, as Christ has taught, they would be more watchful of it (Matt. 26. 41). The young are especially exposed. Young professors of Christ often fall. Gay amusements and vain

14 For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.

companions surround them, and they apologize for these allowances. They often feel strong, and think there is no danger; but they run into the temptations, and are led astray by an enticing world. There is no safe rule but this—to dread and pray against all forms of temptations, and so to deny ourselves those occasions, companions, and employments which are calculated to ensnare our souls. "As strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts that war against the soul." 1 Pet. 2. 11.—¶ *Evil.* Literally, "the evil;" that is, the evil or dreadful consequence of temptation. Or, it may mean, "the Evil One," Satan (Matt. 15. 19. 1 John 2. 13), and so include all sin and misery in the widest sense. We may and ought to pray for deliverance from all that belongs to sin. God alone is the Deliverer. To be delivered or *set free* from our evil natures, from Satan's snares, from sorrow, and suffering, and sins, is matter for daily prayer. Sin is the greatest evil, and the *source* of all beside. Christ has come to bring us deliverance from the bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the children of God.—¶ *Kingdom.* Here follows the doxology, ascribing to God all the power to perform these things, and all the praise and glory for their performance, and from it.—¶ *Amen.* This word is from the Hebrew verb, *to be firm, sure.* It means, *so let it be!* or, *may it be made sure!* It is added at the close, to express the strong desire of the petitioner for all that he has asked. It is a form of subscription and seal set to the prayer, confirming it as the hearty wish of the suppliant, or it is a general enforcement of the request. Such phrases are common—as in memorials to government we say, "So your petitioners will ever pray." This word, *amen*, though often spoken lightly, is properly a

15 But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses. †

16 ¶ Moreover, when ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men † to fast. Ver-

† Ep. 4. 31. Ja. 2. 13.

‡ Is. 51. 3. i.

solemn form of prayer to God, who only can make anything sure. It was sometimes used to express the uniting of a company in a social prayer (1 Cor. 14. 16). It occurs very often in the Gospels, rendered "*verily*," or repeated, "*verily, verily*."

14. This refers to the fifth petition. It would indicate, that as forgiveness is the great message of the Gospel, so it is the leading duty of fellow-sinners toward each other. This would account for this particular subject being here taken up out of all the topics presented in the Lord's Prayer. Besides, the fifth petition was peculiar, as having this sort of condition annexed, "*as we forgive*;" and here the reason is assigned for such a proviso. —¶ *For, if ye forgive, &c.* The true spirit of forgiveness, in imitation of Christ, is a pledge of forgiveness being obtained of Christ. A uniform temper of forgiveness is characteristically Christian, and Christians who have obtained pardon through Christ, are charged to expect that measure of forgiveness from God which they mete out to others. No one virtue can save, but it can give evidence of our regeneration. An unforgiving spirit has no evidence of pardon from God.

16. *Moreover, when ye fast.* The great Teacher here lays down again the doctrine of sincerity and simplicity in religious devotions, and applies it to fasting, as He had done to alms and prayer. This alludes to their private and voluntary abstaining from food. The Jews had four annual fasts, and many private fasts.

ily I say unto you They have their reward.

17 But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thine head, and wash thy face;

18 That thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret: and thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly.

The Pharisees fasted twice a week (Luke 18. 12), to wear the appearance of extra sanctity and devotion. This was on the second day of the week, when Moses ascended Mount Sinai, and on the fifth day, when he came down.—¶ *A sad countenance*, More literally, a *scowling face*—a sullen, morose look.—¶ *They disfigure*. They spoil the appearance of their faces, neglecting to wash, and comb, and anoint themselves as usual—throwing ashes and earth upon their heads. They strove to look as squalid and wretched as possible. The Searcher of hearts knew that their object was only to *appear* self-denied, humble, and devout in the sight of men.

17. *Anoint thy head.* It was THEIR custom to wash at every meal, and to anoint freely with olive oil, *except* on days of fasting. Christ teaches that they should not make such alteration in their appearance, but anoint and wash *as usual*, having for their object, not to show themselves to men as fasting, for this is hypocrisy and mockery, but to appear acceptably before God. In all these precepts Christ would guard His disciples against a vain show and empty parade in their devotions and duties.

19. Christ had enjoined sincerity toward God in almsgiving and fasting—in charity to others and piety toward Him. He had also taught them to pray and how to pray. Now he proceeds to discourse against worldliness, which is so hostile to benevolence and confidence in Him. We should not seek independence of



19 ¶ Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal :

20 But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth cor-

† Pr. 23.4. Lu. 12.33,34. He. 13.5.

His providence, or prefer earthly to heavenly wealth.—¶ *Treasures*. Valuable articles—money, raiment, corn, wine, oil. This was the wealth of the rich in the East. The language here is, Do not *treasure up treasures*, or store away stores for yourselves upon earth—that is, Do not make it your chief aim to hoard up large possessions here below. The great hindrance to spirituality is worldliness.—¶ *Upon earth*. This is not the place for laying up possessions—because it is full of destructive agents, moth, rust and robbers.—¶ *Moth*. As a principal article of wealth was in goodly garments and changes of raiment, and as moth is a small worm which ruins clothing, it is meant that their possessions are perishable, and will be destroyed.—¶ *Rust*. By the rust that destroys metals, is meant that which would render their other valuables worthless. In general, it alludes to the gnawing tooth of Time. All earthly treasures are liable to perish by treachery of men, disasters of Providence, and their own perishable nature. They shall fade away and fail at last, and often while the owners are alive. “Riches take to themselves wings.”—¶ *Treasures in heaven*. Provide for your soul’s interests. This is more than the body. Lay hold on the hope set before you. Set your affection upon things above. Seek an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled. Heaven is the place for laying up an enduring portion. These treasures are such, and the place is such, that they can never be invaded, much less destroyed. God offers to take into His own secure keeping that which we otherwise could not

retain, and where thieves do not break through nor steal :

21 For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

22 The light of the body is the eye : If therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light :

u Is. 33. 6. Lu. 12.33,34. 1 Ti. 6.19. v Lu. 11.34,36.

retain. We are charged to send it before us to that world where we are certainly going, that we may find it there.

21. The heart will be where the treasure is. This duty is urged here, from the consideration that the *heart* will cleave to the treasure wherever and whatever it be. We may know where we have our treasure laid up, if we notice where our affections are set. The heart follows and fixes on its treasures, whatever they be, or wherever. “If riches increase, set not your heart upon them.” We should employ our earthly treasures in heavenly deeds of benevolence and piety. *And we should take care of our hearts*, for they shall be corrupted and worn by cleaving to earthly treasures. We can properly and safely cleave only to that which is true and eternal. “Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life.”

22. *The light of the body*. All light enters by the eye. Every thing depends upon the condition and action of this organ. This is an adage. Our chief impressions abroad in the world depend upon the eyesight, what the eye is set upon, and what it sees, and how. Our actions mostly depend on this.—¶ *Single*—simple, set on one object, or seeing clearly and not confusedly. The eye, here, is the *intention or motive*. In general, it means the disposition.—¶ *Full of light*. “*Lucid as if all an eye*.”—Bengel. All your actions should be well advised, and full of wisdom and spiritual understanding in the knowledge and service of Christ, by having the eye singly or supremely directed upon Divine things. “This one thing !

23 But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light

that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!

24 ¶ No man can serve two

do." "Looking unto Jesus." So racers run with an eye singly on the goal. This singleness of purpose and feeling makes our course straight and plain.

23. *Evil.* As a single eye is good, so an evil eye is double. "A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways." A blurred or double sight sees nothing plainly, but all confusedly, and the result will appear in all the conduct.—¶ *Darkness.* Ignorance and sin belong to a depraved aim, and an unfixed and wavering sight. "Having the understanding darkened—being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them because of the blindness of their hearts." (ch. 20. 15. Eph. 4. 18. Deut. 15. 10. Prov. 25. 6.) There is no security for holy living out in the utmost singleness and steadfastness of purpose to serve God, and in the fixedness of thought and faith and affection upon things above.

—¶ *The light that is in thee.* The light of understanding and conscience. The conscience enlightened is God's command within us. If this be darkness, how total is the darkness, and how dreadful and how fatal. "Even their mind and conscience is defiled." Sin darkens the mind more and more. Men are totally depraved. Sin is not merely in the act, but in the nature. It is not merely in the *will*, but in the *eye*. Having the understanding and conscience darkened, they plead a kind of Divine authority for sin, and then how great is the darkness—they even walk by darkness—are *guided by a wrong light*—the torch-light of Judas. Spiritual light is imparted only by that power which made the light of the natural world to shine out of darkness. Sinners are blind to their own interest and duty and destiny; "having eyes they see not" the plainest truths of God's word and providence. Paul was chosen as a messenger of truth to open the blind

eyes. "The love of money is the root of all evil." Covetousness leads men into a snare, and when wealth is so avariciously sought after, it stands in the way of seeing any thing else. So it blinds men. As to earthly and heavenly wealth, we do supremely seek after one or the other, even as a servant cannot hold himself at the call of two masters, and cannot be said to render both his service, because each master requires all. The parable of the unjust steward (Luke 16. 1-3.) was spoken by our Lord, to impress this sentiment.

On verses 19-34, **OBSERVE** (1) Worldliness is the great hinderance to spirituality and the opposite to internal purity. It is contrary to the spirit of prayer and true benevolence, as just insisted on by our Lord. (2.) Laying up, as opposed to distributing, and laying up for self, instead of dispensing to others and using for the Lord, are here condemned (vss. 19 and 20). Laying up *earthly* treasures instead of *heavenly*, is the evil—and usually the result is an aim to be independent of God's providence, so as not to plead the fourth petition, "Give us day by day our daily bread." It seeks at length to live on something besides God. It lays up the sources of disappointment. It is laying up of our valuables *upon earth*, where every thing is unsafe. Moth and rust are there, and the valuables that are treasured up are of themselves perishable. There are destructive agents, as *insidious* as the *moth*; and there is the element of corrosion in their very nature, just as some metals rust for want of use. And there are thieves besides ready to steal valuables of this kind—robbers, whose occupation is to plunder such stored treasures. Spiritual treasures laid up are cut of such reach in heaven, "an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled." Hence our true wisdom is to make such an investment, which is so superior in

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.

to Lu. 16.13. x Ga. 1.10. 2 Ti.4.10. Ja. 4.4.

itself, and so much more safe from harm. *And as to our hearts* (vs. 21), there is this moral objection against having our valuables in such worldly goods. Not only is it not *real estate*, it is not *fast property*. But as the *heart* of the worldling cleaves to the object of affection and aim, the heart itself will suffer injury by holding to such perishable and unworthy objects. It will be more and more corrupted and *worn*. For such "love of money is the root of all evil, which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and *pierced themselves through with many sorrows*." Covetousness is idolatry, and it leads to disobedience of God, and often, also, to dishonesty toward men. Hence the *next* (vs. 22): If the heart be simple and single, the whole mind will be illuminated and luminous to others. This sincerity or singleness of service as unto God is taught in regard to alms and fasting and prayer in the first part of the chapter, and it is essential. But in *double-seeking* (vs. 23), as of God and mammon, there is all the warping of judgment and bending of principle and stretching of conscience that belongs to a worldly, avaricious course. All is darkness—conscience is darkened—the mind is not clear—the soul is in darkness—the life is dark. The candle which God has given to shine, is put under this bushel measure. *When a man at length walks by darkness*—a depraved conscience directs him : "a deceived heart hath turned him aside, so that he cannot deliver his soul, nor say, Is there not a lie in my right hand." We cannot be both worldly and heavenly. We may know where our treasure is, by marking where our heart's affections are

25 Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought<sup>y</sup> for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink ; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is

y 1 Cor.7.32. Ph. 4.6.

set. We may so live as to lay up treasures in heaven, even as the worldling daily stores away his empty treasures on earth.

24. The essential difficulty and folly of attempting this double service are here pointed out as a warning. The man will either hate Satan and love God—or else he will hold to Satan and despise God.—¶ *Mammon*. This is a Syriac word meaning riches or worldly lucre. To serve mammon, is to labour for it as a servant labours for his master ; to be devoted to gain, and to have the heart set supremely upon the world, making every thing bend to the attainment of property. The poor may be as worldly-minded and avaricious as the rich. To serve God is to obey him, to labour for his cause, and to have the heart set upon Him—to regard His will in all things, and to devote ourselves to the practice and pursuit of godliness. We may know whether we are servants of the one or of the other, by observing the course of our thoughts and desires and actions, and watching which object we are wont to prefer. "To whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey." Rom. 6. 16. We should serve God and not mammon and we should do it by studying to know our duty from His word, and by striving daily to follow His commandments, setting our affections upon things above and not on things on the earth.

25. *Take no thought* for your life. Be not *over-anxious* about your living—liveliness. So the English word *thought* is used by our translators in 1 Sam. 9. 5. for *over-solicitude*, and it is found with this sense in the old English writers. Parkhurst says, the

not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?

26 Behold the fowls of the air : for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns ; yet your heavenly Father <sup>z</sup> feedeth

them. Are ye not much better than they ?

27 Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature ?

<sup>z</sup> Job 38.41. Lu. 12.24,&c.

Greek term in its derivation means a distracting, heart-dividing carefulness. It is the same word in Phil. "Be careful for nothing," and our Saviour's word to Martha, "Thou art careful and troubled about many things." This is the enforcement of the precept against worldliness and worldly-mindedness, in the former verses. This command does not forbid a moderate and well-regulated attention to our worldly interests, but instead of such an over-solicitude for this world's goods as would crowd out divine things, or make them subordinate, we are to look more to God, and trust more in his power and promises. The scriptures often exhort to diligence in our worldly pursuits (1 Tim. 5. 8. 2 Thess. 3. 10. Rom. 12. 11). As the early disciples often forsook all to follow Christ, they would have grievous cares.

25. *Is not the life more than meat?* If He can give you life, He can give you means to support it; and would He furnish the greater, and not the less? Is not the life more important in His sight than the food it requires? And did He not give you life, the greater blessing, without your care, and what value is raiment in comparison with the body itself? It is not all of life to live. "A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth." Is there not every encouragement to expect His care for your bodily wants, and to look to Him accordingly? The idea is that He has given you life, and a body without your care. He will give you food and raiment which are the lesser gifts; and food and raiment He gives to the fowls and lilies, and shall He not much more, to you? "Man must be sent to school to the fowls of the air." Henry.

26. As to *food*, a very plain case, which all can behold, and most fit to inspire confidence in God, is His care of the birds. He provides for them—furnishes their food—they seldom or never starve in hardest weather—no famine reaches them. See Psalm 147. 9, where the term is *ravens* (which Luke uses), and as some think because the young ravens are immediately deserted by their parents, and must be specially provided for by God. This would make the case more marked. It applies to all birds. And the argument from less to greater holds here as before. We are better than the birds of the air, not as serving God better, but as of more importance in the scale of being—having souls, and being immortal. Trust in Christ.

27. The next argument is from the *fruitlessness* of such over-anxiety. What can it accomplish at best? Suppose you indulge such distracting solicitude, what can you achieve with it all?—¶ *For which of you by taking thought*—with all his thought and anxiety. A striking question is here put to show how utterly vain it is to fret and drudge independently of God's providence. *Who* can add to his stature or height by any amount of painstaking or anxious endeavours? Who can make himself a cubit taller than he is? How impossible! God has this matter entirely in His hands, and it is a thing which no one ever attempted, so utterly is it beyond our reach.—¶ *One cubit*. From 18 to 22 inches. Originally it marked the length of the arm, from the elbow to the farthest point of the hand. The word in Latin means the lower arm. (See Deut. 3. 11.) This is not a distinct item of care proposed as ranking with food and raiment, but a *question put*, to show the folly of self-d-

28 And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin:

29 And yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.

pendence and distracting care from not putting trust in God, the sovereign disposer of all. Therefore it need not relate to the measure of life, which, as Bengel remarks, is not measured by cubits. A cubit to the stature, is put, as the most impossible thing—for it were impossible to add an inch! Yet the height is “that which is least.” Luke 12. 26.

28. As to raiment or clothing, the argument is taken from God’s care of the flowers and fields, in clothing them with their verdure and beauty. —¶ Consider, or attentively survey them. They do not toil or labour. They use none of the means for their clothing which men employ. Who arrays them, or beautifully dresses them? Kings of the East wore very rich and elegant robes of purple and white. And Solomon, we know, had great splendour in his court. But even he, in all his most gorgeous apparel, was not as splendidly clad as the lily. The lily of Palestine is a beautiful scarlet—its size about half the com on tiger-lily—the flowers are turban-like. It grows in the locality where Christ delivered His discourse, and it blooms at the very season when this sermon was supposed to have been delivered. *Kitto*. He is over all, God blessed forever.

30. Wherefore. If such care is taken for clothing the short-lived grass that grows to-day, but to-morrow is burned for fuel, how much more will He clothe you? How little consequence what clothing the grass of the field has? The grass is a term used in the East to include flowers and herbs, and every thing in the field

30 Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not make more clothe you, O ye of little faith?

31 Therefore take no thought,<sup>a</sup> saying, What shall we eat? or,

<sup>a</sup> Ps. 37.3; 55.22. 1 Pe. 5.7.

but trees. Where fuel is scarce, withered stalks and dried grass are used for the fire. In these countries, also, baking is done by heating an oven with such fuel. A hole is dug in the earth about the size of our common ovens, and paved with stones. When these stones are heated by the fire, the ashes are removed and the dough is spread upon the stones. These ovens were most commonly in use (comp. Ezek. 15. 4). They had a way of baking also on the heated sand, and they used portable ovens made of clay or plates of iron.—¶ Much more. This refers to the certainty, not to the quality of the clothing. Here we may have rude apparel, and yet be faithfully clothed. In heaven our raiment shall be more splendid than Solomon’s.—¶ O ye of little faith. Such undue anxiety for our temporal affairs shows a want of trust in Divine Providence. If Christians confided more in Christ, believing in His universal power and care, and relying on His abundant promises, and living on His covenant, they would not give way to such distracting anxieties. And Christ complains most of our not trusting Him for all things.

31. Therefore. Do not worry about food and clothing. We must have cares, and we should be careful. But we have no right to fret and tease ourselves about these matters, that are so in the hands of God. We must own His supremacy and trust His fatherly covenant love.

32. Gentiles. In Luke it is “the nations of the world”—the unenlightened heathens. The Jews, who knew of the true God, ought to live differently

What shall we drink? or, Where-withal shall we be clothed?

32 (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek :) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.

33 But seek ye first <sup>b</sup> the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added <sup>c</sup> unto you.

<sup>b</sup> 1 Ti. 4.8. <sup>c</sup> Le. 25.20,21. 1 Ki.3.13. Ps. 37.25. Mar. 10.30.

from the dark pagans who were ignorant of His providence, and bowed down to idols. But above all, Christians should remember that their own Father in Heaven knows all their wants, and can supply them, and can they not confide in His love?

33. *Seek first.* Instead of caring supremely for your daily living—food and raiment—give first attention to the religion of Christ; seek it diligently and earnestly—make it the first concern. Strive, above all things, to embrace the offers of the Gospel, and to become interested in Christ by applying for His righteousness, and as well for the holiness which He requires as for the pardoning grace which He provides. Seek the merit of His death, and the spirit of His life, and the only justification by His plan of grace. Then you shall be interested in His *covenant*, which covers all good things, and even “our daily bread,” for which Christ had just taught them to pray. “No good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly.” Psalm 84. 11.

34. *For the morrow.* Do not give yourself such excessive anxiety for the future here. God has furnished *promises*, exceeding great and precious, to satisfy us about this; and to-morrow belongs to itself. Let it alone to itself. If it bring its own cares, it will also have its own supplies. Do not borrow trouble. To-day’s troubles are enough for to-day, and every day has sufficient cares for itself without adding those of to-morrow. Besides, to-morrow may find us in eternity

34 Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself.<sup>d</sup> Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.

#### CHAPTER VII.

JUDGE <sup>e</sup> not, that ye be not judged.

2 For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged; and

<sup>d</sup> De. 33. 25. He. 13. 5,6. <sup>e</sup> Lu. 6. 37. Ro. 2. 1  
1 Cor. 4.5.

#### CHAPTER VII.

In the last paragraph our Lord discoursed about Divine Providence and grace—showed the wisdom of trusting in Him, and the folly of vexing and perplexing our minds too much with earthly cares, apart from Him, when the soul is so much more important, and faith so much more excellent. We should *cast all our care upon Him*, for He careth for us.

1 *Judge not*, that is, rashly or harshly, or hastily, for the sake of judging—or with a spirit of severe judgment. This applies to backbiting and slandering the character and conduct. The Pharisees were notoriously prone to this, and it is a natural disease. We may form opinions of others, but not censoriously, or enviously, or unfairly. It is unkind and unjust to harbour such judgment, and in true piety there is a disposition to be lenient toward others’ faults, remembering our own. We have no right to injure the character of others by any such criticism or disparaging opinion without a necessity, and to gratify a bad feeling toward them. It is especially odious where it is in a way of pharisaical self-sufficiency.—¶ *That ye be not judged.* One reason why we should abstain from any such treatment of others is this: that if we judge them, we may expect the like ourselves. And the presumption is all against us in exercising such a temper, and God will judge us with the severity of His law for such a malicious feeling and practice. Luke adds the positive duties of giving and for-

with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.

3 And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?

4 Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye: and be-

f Ju. 1.7.

giving.—¶ *For.* This is a proverb which was common among the Jews, and expresses the sentiment just noticed in the preceding clause. Men will deal out to us the same kind of judgment which we pass upon others, and God also will visit us accordingly. Even in this world, He treats men, often, as they treat others. (See Isa. 33. 1.) Haman was hanged on the gallows he had prepared for Mordecai. Esther 6. "As I have done, so God hath requited me." See the case of ADONI-BEZEC (Judges 1. 7). And especially when we condemn in others the same sins that we ourselves commit, we condemn ourselves most severely (Romans 2. 1). Christ condemns our taking satisfaction in judging others, and our indulging sin in ourselves; for these things commonly go together.

3. *And why.* It is unreasonable. This refers to a proverb common among the Jews and others, about men who censured their neighbours and were more grossly guilty themselves.—¶ *Mote.* The *merest straw* or *splinter*, as opposed to the *beam*. The mote was the lightest, tiniest chaff.—¶ *The beam* was a huge timber. How is it, asks our Lord, that you look at a neighbour, and see sharply the smallest offences or faults of his, and do not see your own disposition or conduct? In the very temper in which you judge him, there is a more grievous wrong, than the small failings which you find out in your neighbour. We should first correct our own faults, because only then can we consistently criticise others

hold, a beam is in thine own eye?'

5 Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam <sup>s</sup> out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye.

6 ¶ Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither <sup>h</sup> cast

g Ga. 6.1. h Pr. 9. 7,8; 23.9.

(comp. Gal. 6. 4). In Luke we find this enforced by a parable, "Can the blind lead the blind?"

4. *Thy brother*—or neighbour, fellow-man. What consistency is there in offering to correct the fault of another, and behold you are more in fault? Such censoriousness God hates.

5. *Hypocrite.* See note on ch. 6. 2. He is a hypocrite in pretending to be so much better than he is, covering his own faults, while he sets himself up as a judge of others.—¶ *See clearly.* Correcting his own failings first, especially his bad tempers, he will get rid of an evil eye—the beam will be removed, and he can better see to inspect others' characters and conduct. He will judge more tenderly and truly; and finding out his own failings, he will judge most moderately and modestly. Luke adds the doctrine of a tree and its fruit as a safe rule of judging—yet we are to consider one another, to provoke unto love and good works in a Christian, mutual watch and care.

6. Lest all judging might seem prohibited, our Lord here teaches that we should not expose our religion to the scorn of bad men. "Let not your good be evil spoken of." And in judging others, we must still consider dogs as dogs, and swine as swine, in self-defence, otherwise sacred things will be abused by being held indiscriminate. While we are not to be too severe, we are not to be too lax in judgment. Here are two adages or common sayings which our Lord applies to this subject.—¶ *That which is holy*—sacred things. "The holy

ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you.

7 ¶ Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you:

† Is. 55. 6. Lu. 18. 1.

thing" under the Old Testament, was the flesh of the altar.—¶ *Dogs*—and swine are the profane and sensual, or the malicious and debased. Dogs are they who turn the grace of God into lasciviousness. In our judgment of others, we are not to be so lax as to consider dogs or evil-workers, as holy. (See Phil. 3. 2. "Beware of dogs.") See Rev. 22. 15. "Without are dogs." We are not to give such offensive and malicious people a good character, nor apply the promises indiscriminately to them, lest we may wound the cause of religion. Nor are we to expose sacred things to the *ill-treatment* or abuse of outrageous and impious men. 2 Pet. 2. 22. Matt. 15. 27. There is nothing here to excuse such as fear to rebuke iniquity or refuse to engage in active duty—unwilling to testify for Christ. By neglecting altogether the rules of prudence and sound judgment, we might rudely cast the doctrines and precepts of religion before the most debased and grovelling men, only to have these pearls trampled on, in common with the filth of the sty. *Pearls* are precious stones taken from shell-fish of the oyster species. Pearl oysters are found in clusters, on rocks or pearl banks in the Persian Gulf, and near Ceylon and Java. By "*your pearls*" are here meant the privileges and doctrines of their religion. Matt. 13. 45.

7, 8. *Ask*. Fundamental directions are now given, and the discourse is summed up. These are the summary commands and promises in regard to prayer. There are three various assurances here to encourage prayer; and prayer is a leading duty. In the Lord's prayer He had just given an

8 For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.

9 Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone?

† Ps. 81. 10, 16. Jno. 14. 13, 14; 16. 23, 24. 1 Jno. 3. 22; 5. 14, 15. † Pr. 8. 17. Je. 29. 12, 13.

idea of what is to be asked for; and we are to ask with earnestness, diligence and perseverance, as these words would seem to indicate. To *ask* signifies a *personal address*. We must believe that *He is*. To *seek*, signifies an object earnestly in view. To *knock* signifies an application at the door, and an embrace of the promise in the appointed way—"We have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of Him." Ephes. 3. 11, 12.)—¶ *Seek*. Search for Divine things. They are hid to the natural heart. "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him." "Then shall ye find me, when ye shall search for me with all your hearts."—¶ *Knock*—that you may enter by the door. John 10. Make application to Christ to be admitted fully into the mysteries of His kingdom. 2 Cor. 6. 18. Luke 13. 25. You are brought to the very door of heaven by the Gospel. Knock for entrance. It is not enough to say our prayers. We must ask with a view of receiving—we must seek as those that are anxious to find—we must knock with importunity as taking no denial. See Luke 11. 8.—¶ *For everyone*. For strongest encouragement, we are now pointed to the grace of our Heavenly Father as it is actually experienced among men. "The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon Him." "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." This is the established rule of His grace; and this is the fact attested by all experience. Praying men and seekers of God do receive and find. Psalm 22. 26. Yet it is to be remembered that if we ask not with filial confi-



10 Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent ?

11 If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children,<sup>1</sup> how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him ?

12 Therefore all things what-

<sup>1</sup> Lu. 11. 11, &c.

dence ("Our Father") and with humility ("Thy will be done") the prayer is not complete: remembering always to lay every thing at the feet of Him who has all right, and whose is "the kingdom and the power and the glory." See Jas. 4. 3. *Observe*, prayerless men are found out by their lack of graces. As they have not the spirit—so they cannot have asked.

9. *Or what man.* Our Lord chooses farther to illustrate and enforce this by the conduct of parents. What father will so badly treat a child's request as to deny him what he needs—or to give him what is evil. God will withhold no good thing from them that walk uprightly, and blessed is the man that trusteth in Him, so as to look to Him for blessings, and leave Him to judge of what is best.

11. *Evil.* Naturally corrupt—as distinguished from the heavenly Father, who is essentially holy.—*How much more* shall God show parental affection toward the prayers of them that ask Him, than earthly parents who are naturally evil. This freeness and fulness of the Gospel offer, must leave men utterly without excuse. Why should they be prayerless or godless?—¶ *Good things.* (Luke 11. 13. 'The Holy Spirit.') The gift of the Spirit includes all good. The meek shall inherit the earth.

12. *Therefore.* One of the closing deductions of our Lord is this GOLDEN RULE of the Gospel. This stands, here, for a summary of our relative duties, as they are taught in the moral law. This, therefore, at the same time, concludes His teaching on these points

so every ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for<sup>m</sup> this is the law and the prophets.

13 ¶ Enter ye in<sup>n</sup> at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat:

<sup>m</sup> Le. 19. 18. Ro. 13. 9-10. Ga. 5. 14. <sup>n</sup> Lu. 13. 24.

here, and proves what he set out to establish (ch. 5. 17), that He "came not to destroy the law but to fulfil." Every one can tell how he wishes to be treated by others—kindly and with allowance for his faults. He carries this rule, therefore, within him, and has no excuse for neglecting or violating or misunderstanding it. Let him treat others kindly, and with allowance for their faults, as Christ has taught. This is the sum of the law and the prophets, as to our relative duties, and the world would be peace and happiness and good-will, if this rule prevailed in its true spirit among men. But all this has a special connexion with the Gospel plan—as follows:

13. Our Lord exhorts men beyond all their mutual moralities to *embrace the Gospel*. And here He distinctly teaches that to enter the gate of life, is something besides the cultivation of such mutual kindness and good-will. This *entrance*, therefore, is to be their great business. The gate is not an easy, but a difficult passage, because of our evil hearts. In the Gospel plan of salvation there is but one way, and one gate. "I am the way"—"I am the door," of the sheepfold (John). *The gate of the city* (Revelation).—¶ *Straight*, narrow. The word is sometimes mistaken for *straight*—direct, or not crooked. The reference is here to the narrow gate for foot-passengers in walled cities, as distinguished from the broad, double, public gate for vehicles, processions and the crowd. Such a gate was sometimes called the *needle's eye*:—as being

14 <sup>1</sup> Because strait *is* the gate, and narrow *is* the way, which leadeth unto life; and few <sup>o</sup> there be that find it.

1 Or, *hoiv.* o c.20.16; 25.1-12. Ro. 9 27,29.

the most limited opening—which a loaded camel of course could not possibly get through, but would need to take the other and wide gate. And the difficulty would be as well in the back as in the burden. (See ch. 19. 24.) At a wedding feast, also, the entrance was by a narrow wicket gate, at which the janitor sat, to admit one at a time, that only guests might enter; and that there each man might get his wedding garment as furnished by the lord of the feast.—  
 ¶ *For wide is the gate.* The common course of carelessness and sin is roomy. The entrance is wide. It is easy at the opening. People enter it most naturally; and the way itself is broad. It gives license to the carnal heart. But just so certainly does it lead to destruction—“everlasting destruction from the presence of God.” All unrenewed men walk in this way. A change of heart and life is requisite for salvation. “Thou wilt shew me the path of life.”

14. *Unto life.* The life eternal in glory—everlasting salvation—the *perfect day* to which the path of the just leads. Our evil hearts, low desires, and carnal principles, make the way difficult. “If the righteous scarcely be saved,” &c. (1 Pet. 4. 18). But because it is wisdom’s way as our only proper course, and highest interest, it is pleasantness and peace. So few find it because they are “alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart” (Eph. 4. 18). Gibbon boasted that Christ’s golden rule could be found substantially in Isocrates 400 years before. But it is not the same. *That* only taught to avoid doing others the *injuries* which we would not have them do to us. It said nothing of this active love. And if it were fully the same, it would only be found to be the

15 ¶ Beware of false prophets,<sup>p</sup> which come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravening <sup>q</sup> wolves.

p De.13.1-3. Je.23.13-16. 1Jno.4.1. q Ac.20.29-31.

old precept which this very passage declares it to be—the substance of “the law and the prophets.” As to the strait gate, Augustine here makes use of a legend concerning the artifice by which the serpent was believed to get rid of its old skin, by forcing itself through some narrow aperture, and so leaving behind the old, and coming out in all the splendour and freshness of the new. *Trench.*

15. On this vital subject of salvation, they had need to be cautioned against false directions, else they might mistake the way—and follow the broad instead of the narrow. There is great danger of the wide gate.—¶ *False prophets.* False teachers might boast that they were the *few* in the right. By *prophets* were originally understood, those who foretold future events. They were also teachers. Here the caution is against those who teach falsely about the future, “who prophesy smooth things” (See Jer. 23. 17. 26).—¶ *Sheep’s clothing.* The false prophets not improbably clothed themselves with a cloak made of sheep skins, or of the fleece roughly made up, to imitate the garb of the true prophets. The idea is, they come to you in the garb of meekness and sincerity and harmlessness, in the very dress of Christ, who is the Lamb, claiming to teach of Christ and to teach like Him.—¶ *Ravens wolves.* They are really the very opposite to what they pretend—rapacious—insincere and mischievous. As wolves, instead of being sheep, tear and devour the flock, so these are the bitter enemies of Christians, and would ruin them if possible. We should beware of such as teach untruth and error. It is a false charity to be indiscriminate in so vital a matter. We may judge usually of doctrines from their effects upon the life. We are to be most particu

16 Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?

17 Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit.

18 A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a

r c.12.33. s Lu.6.43,45.

lar, for the gate is *strait*—most narrow. The way is most precise, as well as most private.

16. *Their fruits*—conduct. The teachers themselves commonly show the effects of their faith in their conduct. This is natural, as that trees should yield their own fruit and not another kind. Yet in so judging, we are to “beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the Sadducees, which is hypocrisy.” The pure word of God circulated in the scriptures, will serve to confound error of every kind.

17, 18. *Even so*. It is so in vegetable nature. You can tell a tree from the fruit it bears, and so you can tell a teacher from the fruit his doctrines yield; and so you can tell every good man from his habitual good actions. As a *corrupt tree* of bad nature and quality brings forth an evil kind of fruit, so a bad doctrine brings forth bad results. Error cannot save men. So the natural, unrenewed heart must show itself somehow in the life. It is not possible in the nature of things that it should be otherwise. “The carnal mind is enmity against God, and is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.” Augustine says, on this subject, “I praise the fruit of a good work, but in faith I acknowledge the root.” The degenerate tree is not capable of restoring itself by its own unaided power. The law of human living is as the law of fruit-bearing trees, that according to their kind, so they must produce. Isolated acts of men may seem every way righteous, while they are not

corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.

19 Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewn down, and cast into the fire.

20 Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.

21 ¶ Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall en-

r c.3.10. Jno.15.2,6. u Is.48.1,2. c.25.11,12. Lu.6.46; 13.25. Ro.2.13.

Christian. The question cannot be upon detached doings. But was the man righteous? Was the tree good? Leaves may deceive often from a close resemblance. But what is the stalk and the root? Has there been a positive engrafting into Christ?

19. *Hewn down*. So in Matt. 3. 10. Repentance and regeneration are necessary, because the heart is naturally evil, and there must be a radical change. “And now the axe is laid unto the root of the trees.” The wild and bitter stock that was removed from Eden, can only be restored by being grafted anew upon one of that stock from which it originally fell, and by this re-engrafting becoming partaker of the better life. *Trench.*

21. *Not every one*. Christ, as the great searcher of the heart, will distinguish. Not all shall enter into life who profess Christ, however repeatedly and loudly and familiarly saying, *Lord, Lord*, as though they were His followers. He demands a profession of His name, but those who have only this, He will exclude and reject. Those who enter, must do the will of God, must be His obedient and faithful disciples. The workers of iniquity are unfit for heaven, because that is a place of perfect obedience to His will, and true Christians pray daily that they may do His will on earth as it is done in heaven. Those who do not sincerely aim to do and submit to His will in all things, do not belong to Christ. (“He that doeth the will of God, the same is my brother” &c.)

ter into the kingdom of heaven ; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.

22 Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied <sup>v</sup> in thy name ? and in thy name have cast out devils ? and in thy name done many wonderful works ?

23 And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you : depart from me, <sup>w</sup> ye that work iniquity.

24 ¶ Therefore <sup>x</sup> whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise <sup>y</sup> man, which

<sup>v</sup> Nu.24.4. 1 K. 22.11, &c. Je.23.13,&c. Ac.19.13-15. 1Co.13.2. <sup>w</sup> Ps.5.5. c.25.41. Re.22.15. <sup>x</sup> Lu.6.47,&c. <sup>y</sup> Ps.111.10; 119.99,130.

22. *In that day.* The day of final and general judgment, see Luke 13. 25. Though they may have done all these things that seem so religious, yet they have an evil heart of unbelief, in "departing from the living God." It is not merely what we have *done*, but what we have *been* that shall be required.

23. *Profess*—openly declare.—¶ *I never knew you*: never approved or recognized you as my followers. This is the sense of the word in many passages. Ps. 1. 6, &c. 1 Cor. 8. 3.—¶ *Depart from me.* Unbelief departs from the living God—refuses to follow, obey, and love Christ. And so unbelievers must forever depart—must go down to their destruction from the presence of God, and from the glory of His power—outcast "into outer darkness."

24-27. Christ closes this sermon on the Mount by an impressive and forcible comparison. He was the great Teacher of unadulterated truth, and they should carefully distinguish His teachings from those of false prophets, who should plausibly come to them, ready to deceive and devour.

built his house upon a rock : 25 And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house ; and it fell not ; for it was founded upon a rock.<sup>a</sup>

26 And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish <sup>a</sup> man, which built his house upon the sand :

27 And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew,<sup>b</sup> and beat upon that house ; and it fell : and great was <sup>c</sup> the fall of it.

28 ¶ And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings,

<sup>a</sup> Ps.92.13-15. <sup>a</sup> 1Sa.2.30. Je.8.9. <sup>b</sup> 1Co.3.13. <sup>c</sup> He.10.26,27.

To hear these doctrines of His, which he had just taught, and to obey them, is the only true wisdom. We are building for eternity—and how foolish is that man who builds his house upon the sand. He has no foundation. Every Jew could understand the simile. In that country they were liable to sudden and heavy rains, which would swell the Jordan, and its overflow, rapid and powerful, would sweep away every tenement situated on its banks.—¶ *Rains, winds and floods,* make it wise to build on a good foundation, to "lay up in store a good foundation against the time to come." We are all liable to afflictions, sudden fears, and death : and the man whose hopes are at loose ends, and on a sandy foundation, must expect his house to fall. This is the case of unconverted sinners. Their destruction shall come as a mighty whirlwind (Prov. 1. 27), and it shall be great because it is *the soul's* eternal loss. None are safe whose hopes are not built on Christ, the Rock of Ages. Some have a secret hope, but cannot give a reason of it. They should look well to its grounds.

the people were astonished <sup>d</sup> at his doctrine :

29 For he taught them as *one* having authority, and not as the scribes.

*d* Je. 23.29. Mar.6.2.

28. *His doctrine.* His sayings or teachings.

29. *Having authority.* As having the *right* to say what is truth. Not like the Scribes, telling what the Jewish Rabbins or doctors taught. The Scribes were the Jewish lawyers, as the term indicates, who had to do with the Scriptures—to copy and preserve them. But Christ's teaching was like that of a master who owned none higher than Himself, and who, in all His words and actions, plainly showed His inherent authority to speak, both as lawgiver and interpreter. The ruin of those is great who, under the teaching of the Gospel, refuse to hear and obey.

OBSERVE: *Three* principles are laid down in the Sermon on the Mount :

(1.) True happiness is not where the world would place it. ch. 5. 1-17.

(2.) The Gospel establishes the Law. ch. 5. 17, to ch. 6.

(3.) A mere outward religion is vain. ch. 6 to ch. 8.

### [§ 33. THE HEALING OF A LEPER.] *Galilee.*

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
8. 2-4	1. 40-45	5. 12-16	

It would seem, from comparing the narratives, that this case of a leper is briefly introduced here by the way, without regard to the time and order of events. It is probably the same as Mark and Luke record, which seems to have belonged to our Lord's tour in Galilee, previously to this, but is mentioned here by Matthew briefly, in passing. St. Ambrose has called this chapter, a chapter of miracles. Observe, they were wrought at very different times, but Matthew collects them here into one narrative.

2. *A leper.* Luke has it, "a man full of leprosy." The leprosy was a distemper of the most loathsome kind,

## CHAPTER VIII.

WHEN he was come down from the mountain, great multitudes followed him.

2 And behold, there came a

and broke out on the skin ultimately, sometimes after being for years in the system. It came out in blotches, mostly circular, like a ring-worm. It formed at length into scales, and sometimes covered the body with a dry and white scurf. It has its name from a Greek word *lepis*, signifying a scale. There were the strictest laws for keeping separate from it—as the *garments*, Levit. 13. 47, and *houses*, Levit. 14. 34—and in its worst forms it was deemed incurable by human means. The symptoms of the disease, and the Mosaic laws respecting it, are found Levit. 13. and 14. It was a striking emblem of the malady of sin. It was sometimes inflicted by God as a special and signal judgment. Numbers 12. 1-10 (Miriam). 2 Kings 5. 27 (Gehazi). 2 Chron. 26. 16-21. The disease as known at the present day, commences by an eruption of small reddish spots grouped together in a circle. Presently a thin whitish scale forms, glossy like isinglass, and falls off. The circles spread out to a larger size. They are commonly as large as a shilling, or larger, but increase sometimes till they are broad as the palm of the hand. *The disease* of leprosy was the greatest ceremonial uncleanness under the Mosaic law. There was no final excommunication but for leprosy. He that was leprous all over was pronounced clean, because all the poison had come out. If he had yet any live flesh that showed *not* leprous, he was unclean. The priests could not be tainted with it, for they were judges of it. From the strict regulations for keeping aloof from leprosy, it has generally been thought to have been contagious. But this is disproved from abundant facts the exclusion being wholly regulated by the Mosaic law, and not observed

leper and worshipped him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.

3 And Jesus put forth his

*a* Mar. 1.40, &c. Lu. 5.12, &c.

where the law did not rule, and the priests who came in contact with it so much, being exempt. As it was a most loathsome disease, it was employed as a *special symbol of sin, and sign of its consequences*—and these strict regulations were meant to *train the people to the great idea of separation from sin as the foul malady of the race*, and of a great deliverer being needed who could cure us only by taking our flesh. “Touch not the unclean thing” (2 Cor. 6. 17). What a striking ordinance was this! The cure could be effected not by any human means, but simply and only by God’s expressed pleasure. “Am I a God—to recover a man of his leprosy?” (2 Kings 5. 7.) The Jews termed it the *finger of God* and the *stroke*. Hence, that “the lepers are cleansed” is a striking mark of the Messiahship (Matt. 11. 5). It generally affects the knees and elbows before it spreads. The spots usually appear first on the face. There were three species known among the Greeks, and three kinds are mentioned under the same generic term (*bahereth*), a white or bright spot. It is hereditary to the third or fourth generation. One may live with it for twenty or thirty years or more. This disease is found to be quite different from that generally known as leprosy in the books of travellers, prevalent in the middle ages, and later in Europe, disappearing about the 17th century. *Killo* “W. A. N.”

2. *Worshipped Him.* Mark says, “Fell on his knees.” Luke, “He fell on his face.” The term indicates the outward posture which denoted reverence. And such postures were common in Eastern countries, as we find often in the Old Testament. See Cut, Matt. 2. 11.—¶ *Lord, if thou wilt.* He ascribed to Christ the ability. This was part of

hand, and touched him, saying, I will; be thou clean: and immediately his leprosy was cleansed.

his worship. So we are taught in the Lord’s prayer to ascribe the kingdom, power and glory to God, and to regard His will as supreme. “Thy will be done.” He believed in Christ as having the power to heal him, and he acknowledged Him as sovereign in all his mercies, and made application on these grounds. *Observe*: He did not keep aloof because Christ could do with him as He pleased. The sovereignty of God is no bar to our approach, for we have His offers and promises, and are warranted to trust in Him confidently.

3. *Touched him.* He will use *means*—the touch and command. “He is able, He is willing, doubt no more.” We need faith in God the Holy Ghost in all His office work.—¶ *I will.* Here Christ asserted that diseases are subject to His will. His power of course must be divine. The leper acknowledged this, and Christ here claims that His will and command are all that is needed to make the incurable leper clean. And so the result showed. How readily does Christ grant every humble request. This is symbolical of His power over sin, and of His readiness to deliver from its curse.

4. It was the rule under the Mosaic law, that a man cured of leprosy should first present himself to a priest, with a sacrifice of thanksgiving (Lev. 14. 4). Naturally the man would have gone blazing abroad his cure. But the Levitical ceremonies were not yet repealed, and Christ would have this command first attended to.—¶ *See.* From Mark 1. 45, we learn that Christ was obliged to refuse publicity, because of the crowd that sought His miracles and left Him no opportunity to teach and preach; and that by this man’s sounding abroad his cure, He was obliged to withdraw to a desert place. Besides, the time had not yet come for

4 And Jesus saith unto him, See thou tell <sup>b</sup> no man; but go thy way, show thyself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded <sup>c</sup> for a testimony unto them.

5 And when Jesus was entered into Capernaum, there came

<sup>b</sup> c. 9.30. Mar. 5.43. <sup>c</sup> Le. 14.3, &c.

His public manifestation as the Messiah. We are taught to signify our gratitude by careful obedience, rather than blind and headlong zeal. The man was to go and report himself at Jerusalem, according to the command, even before he should report the matter to others. Some have a religion which obeys natural impulses rather than Divine commands. Some people hope they are religious without attending to the appointed ordinances of God's house. Some think it of little account to join the church. But God has appointed His ordinance as a public testimony most important to be made at once. Mark tells us how Christ's work was hindered by this leper's disobeying His commands. How many hinder His work by neglecting the public ordinances.—¶ *For a testimony unto them*—priests and people. The priest was to examine the case and publicly attest the benefit received from God, so that the miracle might be properly certified and circulated, and the man be restored again to society. The Jewish Rabbins allowed that *curing lepers* should be a characteristic of the Messiah. And the testimony therefore was to reach both priest and people for their conviction of Christ's claims. When a man is converted from the power of Satan unto God, it should be made public in the appointed way, for the sake of others. This testifies against them.

6 42. THE HEALING OF THE CENTURION'S SERVANT.—*Capernaum.*

Mat. c. 5-13	Mark.	Luke. 7. 1-10	John.
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5, 6. And when Jesus had entered into Capernaum. The Evangelist here

unto him a centurion, <sup>d</sup> beseeching him,

6 And saying, Lord, my servant lieth at home sick of the palsy, grievously tormented.

7 And Jesus saith unto him, I will come and heal him.

8 The centurion answered and

<sup>d</sup> Lu. 7.2 &c.

takes up the narrative. This was the first event after coming down from the mount near Capernaum. Luke records it also.—¶ *A Centurion.* This was a military officer among the Romans. As the name imports (the Latin *centum* meaning a hundred), it was the command of a hundred men. A Poman military force was stationed in Judea because it was now a province of the Roman Empire. It is not a man's *occupation* but his *faith* that gives him standing before God.—¶ *Beseeching.* We must come as supplicants, needy and anxious.—¶ *Lord.* The word here would seem to mean *sir*, as used by a Roman.—¶ *My servant.* The Centurion shows great regard for his servant, being evidently anxious about the case, and taking the same steps, which he would naturally have done for a child. Good masters will pray for their servants, and strive to do their souls good. We ought to beseech Christ for others, especially for our own house.—¶ *Lieth at home.* The word intimates the severity of the disease and the infirmity consequent upon this reduced state.—¶ *Sick of the palsy.* See note, ca. 4. 24.

7. *I will come*—literally, *I am coming*, and will heal him. It falls in with God's eternal purpose, to hear prayer and to grant salvation. So it proved. What free grace! What full offices! Christ had only to signify *His willingness* and this would secure the result. He could even heal him on the way to the house, as He really did. This prompt reply of Christ to the request of this stranger, who was probably born a pagan, and not a Jew, showed His gracious rea-

said, Lord, I am not worthy e that thou shouldst come under my roof: but speak the word only, e and my servant shall be healed.

9 For I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me: and I say to this *man*, Go, and he goeth; and to another,

e Ps. 10.17. Lu. 15.19,21. f Ps. 33.9; 107.20.

diness to bless. It displayed also His conscious Omnipotence, who at His will could heal and save. *Christ has now come*—to Christ we may apply.

8. This gracious language of our Lord was *humbling* to the Centurion. He had great faith, for he could believe in Christ's ability to heal by a word, and now he felt the grace of Christ expressed to him. And this faith affected his views of himself; for he began to feel how unworthy he was to have his house honoured with Christ's presence. Such is the result of genuine faith upon our estimates of self, producing the deepest humility. So Job (42. 6), "I have heard of Thee," &c. Others said he was worthy (Luke 7. 4), but he himself thought he was not. Christ's offers of love abase him and overcome him. He feels that this love is too much, and casts himself upon Divine power.

9. *I am a man under authority,* &c. I am a man of subordinate rank, and yet can order my soldiers who obey me at a word. But Thou, who art Supreme, canst command even diseases and they shall obey Thee. "What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey Him?" Being under authority, he knew also what it was to be commanded and to obey with strict military precision and promptness. He had experience of this in both ways, and he saw that Christ had absolute authority over disease. How blessed to have Christ's word enough for us, to fly to the power of it, and have it carry Divine authority for our salvation.

Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth *it*.

10 When Jesus heard *it*, he marvelled, and said to them that followed, Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, e no, not in Israel.

11 And I say unto you, that b

g c. 15.28. h Is. 2.2,3. Lu. 13.29. Ac. 11.18. Ep. 3.6 Re. 7.9.

10. *He marvelled.* He expressed astonishment or admiration. It was a remarkable instance of one not a Jew, showing the strongest confidence in Christ's ability. It was more signal and illustrious than any instance among the nominal Israel. His faith was probably of a saving nature. And this is the first case of conversion on record among the Gentiles. We learn that while the Jews thought this man worthy (as we find in Luke 7. 4), *on account of his good deeds*, Christ judged of him by *his faith and humility*. A sense of unworthiness should never keep us back from Christ, and will not, if we have right views of Him; we shall cast ourselves on His sovereign ability the more we distrust ourselves. "I am not worthy, but Thou canst perform by a word." Parents and householders who have heard of Christ, ought to seek His blessings on their families and servants. And as all disease and distresses are at the command of God we ought to mark in all our lot His providence, and cast all our cares submissively on *Him*. We should adore the sovereignty of His will, and in all our prayers should say, "*They will be done.*"—¶ *In Israel*—among the Israelites or Jews. Jacob was called Israel (see Gen. 32. 28), meaning Prince of God, because in prayer he prevailed with God. And so his descendants are called Israel and Israelites, after this patriarch of the Jews.

11. *Many shall come.* That the Centurion was a true believer, and had saving faith, and that he was the



many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven :

12 But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness : there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

i c. 7. 22, 23. j c. 13. 42, 50.

first instance of conversion among the Gentiles, would appear from this declaration of our Lord. This case should not be alone. The Gentiles should yet be converted in large numbers, from the east and west and from all quarters of the globe. Isa. 45. 6 ; 59. 19.—¶ *Shall sit down with*—as at a meal. This is the sense of the word. The benefits of the Gospel were commonly represented by the provisions of a feast. Matt. 26. 29. Luke 14. 15. And this would naturally conciliate the Jew to the Gospel, that it would bring him into happy communion with the patriarchs of his ancient religion.

12. *The children.* The *child* of any thing is a phrase in Hebrew, expressing the special property which such an one has in the thing specified. So in Greek, as in Luke 10. 6, "The Son of Peace." So children of disobedience (Ephesians 2. 2). Here those are meant who have special property in the kingdom, i. e. the *Jews*, to whom it naturally belonged (Rom. 9. 4), and to whom the kingdom had come by hereditary descent, through their fathers. To them "pertained the adoption," &c. They were born into it, and to them it specially belonged by natural associations, and they were related to it by outward covenant. So the baptized children are now called "the children of the church." In Acts 3. 25, the Apostle says to the Jews, "Ye are the children of the prophets and of the covenant which God made with our fathers," &c.—¶ *Outer darkness.* As Abraham and others are represented as sitting down to a

13 And Jesus said unto the centurion, Go thy way ; and as thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee. And his servant was healed in the self-same hour.

14 ¶ And when Jesus was come into Peter's house, he saw his

brilliant feast, splendidly lighted at night, so those who are excluded are described as being thrust out in the midnight darkness, *which reigned outside.* They were to have the very opposite portion. So the rich man is described as lifting up his eyes in torment and calling upon Abraham in heaven. Darkness is the scriptural image of perdition. It signifies the confinement and distress of a dungeon, the shutting out of cheerful light from the soul, and the shutting up of souls to all the deprivation and despondency and despair of the blackness of darkness forever. There shall be sorrow and torment there which words are unable to portray. See ch. 13. 42, 50. Luke 13. 28. Acts. 7. 54.

13. *As thou hast believed.* According to his faith was his success. This is the Gospel rule—not on this *ground*, but in this *measure*. The healing was performed at once, and his faith was doubtless strong as the grace was signal, and the result sublime. Faith is the *measure* not the *merit* (Ps. 33. 22). "Let Thy mercy O Lord be upon us, according as we hope in Thee." This narrative differs somewhat from that of Luke, but only as the different Evangelists *naturally dwell upon different points or narrated different features of the transactions.*

[§ 31. THE HEALING OF PETER'S WIFE'S MOTHER, AND MANY OTHERS.—*Capernaum.*]

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	Jchn.
8. 14-17	1. 29-34	4. 38-41	

Here Matthew brings in another event without regard to the order. This miracle occurred, as we learn from

wife's mother laid, <sup>k</sup> and sick of a fever.

15 And he touched her hand, and the fever left her: and she arose, and ministered unto them.

16 When the even was come, they brought unto him many: that were possessed with devils:

<sup>k</sup> Mar. 1.30,31. Lu. 4.38,39.

<sup>l</sup> Mar. 1.52,&c.

Mark and Luke, just after Christ had called Simon and Andrew. Mark's narrative of it leads us to infer that it was on the *Sabbath day*, immediately after coming out of the synagogue, where a demoniac had been healed. See § 30 of the Harmony. Also that it was at the house of Simon Peter and Andrew his brother, whom He had lately called. "*Anon they tell Him of her.*" Blunt notices a coincidence in proof of the veracity of the Gospels, that Matthew and Paul both speak of Peter as married (1 Cor. 9. 5). From this raising of Peter's wife's mother, it is incidentally signified that Peter had a wife, which Paul's statements corroborate. **OBSERVE,** The Papists claim that Peter is the head of their church, and yet they forbid the clergy to marry. How could he be a Bishop or Pope if he was married? Or how can they forbid marriage if he was their head and married? How inconsistent is such a system with the Scriptures! They who give heed to the doctrine of devils forbid to marry. 1 Tim. 4. 1-3. And in making out testimony of a miracle, would it have been related of a person, who did live or had lived (Peter's wife's mother) if there was intent to deceive? The miracle here consisted in Christ's healing by a *touch*, for a miracle is a supernatural work, a suspension or contradiction of nature's laws. It is a wonderful result effected by a power that is utterly beyond that of man. This healing by a touch is a Divine operation, because it is not in the power of man, nor is it according to the constitution and course of nature. No-

and he cast out the spirits with *his word*, and healed all that were sick:

17 That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias <sup>m</sup>, the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare *our* sicknesses.

<sup>m</sup> Is. 53.4. 1 Pe. 2.24.

time the immediate effects of Christ's cure—"Immediately the fever left her;"—and the striking results, "She arose and ministered unto them" Her gratitude included Christ.

16. *When the even was come.* This being on the Sabbath, which they kept from evening to evening—the Jews awaited this time when the sacred day was ended, to bring their sick (Luke 13. 14). Or they might have come after sunset, because the heat of the day would have proved too oppressive to the infirm. **OBSERVE,** This showed the fame He had acquired among the people and their faith in His healing power. So His fame should spread in the case of every conversion, that many may be induced to apply. "He healed *all* that were sick." This illustrates His abundant grace. How compassionate and kind to sinners. Who need fear to apply? "Come unto me *all*." "For every one that asketh receiveth." His word has healing power.

17. *That it might be fulfilled.* Isa 53. 4.—¶ *Himself.* Christ Himself. Matthew, writing for the Jews, aims to connect Christ's doings with their own inspired prophecies, and so to identify Him to them as their Messiah. "He that put away sin by the sacrifice of himself," and "bore our sins in His own body on the tree," undertook to put away all the *fruits* of sin. This is the connection of His healing with His atonement. He aimed to remove the curse and restore the ruin of the fall. He took out infirmities and bare our sicknesses, taking the curse and bearing the condemnation of our sin "in his own

18 ¶ Now when Jesus saw great multitudes about him,

he gave commandment to depart unto the other side.

body," even in numberless physical sufferings. It may be expressed more generally, "He bore our griefs and carried our sorrows." This Hebrew clause in Isaiah is precisely rendered by the Greek in Matthew here. He took a large share of human woes of every kind, sympathized in the suffering, and provided for the cure. His atoning plan provides as well for the body as the soul. The old versions read, "He took on Him our sicknesses," &c. We can suppose that He was a man of pain and ailment in the flesh, so far as would not interfere with His active labours. We know not how He was at Nazareth, the greater portion of His life; but there is authority for saying He "was without form or comeliness." "His countenance was marred more than the sons of men." In the Jewish Talmud is this striking passage: "What is the name of the Messiah? Some say *Leprous*. According is that 'surely he hath borne our sicknesses,' &c., and Messiah sitteth in the gate of the city. And by what sign may he be known? He sitteth among the diseased and poor." It is also said in the Zohar, "That all the diseases, griefs and punishments due to Israel shall be borne by Him." His taking our nature and taking such active part in relieving our woes, is not mere human sympathy, but belongs to His mediatorial work. This lively feeling for our sicknesses, and this prompt and effectual cure of all that were brought, show the reality of His re-

mediatorial work for sinners, and the hearty interest He has taken in the redemption of men. In undertaking our salvation He took our load of woes a *man of sorrows*. The contemplation of our woes was a living pang to Him—Christ's rule in healing seems to have been to cure applicants and such as He met, where it was asked for. This was in accordance with His redeeming plan: "for every one that asketh receiveth." OBTAIN, The worst cases He can cure as well as any: even the possessed with devils, along with the sick. Our relatives we should bring to Christ's attention. We may go to Him for ailments of the flesh, and for woes of the spirit, for it is His part to cure them both. His control over diseases should satisfy men of His higher work and of all His Divine claims. NOTE, That between verses 17 and 18, there intervene, in the proper order of the history, 3 chapters of events, as recorded in the 11th, 12th and 13th chapters. This crossing the lake (vs. 18), was after a second circuit in Galilee, and after speaking the several parables near Capernaum. (See the Harmony.) In ch. 13. 1, we find our Lord seating Himself by the sea-side, giving instructions, "and great multitudes were gathered together unto Him," &c. (vs. 2). This explains His giving order here (ch. 8. 18), "to depart unto the other side," on account of the multitudes.

	Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
§ 43. The raising of the Widow's son. <i>Nain.</i>	.....	.....	7. 11-17	
§ 44. John the Baptist in prison, sends Disciples to Jesus.—Galilee—Capernaum? .....	11. 2-19	.....	7. 13-35	
§ 45. Reflections of Jesus on appealing to His mighty works.—Capernaum. . .	11.20-30			
§ 46. At Siron the Pharisee's table, Jesus is anointed by a woman who had been a sinner.—Capernaum? . . .	.....	.....	7. 36-50	
§ 47. Jesus, with the Twelve, makes a second circuit in Galilee. . . .	.....	.....	8. 1-3	

19 And a certain scribe came, and said unto him, Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest.

n Lu. 9.57,58.

20 And Jesus saith unto him, The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.

	Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John
§ 48. The healing of a Demoniac. The Scribes and Pharisees blaspheme. <i>Galilee.</i>	12.22-37	3. 19-30	11.14-15 17-23	
§ 49. The Scribes and Pharisees seek a sign. Reflections of our Lord.— <i>Galilee.</i>	12.38-45	.....	11, 16 24-36	
§ 50. The true disciples of Christ His nearest relatives.— <i>Galilee.</i>	12.46-50	3. 31-35	8. 19-21	
§ 51. At a Pharisee's table, Jesus denounces woes against the Pharisees and others.— <i>Galilee.</i>	.....	.....	11.37-51	
§ 52. Jesus discourses to His disciples and the multitude.— <i>Galilee.</i>	.....	.....	12. 1-59	
§ 53. The slaughter of certain Galileans. Parable of the barren Fig tree. <i>Galilee.</i>	.....	.....	13. 1-9	
§ 54. Parable of the Sower. <i>Lake of Galilee, near Capernaum?</i>	13. 1-23	4 1-25	8. 4-18	
§ 55. Parable of the Tares Other parables. <i>Near Capernaum?</i>	13.24-53	4. 26-34		
§ 56. JESUS DIRECTS TO CROSS THE LAKE. Incidents.—The Tempest stilled. <i>Lake of Galilee.</i>	8. 18-27	4. 35-41	8. 22-25 9.57-62	

18. *Great multitudes.* They came to Christ in crowds, having heard of his healing powers. Some came from curiosity; others came to be healed, or to bring their sick for His cure. He was now at the Lake of Galilee, at or near Capernaum, which was at the north-west coast of the lake or sea. He wished to go to the other side. OBSERVE, the train of intermediate events. The incident does not connect immediately with the previous verses. He wished to go to the other side of the lake; accordingly we find Him next at Gadara, on the opposite or south-east side (see vs. 28-34). He proposed this movement, not to get rid of applicants, but to avoid the suspicion of fomenting disturbance. He also loved to withdraw when He had accomplished His work.

19. *A certain scribe.* A scribe was a writer and teacher of the law; i. e., a *Jewish lawyer*. He came doubtless, as the reply would intimate, from interested and mistaken motives; from worldly ambition or, like

others, for the loaves and fishes of the miracles. Such displays of prerogative, and crowds of adherents, were likely to attract such followers. He proposed to throw in his lot with such a wonder-working personage, and go with Him to his place of destination.

20. Our Lord meant to warn him of his mistake, in thinking that he should have earthly ease and privilege from following Him. Even the foxes and birds had better lodging than He. Christ had a home in Nazareth, before He entered on his ministry; but now He was a sojourner and wanderer. How little we know of our hearts! Christ can tell us of them. Some are ready to profess religion with an understanding of temporal ease. Christ proposes the cross. He who rejects it cannot be His disciple.—

¶ *The Son of man.* See 16. 13. This is the title which Christ usually gave to Himself. So it occurs sixty-one times in the Gospels. It is a strong assertion of His proper humanity, and of His having a peculiar interest in

21 And another of his disciples said unto him, Lord, ° suffer me first to go and bury my father.

22 But Jesus said unto him, Follow me; and let the dead bury their dead.

23 ¶ And when he was entered

o1 Ki.19.20.

man. Yet if He had wished to own Himself a mere man, this would have been constrained and unnatural. He was the son of Joseph, the son of David, and also the Son of God; yet His peculiarity was this, that such an one as He should have become man. Therefore He uses the title as distinguishing Him, "The Word *was made flesh.*" He was "found in *fashion as a man.*" He is called the Son of man, because He has a human nature; the Son of God, because He has a divine nature; and He is as really God as He was seen to be man. Yet these natures He has mysteriously united in one person, just as Father, Son and Holy Ghost, are one God. How ashamed and grieved should we be for our sins, when we find that Christ on that account had so lowly a condition! and how thankful to Him should we be, and willing to serve Him by all manner of self-denial, when we find Him undergoing such hardships for us.

21. *And another of his disciples.* This alludes to another request made at the same time (Luke 9. 61), to bid a farewell. It is supposed to have been one of Zebedee's children. See *Blunt*, Matt. 4. 21, note. From the narrative in Luke 9. 59, it would seem that this was one who at Christ's call to follow Him made this reserve about what seemed a special filial duty. *Suffer me*—give me this permission. *First*—before following, or as a first obligation, *before* the command of Christ should be obeyed. Elijah permitted Elisha to go and bid adieu.

22. *Let the dead.* Even his most sacred duty as a child, should give way to Christ's call. "They left their nets and father." "He that

into a ship, His disciples followed him.

24 And behold, ° there arose a great tempest in the sea, inso-much that the ship was covered with the waves: but he was asleep.

p Mar.4 37,&c. Lu.8.23,&c.

loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me." "Seek first the kingdom of God" is the only rule. Enough can be found to do such services who are not inclined to "follow me." Let the dead in trespasses and sins, who are not of my disciples, attend to this business, and bury the dead. That belongs to a department quite apart from yours. You have no concern with that now. Leave it to those who belong there. This is a kind of proverbial expression. Let the dead in sin have to do with the dead under sin. You have higher concerns. Luke says he was ordered to *go preach.* The duties of this life, our own families, are not to be neglected, but when Christ calls we are bound to *follow*, no matter what may stand in the way. And as there can be no higher claims upon us than this, we must forsake father and mother, if need be, for His sake. If they would hinder our following Him, we must separate from them, rather than from our Lord and Saviour, and His work. This was really a case of half-way service and compromise; for in Luke it is added, in conclusion, "no man having put his hand to the plough and *looking back*, is fit for the kingdom of God."

23. *A ship.*—A fisherman's boat. Mark mentions that there were several boat-loads of followers (4. 36). He had delivered several parables during the day (recorded in Matt. ch. 13), and now He gave commandment to depart, and was detained by the scribe and the disciples. We should always have Christ with us.

24. See Mark 4. 37, for the powerful effects of the storm. It was a sudden and violent squall of wind—

25 And his disciples came to *him*, and awoke him, saying, Lord, save us : we perish.

26 And he saith unto them, Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith? Then he arose, and rebuked <sup>q</sup> the winds and the sea; and there was a great calm.

27 But the men marvelled,

*q* Job 38.11. Ps.89.9; 107.29.

a hurricane. Christ was in the stern of the boat (Mark 4. 38), asleep on a pillow (as it was at night). Difficulties and perils may be expected in the performance of duty. Duties will not exempt us from natural calamities.

25 *Awoke him.* They had seen His marvellous power, and they naturally appealed to Him, seeing Him asleep and unconscious, as it would seem, of the danger.—¶ *Lord save us : we perish.* This is the substance of a prayer for deliverance. Our necessity pleads for God's ability. A proper sense of our inability prompts to earnest prayer. Christ, when He seem asleep, may always be awaked by His disciples.

26 They should have believed Him as well when He was asleep, as when He was awake. Christ only complains at our fear, not at our confidence, and graciously gives us more demonstrations. They had *little* faith, for they had great *fear*. They had *some* faith, for they flew to Him, and prayed for His help as their only hope. Sharp admonitions and splendid deliverances may go together. Christ spoke first to them—then to the tempest.—¶ *Rebuked*—restrained the fury of the elements, as having them in His power, and even subject to His word.—¶ *A great calm.* This snowed the miracle, that the result

saying, What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him?

28 ¶ And <sup>r</sup> when he was come to the other side, into the country of the Gergesenes, there met him two possessed with devils, coming out of the tombs,

*r* Mar.5.1. Lu.8.26.&c.

was so *sudden* and complete. Psalm 107. 23-30.

27. *Marvelled*—wondered, were surprised. The elements would not obey the word of any mere man. He must have been God. This was the impression made on the mind of the beholders. Christ performed miracles by His own power. Moses divides the sea and brings water from the rock by special direction of God, and in dependence on Him—never by his own strength. This difference shows how much greater than Moses is Christ. "Even as he that buildeth the house hath more honour than the house." Christ has given every man sufficient evidence for his belief.

OBSERVE, 1. Christ has embarked in the same vessel with every true disciple. He identifies himself with us, and His interests with ours. 2. Christ is very man—He sleeps. And He is very God—"even the winds and the sea obey Him." 3. The Church is the vessel in which Christ and His disciples are embarked together. It is liable to tempests and perils. "Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall never slumber nor sleep." 4. It is a *great calm* when Christ has rebuked the tempests of the soul. "Peace, be still." Blessed is He "who stilleth the noise of the seas, the noise of their waves, and the tumults of the people."

	Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
§ 57 THE TWO DEMONIACS OF GADARA.	8. 23-34	5. 1-21	8. 26-40	
SUNDRY MIRACLES. THE PHARISEES MURMUR. . . . .	9. 1			
<i>S. E. coast of the Sea of Galilee.</i>				

exceeding fierce, so that no man might pass by that way.

29 And behold, they cried out, saying, What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God? art thou come hither to torment us before the time?

30 And there was, a good way

28. The last incident showed His power over the elements; this, over the evil spirits. Together, they exhibit His prerogative in the natural and spiritual world. He came now to the country of the Gadarenes (Mark) or Gergesenes (for the region was called by the name of either Gadara or Gergesa, which lay in the same district) *on the other side*, or S. E. coast of the lake or sea across from Capernaum.—¶ *Two possessed with devils.* Such a case was an awful symbol of depravity in the heart. The devils were allowed such a fearful manifestation on earth, the better to manifest Christ's work of destroying the works of the devil. Mark (5. 2) and Luke (8. 27) mention only one demoniac, because his case was the more special and striking of the two. He was a heathen, as would seem. Josephus says, "it was a Grecian city, and swine were kept there, which was not lawful among the Jews." According to Mark, he was "possessed of an unclean spirit;" and according to Matthew, he was "exceeding fierce." His case was remarkable, too, because he showed his gratitude for the miracle. Luke 8. 35, 38.—¶ *Coming out of the tombs.* This place (Gadara) is remarkable for a great number of tombs, hewn out of the white limestone rocks and richly carved. See "Biblical Geography" S. S. Union.

29. *What have we to do with thee?* was a common form of question, implying some troublesome interference. So the next words explain. The devil here recognizes Christ as the Son of God, and as the Saviour Jesus, but not as their Saviour. Christ has

off from them, an herd of many swine, feeding.

31 So the devils besought him, saying, If thou cast us out, suffer us to go away into the herd of swine.

32 And he said unto them, Go. And when they were come out,

Job 1.10-12; 2.3-6. De.14.8. Is.65.3,4.

nothing to do with the devils, or with lost spirits for their salvation. The "spirits in prison," to whom Christ preached in the days of Noah (1 Pet. 3. 19), were they who are *now* spirits in prison, but who were waited on then in God's "long-suffering" (vs. 20). This is plain from (1 Pet. 4. 6), where the reference being to these, it is added, "For this cause was the gospel preached also *to them that are dead*," &c.—¶ *Before the time*; that is, the appointed time, as the Greek work is. The devils believe in God and tremble (James 2. 19). From the Epistles of Peter (2 Pet. 2. 4), and Jude 6, we learn that fallen spirits are reserved in chains unto the judgment of the great day. They refer to this time, and doubtless they are kept in constant terror of this time (see Rev. ch. 20. 21). In Luke 8. 31, the devils entreat not to be sent into the *abyss*—or *hell*.

30. *A good way off.* That is, on the same plain, or on the brow of a hill sloping down to the water. Mark says, "*nigh unto the mountains*." It was "*there*," that is, in direct view, but some distance from the spot where they stood.—¶ *A herd* (a flock) of many swine. Mary says, "about two thousand" (5. 13).

31. Here they entreat permission to be sent into the herd of swine, and Christ's authority over them is here acknowledged.

32. The unbelieving Greeks were wont to ridicule the Jewish laws, especially on account of their prohibiting the use of swine's flesh as food. This entering of the devils into the swine would have a meaning in this respect, and would be likely to show

they went into the herd of swine: and behold, the whole herd of swine ran violently down a steep place into the sea, and perished in the waters.

33 And they that kept them fled, and went their ways into the city, and told every thing,

them the sacredness of these laws, and to keep up this awful distinction between the holy and the profane.

The case of the fig-tree—the casting out of the money-changers in the temple, and this, are instances of Christ's vindictive acts, and the only instances of loss attending the exercise of His authority. "These are hints," says Bengel, "of a future punishment.—¶ *Perished*. The devils from these two men fill the whole herd, and the possessed brutes could not live long. It is of mere mercy that men possessed of the devil should not immediately perish.

33. *Fled*. They were terrified at this. They saw this wonderful change in the men that were possessed, and the strange effects upon the swine. Luke says they saw the demoniac "sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in his right mind." They were astonished at the awful power of God over evil spirits, and doubtless it seemed to them a judgment of the God of the Jews upon these animals that were held in abomination by the Jewish laws; and so they feared a judgment also upon themselves, as keepers of swine, which was a business forbidden by those laws.

34. *The whole city*. There was a general turning out at this report of Christ's doings; for it was plain that Christ had power over property and life, and men were universally alarmed. They wished him to go away, lest they might lose their property by this means, or suffer other damage. So many beg Christ to depart from them, "and choose iniquity rather than affliction" (Job 36. 21), or the inconvenience even of attending to His claims. We should desire Christ to

and what was befallen to the possessed of the devils.

34 And behold, the whole city came out to meet Jesus: and when they saw him, they besought him that he would depart "out of their coasts.

u Job 21.14. Lu.5.8. Ac.16.39.

be always near us, because He alone can deliver us from difficulties, or support us under trials, and His presence can give peace to our souls. The cured demoniac begs the privilege of following Christ (Luke 8. 38). We should seek this. If He is not near us, we are in danger of being possessed by evil tempers, and thoughts, and desires, and falling under the power of sin. "Deliver us from evil." The true wisdom is to take Him for our portion as He is offered in the gospel, so that we may have Him for a friend at all times, "our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble." The demoniac was cured, and an interesting account of the result upon him is found in Mark and Luke. He besought Christ to allow of his accompanying Him, but our Lord told him to speak His praises *at home*. Luke 8. 38, 39. OBSERVE, the men who merely saw His *power* were terrified and begged Him to depart. But the poor demoniac, who felt His *goodness* also, begged to remain with Christ. A mere sight of *Divine power* drives us away from God; an insight of *His power and love* draws us near to Him. Such cures of bodily diseases as are recorded in the history of Christ are intended to be *symbolical* of the removal of spiritual diseases by the power and grace of the Great Physician (*Ed. Calvin, p. 436, note*). All scripture is given for doctrine, for reproof, &c. "Carnal hearts prefer their swine before their Saviour, and had rather lose Christ's presence than their worldly profits."—*Burkitt* Christ often grants the wish of devils and of wicked men, but with calamitous results to themselves.



## CHAPTER IX.

AND he entered into a ship, and passed over, and came into his own city.

2 And <sup>a</sup> behold, they brought to

<sup>a</sup> Mar. 2.3, &c. Lu. 5. 18, &c.

## CHAPTER IX.

1. Our Lord would not obtrude His labours upon the unwilling, and so He yields to the request of the Gergesenes, and leaves their coasts. After He had got into the ship, the demoniac prayed that he might accompany Him. This was asked in a very different spirit from that of the scribe on the other side of the lake.

-¶ *His own city.* Capernaum, where he dwelt, and whence he had started out. (See vs. 18, note.)

[§ 34. THE HEALING OF A PARALYTIC ]  
*Capernaum.*

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John
9. 2-8	2. 1-12	5. 17-26	

*Sick of the palsy.* Here Matthew relates a miracle which was wrought at Capernaum, but at a previous period. His object was to tell the works of Christ, though not in their order; and this return of Christ to Capernaum, naturally suggested a miracle previously wrought there, which as yet he had omitted to narrate. §§ 34 and 35 are in parenthesis.

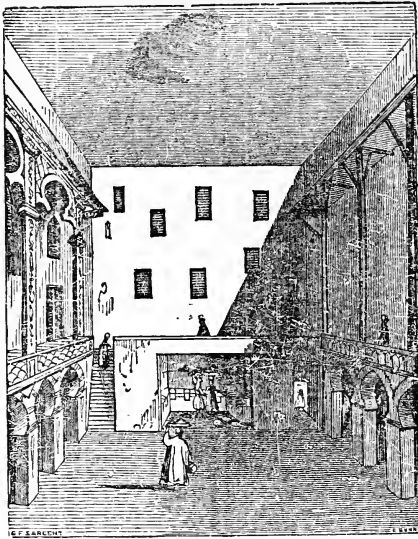
2. They brought to Him—or *offered* to Him. Many such grateful oblations were made to the Saviour. Christ was *in the house* (Mark 2. 1), sitting and teaching a great multitude, who crowded the house and porches. He was probably in the gallery, teaching the crowd that thronged the open court below and filled the doorways (fig. 1). He healed in the presence of Pharisees and doctors of the law, who came from Galilee, Judea and Jerusalem (Luke 5. 17). This paralytic was carried on a couch by four men (Mark). It was a case which fitly represented the *utter helplessness* of the sinner.—¶ *Seeing their faith.* They showed their faith

him a man sick of the palsy, lying on a bed: and Jesus, seeing their faith, said unto the sick of the palsy, Son, <sup>b</sup> be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee.

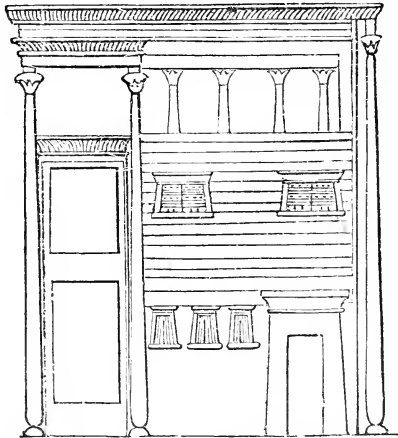
3 And behold, certain of the

<sup>b</sup> Mar. 5. 34.

by pressing through difficulties and discouragements. "*Their faith*" included doubtless that of the sick man also, however weakly exercised. The throng was so great that they could not get into the house with the sick man, and they resolved upon this expedient of letting him down through the roof (see Luke). The Eastern dwellings were built in the form of an open square, inclosing a court, with piazzas and rooms on the four sides, and thus securing light and air without exposure (fig. 1). From the front entrance, a stairway led directly to the roof, without the need of passing through any part of the house; which explains the passage, "Let him that is on the housetop not come down to take any thing out of his house" (fig. 2). The "*tiling*" referred to in Luke, was such as could be removed with some difficulty, and here it was probably the covering of the gallery that was actually taken up. Mark says, "They uncovered the roof;" Luke adds, "They let him down through the tiling in the midst." Faith presses and penetrates through all difficulties till it reaches Christ. The helpless sinner must be let down into His presence.—¶ *Thy sins be forgiven thee.* Christ here attracts attention in a new and startling form to the great truth of His supreme Divinity. He did not say, "*Be healed,*" but "*Thy sins be forgiven thee.*" He thus refers sicknesses to sin—hints of this paralytic case as an expressive type of sin, and shows that His work is not merely nor mainly physical, but spiritual. He would even bring His redeeming work distinctly and strikingly before the people, asserting and sealing by a visible sign His authority to forgive sin. He would have His cures at



The rooms of the house were ranged around this court. The roof was flat, formed often by layers of boughs, matting, and earth laid over the rafters, and trodden down; then covered with a compost, which hardened when dry. This roof was protected by battlements, so that on the *house-top*, persons walked at evening, and sometimes slept at night. 2 Sam. 11. 2, &  
*Kitto.*



This cut shows the mode in oriental countries of covering the open court with an awning, stretched upon columns. The sun was thus excluded, and the air was admitted. *Kitto.*

scribes said within themselves, This *man* blasphemeth.

4 And Jesus knowing their thoughts, said, Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts?

5 For whether is easier to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or

c Ps. 139.2. Jno. 2.24,25. He. 4.12,13. Re. 2.23.

ways viewed in this connexion, and men could not fully understand His work otherwise than in this light. See James 5. 14, 15. It would also appear to them, from this language, that the forgiveness of sin was of first consequence and included every blessing. And so also He shows His gospel grace by this visible illustration. He gives before we ask, and then gives more than we ask. The faith here was mostly a deep sense of need, and of Christ as the only helper. Others spoke to Christ, but Christ addressed the paralytic. Forgiveness must be spoken to us, and cannot be spoken to another for us. The sense of personal forgiveness has power with us for a Christian life.

3. The Scribes and Pharisees, in their murmuring, acknowledged that to *forgive sins* was strictly a Divine work. They had always regarded this prerogative as a characteristic of their Messiah when He should come. Hence they were offended in Him. — **¶ Blasphemeth.** In other writings, blasphemy was evil speaking of any kind, and evil foreboding in regard to any one. In the Scripture, to blaspheme the name of the Lord (Levit. 24. 16), was to impiously profane the Divine titles, attributes or works, and especially to violate the honour of Jehovah by assuming it for the creature. So here, "Who can forgive sins, but God only?" (See Matt. 26. 65. John 10. 36.)

4. *Knowing their thoughts.* Christ here again shows to them His Divinity by showing to them their thoughts. So, with the Samaritan woman. "Come see a man who told me all things that ever I did. Is not this the Christ?" See 1 Sam. 16. 7. 1

to say, Arise, and walk?

6 But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive<sup>d</sup> sins, (then saith he to the sick of the palsy,) Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house.

d Mt. 7.18.

Chron. 28. 9. 2 Chron. 6. 30. Jer. 17. 10. Rom. 8. 27. Rev. 2. 23. Mark adds, "Jesus knew by His Spirit," or perceived in His Spirit, their *thoughts*, or carnal reasonings. He might easily say this, thought they, and only blaspheme; for He could safely pretend to a work which admitted no proof. How could we know that the man's sins are forgiven?

5. *Whether is easier.* It was not because it was *easier* to Him, as they supposed, that He so said, but for another reason—to call their attention to His redeeming, sin-forgiving work. And He would presently show them that He could as easily say "*Arise.*" His object was to have them know that He—the Son of man—had power on earth to forgive sin, and was therefore God and Saviour. Properly speaking, His prerogative extended equally to both departments, "Who forgiveth all thine iniquities—who healeth all thy diseases" (Psalm 103). But the greater, that included the less, should be put foremost. Disease is but a feature of the curse, and forgiveness virtually removes it, as it takes away its sting, even the sting of death. His object He now declares to be their instruction in His saving work. "But that ye may know," &c. And hence, to convince them that this assumption of His was authorized, and not blasphemous, He will work the miracle in attestation of His claim. He will show them by a visible exertion of Divine power and grace, on His own authority, that He had *power on earth* to forgive sin.

6. *Arise, take up thy bed.* There is a reason for this form of the healing word. As forgiveness of sin is the great substance of blessing which in-

7 And he arose, and departed to his house.

8 But when the multitude saw it, they marvelled, and glorified God, which had given such power unto men.

e Ac.4.21. Ga.1.24.

cludes all good things, so the restoration is most triumphant when it is shown at once in the effects. Christ would deliver the blessing in the form of a command, which He very commonly did, that the first exercise of faith might be an effort of obedience. To the maid he said, "Arise" (Mark 5. 41); to Lazarus, "Come forth" (John 11. 43); to the paralytic, "Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house."—*Mather on the Types*, p. 140. This incident gave our Lord an opportunity to prove His Messiahship; for a miracle in His own name, "I say unto thee," proved His claim to Divinity; and His claim, if proved, was such as proved Him *their Messiah*. Indeed, in all His miracles, He would assert or illustrate this truth.

8. *Such power unto men.* They saw Divine power in this miracle, but they did not observe how Christ wrought it by His own word, "I say unto thee." They could not conceive or admit His Divinity, though this was proof. They did not own that He was more than man, though sometimes they were forced to say, *What manner of man is this?* Yet here their confessions make them the unwilling witnesses to this truth of His proper *Godhead*. "The Son of man"—He whom ye regard only in the light of His humanity, hath Divine power, and thinks it *no robbery* to be equal with God (Phil. 2. 6).

[§ 35. THE CALL OF MATTHEW.]  
Capernaum.

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
9. 9	2. 13, 14	5. 27, 28	

9. *Matthew sitting at the receipt of custom.* This is the call of Matthew as a disciple. Afterward, Christ chose, from all the disciples, *twelve*, for apos-

9 ¶ And as Jesus passed forth from thence, he saw a man, named Matthew, sitting at the receipt of custom: and he saith unto him, Follow me. And he arose, and followed him.

f Mar.2.14. Lu.5.27,&c.

ties. Every minister of Christ must needs first be a true follower. Church office could not suffice, in His view, without piety. Christ would have, among the twelve, this proof of Judah's low estate—an apostle from the officers of tribute. The custom-house among the Jews, in their subjection to Roman authority, was a place for plundering and extortion. Hence, the call of this apostle was a striking instance of Divine grace. Mark and Luke call him *Levi*, which must have been his common name, as he was so called by the people of the country. But his being a publican, and an officer under the Romans, is a reason why he took a foreign name, though not a foreigner. But he would not here employ the name in which he served as a publican. Christ "calls His servants by another name"—"a new name." The promptness with which he followed Christ, shows us not so much his natural character for decision and promptitude, as the *Divine power of Christ's call*. He was *sitting*—busy at his work. He "*left all*," adds Luke, and he was made an example of that effectual calling, which renews the heart, and converts the life. Luke gives an account (ch. 5. 29) of a great banquet made by Levi, or Matthew. The freeness of God's grace is such, that he often chooses the worst, and takes the most notoriously wicked as chosen vessels for himself. So with Saul, the persecutor. OBSERVE, The effectual calling is seen from the effects. 1. The promptness of action at Christ's word—"He arose." 2. The self-denial—"He left all" (Luke)—his self-righteousness, and sins, and vain pursuits. 3. The steadfast obedience—"and followed Him."

10 ¶ And it came to pass, as Jesus sat at meat in the house, behold, many publicans and sinners came and sat down with him and his disciples.

11 And when the Pharisees saw *it*, they said unto his disci-

ples, Why eateth your Master with publicans and sinners? §

12 But when Jesus heard *that*, he said unto them, They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick.

13 But go ye and learn what

g c. 11. 19. Lu. 15. 2. He. 5. 2.

§ 58. LEVI'S (or Matthew's) FEAST.—  
*Capernaum.*

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John
9. 10-17	2. 15-22	5. 29-39.	

There elapsed an interval of some months between Matthew's call and this feast, as will be observed by the Harmony.

10, 11. *As Jesus sat.* This feast Matthew made as an act of gratitude to Christ, and a parting entertainment to his former associates, in which he would at once make them acquainted with his new Master, and make an open profession of his discipleship before them. A convert should surely not be ashamed of Christ: he should not fear to profess Him; nor should he be willing that his own former associates should remain ignorant of Him. And as Christ has made us a great feast in His house, and invited us all, we should pay Him our best honours in our own house, and before all our acquaintances. Luke calls it a *great feast*, which Matthew, in modesty, omits.—¶ *In the house.* Matthew does not call it his own house, though Luke does. "What things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ." "Neither said any of them that aught of the things which he possessed was his own" (Acts 4. 32). Christ's excellency makes even a close calculator reckon Him more than all things. How few large entertainments are given where Christ is invited.—¶ *Publicans and sinners*—or heathens. The Pharisees complained to the disciples that their Master was keeping unhallowed company. *Eating and drinking* with any was a mark of great intimacy and fellowship, which

these proud murmurers, not understanding Christ's work among sinners, sought to lay to His discredit. They were offended at Christ and His claims, and hence they loved to excite prejudice against Him. Their pride revolted at Christ's ways, and at His humiliating, soul-abasing religion. Christ is called on to explain His intercourse with sinners! How the natural man misunderstands the gospel. The very grace is a blot. The love of Christ must be shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost given unto us. Of the sacramental table, the world might ask, why eateth your Master with publicans and sinners?

12, 13. We learn that it belongs to the true spirit and end of the gospel dispensation to seek and save the *lost*, to call *sinners*, to preach glad tidings to the *poor and meek*, and to justify the ungodly. This is most important for us to know; this was our Lord's vindication. Herein lies our hope. The gospel is good news—glad tidings to the weary and heavy-laden, and guilty, and undone. This we are to believe. To the self-sufficient, like the Pharisees, the ways of Christ will always be objectionable, and they feel not their need of His help. They objected on the ground of strict ceremonial purity. Christ refers them to their own prophet. Hosea 6. 6. They misunderstood what God proposed and required. He proclaimed mercy to sinners, and not sacrifice; and it was love or mercy that He claimed of men, rather than mere outward observance with severity. Where truth was not found toward God and man, ritual sacrifice was of small account, especially where malice and ill-will toward fel-

that meat, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. <sup>1</sup>

14 ¶ Then came to him the disciples of John, saying, Why do we and the Pharisees fast oft, but thy disciples fast not?

15 And Jesus said unto them, Can the children of the bride-

h Pr. 21.3. Ho. 6.6. Mi. 6.8. c. 12.7. i Lu. 24.47. Ac. 5.31. 2 Fe. 3.9.

ow-men were indulged. God demands mercy or love first of all; and all His *precepts* (even the 4th Command) must have an eye to mercy. See Matt. 12. 7, where this is referred to, as excusing the plucking of corn by the disciples on the *Sabbath*.—¶ *For I am not come.* This was not the object of His mission, to company with such as proud Pharisees who count themselves already righteous, but to *call sinners* and furnish them a perfect righteousness, and thereby lead them to righteousness of life, in genuine repentance. His object was not to get a mere punctilious Pharisaic obedience, but to show mercy, and preach mercy. Here was also a proverbial expression, to signify the consistency of one's course with his object—"Physicians: *are with the diseased.*"

14, 15. The disciples of John were drawn into the controversy by the Pharisees, whom Luke represents as speaking, while Mark seems to connect the two. John's disciples were trained to fastings, twice a week at least, in keeping with all that austerity and seclusion which belonged to John's ministry in the wilderness. It served the purpose of Christ's enemies to oppose this strictness against His apparent indulgences. *Fasting* is abstinence from food, either wholly or in part. Its design is to deny the fleshly appetites, and its use is more exclusively to cultivate spiritual dispositions, to humble us at the thought of our dependence for daily food on the goodness of God, and to check

chamber mourn, as long as the bridegroom is with them? but the days will come when the bridegroom shall be taken from them, and then shall <sup>1</sup> they fast.

16 No man putteth a piece of new cloth unto an old garment; for that which is put in to fill it up taketh from the garment, and the rent is made worse.

j c. 25. 1. 10. Jno. 3. 29. Re. 21. 2. k Is. 22. 12. 1 Or, raw, or, unwrought cloth.

the carelessness and sensuality of life. But it was abused to self-righteousness by the Pharisees, and John's disciples had not fully come into the light.—¶ *The bridegroom.* Christ points out the circumstances as justifying this. It was not a time to fast any more than at a wedding. His presence with the disciples was fit to excite joy, as at a marriage feast, where the festivity would seem highly proper. He is the bridegroom; they were the *children of the bride-chamber*—the groomsmen, who conducted the arrangements, and took special part in the joy. *Can they mourn* at such a time? Luke has it, "*Can ye make*" them mourn? It is not fit that they fast, and use the expressions of grief while the marriage is going on and the groom is with them, but when He should be taken away from them, then the expressions of grief would be fit.

16. The illustration here used applies to the same effect, viz.: to show that there is a *fitness of things*. It would be as unfit and hurtful even to put on these forms of sorrow and lamentation, while Christ is present with them, as to patch an old garment with new cloth, or to put new wine into old bottles; for in both cases, there would not only be impropriety, but injury done. So, He would say, my doctrines do not suit the old and legal rites of the Pharisees. They who have embraced Christ, and find Him present, have no right to go in mourning, any more than they have to turn Jews. Because joy is appropriate to

17 Neither do men put new wine into old bottles; else the bottles break, and the wine runneth out, and the bottles perish: but they put new wine into new bottles, and both are preserved.

18 ¶ While he spake these

l Job 32.19. m Mar.5.22. Lu.8.41,&c.

the believer, and freedom also, he must not go in bondage and sackcloth; for so he does, in heart, return to the old way of the law—*do this and live*—to the beggarly elements. Besides, the day for mourning will soon enough come, and to tender and weak converts there is need of all the joy which comes from the presence of Christ with them.

17. *Bottles.* Bottles made of skins were used, especially for wine. They would become dry and cracked at length, unfit to hold new wine that should ferment greatly; hence there would be impropriety and injury in using old bottles for it. So, every thing in its time and place. The law for Pharisees—the gospel for disciples: milk for babes—strong meat for full-grown men: joy in Christ's presence—fasting and grief for His absence. For the form of these skin bottles, see Cut from *Killo's Bib. Cyclop.*



§ 59 THE RAISING OF JAIRUS' DAUGHTER. THE WOMAN WITH A BLOODY FLUX.—*Capernaum.*

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
9. 18-26	5. 22-43	8. 41-56	

10

things unto them, behold, there came a certain ruler and worshipped him, saying, My daughter is even now dead: but come and lay thy hand upon her, and she shall live."

19 And Jesus arose and followed him, and so *did* his disciples.

n Jno.11.22,25.

18. This occurred while our Lord was at Matthew's feast. Mark and Luke speak of this man as a "*ruler of the synagogue*," and call him by name, *Jairus*. In Mark it is said he was "one of the rulers of the synagogue," which shows that in this office there were more than one (see Acts 13. 15). He was one of those church officers whom we call *Ruling Elders*. "Elders of the Jews" (Luke 7. 3).—¶ *Worshipped.* "He fell at his feet" (see Mark and Luke, and note on ch. 2. 11). He paid Him this outward homage as an expression of reverence, which could be done without any hearty worship; yet he humbled himself in prayer. Mark has it, "*he besought Him greatly.*" The ruler was convinced of Christ's marvellous power, and though he regarded his daughter as dead, or dying (Mark 5. 23. Luke 8. 42), he had faith in the *touch* of Christ, though he seemed to think it necessary for the hands of Christ to be laid upon her. He did not feel with the centurion, that a word would be enough.—¶ *Even now dead.* Mark has it; "*at the point of death;*" Luke reads, "*she lay a dying.*" Our faith must reach to this: that Christ is able to meet the extremest case—to raise dead souls.

19. *Jesus arose.* Here again we see Christ's willingness to relieve the distressed who called upon Him. This was His work, in a higher sense, that might be shown by these outward and visible doings. The maid was "one only daughter, about 12 years of age;" (see Luke 8. 42).

20. Here there occurred, on the

20 ¶ And, ° behold, a woman, which was diseased with an issue of blood twelve years, came behind *him*, and touched the hem of his garment :

21 For she said within herself,

o Mar.5.25. Lu.8.43.

way, a case which shows the sinner in another light, and exhibits the power and grace of Christ.—

¶ *And behold, a woman.* Here was a great sufferer, whose disease had been of 12 years' standing. It was held to be unclean by the Jewish law (Levit. 15. 25), and hence she would not give her case publicity if it could be helped. So the sinner, though a sufferer, conceals his sin and shame, and keeps back from Christ and from numble confession to Him. Mark and Luke tell us that she had spent all that she had upon physicians, and was nothing bettered, but only grew worse. “. said unto thee, when thou wast in thy blood, LIVE.”—¶ *Touched the hem of His garment.* She thought there must be virtue in *touching* Him, since His touch was seen to give cures. This was as far as she could see

If I may but touch his garment, I shall be whole.

22 But Jesus turned him about ; and when he saw her, he said, Daughter, be of good comfort ; thy <sup>a</sup> faith hath made thee whole.

p Ac.19.12. q Lu.7.50; 17.19; 18.42. Ac.14.9.

of His Divine power. Her faith was full of trembling, yet she did well to think that He was so full of grace, that this touch of His clothes could cure her. She touched the *hem* or fringe on the border, as having peculiar sanctity with the Jews (Matt. 23. 5). This was the hem or fringe of the outer robe, cloak or mantle ; and hence it was not at the feet, but below the waist (see fig. and note 5. 40). Fringes on the borders of the garments were commanded (see Numbers 15. 38). The Holy Spirit put this into her mind, and recorded it here that we may see how earnestly Christ must be sought in all circumstances, and how much virtue there is in any contact with Him, and how the power of Christ can make the simplest means efficacious. Many press upon Christ like the care-

The outer and inner garments (coat and cloak) were girt around the loins for a journey (ch 3. 4).



A sword was worn by travellers (ch. 26. 51).



And the woman was made whole from that hour.<sup>r</sup>

23 And <sup>r</sup> when Jesus came into the ruler's house, and saw the minstrels and the people making a noise,

24 He said unto them, Give

<sup>r</sup> Jno.4.53. <sup>s</sup> Mar.5.38. <sup>Lu.</sup>8.51. <sup>t</sup> 2 Ch.35.25.

less crowd. *She*, with her heart full, *touch'd* Him; and the touch of faith was more than the common press upon Him.

22. Jesus inquired after her, as we find from Mark and Luke. He showed an interest in her, and a disposition to encourage her. Then she saw how fully He knew her and her case, and that she could conceal no longer. She came forward and confessed. So every one finds who truly finds Christ. He inquires after such, and emboldens them to speak out, and shows by the very *cure itself*, how ready He is, beyond all that they had dared to think, and then they are impelled by His goodness to "tell Him all the truth." We should not tremble and doubt when we see His readiness to bless, but should "come boldly to a throne of grace." Christ is found to be beforehand with the seeking soul, and shows us His foregoing love. "Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig-tree, I saw thee."—¶ *Thy faith*. Her faith cured her, because it led her to Him, who alone could cure, and who was so able and ready to heal. It was thus that Abraham's faith was counted to him for righteousness. Faith must take hold, for comfort, upon Christ's power and willingness to save.

23. After this miracle wrought by the way, Christ came to the house of the ruler.—¶ *The minstrels*. These were musicians, hired to play at funerals. It was a method among the Jews of expressing their grief on such occasions. The daughter of the ruler being now dead, the minstrels were already there, to serve at the funeral. In Eastern countries, the people set up a wail for the dead, as

place: for the maid is not dead,<sup>r</sup> but sleepeth. And they laugh'd him to scorn.

25 But when the people were put forth, <sup>r</sup> he went in, and took her by the hand, and the maid arose.

<sup>u</sup> Ac.20.10. <sup>v</sup> 2 Ki.4.33,&c.

a ceremony, and used very noisy demonstrations of their grief. See fig. from *Killo's Cyclopedia*.



24. *Give place*—make room. He meant to intimate that He had come to show His power, and that to Him it was like raising her out of sleep. They scoffed at this. Thus He obtained their testimony that she was fully dead, and not otherwise, so that when they should see her rise, they could not say she had not been dead, but He should have the credit of raising her from the dead. Sinners scorn the thought of Christ's Divine power with their souls.

24. He chose not to have the multitude present, but only Peter, James and John, and the father and mother of the damsel (Mark 5. 40). He would have quite enough there to witness the miracle, so that it should not be done in secret (see 2 Kings 4. 33). But it would speak for itself.

26. The fame of Christ went abroad, though He did not desire the publicity at present. He charged them (Luke 8. 56) that they should tell no man. "*He charged them straitly*" (Mark). The miracle was manifest—they must all have admitted it; and yet to publish it then, would only excite jealousies against such a power in the state, and throw obstacles in the way

26 And <sup>1</sup> the fame hereof went abroad into all that land.

27 ¶ And when Jesus departed thence, two blind men followed him, crying, and saying, *Thou son of David,* \* have mercy on us.

<sup>1</sup> Or, *this fame.*      *vs c.15.22; 20.30, 31.*

of His work (see Mark 1. 45). It would also encourage the idea of His temporal authority and rule, since He was showing His great work of redemption by these outward and visible doings. Presently, they could better understand, that He came to save sinners, and that this was but incidental, as yet, to His grand object. "Her spirit came again" (Luke), is precisely the same language as in 1 Kings 17. 22, in the Greek version. "He commanded to give her meat" (Luke), to show that it was no phantom, but a real return to life.

OBSERVE, (1.) There are but three miracles of this kind recorded of our Lord; and these, as they are deeply significant of His regenerating power, are different cases. This one had just died—the widow's son was just about to be buried—and Lazarus had been dead four days. (2.) How carefully the proofs are brought forward to show that this was a case of actual death: the father confessed it, the minstrels were there for the funeral, and the people ridiculed any other idea. If men are not dead in sin, Christ's work is shorn of its glory.

§ 60. TWO BLIND MEN HEALED, AND A DUMB SPIRIT CAST OUT.—*Capernaum?*

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
9. 27-34			

27. This miracle is not recorded by the other Evangelists. Christ wrought many wonderful works, that are not narrated, and those that are selected by the Holy Ghost for this inspired narrative, must be told with an object beyond the mere facts. They serve powerfully to illustrate Christ's redeeming work, and to point out to

28 And when he was come into the house the blind men came to him: and Jesus saith unto them, Believe ye that I am able to do this? They said unto him, Yea, Lord.

29 Then touched he their eyes,

sinners the way of salvation. Every variety of case is therefore given, to show that in all various circumstances, the great business is, to find Christ, and seek His power and grace, as the only hope.

The blind were a numerous class at the East (Levit. 19. 14. Deut. 27. 18). These blind men acknowledged Christ as the Messiah by calling Him the *Son of David*. So He was prophesied of, and so His genealogy had proved as a standing confirmation of His claims, among the Jews.

28. Here Christ allows them to call upon Him till He gets into the house. He would have them earnest enough to follow Him whithersoever He went, and not willing to give up their suit. Who can doubt that they desired sight the more that they might see Him who was the great object of wonder?—¶ *Believe ye.* He would not only put their faith to the trial of some delay at first, but to this test as to its nature. He would also have their case attract the more public attention. It was most important that He should have credit for His *ability*. This would imply His Divine authority and power, and as yet, this was the great point with the people. His willingness they should also find out. But this could be fully known only when His saving work as Jesus should be revealed. They believed in Him as the Messiah, all-powerful to work bodily cures. But as yet they saw no farther. So some would seem to know of Christ as a Saviour, but only partially as a sanctifier.

29. *According to your faith.* So far as they believed, so far He was willing to show Himself for their cura

saying, According to your faith be it unto you.

30 And their eyes were opened: and Jesus straitly charged them, saying, See *that* no man know <sup>x</sup> it.

31 But they, when they were departed, spread abroad his fame in all that country.

32 As they went out, behold, they brought to him a dumb man <sup>y</sup> possessed with a devil.

33 And when the devil was cast out, the dumb spake: <sup>z</sup> and

<sup>x</sup> Is. 42. 2; 52. 13. c. 12. 16. <sup>y</sup> c. 12. 22. Lu. 11. 14.

Yet this formula of speech is rather in the sense of affirming than of limiting. They credited His ability, and this He displayed. The more fully we believe in Christ, the more fully will He deliver us from evil. And what we lack, for the most part, is the implicit and hearty faith in Him. "Let thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us, according as we hope in Thee." (Ps. 33. 22). This faith is the *bucket* let down into the fountain, without which we cannot draw.

30. *Straitly charged them.* The word means, He strictly and positively commanded them, on pain of His displeasure. OBSERVE: We must confess Christ, and cry out to him, and follow Him up, and believe in His mighty and gracious work. See vs. 26.

31. They had no right to publish the miracles, when Christ so positively forbade them. He had His own reasons for charging them with secrecy, and no matter how differently they might think of it, He ought to have been fully obeyed. They thought they knew better than He. This was the sin of Adam: and they had an inconsiderate zeal, which often carries people beyond and contrary to the express word of God.

32. *A dumb man.* The dumbness was doubtless of such a kind as was occasioned by the demon with which the man was possessed, for when he was cast out, the dumb spake. We

the multitudes marvelled, saying It was never so seen in Israel.

34 But the Pharisees said, He casteth out devils through the prince of the devils.

35 And <sup>b</sup> Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people.

36 But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with

<sup>z</sup> Is. 35. 6. <sup>a</sup> c. 12. 24. Mar. 3. 22. Lu. 11. 15. <sup>b</sup> c. 4. 23.

find Satan and his hosts having to do with diseases. Not merely was it so thought among the Jews, but this is clearly inferred from Scripture, as in the history of Job and here. When Satan is utterly "cast out" (Rev. 20. 10), there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain (Rev. 21. 4).

33. The multitudes confessed that this surpassed all that the prophets had ever done, and that a greater than Moses or Elijah was here—that Israel, who had beheld so many wonders, had never seen the like of this. This was a sudden burst of their admiration.

34. *Prince of the Devils.* This was a charge full of absurdity and blasphemy. They owned the miracles, yet would not ascribe them to His Divinity, but charged Him with infernal intercourse, holding communication with Beelzebub. See ch. 12. 23, 24. The Jews practised exorcisms, or the casting out of evil spirits, in pretence. But they were all amazed at Christ's power over demons, and they made the desperate resort of ascribing *this kind* of miracle to an alliance with the Prince of the Devils. This charge He answered on another occasion (Luke 11. 14), "By whom do your children (or disciples—the exorcising Jews) cast them out?" &c., ch. 12. 27.

compassion on them, because they <sup>1</sup> fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep <sup>c</sup> having no shepherd.

37 Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest <sup>d</sup> truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few :

<sup>1</sup> Or, were tired and lay down. <sup>c</sup> Nu 27.17. 1K. 22.17. Eze.34.5. Zec.10.2. <sup>d</sup> Lu. 10.2. Jno.4.35.

38 Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth <sup>e</sup> labourers into his harvest.

CHAPTER X.

AND when he had called unto *A* him his twelve disciples, he <sup>a</sup> gave them power *against* <sup>1</sup>

<sup>e</sup> Ps.68.11. <sup>a</sup> Mar.3.13,14; 6.7, &c. Lu.9.1,&c. <sup>1</sup> Or, over.

§ 61. Jesus again at Nazareth, and again rejected. . . . .

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
13. 54-58	6. 1-6		

§ 62. A THIRD CIRCUIT IN GALILEE, &c. See ch. 10.

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
9. 35-38			

35. *Jesus went about*—doing good, teaching, preaching, and healing. Preaching is something more than teaching—it is proclaiming the good news, and offering the gospel. This general description is given us of His work, to show that much more was done by Him than is narrated. And if we ask why the Spirit dictated these narratives rather than those of other works of Christ, we may suppose, that beyond the facts, there is conveyed important instruction respecting the way of life.

36. *They fainted*—literally, were faint. They were weary in body, and heavy laden with burdensome rites and doctrines of the Pharisees—without spiritual care from the priests, who were themselves ignorant and heedless of their charge. They were in just such condition as to excite His pity. The people He compared to scattered sheep, without a shepherd, or pastor. Their case called for help. They needed adequate instruction and care. They needed faithful shepherds, or pastors, to look after them, and tend them.

37. Yet this was the very harvest He was designing to reap. He sought the lost—"Come unto me all ye that are weary," &c. He points out this great truth to the disciples: **The fields were white to the harvest—**

all was in a state ready for active and faithful labourers. The harvest is the multitude of souls ripe for being gathered in to His kingdom. Labourers are Christian ministers.

38. The disciples' work for the great cause was, first of all, to pray. We can help the church by prayers to the great Head of the church. God alone can raise up the men for the ministry in sufficient numbers, and give them the requisite qualifications and put them into the work. **OB-SERVE:** It is *His* harvest, and He must send the men. Ministers must go under *His* commission.

CHAPTER X.

§ 62. (Continued.) THE TWELVE INSTRUCTED AND SENT FORTH.—Galilee.

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
10. 1-42	6. 6-13	9. 1-6	
11. 1			

Christ was about 32 years old before He commissioned and sent forth His twelve Apostles. He had called them with other disciples at different times and places. He had chosen the twelve just after His second Passover. Peter had been called first, and Matthew last. Two of them had been John's disciples. Meantime Christ had been proved to be God, by His numerous miracles wrought in His own name and by His own proper authority. And He was proved to be the Messiah by His fulfilling in Himself the predictions of Him that was to come. He obtained sufficient and proper witnesses of His life and mir-

unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease.

2 Now the names <sup>b</sup> of the twelve apostles are these: The first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James *the son* of Zebedee, and John his brother;

3 Philip, and Bartholomew; Thomas, and Matthew the pub-

<sup>b</sup> Lu. 6.13.

lican, by choosing those who should accompany Him in all His course, and receive His private teachings, and such as should be able to give the fullest testimony to His words and works. For this purpose He had chosen and called *twelve*. As there were 12 tribes, and the nation was descended from 12 patriarchs, He would show thus that the church was essentially the same in all ages, and the Head of the church the same, and that it would be restored again, under a new economy.

1. Christ had chosen and called the twelve before the Sermon on the Mount was delivered. Mark 3. 13-19. Luke 6. 12-19. They had been all the time in His special company. Now He summons them to go out to their work. He gave them this power, that they might prove their commission, and have authority with men, as sent by Christ for the promotion of His kingdom. We see that Christ could not only work miracles of Himself, but He could even delegate this power to others. This was His greatest miracle. This clearly proved Him to be God, having life and power in Himself, to give to others.

2, 3, 4. *Apostle*. One that is sent. This is the meaning of our word *Missionary*. Matthew mentions them in pairs, probably as they were sent out "by two and two."—¶ The first, Simon. Alluding to the fact that Simon Peter was the *first* called as an

lican; James *the son* of Alphaeus; and Lebbeus, whose surname was Thaddeus;

4 Simon the Canaanite; and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed him.

5 These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into *any* city of the Samaritans <sup>c</sup> enter ye not:

<sup>c</sup> 2 K. 17.24. Jno. 4.5,9,20.

Apostle. See John 1. 43.—¶ *Matthew the publican*. An humble confession. He does not call James and John the fishermen.—¶ *Lebbeus*. The Thaddens of Matthew, is called by Luke, 'Judas the brother of James.' This is the "Judas not Iscariot." John 14. 22.—¶ *Simon the Canaanite*, or more properly, the *Canaanite* or *zealot*, called also "*Simon Zelotes*." There was a Jewish sect called "Zealots."

5. The twelve were sent forth to preach or proclaim the Gospel of Christ. "Ambassadors for Christ."—¶ *The Gentiles*, were the heathen, who were not born Jews. The Apostles were not now to go *in the way of them*, or among them. Their first business was with the Jews.—¶ *The Samaritans*, were inhabitants of the region between Judea and Galilee, the country assigned to the tribe of Ephraim and the half tribe of Manasseh. They were formerly the revolted ten tribes of Israel, who had Samaria for their capital city, and took their name hence, and became most completely separate from the Jews. But subsequently, by the people being carried captive into Assyria, and colonists being sent back from that land, the inhabitants became wholly or mostly *heathen*. They deeply hated the Jews who had no dealing with them (John 4. 9). Their religion was made up of Judaism and heathenism. The twelve were not yet to go among these, because Christ

6 But go <sup>d</sup> rather to the lost sheep <sup>e</sup> of the house of Israel.

7 And, as ye go, preach, saying, 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand

<sup>d</sup> Ac.13.46 <sup>e</sup> Ps.119.176 Is.53.6. Je.50.6,17. Eze. 34.5,6,8. 1 Pe.2.25. <sup>f</sup> c.3.2; 4.17. Lu.9.2; 10.9.

held a peculiar relation to the Jews through Abraham, and He would first proclaim to them the Gospel salvation, and own them as a peculiar and favourite people, in keeping with the Old Testament prophecies and promises. The Gospel was preached to the Gentiles after His resurrection, and Peter had a vision to authorize him as the Apostle to the Gentiles. But Peter's greater distinction *was his acknowledgment of Christ*. He was called a stone (Cephas and Peter are words which mean a stone), and in this ground of *Christ preached* to Jews and Gentiles, the Christian Church in all nations was to be erected.

6. *The House of Israel*. It was by virtue of a *household* covenant made with the family of Abraham, and extended to Jacob, that this people of the Jews were taken as the Lord's. Jacob was afterward called Israel, in keeping with his family covenant, which was then repeated to him. And so his descendants were called the house of Israel. They were sheep of this fold, but *lost* and scattered sheep. The Jewish Church, though taken into covenant with God, had become estrayed. Yet even in such case, He would have them treated with especial favour, and honoured with signal privilege for the father's sake. All sinners are like lost sheep, as being cared for and sought after by appointment of Christ. But such of them as have been baptized and have come into this outward covenant relation are more especially like the *lost* sheep of the house of Israel.

7. *The kingdom of heaven*. This was to be the sum of their preaching, to *call attention* to the reign of Christ as the heavenly kingdom—*coming*—drawing near. This form of

8 Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: <sup>g</sup> freely ye have received, freely give.

9 <sup>h</sup> Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass, in your purses

<sup>g</sup> Ac.8.18,20. 1 Or, *get*. <sup>h</sup> Lu.:2.35. 1 Cor.9.7,&c.

announcement was best fitted to arrest the notice of the Jews, and to express the advance of the Gospel reign. The term "*at hand*" is used in the literal sense of "*presently*"—that is, present here, nigh, even at the doors.

8. *Heal the sick*. Such is the benevolent design of Christ's mission, and by this visible manifestation in bodily diseases was His spiritual work to be set forth, breaking every yoke (Isa. 61. 1). They could do these things only by His divine power, committed to them, but needing to be exercised by Him at every step, in every instance.—¶ *Lepers*—were those defiled with the loathsome disease of leprosy, which excluded the poor sufferers from society, as ceremonially unclean and dreadful, and which nothing but the power of God could cleanse. These miracles they were to work in the name of Christ, not in their own name, nor in any other.—¶ *Freely give*. They were to dispense these benefits as *free gifts*. So they had received them.—and so, in their healing acts, they were to set forth the *free bounty* of God. Simon Magus thought the gift of God, in working such wonders, could be bought and sold for money, and though he was baptized, he was denounced for this. Maintenance, but not *money-making*, by the Gospel, was allowed (1 Cor. 9. 14). The exorcists wrought only for money.

9. *Provide* (margin, *get neither &c.*). They were not to carry any store for themselves. Their journey was not to be *long*, and the office work was to support itself. Though they were to dispense gratuitously, yet they were to look for maintenance from their work, and to cast themselves upon the people.—¶ *In your purses*.

10 Nor scrip for *your* journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet <sup>1</sup> staves : for <sup>i</sup> the workman is worthy of his meat.

11 And into whatsoever city or town ye shall enter, inquire who in it is worthy ; and there abide till ye go thence.

12 And when ye come into an house, salute it.

<sup>1</sup> A staff. <sup>i</sup> Lu. 10.7, &c.

They were not to go as other travellers, with a supply of money in their girdle or belt.

10. *Scrip*. Knapsack for provisions.—¶ *Shoes* were here forbidden. In Mark it is said, Be shod with sandals. They were not to make any special preparation, nor take spare clothing.—¶ *Staves* (margin, a staff). Mark says, they might have nothing but “a staff only,” for the journey. They were not to *provide* staves, though they might *take one*. The whole idea is, that they should not make the common provision of travellers, in view of a journey, nor take any thing extra ; but they should rather go empty, and look for the reward of their work. Their business was mainly spiritual, they must feel it to be so, and under the God of Providence, the work should support itself. The people would be bound to supply them with necessities, and they should make this claim upon them as they went. And He that sent them would furnish them, if none others did. Christ's ministers have no right to be secular. Christ commands His servants to come to Him empty rather than full.

11. *Worthy*. Well disposed toward their doctrine and work—such as should be ready to receive them and their doctrine, as is explained by the next verse—those to whom they might hopefully preach the Gospel, as being ready to entertain them and their message. They were to *inquire*, and such an one as was “of good report” in things pertaining to the kingdom,

13 And if the house be worthy, let your peace come upon it ; but if it be not worthy, let your peace return to you.

14 And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words when ye depart out of that house or city, shake <sup>k</sup> off the dust of your feet.

15 Verily I say unto you, <sup>1</sup> It

<sup>j</sup> Ps. 35.13. <sup>k</sup> Ne. 5.13. Ac. 13.51 ; 18.6. <sup>l</sup> c. 11.22, 24

they were to *select* as their host, and abide with him. Staying in one house, they would better be found, and could more easily despatch their work. Here it was hinted that they were not to make long stay in any one place. The reception of the gospel message is our only worthiness with God. Christ is jealous of the treatment which His ministers receive.

12. *Salute it*—the house. Pay *your address to the family* as ambassadors of Christ, and thus ascertain what reception you shall meet with.

13. *Let your peace*. The common mode of saluting was the simple word “*Peace*,” which denotes one's *good wishes*. May peace and prosperity attend you ! If the house be favourably disposed, let your peace come upon it—that is, labour to bless them according to the full import of your salutation, and they shall indeed be blessed. But if they should be found unfavourable to you and to your message, withdraw your salutation—leave the house—and your blessing or pronouncing of peace upon them shall return to you again : they shall not be blessed (Luke 10. 6). A cup of cold water given in the name of a disciple shall not lose its reward.

14. *Shake off the dust*. This act was understood, like the *washing of the hands* by Pilate, as signifying innocence of the crime. Accordingly it is a *begging to have no part or lot* in the punishment. The guilt is metaphorically regarded as adhering to the hands or feet (see 1 Kings 2.

shall be more tolerable for the laud of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for that city.

16 ¶ Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves :

5), as the next versé shows. So in Mark 6. 11, it is expressed, "*For a testimony against them.*" Your doom be on yourselves; and let not even the least dust of your sin and condemnation attach to us! Such an act would be most expressive, as testifying the reprobation of the Apostles. They actually did this. Acts 13. 51; 18. 6. Many there are now, who refuse to receive or hear the Gospel. From such, the ministers of Christ can at last only turn away, and disclaim any portion with them. For the punishment will be so complete, that it would seem to reach even the dust trodden by such transgressors. "Have no fellowship with them," "Seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves *unworthy* of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles." Acts 13. 46, 51. "They shook off the dust of their feet against them."

15. Sodom and Gomorrah were the chief of those cities of the plain which were destroyed by fire raining down from the Lord out of heaven. Gen. 19. 24, 25. They were along the south-east border of Palestine, and their site is now covered by the Dead Sea. Their punishment, though they were so wicked as to be cut off so terribly from the earth, will be more tolerable at the day of final judgment—that is, *more easily endured*, comparatively—than that of such as "obey not the Gospel!" And the reason is, that these neglect and reject so great salvation, and sin against this greater light. For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, how shall ye escape? (Heb. 2. 2.)

16. These words are spoken more generally of their apostleship, not merely of the particular expedition on which they were at this time sent out, which should be of short duration. The ministers of Christ amongst

be ye therefore <sup>m</sup> wise as serpents, and <sup>1</sup> harmless <sup>n</sup> as doves.

17 But beware <sup>o</sup> of men : for <sup>p</sup> they will deliver you up to the

*m* Ro. 16.19. Ep. 5.15. 1 Cr. *simple.* n Ph 2  
*o* Ph.3.2. p c. 24.9. Mar.13.9.

their enemies are compared to sheep defenceless in the midst of wolves—i. e., the fierce and ravenous foes that should prowl about their path, and seek to devour them. Such were the false prophets; "Inwardly they are ravening wolves." ch. 7. 15. Satan is termed a *roaring lion*. Wicked men that are enemies of Christ's ministers, are here termed *wolves*. The reference is to the *persecutions that they should afterward endure*. (So in Matt. 24. the language is first concerning things *near*, and then concerning things *remote*.) Therefore they should require at once to be prudent and discerning, while they should be gentle and meek. This wisdom qualified by the harmlessness, is *wisdom to do good* and not evil. (See David toward Saul.) Christians are, like sheep of the fold, defenceless, and like them they should look to the good shepherd. Christ was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers was dumb, so He opened not His mouth; and yet He was *wisdom* itself. Proverbs. The word rendered "harmless" here, is the same in Rom. 16. 19, "*simple—concerning evil.*" Its leading sense is, *unoffensive*. It occurs but three times in the New Testament. Serpents are called *wise*, because they have always been the symbols of wisdom. Be full of keen and cautious discernment. The Egyptians expressed their idea of wisdom by the figure of a serpent. Christians are not to abjure true wisdom, but to cultivate it and pray for it. Christian ministers are to have a wisdom as remarkable as that of serpents, only *from God, and for good*.

17. *Beware.* Take good care. Be cautious of the men. Here they were to show their wisdom in dealing with those who are like wolves. They were to expect such enemies, not to



councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues ;

18 And ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles.

19 But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak ; for it shall be

q Ac.5.40. 2Cor.11.24. r Ac.24 & 25. s Mar.13. 11. Lu.12.11 ; 21.14,15.

avoid them, nor invite their attack. The caution is explained more fully in vss. 19, 23, &c.—¶ *To the councils.* To the Sanhedrim for trial, where the high priests met.—¶ *Synagogues,* where the people also assembled.

18. *Governors.* See Acts 4. 5-30; 5. 17-33; 12. 1-4; 18. 12; 23. 33; 25. 6, 10; 26. 1, 28, 30. Paul before Nero (2 Tim. 4. 16) fulfilled this forewarning. It was *for the sake of Christ*, because it was on account of Christ's doctrine and cause that they were thus treated. It would be *for a testimony* against these magistrates and the Gentiles, by preaching to them the claims of Christ, and making the gospel known to them, that they might be without excuse, that their unbelief might be rebuked, and that the judgment of God against them might be vindicated. So the gospel is to be preached to all nations, "*for a testimony*" before the end come. See the same phrase where the leper was to offer the gift that Moses commanded *for a testimony unto them.* ch. 8. 4. Though this prediction by Christ was so plain, and though the results so clearly proved His foreknowledge, nothing hindered the apostles from going forward. He who foreknew future events, could foreordain their deliverance; hence they received their persecutions with calmness and trust in God, and rather rejoiced that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His name. Acts 5. 41.

19. *Take no thought*—have no anxiety. So the term occurs in Matt. 6 25, see note They would natu-

ally have great terror in coming before kings, as to how and what they should speak, lest they should be unable to vindicate themselves and the truth, in such an embarrassing condition. They were to feel most perfectly at ease on this point; for at the instant, they should have words put into their mouths from God. This would be a most complete relief.

20 For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you.

21 And the brother shall deliver up the brother to death, and the father the child: and the children shall rise up again *their* parents, and cause them be put to death.

rally have great terror in coming before kings, as to how and what they should speak, lest they should be unable to vindicate themselves and the truth, in such an embarrassing condition. They were to feel most perfectly at ease on this point; for at the instant, they should have words put into their mouths from God. This would be a most complete relief.

20. *The Spirit of your Father.* A double consolation. It should not depend upon their ability of speech, their rhetoric or discourse, but it should be a question of the Holy Ghost's ability. And this was the Spirit of *their Father*, working in them and speaking in them. For it was He who should give illumination and power of discourse suited to the case. This was not to encourage indolence in attainment of knowledge, or any requisite qualifications, but to fortify their faith in God for all the possible trials of their case.

21. Persecution should be so violent as to break through all the ties of kindred. The opposition to Christ would be so great as to destroy all those natural affections in families, which are the strongest on earth.

22. They are here further encouraged against all their fears, by the assurance that the *result* should be most happy. Their salvation should depend on God, who here beforehand certifies them of the issue. They who should endure should be saved. They had only to hold out in this confidence, and they should see it come to pass as He promised.

22 And ye shall be hated of all *men* for my name's sake; but he that endureth to the end shall be saved.

23 But when they persecute you in this city flee ye into another: for verily I say unto you, Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel till the Son of man be come.

24 The disciple is not above

*t* De. 12. 12, 13. Re. 2. 10 *u* Ac. 8. 1. 1 Or. *end*, or, *finish*. *v* Lu. 6. 40. Jno. 13. 16; 15. 20.

23. It should not be their object to avoid persecution by fleeing from the reach of it, nor were they to run needlessly into it, nor to lie down and die under it when they could serve the Master more. It should be their object to do others good. They were to flee into another city, not in order to escape all trial, but in order to labour in another place with better success. The plan and prospect contemplated their being driven by persecution through the cities of Israel. So Acts 8. 4, "They that were scattered abroad, went every where preaching the word." Christ here gave them encouragement of a speedy coming of His, before they should have gone through this itinerating work. He refers here to the Transfiguration, in which He purposed to reveal Himself by a special manifestation, that should be most important in the history of their work. The apostles owned this to be a special coming of Christ when they asked, why say the Scribes that Elias must first come? They fell on their faces when they saw His glory, and heard Him announced as Christ from heaven. Peter refers to it as "the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ," that he saw with the rest on the holy mount, when they were eye-witnesses of His majesty. This prospect was given here of a special manifestation, speedily, which should satisfy them of His authority and glory, and should be a great step in the prosecution of His re-

his master, for the servant above his lord.

25 It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household?

26 Fear them not therefore for there is nothing covered

*v* Jno. 8. 48. 1 Beelzebub. *x* Mar. 4. 22. Lu 12. 23 1 Cor. 4. 5.

deeming work (ch. 17. 2 Peter 1. 17).

24, 25. They were to be satisfied with the severities of their lot, when they remembered the greater severities of His, and considered that they could not expect better treatment than He. The servant is not above his lord. If He endured privation, and went through drudgery in the cause, though He was the Master, what better lot could be expected for the servants? They should ask no better or easier condition than they saw Him have. This was good enough for them. A family circle is usually called by the same name; and if they have called me, the Master of the house, "Beelzebub," in derision and scandal, how much more shall they call them of His household by like abusive epithets? (see ch. 9. 34; 12. 24. Mark 3. 22. Luke 11. 15. John 8. 48.) See Jude, vs. 15, "Hard speeches."—"Beelzebub" (see 2 Kings 1. 2) was chief of the false gods of the Philistines, and was worshipped by the inhabitants of Ekron. The name signifies (from Baal, god; and zebub, fly) the god of flies—having power over all noxious insects. This was as much as to say, the "god of idolatry." The worst devil was lord of idols in their view. This alluded to the false worship which they accused Him of setting up in claiming to be God (see *Lightfoot*, vol. II., pp. 185, 195). See 2 Ki. 1. 3. "Is it not because there is not a God in Israel, that ye go to inquire of Baal-zebub," &c.

that shall not be revealed; and hid, that shall not be known.

27 What I tell you in darkness, *that* speak ye in light: and what ye hear in the ear, *that* preach ye upon the house-tops.

28 And <sup>v</sup> fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him

*y* Is. 8.12,13; 51.7,12. 1Pe.3.14.

26. *Fear them not therefore.* A reason given for their courage and confidence is the coming development: they should see greater things than these. Their Master should yet appear to them in His glory, and their enemies, and His, should be put to shame. And a final day is coming, when the truth shall come to light, and things shall be called by their true names. Never fear, for truth will prevail.

27. Therefore *speak out* the words of your great Teacher and Master. He taught them privately, as twelve scholars or private pupils. They were to teach these things most publicly, in all the world, without concealment, disguise, or fear. There were many reasons why Christ could not come out openly as the Messiah at first. Men would have prevented His work, or set Him up as a temporal king, or charged Him with treason against the State. Therefore, He would not have those whom He cured tell of Him; nor would He have the transfiguration told of till after the resurrection, when it should be better understood, believed, and appreciated. Both Christ and His apostles were compelled at first to speak privately and in a whisper, for fear of the Jews, and from the weakness and peril of the cause. But they were thus to go abroad to their great public work, and to speak boldly and openly in the face of persecution.

28. They were here emboldened against the fear of death itself. This they should have to meet. But what is this?—*the body*. Offence against God is the only proper ground of fear,

which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

29 Are not two sparrows sold for a <sup>1</sup> farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father.

30 But <sup>2</sup> the very hairs of your head are all numbered.

<sup>1</sup> In value, *half-penny farthing*, a 10th part of the Roman penny, c.18.23. <sup>2</sup> Ac. 27.34.

for thereby both soul and body are exposed to eternal death. NOTE: This proves that the wicked shall be sent to hell, and their bodies shall be raised from the grave to suffer forever with their souls. Psalm 9. 17.

29. In Luke we have it that the disciples were charged not only *not* to fear men who were but dust, but to fear and honour Him who has power over body and soul. "Yea, I say unto you, fear Him" (Luke 12. 5). And the verses here seem to follow naturally from that sentiment. The protection of our life is in the hands of God, who has body and soul in His power. And seeing even wicked men who would destroy us, are under His overruling providence, we ought not to fear them as though they could do any thing without His consent. So we also are objects of Divine care.—**¶ Sparrows.** These are insignificant birds, and so unimportant that two of them are sold for a farthing; and yet God's providence is so extensive, so minute and particular, that even one of them shall not fall on the ground, without God being there, allowing it, and ordering it, and arranging that it should be one and not another of them that should fall.—

**¶ Your Father.** This God is your Father. And if God gives to them such care, shall He not much more care for you who are of so much more value?

30. *The very hairs*—the least things that belong to you. This is proverbial language, expressing the most minute and trivial interest connected with any one. The very hairs of your head, for which you care so little, and which you never pretend to

31 Fear ye not therefore; ye are of more value than many sparrows.

32 Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him<sup>a</sup> will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven.

33 But<sup>b</sup> whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven.

<sup>a</sup> Re. 3.5. <sup>b</sup> 2Ti. 2.12.

count, are *all numbered*. God's providence is so particular that it reaches to every creature—even to a sparrow or a worm, and to the very separate hairs of the head, and to every thing belonging to and concerning all His creatures, and all their actions.

31. *Fear ye not therefore*. This refers back to vs. 26 and 28. The soul's value, as shown in the priceless work of Christ, is our encouragement.

32, 33. Such a bold, unshaken confidence in Christ, as one is ready to declare openly before men, however they oppose, is demanded. This is the spirit needed for the work: trusting Christ for every thing, and undauntedly boasting Him before the world. There must be an open, earnest espousing of Christ, cleaving to Him, living upon Him—a public confession of His name in the act, and of His all-sufficiency in the life. Such as make Christ their boast will be openly acknowledged by Him as His children in the day of judgment. This word rendered *confess*, is the same word elsewhere rendered *profess* (1 Tim. 6. 12). A profession of religion is a profession not of our extra piety, nor of our worthiness, nor of our being able to stand alone, but a profession of Christ. It confesses our unworthiness and insufficiency, and also His merit and sufficiency. It is confessing or *owning* that Christ is our hope and our all. It professes a determination to follow Him as disciples, and to look to Him alone for salvation. This is to be done before men—publicly in the

34 Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: <sup>c</sup> I came not to send peace, but a sword.

35 For I am come to set a man at variance<sup>d</sup> against his father, and the daughter<sup>e</sup> against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law.

36 And<sup>e</sup> a man's foes shall be they of his own household.

<sup>c</sup> Lu. 12.49,53. <sup>d</sup> Mi. 7.5,6. <sup>e</sup> Ps. 41.9.

church, by uniting with this separate body and coming out from the world. It is to be done in all the life, by witnessing for Christ before gainsayers and beholders. Christ will own all such as His, and profess to them that He has known them, and profess to the world that these are His brethren and chosen; while such as deny Him, or are ashamed of Him—refusing to confess Him before men, and practically having no connexion with Him in His Church or His cause—shall be denied and disowned by Him at the judgment.

34, 35, 36. *Think not, &c.* Though the gospel message is peace, yet it introduces collision. Christ's ministers are not to expect worldly ease or advantage. They must not look for peace and harmony with best friends in serving Christ. There would be severe and cruel opposition. The tendency of Christ's doctrines and service, would be to make breaches even in families, because He introduced into a world of sin an opposite element (see Mark 7. 6); and like water upon fire, it would create strife. This was not His object, to make family discords, but it should be the effect of His work; therefore they must not expect easy times in His service. The gospel has produced such results always and every where. Christ's brethren and sisters believed not, and were offended in Him.—¶ *A sword*. Luke reads *division* (ch. 12. 52). This is the idea. Strife would ensue where some pro-

37 He<sup>r</sup> that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me : and he that loveth son or daughter more than me, is not worthy of me.

38 And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me.

f Lu. 14. 26.

fessed Him ; hatred would be the consequence, and separation. Christ warns them, therefore, that they must be prepared, even for such painful sacrifice as that of dearest friends.

37. If we love any other more than Christ, though it be father or mother, then He has no claims upon us but such as are subordinate to theirs, and can expect nothing from us, except in a secondary way. We could, in such case, do nothing for Him without their consent, and could not follow Him without first paying the last attentions to them—*seeing them dead and buried first* (ch. 8. 21). But all His claims upon us are for our *supreme love*; and if He receives not this He receives nothing that He claims. Such as love any being or thing more than Him are *not worthy of Him*. They are not such as He calls for, nor such as His cause demands; and they cannot be His disciples, nor should they be considered such.

38. Since the world is so full of opposition to Christ's cause, as He had just said, and since such strifes and persecutions are to be met, every man will have trials to endure, and sufferings to undergo for the Master. This burden is here called *his cross*, in which language Christ alludes to His own cross which already He bore in secret—a load of trials and reproaches and sufferings. He that taketh not freely the load of worldly condemnations and penalty that is laid upon him for Christ—he that declines duty because of what it costs—he that serves Christ only so far as his convenience and ease will allow, is not worthy of *Him*, who "endures the

39 He<sup>s</sup> that findeth his life, shall lose it : and he that loseth his life for my sake, shall find it.

40 ¶ He<sup>b</sup> that receiveth you, receiveth me ; and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me.

41 He<sup>i</sup> that receiveth a pro-

g c. 16. 25. h c. 13. 5 ; 25. 40, 45. Jno. 12. 44. i 1 K. 17. 10. Ho. 6. 10.

cross" for sinners "despising the shame." Luke here brings in a paragraph, about building a tower and counting the cost; for every one who professes Christ should count the cost, and this is what Christ here urges. The cross hints here of His death.

39. Here is a general declaration on this whole subject of self-denial. He that *looks after* his life, consulting only his comfort, his profit, his living, shall be disappointed and lose the highest style of living and its highest joys. Luke reads, he that saveth his life, *i. e.*, spareth it and seeketh it as the highest interest, shall fail in his attempt. The selfish man shall not be happy, shall not half live, stinting himself and making his own life miserable to hoard up the means of living. The man always bent upon keeping his health shall often lose his health by his vain devices. So he who looks out for himself supremely, loves himself, and trusts himself rather than God, shall fail of his life, especially of that which is eternal. While he that loseth (or is willing to lose, see ch. 16. 25) his life for my sake—willing to take up his cross and go through trials and perils from supreme devotion to me—shall find his life. He shall find out the true life, and the salvation of his soul. What a terrible loss is it for a man to gain the whole world, if one could do it, and lose his own soul or be cast away (ch. 16. 26). The idea here is, *he that saveth himself* shall lose himself or be lost, while he that loseth himself for Christ's sake shall be saved.

40-42. Here Christ shows them the high claims which they shall have

phe. in the name of a prophet, shall receive a prophet's reward; and he that receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man, shall receive a righteous man's reward.

42 And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily

on the hospitality of a wicked world. This is for their encouragement. He is with them alway, even unto the end of the world. He held himself identified with his true followers. They in Him and He in them—hence they were to go out with this feeling of identity with the Master. Whoso received *them*, did thereby receive Him (see ch. 25. 40). This alludes to the reception spoken of (ch. 10. 13), receiving their persons and messages with favour. These words also seem to have been spoken as a *passport* given them by Christ to embolden them in presenting themselves and their messages, and to comfort them when cast out. This related to all the course of their work.

41. *In the name of a prophet.* That is, because he is a prophet—from this motive. The principle was first stated, that *Christ was to be treated in them, for they were one with Him.* Now the principle is laid down that the sincere reception of a prophet or a righteous man—a religious teacher or a private Christian—from love to Christ and the cause, will secure a share in the reward of such prophet or righteous man; for thus an interest can be shown, making common cause with them in their trials, and such shall have a portion with them in their recompense above. So important is the good treatment of Christ's cause, that often it shows true piety most manifestly, and is a token of the genuine part which such have in the inheritance of the saints.

42. Kindness and hospitality to the servants of Christ, and liberality to

I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward.

### CHAPTER XI.

AND it came to pass, when Jesus had made an end of commanding his twelve disciples, he departed thence, to teach and to preach in their cities.

2 Now when John

a Lu. 7. 18, &c.

the cause of Christ, and cordial sympathy with the church of Christ in all its operations and wants, are here commended, and the principle is such that whoever does the least out of affection for the cause, shall be amply rewarded. Whoever gives a cup of cold water to one of these disciples (or little ones) in the name, or for the sake of a disciple, and because of his being a disciple, he honours Christ in the Christian whom he helps, and he shall in no wise lose his reward. (Matt. 25).—¶ *These little ones.* would be easily understood as referring to the disciples, because the term among the Jews for Master was *Rabbi*, which was from a word meaning *Great*.

### CHAPTER XI.

1. *He departed thence.* The *Third* circuit in Galilee is here announced. But there are three chapters of *back events* which come in here as a parenthesis, after which this circuit will be detailed (ch. 14. § 63). The twelve had previously been chosen, before the Sermon on the Mount was delivered. They were now instructed and sent forth in Galilee; and from this point Christ departed "to teach and to preach in their cities"—that is, in the cities of Galilee. He did not go into Judea as yet. Here the Evangelist Matthew introduces *back events*, which occupy chapters 11. 12. 13; these belong to His 31st year.

[§ 41. JOHN THE BAPTIST IN PRISON SENDS DISCIPLES TO JESUS.]--Galilee.

—Capernaum?

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
11. 2-19		7. 18-35	

had heard in the prison the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples,

3 And said unto him, Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?

4 Jesus answered and said unto them, Go and shew John again

those things which ye do hear and see :

5 The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them.

6 And blessed is he, whosoever

This is not to be read as directly following upon the former chapter of events. Here, *previous doings* are recited. Soon after the Sermon on the Mount, and the healing of the Centurion's servant, and raising the widow's son, John the Baptist sent this message. In Luke we learn that as John's disciples told him of those miracles, he sent messengers to Christ. John was first put in prison just before our Lord began His work, and came from Nazareth, Matt. 4. 12, to preach, 17. He had been put in prison by Herod for faithfully denouncing, as unlawful and shameful, his marrying his brother Philip's wife. Josephus relates that he was imprisoned in the castle of Machaerus in the south part of Perea, the region east of the Jordan.

3. Art Thou He that should come? John knew of Christ enough to serve him in ordinary circumstances. But now he had been detained for some time in a gloomy prison, and could not see or know all that was going on. He had evidently heard of His wondrous works, but he doubtless expected, from the prophecy of Malachi, a somewhat different manifestation, especially a more immediate occurrence of the blessing and punishment promised. So his misgivings were only superficial and such as did but require this explanation of the word and works. Besides, he would send his disciples to Christ as he beforepointed two of them to Him.—(John 1. 36). He was sent to herald Christ, and now as his public work was done, he would direct his disciples to Him whom he announced.—¶ *He that should come.* This

refers directly to Malachi's prophecy, by which John was naturally guided; as it was there that he was promised as the Elias, in connexion with Christ the *one that should come*. Mal. 3. the language occurs: "The Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come." Behold *He shall come*. "The day of His coming," &c. And John's language refers to these prophecies. He inquires for Him that was promised, if Christ were truly He. Christ was expected by the Jews because He was predicted in their Scriptures.—¶ *Or do we look for another?*—that is, to answer the prophet's description of the one that was to come.

4. *Go and tell John again.* From Luke we learn that *at that same hour*, Christ cured many of diseases and plagues, &c., giving John's messengers a specimen, and this only reply to their inquiry. He answered in language that would explain itself, and must be understood by those familiar with the prophet's speaking of the Messiah.

5. He appealed to His miracles wrought in their presence, for a complete attestation of His Messiahship. A miracle is an exertion of Divine power, and therefore is the plainest, highest proof that can be given. These things also had been predicted by Isaiah, ch. 35. 42, and 61. 66, and 29. 18, 19, and they could see that they were now fulfilled in Him.

6. Here Christ shows that though this is good and sufficient ground for believing in Him, yet in His person and doctrine, there would be things at which the natural heart might take offence (or *stumble*). The proofs He brings are not such as to compe the

er shall not be offended<sup>b</sup> in me.

7 ¶ And, as they departed, Jesus began to say unto the multitude concerning John, What went ye out into the wilderness to see? a reed shaken with the<sup>d</sup> wind?

8 But what went ye out for to see? a man clothed in soft raiment? Behold, they that wear

<sup>b</sup> Is. 8. 14, 15. 1 Co. 1. 22, 23. 1 Pe. 2. 8. c Lu. 7. 24-30. <sup>d</sup> Eph. 4. 14. Ja. 1. 6.

belief of men, and some, after beginning with Him might break off. Therefore he adds, Blessed is he who shall not *be offended* in me. His *humble* life was likely to offend the proud, because they would think it mean, and vulgar, and beggared, and out-cast, and unfit for their association. His *death* offends the proud, because it was ignominious and accursed. And in the doctrines which He taught, there is so much that is abasing to men—as, the utter helplessness of fallen nature and the entire dependence on Christ's work for salvation, and the distinguishing grace in our renewal—that they are likely to be offended in Him. It was so with the young ruler, the people of Nazareth and the Pharisees. Persons show that they are ashamed of Christ by refusing to acknowledge Him before men, even when they are persuaded of His claims.

7. Christ takes this opportunity of giving testimony to John, as John had testified of Him. Their work was a joint one, but John was to decrease, while He was to increase. He would have the multitude rightly understand John's mission and character, that they might rightly understand His. Here, then, He tells who and what John was. In ch. 3. 5, we read that, Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan, went out to John in the wilderness.—¶ *A reed.* A flag that grows around the Jordan. The character which is represented by a *reed shaken with the wind*, is a light fickle character,

soft *clothing* are in kings houses.

9 But what went ye out for to see? a prophet? yea, I say unto you, and more than a prophet.

10 For this is *he* of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee.

<sup>e</sup> Is. 40. 3. Mal. 3. 1. Lu. 1. 76.

“carried about with every wind of doctrine,” and of favour. They scarcely knew what manner of person they went out in a vain curiosity to see. But Christ assures them, that John was a firm, substantial character. He showed his firmness by testifying of Christ before He had come, and maintaining his own inferiority to Christ, among so many temptations to exalt himself.

8. *Soft raiment.* They could not have expected to see one different from what this work of John required. No soft clothing would have been appropriate for him. And if they understood his work as a preacher of repentance, they would have understood the rough clothing. He was dressed in a raiment of camel's hair, and a leathern girdle around his waist—dressed for the wilderness, and for his work—not for king's houses; and his preaching was that of repentance, not of ease and self-security. See Luke 7. 25.

9. *A prophet.* This name applied not only to those who predicted future events, but to such as gave religious instructions. The people thought John to be a prophet (ch. 14. 5). But Christ declares that he was more than an ordinary prophet, since he was His immediate herald and personal forerunner—“*much more.*” Luke 7. 26.

10. In Mal. 3. 1, this had been written of John, that he was to be the *messenger of Christ*, before whom John was sent. This passage is the substance of the prophet's language, and Christ here shows that John had the



11 Verily, I say unto you, among<sup>f</sup> them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding, <sup>g</sup>he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

12 And from the days of John the Baptist until now the king-

*f* Jno. 5. 35. *g* Jno. 1. 15, 27; 3. 30.

honour of its applying to him. Accordingly, the Gospel by Mark opens with direct reference to this prophecy.

11. John was greater than other prophets, because to him it was given to stand personally related to Christ as His forerunner—to prepare His way—to baptize Him, to testify of Him, and to point to Him as the Lamb which the law required.—¶ *He that is least*—or less, inferior. He that is of inferior standing to him in the Christian church is greater than He. The Christian economy is so much in advance of that under which John lived and acted, that he who is of comparatively low rank among the teachers here, is greater than John. He has a more advanced position, and teaches, not merely the Messiah come, but *Christ crucified* (1 Cor. 1. 23). Behold the dignity and excellency of a Sabbath School teacher. Any office of teaching Gospel truth is honourable.

12. *From the days.* All about this time of John's preaching and Christ's, the Christian economy had begun to excite general interest, and to create an extensive zeal for obtaining its privileges.—¶ *The kingdom of heaven.* The new dispensation now preached, in which Christ's kingdom was to be established openly.—¶ *Suffereth violence*—as though it were attacked. The people were so zealous and earnest; and this would go to show John's superior position above other prophets, and an ordinary Christian teacher's pre-eminence over John.—¶ *The violent.* Those who are earnest, and who strive to get possession of its blessings, succeed. Luke 13. 24; 16. 16.

dom of heaven<sup>1</sup> suffereth violence, and the violent take<sup>h</sup> it by force.

13 For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John.

14 And if ye will receive *it*, this is Elias, which<sup>i</sup> was for to come.

<sup>1</sup> Or, *is gotten by force, and they that thrust men, take it, &c.* <sup>h</sup> Lu. 16. 16. Ep. 6. 11-13. <sup>i</sup> Mal. 4. 5. c. 17. 12.

13. *For all the prophets and the law.* "The Law" was that part of the Old Testament included in the five books of Moses. "The Prophets" comprised the rest, excepting "the Psalms." Sometimes, as here, the Law and the Prophets is a phrase taken for the Old Testament Scriptures. The Old Testament preaching continued until John's time, since which the gospel had been proclaimed. John was himself a herald of Christ, and so came properly under the Old Testament. John's character and rank are understood only by considering his relation to this new economy. In him all the Old Testament prophesying closed. Since his time was the New. At the same time, this responsibility must be weighed, in reference to this altered state of things. In Luke 16. 16, this sentiment is introduced to rebuke the Pharisees, who clung to the Jewish ritual after the gospel was openly proclaimed.—¶ *Prophesied*—taught of Christ. "The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy" (Rev. 19. 10).

14. *And if ye will receive it.* Our Lord now plainly declares to them that John was no other than the person predicted by the last of their old prophets under the name of Elias. His coming is foretold in Mal. 4. 5. They were familiar with this prophecy, but they had not recognized or received John the Baptist as he that was to come under this name. They had done unto him whatsoever they listed (ch. 17. 12). As in reference to Christ, they had not known Him. John was not Elias, risen from the dead. When they asked him, Art thou Elias? he answered, No; but

15 He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

16 But whereunto shall I liken this generation? It is like unto children sitting in the markets, and calling unto their fellows,

17 And saying, We have piped

*J Ro. 2.7 &c. k Lu. 7.31.*

he was come in the spirit and power of Elias (Luke 1. 17) or *Elijah*. In declaring to them this truth, He says: "If ye will receive it," meaning that He knew how they would dispute John's being the Elias, as they disputed Himself being the Messiah. They expected that Elias himself would personally reappear in the flesh. He meant by this to show how it was a matter to be believed by them—how it belonged to their disposition, either to believe or not, and if they would not believe it nor receive it, it would be their own fault.

15. *He that hath ears.* This is a phrase used where a truth is conveyed which is not naturally understood, requiring a spiritual penetration and disposition to receive it. It calls special attention as to something not apparent at first view, and requiring more deep examination. It is also used to signify that the truth is of general application. It is spoken to us as well as unto them. We must hear with deep attention, and apply all our faculties to the message received.

16. *This generation*—this people; alluding, as we learn from Luke 7. 30, to the Pharisees and lawyers, who persisted in finding fault, whether with John or with Christ, always having some ground of complaint. "All the people and the publicans," it is said, "*justified God*" (instead of finding fault with these declarations); while this other class, the proud opposers of Christ, rejected the counsel of God against themselves. They could not bear to think that John was the Elias that was to come, because he was to come as a reprover and

unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned unto you, and ye have not lamented.

18 For John came neither eating nor drinking; and they say, He hath a devil.

19 The Son of man came eating and drinking: and they

*l c. 10.25. Jno. 7.20. m c. 9.10. Jn. 2.2.*

threatener of the curse upon their nation. So that that generation or these opposers of that day, were like children at play, and they treated all these grave matters as child's play. Allusion is here made to the custom of children to assemble for sport in public places.—¶ *Markets*—places of public gathering, in cities and large towns.

17. Piping and dancing were common at festivals (Luke 15. 25), and mourning and lamenting in companies were common at funerals (ch. 9. 23). "Neither the gay nor the grave suits you. Both have been tried, and you are still displeased. Neither and nothing satisfies."—¶ *Piped*. Piping or playing on a wind instrument, as a shepherd's pipe, was the signal for a dance, and the rest of the company were expected so to respond; hence the complaint, that they had not done *their part*. Or if it were a mourning play, the custom was to set up a wail, and the others would join the lamentation.

18. John had come in the manner of an ascetic, *neither eating nor drinking*, but fasting, or living on coarsest food in the wilderness. And ye say, he *hath a devil*; that is, is possessed by the evil one, like the common demoniacs of that time. It seemed strange, and they called him a *lunatic*—possessed.

19. *The Son of man*. Christ came in the opposite manner, *eating and drinking* as other men, and still you find fault—you make this a ground of complaint. You say, *Behold a man gluttonous*, fond of high living, and a *wine-bibber* (or, *wine-drinker*), one who is fond of wine and given to

say, Behold a man gluttonous, and a wine-bibber, a friend of publicans<sup>n</sup> and sinners. But<sup>o</sup> Wisdom is justified of her children.

20 Then<sup>p</sup> began he to upbraid the cities wherein most of his mighty works were done, because they repented not:

21 Woe unto thee, Chorazin!

<sup>n</sup> Lu. 15.2; 19.7. <sup>o</sup> Ps. 92.5,6. Pr. 17.24. <sup>p</sup> Lu. 10.13, &c.

drink. They misrepresented Him, because they hated His doctrines and claims.—¶ *But Wisdom.* The proverb means that the truth will always have followers, who will vindicate it in their doctrine and lives. Christ was the wisdom of God—called *Wisdom* in the Proverbs. All the *children of wisdom*, that is, the truly wise, justify the doctrine of Christ. They vindicate it in their words, and in their lives. See Luke 7. 29; where observ<sup>d</sup>, it was the people and the publicans *justifying God*, while the Pharisees and lawyers *rejected the counsel of God* against themselves, that drew from Christ these foregoing remarks.

[§ 45. REFLECTIONS OF JESUS ON APPEALING TO HIS MIGHTY WORKS.]—*Capernaum.*

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
11. 20-30			

20, 21. Our Lord was led now to upbraid—that is, to censure, and rebuke, and condemn the treatment He had commonly received.—¶ ‘*Wo.*’ This is opposed to ‘*Blessed.*’—Most of our Lord’s mighty works were done in the cities round the sea of Galilee, Chorazin and Bethsaida. The site of these towns was not far from Capernaum. Bethsaida was the city of Andrew, and Philip, and Peter. John 1. 44.—¶ *Tyre and Sidon.* These were important and well-known cities of ancient time, on the Mediterranean, celebrated for their commerce and magnificence,

woe unto thee, <sup>a</sup> Bethsaida! for if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes.

22 But I say unto you, <sup>r</sup> It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than for you.

23 And thou, Capernaum,

<sup>q</sup> Jno. 12.21. <sup>r</sup> c. 10.15.

but destroyed in accordance with prophecy, for their wickedness. Ezek. 26. 28. Isa. 23. Their remarkable overthrow by the evident hand of God, became notorious and proverbial.—¶ *They would have repented.* (See ch. 21. 31.) This language is to show that the wickedness of these cities in the time of Christ, was greater than that of the worst cities of old. Though those cities were notoriously corrupt, they were ignorant of God, and it could fairly be said, from the facts, that they would not have so despised these mighty works of Christ. They had not sinned against such displays of Divine power and grace. Nineveh repented at the preaching and prophecy of Jonah, and it was allowable to infer that such miracles as had been wrought in these cities would have led *these* to repentance.—¶ *Sackcloth*, was a coarse sacking, worn as a sign of grief with *ashes* thrown on the head, to complete the expression of wo and mourning. These were the well-known badges of desolation and distress, and to repent in “sackcloth and ashes”—“*sitting in*” them, says Luke—means to repent most deeply and bitterly, with all self-abasement.

22. *More tolerable.* (ch. 10. 15,) where this was said of those who reject Christ’s ministers. The doom of those ancient cities will be lighter and more endurable, because they had shown less obstinacy, and had not abused such privileges. Those who, at this day, enjoy religious in-

which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works which have been done in thee had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day.

24 But I say unto you, That it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment than for thee.

25 ¶ At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and

s Is. 14. 13-15. La. 2. 1. t ver. 24. u Lu. 10 21, &c.

structions, and hear the gospel preached, and pass through scenes of great solemnity, without embracing Christ, resemble these cities. The children of pious parents, who have been baptized, and have Sabbath schools, and despise their privileges, must meet a more dreadful doom than the heathen.—¶ *Thou Capernaum.* In this city Christ had tarried much, and performed some of His mightiest works. It was eminently favoured by His presence and power. In this sense, it was *exalted to heaven*, that is, it had the highest privileges. The wo pronounced here is, that it shall meet the very opposite doom. As it had enjoyed more, and abused more, so it should suffer more. It should lose its privileges—Christ would withdraw from it. It should become as desolate as it had been prosperous in temporal things, and its sinful population should perish eternally.

25. *I thank thee.* I confess, or profess. Bengel. Christ began to upbraid these cities, because of the Pharisees, and lawyers, or scribes, who rejected the doctrines He taught about John the Baptist and Himself. They were proud of their own wisdom, and rejected the counsel or wisdom of God. Christ here glorifies the Father for this display of sovereignty. He saw that these things were hid from those who boasted to be wise and prudent, and He

earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.\*

26 Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight.

27 All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.

v Ps. 8. 2. Je. 1. 7, 8. 1 Cor. 1. 27. w c. 23. 18. Lu. 10 22. Jno. 3. 35; 17. 2. 1 Cor. 15. 27. x Jno. 1. 18. 1 Jno 5. 20.

recognizes and approves the ways of the Father with men, that having hid these things from such, He had revealed them unto *babes*, that is, to those "*little children*"—the converted, humbled disciples ("*little ones*" ch. 10. 42), of whom is the kingdom of heaven. (comp. vs. 27.)

26. *Even so.* This is the language of hearty concurrence in the Father's will, and the reason given is merely this: that such was the will of the Father. Luke has these words also at the return of the seventy. This is a temper of implicit and cheerful confidence, which we may all imitate. "*Thy will be done.*" God is glorious in His sovereignty. That gospel truth which the wise reject, babes in Christ can understand—"Born, no of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." In all our times of darkness, we are to trust in God as in one who knows. We are to submit our own wisdom to His, and be resigned, even when we are afflicted, because *so it seems good in His sight.* See Luke 10. 21.

27. *All things.* He had just addressed the Father as Lord of heaven and earth, and as having sovereign control over all men. Now, He presents His own mediatorial relations. Though God is a sovereign, yet God in Christ is a Saviour. Though these differences among men are predestinated, yet Christ is the way, and

28 ¶ Come into me all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am

γ Is 53.2,3. z Ph.2.5-8. 1Pe.2.21.

the truth, and the life. So He at once goes on to state the plan of salvation by a Redeemer. The only way that we can know any thing of God's secret purposes of grace, is to come to Christ and embrace eternal life for ourselves. Thus, as elsewhere, He connects faith with the concealed purposes of God. "All that the Father giveth me, shall come to me," &c. We are of the elect unless we neglect and reject the great salvation. Let God have all the glory of the sinner's salvation. He maketh men to differ. Christians must trace their conversion to distinguishing grace. Let all men hear the gospel. Behold the only plan! It is proclaimed to all. This is the truth, not concealed or secret, but revealed to us. It is for Christ and not for us, to know the Father—"no man hath seen God," &c. He has control of all things as Mediator (ch. 28. 18). All power is given to Him. But the Father is brought down to us in Christ (Colos. 2. 9), who is the revealer of the Godhead. We must learn of Him. He is head over all things to the church. Yet no being knows the Son but the Father. He had just shown (vs. 25) how the Father reveals the Son to some, and not to others. From Him only who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, can we get the discovery of Christ. OBSERVE, Christ is one with the Father. Our condition is hopeless unless Christ reveal to us the Father, and we see God in Christ reconciled. We are blessed, as having such things revealed to us in Christ, beyond kings and prophets of old, and this favour is inestimable; and all from distinguishing grace.

28 Now He accordingly invites to Himself as the only way.—¶ Come into me. Here His object plainly is, not

meek and lowly<sup>a</sup> in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

30 For my yoke is easy,<sup>c</sup> and my burden is light.

a Zec.9.9. b Je.6.16. c JIno.5.3.

to show who are entitled to come to Him, but who are invited, that thus it may appear how He is the fit resort even of the most helpless and forlorn. Not the boasting Pharisees, not John himself was to be their resort, but He, and only He.—¶ All ye that labour. There was a class (Luke 7. 29), who justified God, and received His counsel (toward themselves), which the Pharisees and lawyers, or scribes, despised. "All the people," that is, the common mass, "and the publicans," were of this feeling. Seeing this multitude not disposed to cavil, but rather to receive the truth, and fainting with weariness of body and soul. He was moved with compassion toward them, as sheep having no shepherd (9. 36), and these He addresses here, directing them to Himself. Those who are weary and heavy laden in any such sense, who are tired of the world, and of false teaching, and long for the truth: they who have consciences burdened by a sense of sin, and are ready to hear glad tidings, can hear them from Him. Only to such can the Gospel be glad tidings or good news. Only to such can it give rest.—¶ Rest, is what such want, and He can give it to them and will. It is rest to the soul (vs. 29). This you shall find in your experience—the peace that flows from free forgiveness, and a sense of justification through Christ. So that in Him—coming to Him—looking to Him—finding Him—men shall have rest.

29. Take my yoke. This is added only as giving a further glimpse of His plan for discipleship. There must be subjection of the understanding—"Learn of me." And of the heart—"I am meek and lowly in heart." This must not be overlooked. None can be saved by Christ, but by im-

## CHAPTER XII.

At that time<sup>a</sup> Jesus went on the sabbath day through the corn; and his disciples were an hungered, and began to pluck<sup>b</sup> the ears of corn, and to eat.

2 But when the Pharisees saw it, they said unto him, Behold, thy disciples do that which is

<sup>a</sup> Mar. 2. 23, &c. Lu. 6. 1, &c. <sup>b</sup> De. 23. 25.

explicitly submitting to His plan of salvation. Meekness and lowliness of temper are the great characteristics of discipleship. We must be content to *follow Him*. And this temper He patterns for us: "*Not my will but Thine be done.*" And with this, we shall *find rest to our souls*. *This is rest*. For with this disposition, His yoke upon the feelings is easy—all His restraints are pleasant and welcome—and His burden of service is light. "Wisdom's ways are ways of pleasantness and all her paths are peace."

## CHAPTER XII.

§ 37. THE DISCIPLES PLUCK EARS OF GRAIN ON THE SABBATH.]—*On the way to Galilee.*

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
12. 1-8	2. 23-28	6. 1-5	

1. *At that time.* OBSERVE, this occurred far back, and just after the call of Matthew. The Jewish sabbath answered to our seventh day of the week. The day was changed after the resurrection of Christ, because He rose from the dead on the first day of the week, and rested from that work, and blessed the day and hallowed it. It is our duty to keep this sabbath holy because it is the Christian sabbath, commemorating the finished work of Christ for us sinners, and an earnest of the eternal sabbath in heaven reserved for the people of God. Luke says (6. 1), that this was *the second sabbath after the first*, literally the *second-first sabbath*. It was known by this name, from the festival appointments. The passover feast was celebrated about our March and April.

not lawful to do<sup>c</sup> upon the sabbath day.

3 But he said unto them, Have ye not read what David did,<sup>d</sup> when he was an hungered, and they that were with him;

4 How he entered into the house of God, and did eat the shew-bread,<sup>e</sup> which was not

<sup>c</sup> Ex. 31. 15. <sup>d</sup> 1 Sa. 21. 6. <sup>e</sup> Ex. 25. 30.

On the second day of the paschal week a sheaf of barley was to be offered up as first fruits of harvest, and from this day, which was a day of rest—a sabbath—were to be reckoned *seven weeks* to pentecost or feast of weeks and of harvest. The second sabbath after the first was the second in this series, next after the first or beginning of this reckoning.—¶ *Corn*. This is a general term for grain, and here signifies *Barley*, most probably, which was ripe at that time, and which they rubbed in their hands (Luke 6. 1) to clear it of chaff. The barley harvest in that country commenced in May, and a ripe sheaf of this grain was required to be offered early in *April*.—¶ *An hungered*—hungry.

2. The Pharisees complained of them to Christ for this—that it was unlawful to do this on the sabbath day, as though it was a violation of the fourth commandment—not that they *took the grain* in passing through the field, for this was allowed (Deut. 23. 25)—but for not treating the sabbath with becoming sanctity.

3. 4. He refers them to a precedent in the example of David (1 Sam. 21. 6). The house of God was then the tabernacle. The *shew-bread* was in twelve cakes renewed every Sabbath, and placed in order on a table covered with gold (Lev. 24. 5-9). This bread was considered holy, and not allowed to be eaten, except by the priests (Ex. 25. 30). When David fled from Saul, he applied to the high priest Ahimelech for food, and could obtain no bread but this, therefore he took it. It was a case of *necessity* which overruled the ceremonial command. They

lawful for him to eat, neither for them which were with him, but only <sup>t</sup> for the priests?

5 Or have ye not read in the law, <sup>z</sup> how that on the sabbath days the priests in the temple <sup>h</sup> profane the sabbath, and are blameless?

6 But I say unto you, that in

f Ex. 29. 32, 33. g Nu. 28. 9. h Jno. 7. 22, 23.

mus; admit David's example, and a like necessity justified the disciples. The sabbath was not violated in case of "*necessity and mercy*," (I will have mercy and not sacrifice). Hosea 6. 6.

5. *In the law*—of Moses, prescribing the ceremonies for the sabbath (Num. 28. 9, 10). The Pharisees complained that the disciples by rubbing the grain in their hands had performed labour which violated the sabbath. Christ reminds them that their law even prescribes certain labour on the Sabbath for the priests, which if done by others would have profaned the sabbath. They were to kill two lambs on the sabbath—kindle fires to burn them, which was expressly forbidden otherwise (Exod. 35. 3), &c., and yet were blameless. So that *circumstances and cases* must be considered.

6. Our Lord moreover asserts here His own authority above the temple service—having power over those laws which were of use mostly as referring to Himself. This is an assertion of His supremacy and Divinity, and a hint of His intent to abrogate that cumbersome ritual by His own coming. And if the temple service would excuse the priests' work, much more would His service excuse His disciples' work. In Mark 2. 27, another argument is mentioned. The object of the sabbath must be considered, as it was made for the sake of man, rather than man for its sake. All just ideas of its design would show that it was to subserve man's true advantage, and not to be the means of his destruction. Works of necessity and mercy may be done,

this place is *one* greater <sup>i</sup> than the temple.

7 But if ye had known what *this* meaneth, <sup>j</sup> I will have mercy, and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless.

8 For the Son of man is Lord even of the sabbath day.

9 ¶ And <sup>k</sup> when he was

i 2 Ch. 6. 18. Mal. 3. 1. c. 23. 17-21. j Hos. 6. 6. k Mar. 3. 1, &c. Lu. 6. 4, &c.

7. This passage Christ had quoted before, to show that His ceremonial requirements must not stand in the way of the weightier matters of the law. A knowledge of the meaning here, would have prevented their condemning the guiltless, because it would have shown them the substance of His requisitions—the general principle of them, and their consistency (1 Cor. 13. 1-3); and it would have shown them too that He requires kind judgments of others, not harsh censures. That which God desires or "*will have*," is not the letter of sacrifice, so much as the hearty outpouring of love which the sacrifice symbolized (see Heb. 10. 5-10).

8. *Son of man*. This occurs 87 times in the New Testament, always referring to Christ—¶ *Lord even of the sabbath day*. Christ asserts that He has an authority not only higher than that of the temple service, but higher than that of the sabbath itself. He here asserts that He Himself is more to be regarded and trusted than any ceremonial appointments; that the sabbath has its sanctity from His work, and that He has power to alter it, and to direct its observance. He Himself is the end of the law for righteousness to the believer; the end, as that to which it pointed, and that in which it was swallowed up. This is a claim of Divinity.

[§ 38. THE HEALING OF THE WITHERED HAND ON THE SABBATH.]—Galilee.  
Matt. | Mark. | Luke. | John.  
12. 9-14 | 3. 1-6 | 6. 6-11 |

9. *And when He was departed thence,*

departed thence, he went into their synagogue :

10 And, behold, there was a man which had *his* hand withered. And they asked him, saying, Is <sup>1</sup> it lawful to heal on the sabbath day? that they might accuse him.

11 And he said unto them, What man shall there be among you that shall have one sheep, and <sup>m</sup> if it fall into a pit on the

sabbath day, will he not lay hold on it, and lift *it* out?

12 How much then is a man better than a sheep? Wherefore it is lawful to do well on the sabbath days.

13 Then saith he to the man, Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched *it* forth; and it was restored whole, like as the other.

14 ¶ Then the Pharisees went

1 Lu.14.3. m De.22.4.

This event occurred in close connexion with the complaint and discussion just noticed. From Luke 6. 6, we learn that it was on another sabbath, and doubtless while this subject was in agitation.

10. A case was brought to Him of a man with a withered hand. Luke tells us that it was his *right hand*. This disease, when seated, is incurable. The Scribes and Pharisees (as we learn from Luke 6. 7) watched Him, to see whether He would heal on the Sabbath; and they questioned Him as to the lawfulness of so doing, that they might accuse Him as "not of God, because He keepeth not the sabbath day" (John 9. 16). Seven cures are recorded as wrought on the sabbath: the demoniac in the synagogue—Peter's wife's mother—the impotent man at Bethesda's pool—the man born blind—the woman with a spirit of infirmity—a man who had the dropsy, and th<sup>ts</sup>.

11. He replied by asking whether it was lawful on the sabbath to do good, or to do evil; to save life, or to destroy it? (Luke 6. 8, 9,) for in His view, the neglect to do good, is the same as to do evil (Mark 3. 4): and He brings up a case, appealing to themselves, if they would not count it lawful to draw a sheep out of a pit: and if so, whether a *man* (so much more important than a sheep) could not be healed on that day. Thus He showed that it was lawful to do good on the sabbath, espe-

cially in the way of necessity and mercy.

13. Then looking upon them *with anger* (See Mark 3. 5), that they should have made such a heartless and malicious complaint, He cured the man. This was a miracle, because His word of command gave the man power to stretch forth his hand, *though it was withered*. Thus He proved Himself Lord of the sabbath. This work could have come only from a superhuman source. So, when God commands the helpless sinner, He will give strength if we attempt to obey. We may infer His general rule in regard to the sabbath. Two cases are given: one case was of necessity, the other of mercy. And we infer that works of necessity and mercy may be done on that day, and none other works. We are most likely to err in the way of neglecting such works, from not having a heart in God's service, and not having love to God and man. Where the Sabbath is properly observed, God sends the blessings of His providence and grace. Temporal and spiritual prosperity are to be looked for in this way; but the greatest social mischief and spiritual evils flow from a neglect or contempt of the sabbath.

14. *Held a council*; that is, *planned together*—took counsel. Mark adds, that it was with the Herodians whom they hated. These Herodians were a political party attached to Herod Antipas, of Galilee, and who favour-



out, and held a council against him, how they might destroy him.

15 But when Jesus knew *it*, he withdrew himself from thence : and great multitudes followed him, and he healed them all ;

16 And charged them that they should not make him known :

17 That it might be fulfilled

1 Or, took counsel.

which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying.

18 Behold my servant, whom I have chosen ; my beloved, in whom my soul is well pleased : I will put my spirit upon him, and he shall shew judgment to the Gentiles.

19 He shall not strive, nor cry, neither shall any man hear his voice in the streets.

n Is. 42.1.

ed his claims as king against Christ. Notice their question proposed to Christ : " Is it lawful to give tribute to Cæsar ? " ch. 22. 16, 17.

OBSERVE, (1.) No ordinance of God can be against well-doing. It is lawful, at all times, and in all cases, to do good. (2.) The sinner's inability is quite consistent, in God's view, with the command to obey the gospel ; for there is a way provided in which the withered hand can be stretched forth at the word of Christ.

[§ 39. JESUS ARRIVES AT THE SEA OF TIBERIAS, AND IS FOLLOWED BY MULTITUDES.]—*Lake of Galilee.*

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
12. 15-21	3. 7-12		

15. *He withdrew.* Jesus knew their plans and withdrew, not from fear, but because He also knew that His hour was not yet come. Mark adds that He withdrew with His disciples to the Sea (i. e., of Galilee)—that many came from Idumea and from beyond Jordan, and that a great multitude of those here mentioned came from around Tyre and Sidon, and were of course, *Gentiles* (vs. 21). The crowd, it appears, was so great, that He took a boat, so as not to be pressed down. And here, from the boat, He did His wonders of healing (see Mark) to the throng on the shore.

16. Here again we find Him enjoining silence on them in regard to His being the Christ. It was not yet time for this to be widely known, or loudly asserted with such exciting

proofs, any more than it was time for Him to die.

18. And this also was in fulfilment of prophecy (Isaiah 42. 1-4), that His course should be unostentatious and noiseless. They thought the Messiah should be a conquering hero. But instead of *treading down* His enemies, like a renowned conqueror, or shouting as for battle, He should not *tread harshly* on the bruised reed so as to break it, nor on smoking flax so as to quench it, and that it is His plan and characteristic to proceed without noise and parade. He is not to be despised because of His unpretending style, but revered for this, as it is a mark of His mission, according as the prophets had set forth.—¶ *My servant.* This title indicates His mission for a definite work ; hence He is also said to be "*chosen*" for that work, and accepted for that work.—¶ *My beloved Son ;* "sanctified or set apart and sent." He is promised all the requisites of that work—"the Spirit without measure," and *all success.*—¶ *He shall shew judgment ;* that is, He shall make known and *send forth* the established truth in regard to the kingdom of God—God's plan of gospel righteousness extending to the *Gentiles* (Jer. 16. 19).

19. He shall work by a silent influence in the world, as of the Holy Spirit (vs. 18), not like the sound of a warrior, which is "with shouts and garments rolled in blood."

20. *A bruised reed.* This language indicates His gentle temper and

20 A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench, till he send forth judgment unto victory.

21 And in his name shall the Gentiles trust.

course in the world. His object is not to destroy men's lives, like a warrior, but to save; not to break the bruised, but to lift them up. "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me" (Isa. 61). All His course and His measures shall be of this kind. The humble should be exalted. Tender, troubled consciences should be soothed by His word.—¶ *Smoking flax.* The figure here is of the wick of a smoking lamp, with little or no oil. He should not put out a smothered spark of piety, but rather kindle it to a blaze. His strength is made perfect in weakness. "He giveth power to the faint, and to them that have no might He increaseth strength." *Grace* is the characteristic of Christ's work.—¶ *Till He.* This form of expression does not refer to a point of time, but to the object in view. This is *His aim*—to send forth judgment or the established truth of God—to proclaim and carry forward the gospel of peace. And it shall be unto victory, causing "mercy to triumph over judgment," showing a plan of judgment, truth, and righteousness by which victory is proclaimed, and secured in consistency with justice. This is the nature of His conquests. He is the Prince of Peace.

21. *In His name.* In His gospel covenant shall the Gentiles trust (who are not Jews). Isaiah has it, "The isles shall wait for His law;" *i. e.*, the regions out of Judea (42. 4).

OBSERVE: It was at this juncture that our Lord delivered the Sermon on the Mount, recorded in the 5th ch. *These* (Mark 3. 7, 8) *are the multitudes* whom He saw when He went up into the mountain and taught (ch. 5. 1). Here a great leading prophecy was fulfilled, *in the Gentiles coming to Him.* And here He naturally took

22 ¶ Then ° was brought unto him one possessed with a devil, blind and dumb: and he healed him, insomuch that the blind and dumb both spake and saw.

o Mar.3.11. Lu.11.14.

occasion to deliver *His law*, for which the Gentiles (as it had been prophesied) *were waiting!*

OBSERVE, (1.) The reason of Christ's withdrawing from any is their evident and intense hostility to Him (14). (2.) Christ's purposes cannot be defeated by wicked men, and the gates of hell in council can never prevail against Him. (3.) Of the multitudes who follow Christ, it can always be said, "*He healed them all.*" (4.) Christ's dignity and glory here, are not as an earthly monarch, but as the Saviour of souls.

"Thy noblest wonders here we view,  
In souls renewed and sins forgiven."

[§ 48. THE HEALING OF THE DEMONIAK. THE SCRIBES AND PHARISEES BLASPHEME.]—*Galilee.*

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
12. 22-37	3. 19-30	11. 14, 15	
		17-23	

22. The order of this event is at the opening of His second circuit in Galilee, soon after the message of John from prison to Him. See the parallel passages.—¶ *Blind and dumb.* The effect of this demoniacal possession was, that the subject was both blind and dumb. Luke mentions that it was dumb, but does not contradict the blindness.

23. *Amazed*—at this miraculous power, exerted before their eyes. At once they thought of the Messiah prophesied in Isaiah 35. 5. They were struck at once with a conviction that this must be the Christ whom prophets foretold, *the Son of David.* But though this was the honest and natural impression of the common people, the Pharisees would admit no such thing. The multitude alarmed the Jewish rulers by the question, whether Jesus were the

23 And all the people were amazed; and said, Is not this the son of David?

24 But when the Pharisees heard *it*, they said, This *fellow* doth not cast out devils, but by <sup>1</sup> Beelzebub the prince of the devils.

25 And Jesus knew their <sup>p</sup> thoughts, and said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided

against itself shall not stand:

26 And if Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself; how shall then his kingdom stand?

27 And if I by Beelzebub <sup>q</sup> cast out devils, by whom do your children cast *them* out? Therefore they shall be your judges.

28 But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom <sup>r</sup> of God is come unto you.

29 Or else how can one enter

<sup>1</sup> Beelzebub. <sup>p</sup> Ps 139.2. Jno.2.24,25.

<sup>q</sup> ver.24. <sup>r</sup> Da.2.44. c.6.33. Lu.11.20; 17.21. Ro. 14.17.

Christ. Mark suggests that the Scribes and Pharisees had come from Jerusalem to *watch Him*.

24. They resorted to this impious way of accounting for the miracle: that it was a wonder wrought by alliance with devils. This would make the people afraid of Christ's influence, and tend to destroy it among them. We can well infer from the incidental hints of the Evangelists, in what spirit this was said. And the Pharisees had no other way of keeping in favour and power, than to attribute these wonderful works of Christ to diabolical agency.—¶ *Beelzebub*, the god of flies, or *Beelzebub*, of filth, as they called by this contemptuous name (2 Kings 1. 6) *the arch-demon of idolatry*. It was their name for the very devil of devils—the head and source of all such abominations as were connected with idol worship. They accused Christ of being a base magician, in conference with “the Prince of the power of the air.”

25. *Jesus knew their thoughts*. This proves Him God. Ps. 139. 2. Jer. 17. 10. Herein He gives the Pharisees an infallible proof of His being the Messiah, “He shall not judge after the sight of His eyes” (Isa. 11.3).—¶ *Every kingdom*, &c. He means by this to show how absurd it would be to suppose Satan leagued with Him, to cast out devils who were his own

agents of evil. Satan would thus be set up *against himself*. A contradiction.

27. *Your children*. Those of your family, your disciples: meaning Jews, like themselves, who were *exorcists* (comp. Acts 19. 13), accustomed to cast out evil spirits—in pretence. Why did they not accuse *them* of casting out devils by Beelzebub?—¶ *They shall be your judges*, viz., that it is from mere malice that you so accuse me.

28. *By the Spirit of God*. Luke has it—*the finger of God*. The question was, whether it was God's work or Satan's. If God's, it was proof of His Messiahship, for God would not give His miraculous power to establish an imposture. This Christ argues, and claims the argument in His favour.—¶ *The kingdom of God*—as opposed to that of *Satan* (vs. 26). The kingdom prophesied as to be set up in the world by God's authority and power.—¶ *Is come unto you*. Luke has it: “No doubt the kingdom of God is come upon you.” Christ's reign has begun. It makes its appeal, and presents its claim, and if there is any truth in the miracles, you ought to give immediate heed to the gospel of Christ. If the claims of Christ are proved, they are worthy of all our attention. And if they are of any importance they are of all importance.

into a strong man's house and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man? and then he will spoil his house.

30 He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me, scattereth abroad.

31 ¶ Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men; but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men.

Is. 49.24; 53.12. Re. 12.7-10; 20.2,3. 1 Jno. 2.19. 2 Mar. 3.28. Lu. 12.10. v He. 10.29. 1 Jno. 5.18.

29. These wondrous works, He says, were done to show that Christ has power over Satan. He "came to destroy the works of the devil." He illustrates His power over Satan himself, by rescuing this man from his possession, and thus showing that He can spoil his goods. So the argument is complete. He proves thus that instead of being in alliance with Satan, He has power over him, and means to break down his kingdom in the earth, and has actually in this miracle begun so to do.

30. In this general language, He shows, first, That Satan's reign is directly opposite to His, working contrary results and admitting no collusion or alliance: and next, that all Satan's forces, wicked men, and they themselves who oppose Him, are on the opposite side, and so, on the side of Satan. The conclusion is, that instead of His co-operating with the devil, they are co-workers with him.

31. Wherefore. Having proved them so in the wrong, He goes on to show the heinousness of their offence in blaspheming the Holy Ghost. The unpardonable sin is such as they here committed. Mark expressly explains (3. 36), "Because they said He hath an unclean spirit." Many mistake in thinking other sins and courses of sin unpardonable. Those who so anxiously fear lest they have committed

32 And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him; but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come.

33 Either make the tree good, and his fruit good; or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt; for the tree is known by his fruit.

34 O generation of vipers! how can ye, being evil, speak

v Lu. 7.34. Jno. 7.12. 1 Ti. 1.13. x c. 7.16,17. y c. 3.7.

this sin, do not show the fiendish and malicious contempt of the Holy Ghost which was here exhibited. OBSERVE: It is a deliberate and diabolical blaspheming of the Holy Ghost, and of His work, so as to repudiate it openly, and treat it with impious scorn, that is meant here. "It confounds God, the source of all good influence, with the devil, and shows a state of mind utterly given over to Satan, "doing despite unto the spirit of grace."

32. Neither in the world to come. This phrase is added for emphasis, like "for ever and ever." It was proverbial language. Mark reads, "hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation." This is the idea which is here most strongly expressed. This gives not the least warrant for inferring forgiveness for any sins in the future world, but the utmost warrant for expecting no forgiveness there. Absolution is publicly pronounced on believers at the judgment, but their sins were forgiven in this life.

33. Either make. This is a fair rule laid down for their judgment. Either to make (or consider) the tree good and its fruit also, or else, &c. He claims their belief in Him for the works' sake. Either lay it down as proved that He and His works are together good or bad. The works are not of Satan as He had shown.

good things? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.

35 A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things; and an evil man, out of the evil treasure, bringeth forth evil things.

36 But I say unto you, that every idle word that men shall

z Lu.6.45.

Neither is He. They themselves are of Satan, for their opposition to Him and all their works are so.

34. *O generation of vipers—offspring of Satan*, in his worst form. The rule just given is here applied to themselves. Yourselves, *a race* of most malicious, venomous nature, how can good words be expected out of you? This traces evil speaking to the corrupt heart, and shows the dreadful root and source of blasphemy. With their natural, carnal heart, they *could not* speak good things, any more than a bramble bush could bring forth grapes. As it is natural to speak out of the abundance or fulness of the heart, therefore their evil language only proved the overflowing malignity of their natures. The extremity of our sinfulness is our disability. *How can* the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? The power is of God.

35. The same sentiment is further illustrated. Good and bad men act according to their hearts. The one renewed and good, the other unrenewed and evil. All sinfulness does not consist in *action*, for behind the action and anterior to it is the evil, natural heart.

36. They might think their words of small account. But here these are shown to be of serious importance, as speaking out the heart. Hence they shall all be subjected to strict judgment at the final day.—¶ *Every idle word*, (*καλον*) rendered in 2 Pet. i. 8, 'bairn.' It first means *vain*, then *false*. Every heedless word,

they shall give account<sup>a</sup> thereof in the day of judgment:

37 For by thy words<sup>b</sup> thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned

38 ¶ Then certain of the Scribes and of the Pharisees answered, saying, Master, we would see a sign<sup>c</sup> from thee.

<sup>a</sup> Ec.12.14. Ep.5.4.6. Jude 15. <sup>b</sup> Pr.13.3. <sup>c</sup> c.16. l. 1 Cor.1.22.

even though esteemed most trivial, shall be brought into account.

37. *For by thy words*. A man is to be judged by his own words. "Take a man as he says," is a proverb. Words become vastly important in this light. (See James 3. 6, &c.) Besides, at the bar, a man is called on to speak. *Guilty, or not guilty?* The justice and truth of God's judgment is expressed in the declaration, that every mouth shall be stopped, in tacit confession of guilt.

OBSERVE, (1.) The fulness of Christ's power and grace for all wretched sinners. Blindness, dumbness, weakness, hardness He can cure. (2.) An instance of His wonder-working hand in casting out devils from men, is the highest proof of His Divinity. "Many shall see it, and shall fear and shall trust in the Lord" (23). (3.) The malice of the human heart toward Christ and His redeeming, gracious work, is without a bound; ready for the most infernal plots and accusations. (4.) Christ's work and Satan's must not be confounded. Blessed are all they who are one with Christ and His cause.

[§ 49. THE SCRIBES AND PHARISEES SEEK A SIGN. OUR LORD'S REFLECTIONS.]—*Galilee*.

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
12. 33-45		11. 16	
		24-36	

38. *We would see a sign from thee*. This seems to have been demanded as settling the question of His claims and to show whether he cast out devils

39 But he answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous<sup>d</sup> generation seeketh after a sign, and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas :

40 For<sup>e</sup> as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly ; so shall the Son of man be three days and three

<sup>d</sup> Is 57.3. <sup>e</sup> Jon.1.17.

by the Spirit of God, or by Beelzebub. Luke says (11.16 ; 24. 36) that it was a "sign from heaven" that they sought, and that they did it "tempting Him," asking something more positive than they had yet received—though they had seen miracles and wonders which ought to have satisfied them. They would not believe Him without something more.

39. It was against this stubborn and unreasonable temper in them that Christ exclaims. He therefore charges it upon them that they are an evil and adulterous generation that make this demand. He would point them to their origin while they inquire of His. Their being called *adulterous* would suggest to them the language of the prophets in which this term is so commonly used to represent the unfaithfulness of the Jews to the covenant (Isa. 57. 3. Hos. 3. 1. Ezek. 16. 15, and Malachi).—¶ *The prophet.* This should be the only sign. (*Jonas* is the Greek way of writing the Hebrew name *Jonah*.) This idea is explained in what follows. This is the only kind of evidence they should have. Such miraculous proofs attesting his commission as occurred with *Jonah*. Luke reads, "as *Jonah* was a sign to the Ninevites," i. e. a wonder, a miraculous messenger. They knew the history of that Old Testament prophet. He was a type of Christ in the matter stated here, of his miraculous deliverance from the whale's belly "after three days." Such evidences He should furnish them for his Divine mission. (See Luke 16.31.)

nights in the heart of the earth.

41 The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn<sup>f</sup> it : because they repented at<sup>g</sup> the preaching of Jonas ; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here.

42 The<sup>h</sup> queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment

<sup>f</sup> Ro.2.27. <sup>g</sup> Jon.3.5. <sup>h</sup> Lu.11.31, &c.

40. This refers of course to His resurrection from the dead. His rising "from the heart of the earth after three days ;" (see the book of *Jonah*.) This event occurred in the Mediterranean sea, and, of course, between Joppa and Tarshish. As to the kind of fish, it is called a whale, though in the Hebrew it is a word that passes for any very large fish. We read that God prepared a great fish for the purpose "to swallow up *Jonah*." (*Jonah* 1. 17.)—¶ *Three days and three nights.* The Jews reckoned the parts of days and nights the same as though they were whole. So in the narrative of Christ's resurrection two nights, with the evening preceding and the morning following, including one whole day, were reckoned as three days. This prophecy, therefore, was never disputed by the Jews on this point, as it would surely have been if they had not owned the computations as correct, according to their mode.

41. *The men of Nineveh.* While the Jews should have as good evidence and of the same kind as the Ninevites, they should be condemned for not repenting as the Ninevites did. The case of the Ninevites shall testify against them. They were heathen. They repented at the preaching ; and at the preaching of one so much less than He. (For *Nineveh*, see Bib. Geog. S. S. Union.)

42. *The queen of the south.* This is recorded 1 Kings 10. 1 ; the visit of the queen of Sheba, which was probably in Arabia, south of Palestine.—¶ *Uttermost parts,* i. e., the extreme

with this generation, and shall condemn it: for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and, behold, a greater than Solomon is here.

43 When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none.

44 Then he saith, I will return

*i* 2Ch.9.1. *j* Lu.11.24. *k* Job 1.7. 1Pe.5.8.

Smits of the then known world. Her case should give testimony against them. She sought the wisdom of Solomon with the greatest zeal, and at utmost effort. She came a great distance to hear him. But they, instead of seeking Christ and being at effort to hear His doctrine, so much more important, would not even receive His instructions, though He came from heaven to them, and not they to Him.

43-45. *When the unclean spirit.* The discourse here turns upon the matter of His casting out devils, and of His being charged as in league with Satan, when in truth they were co-workers with the devil. He now represents their deplorable case, "*this wicked generation*" (vs. 45). They were naturally possessed with the evil in their hearts, as the possessions talked of here so vividly exhibited. And so much were they a favourite abode of the devil, that though the blind and dumb devils were driven out from them by His miraculous power, Satan would return again with seven-fold dominion to their hearts: and so He applies verse 30.—¶ *Hath gone out.* (See verse 29.)—¶ *He walketh through dry places,* unfrequented by men. There was an ancient and popular belief among the Jews that demons and evil spirits were wont to haunt desert places. The mode of expression here is figurative, and makes use of that common idea. He would merely represent the evil spirit as going out of the person to his natural haunt

into my house, from whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished.

45 Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first. Even so

*l* He.6.4; 10.26. 2Pe.2.20,22.

without. He seeks rest there and finds none. He is dissatisfied *out of* the man. He resolves to return to his *house* and *home* in the heart. He finds it like a house carefully prepared for the reception of its owner, unoccupied by any other, empty and cleansed, swept and garnished, decorated and furnished, all waiting for him. Whatever the outward change with a sinner, if he be not truly renewed, he only grows worse.

45. *Then goeth he.* Finding it ready and waiting, the unclean or depraved spirit resolves on increasing his forces in the bosom. This indicates the case of those only partially and temporarily recovered from Satan's possession. Their usual course is to a worse extremity of sin and opposition to Christ. Such he declared would be the case of the Jews. Such it really proved. They would be only partially, and outwardly, and temporarily benefitted by Christ's work among them. He would cast out devils. But Satan would not become dispossessed of their hearts. They would only become worse and worse.—¶ *Seven other spirits.* This was a sacred number, indefinite—denoting many, or sufficient.

OBSERVE, (1.) Wicked men constantly claim more of God, while they despise what they have at hand. (2.) How shall they who neglect the gospel be condemned by many converted heathen! (3.) Outward reformations often leave men in more settled and stubborn opposition to Christ. Evil men and seducers wax worse

shall 't be also unto this wicked generation.

46 ¶ While he yet talked to the people, behold, *his*<sup>m</sup> mother and his brethren<sup>n</sup> stood without, desiring to speak with him.

47 Then one said unto him, Behold, thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to speak with thee.

48 But he answered and said unto him that told him, Who is my mother? and who are my brethren?

*m* Mar.3.31,&c. Lu.8.19,&c. *n* c.13.55.

and worse, deceiving and being deceived.

[§ 50. THE TRUE DISCIPLES OF CHRIST HIS NEAREST RELATIVES.]—*Galilee.*

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
12. 46-50	3.31-35	8.19-21	

46. *His mother and His brethren.* From Mark (6. 3), we learn of four brethren, James, Joses, Juda, and Simon. He seems not to have spoken this in their hearing. Others brought the message, while *they* were standing without. He took this occasion to declare to those whom He had been addressing, the true spiritual nature of those relations which He came to institute, as superior, far, to those of flesh and blood. So He left not any opportunity unimproved of declaring His work, and of contrasting it with their common, secular views.

49. This was a most affecting declaration. He showed not the less love for His natural kin but *the more* for His spiritual kindred. His disciples are truly related to Him by bonds nearer and dearer than mother or brethren could be.

50. He sustains these tender relations to all who believe and follow Him, who please Him by exercising faith in His finished work. This was not that He loved His mother less, but His disciples more. He would encourage His faithful follow-

49 And he stretched forth his hand toward his disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren!

50 For whosoever shall do the will ° of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother.

### CHAPTER XIII.

THE same day went Jesus out of the house, and sat by the sea-side.

2 And great multitudes were gathered together unto him, so

*o* c.7.20. Jno.15.14. Ga.5.6. He.2.11. 1 Jno.2.17.

ers.—It will be observed from the Harmony, that Christ does other things here at Galilee which are recorded by Luke. At a Pharisee's table He denounces woes against them and others. Luke 11. 37-54. He discourses to His disciples and the multitude, Luke 12. 1-59, and delivers the parable of the barren fig tree, Luke 13. 1-9. But the next *back item* in order, as given by Matthew is *the parable of the sower.*

### CHAPTER XIII.

[§ 54. PARABLE OF THE SOWER.]—*Lake of Galilee—near Capernaum.*

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
13. 1-23	4. 1-25	8. 4-18	

Here commences a series of SEVEN PARABLES, illustrating the great truths pertaining to the kingdom.

1. *The sea-side.* He had been in Galilee, and now near Capernaum, He passed, "*the same day,*" to the shore of the Sea of Galilee or Tiberias. Luke shows that this *was in His second* circuit in Galilee, as He was traversing the country (8.1). It belongs still to the 31st year of our Lord. See Harmony.

2. *A ship*—the ship. The definite article here intimates that this was the vessel usually there. The crowds of people that came to Him from the cities which He had visited, stood on the beach, where they could be con-



that he went into a ship,\* and sat; and the whole multitude stood on the shore.

3 And he spake many things unto them in parables, saying, Behold,<sup>b</sup> a sower went forth to sow:

4 And when he sowed, some seeds fell by the way-side, and

\* Lu.5.3. b Mar.4.2. Lu.8.5,&c.

veniently addressed by Him from the boat. They were "by the sea, on the land" (Mark). Luke mentions (8. 2), that the women of Galilee and the 12 were with Him. The same are mentioned who "followed Him from Galilee" (see Luke 23. 49).

3. *Parables.* This word is from a Greek term, meaning *to bring together for comparison*. This was a method of teaching by *similitudes*, where the truth is presented as in a *picture*. It is a representation of moral or spiritual truth under the likeness or similitude of a natural subject. The advantage of this teaching was, that it secured the attention of the multitudes. It opened and enforced unfamiliar truth by that with which they were now familiar. It was calculated to remove prejudices by gaining a candid, honest judgment on the subject, before the application was made (as Nathan to David); and it tended to test character, leaving the truth veiled from such as would be blinded, and opening it to those who sought instruction.—¶ *A sower*—a man who *sows seed*. This is a common and familiar work; and the lessons from it could easily be understood. It agrees well for an illustration with the work of Christ and His ministers, sowing the seeds of truth.

4. *The way-side*—where the field and the road join—the edge of the field which the plough had not turned up. These are they who hear the word, and do not understand it (vs. 19), and do not care for it. They give it no attention. It falls upon them as upon the hard, unploughed, unprepared edge of the field that

the fowls came and devoured them up.

5 Some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth; and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth:

6 And when the sun was up, they were scorched; and be

skirts the road. Satan takes away the word, by diverting the mind, starting objections, or keeping the thoughts dull, sluggish, and careless about the whole matter, or exciting an interest in any thing else about the sermon or service, rather than the truth itself; or, this seed is *trodde[n] down* (Luke). The young are often prevented from attending to God's commands by gay diversions—companions—pleasures—and by Satan's snatching up, by his temptations, any germ of truth from their minds, just as birds pick up seeds that have lodged on the hard ground. Yet this is no excuse for them, because "they love darkness rather than light."

5. *Stony places* (Luke—"a rock"). That is, where there was but a thin surface of soil with rock underneath; a mere covering of ground upon a base of rock, just enough to conceal the rock from view, but not enough to allow of any rooting in the ground.—¶ *Forthwith*—immediately. Though they sprang up the sooner for the lightness of soil, yet they sooner withered, on the same account. There are often hasty conversions and professions that have no depth or genuineness—are gone and vanish as quick as they came. Noisy, boastful converts are often such.

6. See vs. 20 and 21. *Stony ground* hearers, *anon* or promptly receive it (vs. 20) eagerly, "with joy." They differ from the former in going further and yet not getting through. It is not from their being diverted and losing the truth, but from their not being converted to it—not deeply feeling it, but hastily and superficially catch

cause they had no root, they withered away.

7 And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up and choked them.

8 But other fell into good

ing at it. They spring up in a moment from some exciting impulse. Their hearts are not truly exercised, and not at all changed. Religion has taken *no root* in their bosoms. They cannot *endure* trial or persecution any more than such a hasty sprout can stand the scorching, mid-day sun. *False professors* who sit and hear, but do nothing in Christ's service, and make no advance, *have no root*. Such are *offended* (:21). "*Scandalized*" is the Greek term. It refers to a stumbling-block. *They stumble and fall* when a severe trial of temptation or persecution comes; they find it a *stumbling-block* to them, and they turn aside from religion. This furnishes a caution against false hopes, high excitements that soon pass off, and loud professions on light grounds.

7. *Thorns*. Briers and brush in the field, which seemed to grow the faster after the seed had been cast in. These are the natural, wicked desires of the heart. They came up thick and rank—crowded the seed, and shaded them, and took all the sustenance from the ground. In other words, they *choked* them. These thorns that *choke* the truth and prevent sermons and other teachings from coming to any thing in the heart, are the *cares of this world* (vs. 22); i. e., the anxieties and concerns of a worldly kind—of business or pleasure, which occupy men's minds. Their thoughts are so full of these matters that they cannot attend to the word. So, "*the deceitfulness of riches*" (vs. 22)—the planning and worrying to make money—with all the hopes and fears—the successes and disappointments attending it—and even the temptations to unjust gain. This keeps the heart busy and crowds out other and better things. So, "*the lusts of other*

ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundred-fold, some sixty-fold, some thirty-fold.

9 Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.

c c. 11. 15.

*things*" which Mark adds (ch. 4. 18), "*entering in*" have the same *choking effect*. An appetite for worldliness in various shapes—a hankering after gratifications of sense, in forms nameless and numberless, issue in the same sad result. They keep the soul excited and distracted by the mere frivolities of the hour—passing shows—enjoyments—planning for gratification; and the truth cannot enter in where so much else enters and crowds it out. Those who wish to serve God should treat the cares, and riches, and pleasures of this life, as the seductive baits and snares of Satan, that only mislead the soul and destroy all that is good. "As sinners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts that war against the soul." And if the hearers of the word produce no fruit, they are known to be lovers of pleasures, more than lovers of God. We should pray against the evils of our own hearts, which will crowd out all good.

8. *Good ground*. Luke explains, "*an honest and good heart*." The difference turns upon the *state of the heart*. It is not the truth that changes the heart of itself, but like seed it must find a prepared soil, in order to grow and yield fruit. Such a heart as grace has prepared is called here *honest and good*, that is, such as receives the truth soberly and acts upon it—"heareth the word and understandeth it"—"having heard the word *keep it*"—and does not reject it, nor let it die out.—¶ *A hundred fold, &c.*, i. e., yielding a hundred grains for one that was sown, &c. So it is at times with grain. True religion shows a large increase and growth upon the first beginning. "*Much fruit*" is a mark of discipleship (Jno. 15. 8). All true Christians do not produce alike, any more than all good seeds yield all

10 ¶ And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables?

11 He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to <sup>d</sup> know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given.

12 For <sup>e</sup> whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away, even that he hath.

13 Therefore speak I to them

d c.11.25. Mar.4.11. 1Co.2.10,14. Ep.1.9,18; 3.9. Col.1.27. 1Jno.2.27. e c.25.29. Lu.9.26.

equal product. Yet there is always a harvest.

9. *Who hath ears.* This is the common formula (ch. 11. 15), for calling attention to something that needs special notice to be understood. It intimates, too that all would not understand. And it is an appeal, in general terms, to all who have the natural faculties, as they are bound to hear. It summons the Christian attention of those who understand the gospel by grace. So that this parable is addressed to every one as much as to those disciples.

10. *Why?* The disciples wished to know His reason for adopting this method of teaching the multitudes.

11. *Because, &c.* His sovereign will is the reason given of a difference here made between persons.—

*Unto you it is given*, or it pertains to you (out of mere grace), to know the mysteries of the kingdom, i. e., the characteristic doctrines of Christ. But to them it is not given, and hence, these truths are conveyed in a covering of similitude that only the initiated will see through and understand. *Mysteries* here mean, not things incomprehensible, but the things not before revealed, and not else revealed except in Christ.

12. *For.* The reason is here expanded. This is a principle which

in parables: because they seeing, see not; and hearing, they hear not, neither do they understand.

14 And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, <sup>f</sup> which saith, By <sup>g</sup> hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive:

15 For this people's heart is waxed gross, and *their* ears are dull <sup>h</sup> of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with *their*

f Is. 6.9. g Eze.12.2. Jno.12.40. Ac.28.26,27. Ru. 11.8. 2Cor.3.14,15. h He.5.11.

God adopts. They who improve what opportunities they have, shall have more opportunities and helps. Upon this rule, no desire after truth is ever put up in vain, and none who seek are sent empty away. The promise and threatening, of giving more to those who have any thing at all, and taking all away from those who make no improvement, and treasure nothing up, must apply to those who seek Christ, and shall find help, or who, with all their opportunities, are careless and shall at length have their very opportunities cut off.

13–15. *Because they seeing see not.* The other Evangelists state it in a different form. “*That seeing, they might not see,*” or, “*may see, and not perceive.*” (Mark.) In using the parables, this was the sure result, while their wilful blindness was also a just cause. He gave out the truth in such a way that those of proper disposition toward it would perceive and appreciate the meaning. The fault, therefore, lay in them, for the darkness was their own, and out of their own hearts, and not of the truth. They had not the eyes to see these things, and had not a heart for them at all. He chose to state these things in a way that the disciples would understand and not the Jews. And this

eyes, and hear with *their* ears, and should understand with *their* heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.

16 But <sup>i</sup> blessed *are* your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear.

17 For verily I say unto you, that <sup>i</sup> many prophets and righteous *men* 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*.

*i* c. 16 17. Lu. 10. 23. 24. Jno. 20. 29. 2Cor. 4. 6. *j* Ep. 3. 5. 8. He. 11. 13. 1Pe. 1. 10, 11.

could be referred only to His sovereign pleasure, according to this plan of dealing. For to those who had the understanding it was GIVEN, not *deserved, or purchased*—¶ *In them is fulfilled* (Isa. 6. 9, 10). This shows the profound plan. The people are charged by the prophet with grossest insensibility, and the results of all their means of grace were predicted. The Jewish nation was fairly contemplated, and in *these* it is fulfilled. They are even, in irony, commanded to *go and do* the very opposite of what they ought. "Hear indeed," or *hear on*, "but understand not." *So sure was it*, that this would be the result, and so determined did they seem to be in their unconcern, they are at length dismissed, as it were, with this language of desperation and abandonment. So also, the prophet is charged to do, what all his efforts were foreseen as accomplishing, "*Make fat the heart of this people,*" &c. "Judicial blindness is the thing predicted and ordained as the result of national and personal depravity. This end would be promoted by the preaching of the truth, and so, a command to preach, was in effect, a command to blind and harden them." In this passage the Septuagint (Greek) version is retained, in which the people's guilt is the prominent idea. In John 12. 40, the sentence takes ano-

18 ¶ Hear <sup>t</sup> ye therefore the parable of the sower.

19 When any one heareth the word <sup>i</sup> of the kingdom, and understandeth *it* not, then cometh the wicked <sup>m</sup> *one*, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way-side.

20 But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy <sup>n</sup> receiveth it:

*k* Mar. 4. 14, &c. Lu. 8. 11, &c. *l* c. 4. 23. *m* 1Jo. 2. 13, 14; 3. 12. *n* Is. 58. 2. Eze. 33. 31, 32. Jno. 5. 35. Ga. 4. 15.

ther form in order to bring out the idea of *judicial blindness*. "He hath blinded their eyes," &c. (See *Alexander on Isaiah*.) Mark 8. 17, 18.

16. Those who do see and hear, should bless the *distinguishing grace*. The eyes and ears of the disciples were blessed because their eyes had been opened and their ears unstopped to see and hear the truths of the gospel, which natural men cannot understand. And they were blessed in living to see Christ in the flesh, and to hear His doctrines *from His own lips*.

17. *Many prophets*. Isaiah and all the prophets in some degree looked forward to Christ. They prophesied of Him, and desired to see these gospel realities. So "Abraham rejoiced to see my day; he saw it, and was glad," though it was only by the eye of faith. See John 8. 56. 1 Pet. 1. 10-12. Heb. 11. 13.

18. *Hear ye*. The disciples are here addressed. Christ would explain to them the parable, and asks them to listen. Mark reads (4. 13), "Know ye not this parable? And how then will ye know all parables?" as nothing would seem plainer than this, and this was fundamental.

19. The hardened and careless are here understood—way-side hearers in the unploughed edge of the field, (See notes, vs. 4.)

21 Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while; for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended.°

22 He also that received seed among the thorns, is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful.

23 But he that received seed

o c.24.10; 26.31. 2Ti.4.16. p Lu.14.16-24. q Mar. 10.23. 1Ti.6.9. 2Ti.4.10.

20, 21. *Stony ground hearers*, are the *superficial and outside* converts. Their religion is an impulse, and they are of loose surface and hard, rocky, bottom. (See notes verses 5 and 6.) Hard trials, like the hot sun upon a plant without root, wither it away.

22. *Among the thorns*. The *worldly* converts. Those whose religion is so surrounded and choked by worldliness, that they soon give out (1 Tim. 6. 9-11).

23. The good ground hearers are the *true* converts—the renewed regenerate—where the *heart is really changed*, and it is not all outside, or temporary, or worldly. There may be various degrees of fruitfulness, but all true Christians are fruitful, and we are to aim at much.

[§ 55. THE PARABLE OF THE TARES. OTHER PARABLES.]—Near Capernaum?

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
13. 24-53	4. 26-34		

24. *Put He forth*—*παρεθηκεν*. The word implies that He proposed it, as one would a riddle. It had a deeply spiritual sense. This parable is intended to exhibit the nature of the *visible church*, the mixture of the members, and the reason of it, and why it must so be till the end.—

¶ *A man which sowed good seed*. By this is represented “*the Son of Man*” (vs. 37). This title is that most fre-

into the good ground, is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it; which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundred-fold, some sixty, some thirty.

24 ¶ Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field:

r Jno.15.5. s Is.28.10,13. t 1Pe.1.23.

quently used by our Lord to designate Himself, and never given Him in the New Testament by any other, except in one instance (Acts 7. 56), where Stephen seems to have seen Him in His glorified humanity. The title was already given Him in the Old Testament (Dan. 7. 13), and He claims it as the *Second Adam*, in which capacity He loved to be recognized. The title by which He was popularly named, was “*the Son of David*.”—¶ *His field*. This represents the region within which the gospel is properly preached—that is, *the world* (vs. 38). It is Christ's field for His work of redemption.—¶ *The good seed*, “are the children of the kingdom”—the true membership—such as really belong to the kingdom, in distinction from those who are but nominally such. In the last parable, the good seed was the truth; but here, in the progress of the sentiment, the seed is regarded as having entered into the person and having become identical with him. *The field* is called *the world* (vs. 38), because God has ordained to gather His children out of all nations, and because the great preaching commission is, “Go ye into *all the world* and preach the gospel to every creature.” The Lord may be said to sow this field, because “of His own will begat He us with the word of truth,” and we are born, not of corruptible seed but of incorruptible, by the word of

25 But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way.

26 But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also.

God, which liveth and abideth forever." And, as in this *field*, all these things of the parable occur, so the visible church seems to be described as co-extensive with the world: not confined to Jews, nor brought, as yet, to the strict dimensions of the *church invisible*. The disciples were not prepared to expect this mixture of good and evil—wheat and tares—in the church. Hence Chris' warns them beforehand, so that they might not be offended, or think that God's promises had failed, and that they might know how to behave themselves when the mystery of iniquity should begin manifestly to work. What a trial was to come to the faith of the twelve, to find a Judas in their small circle.

25. *While men slept*. This means not so much to censure the neglect of any, as though it were on this account mainly that such mischief was done; but it points to the fact, that this unholy mixture is brought about, *in the night*, as it were, at a time when men cannot see the mischief-maker or his deeds, but can only tell that it is done, from the result. We cannot always detect Satan's movements, nor expect to see his work in human hearts, and hence we may be the more diffident of our skill in discerning between the precious and the vile.—¶ *Tares*. *The children of the wicked one* (vs. 38). Such as belong to Satan and are of him. These are the seed of his sowing, as distinguished from the true membership. These are the false professors that must be expected in the visible church. *The enemy is the Devil* (vs. 39); *the wicked one*, as the being, of all, the most emphatically, absolutely, essentially and supremely

27 So the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field; from whence then hath it tares?

28 He said unto them, An enemy hath done this. The servants said unto him, Wilt thou

EVIL, and the *source and sower* of it (John 8. 44). Satan *sows* these seeds, not as though he could create evil beings, but only spoil the good. Therefore Augustine speaks of the origin of evil as not a *generation*, but a *degeneration*—as having not an *efficient* but a *deficient* cause. Satan is here set forth as the enemy of the Son of Man. These tares are rather a *bastard wheat*, says Trench. The *wild grapes* instead of the good (Isa. 5. 2). The mischief here spoken of is well known in the East and elsewhere. Malicious persons sow some bad seed among the grain, that will grow up and choke it. It is not detected at first, or even when it first springs up; and afterward, it is not easy to distinguish the two. The wicked are among the righteous in the church, like tares among the wheat in the same field, because they are of most pernicious influence among professors, and it is impossible, by the strictest discipline, to make a perfect separation of them on earth. This is the point of the parable. Sinners are called the children of the wicked one, because they bear his likeness, and the works of their father they will do.

26. *The blade*—the *stalk*. It is with the fruits of piety in the Christian life, that a false profession contrasts. There must be *holiness* in the church, to show the *unholiness* in the false membership, and hence, when the church is degenerate, false religion does not so easily appear; the true and false are confounded—discipline is neglected, and the church itself is disgraced.

27. *Whence then hath it tares?* This is the surprise of many, and the world

then that we go and gather them up?

29 But he said, Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them.

30 Let both grow together un-

ffect to wonder at this, and it is a fit topic for earnest inquiry.

28. *Gather them up.* These mischiefs are the direct work of Satan—"an enemy hath done this." It is no part of the church system, or of its design, to harbour bad members. It does not excuse the false professor or the gainsayer. It only points for an explanation to that agency of all evil—the devil. But the zeal of many is at once to rid the church of all imperfection, so that it shall be without spot or wrinkle or blemish, or any such thing. This is often an Elias-zeal, as in Luke 9. 54. Some, like Jehu, call upon others to see their "zeal for the Lord." Some can see no church where they find not perfect purity. But Paul recognized the church of Corinth, though corrupt, because he found there the Christian doctrine with the sacraments, by which the church is to be known.

29. *Lest, &c.* Such a work of rooting out with such an unqualified determination, is perilous in itself, and often suspicious in the spirit of it. Our Lord cautions against such an enterprise. There is danger of rooting up the wheat with the tares, because of our inability to distinguish as perfectly as the case would demand. And a spirit of zealous extermination, that undertakes such a work of *rooting up* and putting out all that seems to them evil, "may be rather a war of the *tares against the wheat, than of the wheat against the tares.*"—Trench.

30. *Let both grow together.* The tares are to be separated from the wheat, but the householder's servants here are not the ones to do it with exactness, nor is this the time for it to be perfectly done. We cannot expect

til the harvest: and in the time of harvest "I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn.

u 1Ti.5.24. v Mal.4.1. w Lu.3.17.

the church to be wholly rid of false members for the present. Those who lay this to the blame of the church, that it has tares among the wheat, do not know their own hearts, or others'. Discipline is appointed in the church, and wo to those officers who neglect it, and are careless of the flock, or of its purity. But we are to beware of destroying a weak brother, or of indulging an arrogant, Pharisaic zeal, or of pretending, finally, to settle all these differences. There are false professors, but "what is the chaff to the wheat?" OBSERVE: Evil and good are to grow together, to increase and develope side by side, and intermixed, until the end of time. The good is not to choke the evil, but Satan is still to have his work and wages on earth.—¶ *The harvest* represents the end of the world (see vs. 39); because at the last, all results are gathered up—men are judged—fruits are brought to light, and a final disposal is made of the good and the bad.—¶ *The reapers are the angels* (vs. 39). They are appointed to this office. Christ is represented as coming to judgment and *all the holy angels with Him*" (Matt. 25).—¶ *To burn them.* Tares are burned so as to destroy most effectually the mischievous seed. Like this, in the end of the world, will be the gathering and effectual destroying of the wicked, beyond the possibility of their propagating evil any more.—¶ *Gather ye together, &c.,* or as in vs. 41, *gather out of His kingdom.* This will be the proper purifying process, removing every evil thing from the church (see Zeph. 1. 3) to "a furnace of fire" (vs. 42).—"Whose end is to be burned" (Heb. 6. 8). Utterly burned with fire (2 Sam. 23. 6, 7). This ex-

31 ¶ Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard-seed, which a man took and sowed in his field

32 Which indeed is the least

z Mar. 4. 36.

presses the common idea in the scripture of eternal burning, as the valley of Hinnom (Mark 9. 43-48). This casting into a furnace, which is here the image of hell, was a punishment in use among the Chaldeans (Jer. 29. 22. Dan. 3. 6).—¶ *Wailing, &c.* (vs. 42). The article here, and usually in this phrase in the New Testament, gives a definite and emphatic sense: THE *wailing*, so peculiar and deserved. These are expressions of rage and impatience (Acts. 7. 54).—¶ *Gather the wheat into my barn.* The righteous, in the judgment, shall be admitted and welcomed to the joy of their Lord: *shall shine forth*, as distinct from the rest, "as the sun in the kingdom of their Father" (vs. 43), as if *transfigured* before the universe. "They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament" (Dan. 12. 3), the children of light and of the day. God permits the evil and the good to dwell together thus, at present, in order to show His forbearance, and to exercise the circumspection and patience of His people, as well as to show the need of a final judgment day, and to make His children look for and pray for His coming kingdom, as prophesied of (Isa. 52. 1), with no more uncircumcised or unclean—Zech. 14. 21, no more the Canaanite in the house of the Lord—His people all righteous Isa. 60. 21. Compare Isa. 35. 8. Joel 3. 17. Ezek. 37. 21-27. Zeph. 3. 13. From this we are encouraged to persuade sinners to repentance, because the long-suffering of our God is salvation and not slackness. It shows His willingness to save. And the goodness of God should lead sinners to repentance. OBSERVE, this parable teaches us how possible it is for false professors to enter the church

of all seeds; but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof.

y Eze. 17. 23.

Nothing else can be expected. Nothing else is pretended. This is not to be charged against the church. The self-deceived and deceivers will all be made known at the last. And for the present, how necessary that we examine ourselves, since membership is no guaranty for our new nature. Christ is the final judge. Let all understand: "*Who hath ears to hear, let him hear*" (vs. 43). There are things here that require spiritual discernment, and the parable is worthy to be personally applied by each. In these two parables they had heard of the difficulties and drawbacks which belong to the kingdom. Now He would speak two other parables for their encouragement.

31. *Mustard-seed.* This parable is to show that the kingdom of Christ, though having these hindrances and drawbacks, WILL PROSPER. The growth of a kingdom had been set forth under this image of a tree (Dan. 4. 10-12. Ezek. 31. 3-9), and so of this kingdom (Ezek. 10; 7. 22-24. Psalm 80. 8). This seed is taken to show the greatness of the tree as compared with the smallness of its origin.

32. *The least.* This is not absolutely the case, but comparatively and proverbially so. "Small as a grain of mustard-seed," was a proverb among the Jews. As the church of Christ began in so small a way, and seemed so unpromising at first, but afterward should grow to the greatest size, the image is striking. The mustard-bush becomes the greatest among herbs—becomes a tree. It sometimes grows to the height of ten or twelve feet. This refers to the church in its outward, visible manifestation—and it applies to piety in the individual heart. So adds Theophylact: "Be thou such a grain of



33 ¶ Another parable spake he unto them : The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures<sup>1</sup> of meal, till the whole was leavened.

34 All these things spake Jesus unto the multitude in parables;<sup>2</sup> and without a parable spake he not unto them ;

35 That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, <sup>3</sup> saying, I will open my

<sup>1</sup> The Greek word signifies a measure (about a peck and a half, wanting a little more than a pint). <sup>2</sup> Mar. 4. 33. <sup>3</sup> a Ps. 78. 2.

mustard—small, indeed, in appearance, for it becomes thee not to make a spectacle of thy virtue, but fervent, and zealous, and energetic, and armed to reprove.”

33. *Leaven.* Under another figure the progress of the church is presented in a new aspect. The kingdom is here compared to that substance which is used to ferment meal. The *hidden, mysterious* working of the gospel is here illustrated. The secret influence in the heart, and in the world, is like that of leaven, which silently works, and pervades the whole mass. How remarkable an ignorance do heathen writers betray of the great work that was going on just below the surface of society, when Christ's kingdom began to spread, even until Christianity had well nigh triumphed. This parable shows how the grace which so effectually operates in the heart, is *imparted*, as the leaven is *put into* the meal. How it is *hidden* away there—spiritual, and not visible except from the effects—“your life is *hid* with Christ, in God”—and how, by the law of its operation, it must go on to spread *until the whole is leavened*. This is the law of Christian progress and perseverance to final perfection in Heaven. So the world shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters fill the seas.

mouth in parables ; I will utter things which have been kept<sup>3</sup> secret from the foundation of the world.

36 Then Jesus sent the multitude away, and went into the house : and his disciples came unto him, saying, Declare unto us the parable of the tares of the field.

37 He answered and said unto them, He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man :

38 The field is the world :<sup>c</sup> the

<sup>b</sup> Lu. 10. 14. Ro. 16. 25, 26. Col. 1. 26. <sup>c</sup> Ro. 10. 13. Col. 1. 6.

34 This means that Christ adopted this as His favourite and common mode of teaching the multitude. It was by *pictures*, attractive and comprehensive. To those who could not understand the spiritual truth, they were imaged to the eye—and by their vivid impression they might serve as formulas of truth, to recall it in its connexions and relations, if afterward it should be received. Yet they would bring only deeper darkness to the rejecters of the light. It was partly to defeat the malice and vigilant hostility of the Scribes and Pharisees, who, had He now spoken in plainest terms, would have plotted to destroy Him.

35. *That it might be fulfilled.* (Psalm 78). The Psalmist was *Asaph, the seer* (2 Chron. 29. 30). Speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God, he used this language, with an intent in the mind of the Spirit, that it should have an application and fulfilment here, in Christ. The Psalmist is called a *prophet* in this verse, and yet his Psalm is a recital of God's dealings with the church, which can be *prophetic* only as looking forward to Christ, rehearsing the Divine faithfulness in Zion. The terms in the Psalm mean rather “weighty sentences,” and “profound sayings.” And here Christ shows Himself as using this method of instruction in accord-

good seed are the children of the kingdom; <sup>d</sup> but the tares are the children of the wicked <sup>e</sup> one.

39 The enemy that sowed them is the devil: the harvest is the end of the world; <sup>f</sup> and the reapers are the angels. <sup>g</sup>

40 As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; <sup>h</sup> so shall it be in the end of this world.

41 The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom <sup>i</sup> all

<sup>d</sup> 1Pe. 1.23. <sup>e</sup> Jno. 8.44. Ac. 13.10. 1Jno. 3.8. <sup>f</sup> Joel 3.13. Re. 14.15. <sup>g</sup> Re. 14.15-19. <sup>h</sup> ver. 30. <sup>i</sup> Or, *scandals*.

ance with this prophetic reference of the Psalm.

37-40. The explanation of the parable of the tares is already given, in connection with the various portions of it as they occur.

41. *All things that offend*—margin, *scandals*. Gr. *σκάνδαλα*, lit. *stumbling-blocks*. Alluding here to persons—“*seducers*.”—Campbell. Trench understands the word as from the old form *σκανδαληθρον*, meaning that part of a trap or snare on which the bait is placed, and which being touched by the animal gives way, and draws the snare suddenly tight. In the New Testament it includes whatever, *entangling* as it were *men's feet*, might cause them to fall. Our Lord having sent the multitude away, *went into the house*, and explained to His disciples that which they had not understood; and to them also He delivered these other parables of different style from the former.

44. Here it is taught that *the kingdom is not merely a general, but also an individual thing*. Unless it be *personal* with us, it is nothing.—<sup>¶</sup> *Like unto treasure hid*. The point of this and the following parable, seems to be to show how the kingdom of heaven, or the gospel provision, is to be personally laid hold of by faith. That while on God's part,

things that offend, and <sup>j</sup> them which do iniquity;

42 And <sup>k</sup> shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there <sup>l</sup> shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

43 Then shall the righteous shine <sup>m</sup> forth as the sun, in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.

44 ¶ Again: the kingdom of heaven <sup>n</sup> is like unto treasure <sup>o</sup> hid in a field: the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth

<sup>j</sup> Lu. 13.27. <sup>k</sup> c. 3.12. Re. 19.20; 20.10. <sup>l</sup> ver. 50. c. 8.12. <sup>m</sup> Da. 12.3. 1Cor. 15.49. <sup>n</sup> Pr. 2.4, 5.

it is destined to spread as leaven, silently, but surely—on our part, it is to be sought and secured. This is the practical portion of the parables. In both these also, the gospel prize is represented as first *found*, then *found out*, and rejoiced in! *Thus*, says Calvin, *denotes the knowledge of faith*. In both cases it is the joy of the discovery that moves to the earnest and successful appropriation, discarding all things else. In Eastern countries *hid treasure* was not uncommon. Property was often held partly in such valuables as could be buried. Hence these rich deposits were often found where they had been hid by the owners long before. A Greek is said to have bought ground where such treasures were reported to lie. He inquired at the Oracle of Delphi, and was told to “*turn every stone*.” This he did, and found it. So we speak of “*leaving no stone unturned*,” in some great effort. This illustrates what is here taught by the parable. The points are these. The gospel treasure is the rich grace that is found so abundantly in Christ—durable riches and righteousness—“*in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge*.” It is *hid* to the natural man who “*discerneth not the things of the Spirit of God*.” It is “*concealed from the wise and pre-*

▪ all that he hath, and buyeth o that field.

45 ¶ Again: the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant-man, seeking goodly pearls;

π Ph.3.7,8. ο Is.55.1. Re.3.18.

dent," but it is "revealed unto babes." "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him, and He will show them His covenant." For this discovery every exertion must be put forth, and *no stone left unturned*. The discovery of the treasure which there is in Christ, is the grand gospel *motive* to discard self-righteousness and deny the world.—¶ *When a man hath found, he hideth*. This is his jealousy lest it be lost. He would not have it exposed nor endangered, but secured. He covers it *as it was*. He lets it lie where God put it—only marks the spot, and so he hastens and gives all diligence to make his calling sure. The Christian would not have God's plan of grace altered, and he would go to a sovereign God for his hope.—¶ *For joy thereof*, the finder parts with all he hath. The delight at finding Christ, and the riches that are in Christ, make a man renounce all things for Him. So Paul: "I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord," &c. It is by no means a bargaining, but a joyful constraint. He *finds the treasure*, and then he *buys the field*—THE TRUTH AS IT IS IN JESUS—and sells it not. This parable represents, therefore, the way in which we actually become partakers of the gospel treasure. It is all *in Christ*, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. It is all of grace. Like finding a prize, we know not what it is, until we have found it. So there is no merit of ours in the work. That which is, "*set before us in the gospel*," is already a *hope*, to be laid hold of (Heb. 6. 18). So the parable represents it almost as though stumbled upon, or found unawares. Lest even the MERIT of *seeking* should have place; as it has in the minds of

46 Who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it.

47 ¶ Again: the kingdom of

ρ Pr.3.14,15: 8.11.

many. The man who has any discovery of Christ should be jealous, lest he lose Him; and for joy of finding in Him all riches, he should count all things but dross and dung for His sake (Phil. 3. 8). Whatever is a hindrance in the way of having Christ in His fulness, whether it be pleasure, covetousness, indolence or pride, it is to be cast away. *And the joy of Christ is that, in the strength of which it is done*.

45, 46. *A merchantman*. This parable illustrates the way of salvation, in a somewhat different light. The former spoke of the treasure—this speaks of the finder. It shows the man as a seeker, an inquirer, in the lowest sense, of seeking something good—happiness, peace, righteousness, safety, salvation—and finding this one incomparable pearl. In this case you see the man.—¶ *Seeking goodly pearls*. These were *hidden*, also, in the *shell fish*. Men were employed by the pearl-merchant to dive after them in the waters of the East. But when this pearl is found, so transcendent in its excellence and value, this is seen to be the *one thing needful*—the *good part*—the *all in all*—and this discovery leads to a *forsaking of all things else for this*. When we give Christ our hearts, we give up our hold on all rival and conflicting interests. This is required of us. And as in the former case, it is our tasting that the Lord is gracious, and finding the one pearl of great price, that makes every other pearl and possession fade and fail to attract us in comparison. *This new affection has an expulsive power*. We throw away the pebbles of earth, for this inestimable pearl. This is represented here, "not as an arbitrary condition, but as a delightful constraint."

48. *Like unto a net*. This par-

heaven is like unto a net that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind :

48 Which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away

49 So shall it be at the end of the world : the angels shall come forth, and sever the wick-

q c.22.10. r c.25.32.

able represents not only the present mixture of good and evil members in the church (as the parable of the tares), but further, the final separation. "As there was a Ham in the ark, and a Judas among the twelve, so there should be a Babylon even within the bosom of the spiritual Israel. Esau shall contend with Jacob even in the church's womb" (Gen. 25. 22.).—¶ *Net*. The word in the original—*sagene*—means a *draw-net*, from which (says Trench) our word *seine* or *sean* is a corruption. It is sometimes half a mile in length, with sinkers at the bottom, and corks at the top, so as to be stretched over a great extent of the waters, and to sweep all the fish, of all kinds, that are there. So Christ's kingdom, or church on earth, will be *spread*, by the preaching of the gospel, all over the world. The field is the world, but in the sea is the net, "a world within a world."—¶ *When it was full*—when the number of God's elect is made up, and His purposes for His church are fulfilled.—¶ *They drew to shore*. The time of final separation is not yet, but at the consummation, when all things will be closed up, and the last judgment will be held—then it shall be.—¶ *Sat down*. This represents the *sitting in judgment*. Christ's ministers are the "fishers of men." But the *angels shall come forth to the office work* of final separation, and Christ with them shall come to judgment. In the church, **this work is very partially done.**

ed from among the just, 50 And shall cast them into the furnace of fire : there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

51 Jesus saith unto them, Have ye understood all these things? They say unto him, Yea, Lord.

52 Then said he unto them Therefore every scribe *which is* instructed unto the kingdom of

s ver.42.

49. *At the end of the world*, the angels shall sever or separate the wicked from among the just (See 2 Tim. 2. 20, 21).—¶ **THE JUST** are the *justified*—the true disciples. The wicked shall be separated from them, because there shall not enter into the heavenly church, any thing that defileth. They shall be cast out. "Thy people shall be all righteous." "Without are dogs."

50. *The furnace of fire*. Not a furnace, but **THE** furnace. By this is meant that place of torment that is so definitely spoken of in scripture as the abode of lost spirits.—¶ *Wailing*. Bitter, despairing lamentations. Definitely, in the Greek, *the* wailing, and *the* gnashing of teeth, which are deserved, and which belong there. The agony of the lost will spring from self-reproaches at having neglected the great salvation, and now finding, when too late, that there is no escape. They had not heeded the repeated warnings. These seven parables "have a certain unity, succeeding each other in natural order, and having a completeness in themselves."

51. *Have ye understood?* With infinite tenderness our Lord makes this inquiry, whether His explanations had fully enlightened them.—¶ *These things*. That is, the *meaning* of the parables which He had just spoken; the truths pertaining to the kingdom of God which they set forth.

52. *Every scribe, &c.* A scribe was, among the Jews, one learned in the

heaven is like unto a man *that* is an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure *things* new and old."

53 ¶ And it came to pass, *that* when Jesus had finished these parables, he departed thence.

t Pr.10.21; 15.7; 18.4. u Ca.7.13.

law, and an expounder of it. These favoured disciples, who sat under all these teachings of Christ, were *instructed* scribes. The term means, literally, *DISCIPLED*—made fully acquainted with, or "instructed unto the kingdom, to show forth the praises of Him who called them." He now shows to what they are properly like, as to their position and obligation. They were to be teachers of others.—¶ *An householder.* The teachers of the church are to have stores of knowledge laid up, as those at the head of a house have provisions stored for their families.—¶ *His treasure.* His storehouse, closet, or treasury of provisions. From this he was to bring out the various supplies, suited to each individual want, and for every occasion; "giving to each a portion in due season," and "rightly dividing the word of truth"—just as a housekeeper brings forth the various stores for each day's meal, and for all. Every teacher and preacher should come before the people with rich stores of useful learning. "Let no man despise thee." "The priest's lips should keep knowledge," that the law may be sought at his mouth. For about three years our Lord gave special instructions to His disciples. He gave here, also, a pattern of gospel teaching, tender and copious in the doctrines of the kingdom. Every well-instructed, or disciplined scribe, should thus bring out of his treasure things new and old. We must be able to teach others also. And those who have received of God's free spirit, and the joys of His salvation, should teach transgressors His ways. (Psalm 51.) —. ¶ *Things new and old,* is a pro-

54 And when he was come into his own country, he taught them in their synagogue, insomuch that they were astonished, and said, Whence hath this *man* this wisdom, and these mighty works?

v Mar.6.1,&c. Lu.4.16,&c.

verbal expression, taken from the ingathering of the year (Sol. Songs, 7. 13). Compare vs. 35.

53. *These parables.* These SEVEN spoken here in connexion, and containing a series of truths most important for them to know. (See Trench on the Parables.) Here it must be observed from the Harmony, that after finishing the parables near Capernaum, Jesus re-crossed the lake, and healed the demoniacs at Gadara, on the south-east coast, came back to Capernaum, attended Levi's (Matthew's) feast, raised Jairus' daughter, and then He appeared again at "Nazareth, where He had been brought up."

[§ 61. JESUS AGAIN AT NAZARETH, AND AGAIN REJECTED.]

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
13. 54-58	6. 1-6		

54. *His own country.* That is Nazareth, where He dwelt, until He entered on His public work. Though He was born at Bethlehem, He lived at Nazareth, whither Joseph had returned from Egypt. Hence in fulfilment of prophecy, He was called a Nazarene. Mark says: "And when the sabbath-day was come, He began to teach in the synagogue." This He often did, as when He was before, rejected at Nazareth. The synagogues of the Jews were the parish churches, where they worshipped in their various quarters, for ordinary occasions when they need not go up to Jerusalem. We read of the minister and of the rulers of the synagogue. According to the Jewish Talmud, wherever there were ten *Dablanim*, or *men of leisure*, who would be responsible for the synagogue ser-

55 Is not this the carpenter's son? Is not his mother called Mary? and his brethren, James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas?

56 And his sisters, are they not all with us? Whence then hath this *man* all these things?

vice, there a synagogue might be erected. Here again the people brought up against His claims the fact of His low extraction, as known to them, His poor family origin, and His being a common man among them, whose brothers were well known.

55. *The carpenter's son.* Mark has it—the *carpenter*. It would seem clear that our Lord had regularly wrought at this trade, under His father Joseph, until He left Nazareth.—¶ *Mary.* Mark has it—“*the son of Mary.*” Though neither of the Evangelists speak of Joseph's death, yet it may be plainly inferred, that Christ was now called “the son of Mary” (see Mark 6. 3), because of her being a widow. (See Luke 8. 19. John 2. 12, and 19. 25-27.)

56. *Whence then?* Here the people of Christ's own town testified that He had had no uncommon advantages. They knew His family well, and knew that they were common people. This was their witness that He could not have received His wisdom from man. The very condescension of our Lord prejudiced the proud against Him. He stooped to save, and His very stooping offended them. They drew from it an argument against His claims. So many make Christ's true and proper humanity an argument to disprove His Divinity. But the scripture equally asserts both. And men beg the question altogether, when they assume this union of the two natures in one person to be incompatible and impossible with God. Behold the Infinite condescension of our Redeemer! The Creator of the Universe a carpenter!

57 And they were offended with him. But Jesus said unto them, A prophet is not without honour, save in his own country, and in his own house.

58 And he did not many mighty works there, because of their unbelief.

to Is. 49. 7; 53. 3. Jno. 6. 42.

This dignifies every honest employment of the mechanic, and makes day labour honourable in all.

57. *Offended in Him.* These things, in His case, were an offence or stumbling-block to them. They rejected Him on these grounds. They argued that He could not be any such person as He claimed, because He had grown up among them. They were envious, too, of such superior pretensions by one of their townsmen. Alas, they knew not the wondrous plan of God, in redemption.—¶ *A prophet.* This proverb Christ here applies as suiting His own case. He was rejected on natural principles, that belong to the carnal heart. We read that even His brethren believed not on Him.

58. *Mighty works*—miracles. Mark says, “And He could there do no mighty work, save that He laid His hands upon a few sick folk and healed them.” According to His plan of grace that required faith, their stubborn unbelief restrained the blessing. This was true, though faith is the gift of God. Obstinate opposers thus even keep back the miracles! Such prejudice, like that of the Gadarenes, besought Him rather to depart out of their coast. Christ would not thrust His benefits upon them unasked. These sick folk, likely, had such a sense of need, as He could properly minister to, and relieve.

OBSERVE, (1.) Unbelief *now*, is equally sinful, and stands equally in the way of His wondrous works. (2.) “Only a spiritual eye can discern beauty in an humbled Saviour.”—*Burkitt.* (3.) We have seen the fulfilment of His word, and the infallible

## CHAPTER XIV.

AT that time<sup>a</sup> Herod the tetrarch heard of the fame of Jesus;

<sup>a</sup> Mar.6.14. Lu.9.7,&c.

proofs of His gospel, as *they* had not. This is more than to have seen Him in the flesh, and so our guilt is greater. (4.) He will not visit Zion with the wonder-working power of the Spirit unless for these things He be inquired of by the house of Israel to do it for them. "Open thy mouth wide and I will fill it." Hardened unbelief will seem to stay His gracious hand. We are not authorized to expect a blessing from God, if we have not faith in Christ as the Divine Redeemer.

## CHAPTER XIV.

"While the twelve are absent preaching in the name of Christ, Herod causes John the Baptist to be beheaded in the castle of Machærus, at the southern extremity of Perea, near the Dead Sea. In consequence of the preaching of the apostles, Herod hears the fame of Jesus—is conscience-stricken, and declares him to be John risen from the dead. The disciples of John come and tell Jesus, and the twelve also return with the same intelligence—upon which Jesus retires to the north-east coast of the Lake, not far from the northern Bethsaida, or Julias. All these events seem to have taken place near together. Matthew and Mark narrate the death of the Baptist in explanation of Herod's declaration. According to John 6. 4, the Passover was now at hand, viz., the *third* during our Lord's ministry. John therefore had lain in prison not far from a year and six months, and was beheaded about three years after entering upon his public ministry."—*Robinson's Harmony*. See § 62. ch. 10.

§ 63. HEROD HELD JESUS TO BE JOHN THE BAPTIST, WHOM HE HAD JUST BEFORE BEHEADED.—Galilee?—Perea.

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John
14. 1-12	6. 14-16	9. 7-9	
	. 21-29		

2 And said unto his servants, This is John the Baptist; he is risen from the dead; and therefore mighty works<sup>1</sup> do

<sup>1</sup> Or, are wrought by him.

1. This Herod was one of three sons of Herod the Great, and was surnamed *Antipas*. He ruled over Galilee and Perea; his father, at his death, shortly after Christ's birth, having left his kingdom in three different parts to the three Herods.—¶ *Tetrarch*. Literally, the ruler of a fourth, is a title not confined to this meaning, but denotes also the ruler of any inferior part. He was called *Herod the king* also, as we find from vs. 9. He heard of the fame of Christ, who had now been engaged the better part of two years in His public ministry, and had twice traversed Galilee, where He had now set out again. But the preaching of the apostles had now made Christ more known, and Herod had in his own house some followers of Christ. (Luke 8. 3, and Acts 13. 1.) Herod was a bad man, of loose character. He was at length banished by Caligula to Spain, and died in exile; and his tetrarchy was given by the same emperor to *Herod Agrippa* (see Acts 12.), who "was eaten up of worms."

2. Herod found that Christ was a remarkable person, and heard that he was possessed of supernatural powers; and his conscience smote him with this idea, that it was John the Baptist, whom he had beheaded, risen from the dead. A sense of guilt, mingled with superstitious fears, had awakened this impression in his mind.—¶ *His servants*—or courtiers. "Matthew alone mentions, and without any apparent reason for such minuteness, that Herod addressed his remark to his *servants*. Luke, in the parallel passage, says he *heard of all that was done by him*. But by referring to Luke 8. 3, and Acts 13. 1, we find that Christ had followers from among the household of this prince, with whom Herod was likely to converse on a subject in which they were better in-

shew forth themselves in him.

3 ¶ For Herod had laid hold on John, and bound him, and put *him* in prison for Herodias' sake, his brother Philip's wife.

4 For John said unto him, It <sup>b</sup> is not lawful for thee to have her.

5 And when he would have put him to death, he feared the multitude, because they counted him as a <sup>c</sup> prophet.

<sup>b</sup> Le. 18.16; 20.21. <sup>c</sup> c. 21.26. Lu. 20.6.

formed than himself."—*Blunt's Veracity*.—¶ *Mighty works*. Literally, powers or miracles operate in Him—are wrought by Him. Though Herod was a Sadducee, and did not believe in a resurrection or spirit, his conscience here prevailed over his infidel creed. (See ch. 3. 7, note.)

3. John had been in prison, it would seem, about a year and a half. The Evangelist digresses now to narrate that cruelty. When it occurred, we remember Christ opened His public ministry (see notes on ch. 4. 12); and all the time of Christ's preaching until John's beheading, was about two years and a half.

4. *Not lawful*. Herodias, whom this Herod married, was an ambitious and vicious woman, the grand-daughter of Herod the Great, and niece of this man, and was now living in marriage with his own brother, Herod Philip. They had a daughter Salome, who is referred to probably in vs. 6. Of course it was not lawful for Herod to marry this woman, though Philip was his brother by a different mother. It was *adultery* in the first place—and it was besides a case of *incest*, forbidden in Levit. 18. 16—"brother's wife." Christian faithfulness will sometimes cost men their lives.

5. He would have put him to death on account of his reproving him faithfully for this crime. But he feared the multitude, who had great respect for John as a prophet. Good

6 But when Herod's birthday was kept, the daughter of Herodias danced <sup>1</sup> before them, and pleased Herod.

7 Whereupon he promised with an oath to give her whatsoever she would ask.

8 And she, being before instructed of her mother, said, Give me here John Baptist's <sup>d</sup> head in a charger.

9 And the king was sorry; \*

<sup>1</sup> In the midst. <sup>d</sup> Pr. 29.10. <sup>e</sup> Ju. 11.31,35. Du. 6. 14-16.

men will gain respect, that will sometimes save them from their enemies.

6. *Herod's birthday*. A great occasion among kings at that time (see Mark 6. 21-29). It was probably kept in the castle of Machærus, where John was imprisoned.—¶ *The daughter of Herodias danced before them*—or, in their midst, on this festive occasion; and it was part of the custom, at such times, for the king to express his special approbation (Esther 5. 6). He made an oath to give her whatsoever she should ask. Mark adds, *even to the half of my kingdom*—a form of royal promise. It was a rash and wicked promise, such as is oftenest made in the company of the gay and revelling. Gay amusements often lead to such crimes. It was such a promise as was wicked in itself, and should therefore have been broken. It was more wicked to keep it than to break it.

8. *Being before instructed of her mother*. This is referred to Herodias, to whom it belonged to instigate the crime. "She went forth and said unto her mother" (Mark). "She came in straightway with haste unto the king" (Mark). "Give me *by-and-by*"—that is, now, immediately, as is the old English sense. This shows us the malignant and depraved character of Herodias, living in sin with Herod, and now ready to call for John the Baptist's head! They wished John put out of the way, that their crimes



nevertheless, for the oath's sake, and them which sat with him at meat, he commanded it to be given *her*.

10 And he sent, and beheaded John in the prison.

11 And his head was brought in a charger, and given to the damsel: and she brought it to her mother.

f Ju.21.1. 1Sa.14.23; 25.22. Ec.5.2.

might not be reproved or disturbed. It was sometimes demanded that the head be brought, as proof that the person had been executed.—¶ *Give me here*—that is, *now*, before the king should repent his promise.

9. *The king was sorry.* Mark has it, "exceeding sorry." He was troubled, worried, but not sincerely penitent for his crime. He feared the result of this upon his own standing with the people, for they counted John a prophet (vs. 5), and he himself had great respect for him on general grounds (Mark 6. 20). He was not quite prepared, at first, for such a request. It shocked him, and he was uneasy, and felt regret at the circumstance. The world's joy is accompanied with sorrow. Sin has misery.—¶ *Nevertheless.* He was shamefully inconsistent in first making such an oath, and then regretting it—and then, notwithstanding his conscience accused, carrying it through for the sake of standing to what he had said, and preserving a false honour. He was afraid of being called cowardly or weak—so the king feared his guests!

10. *He sent.* Mark says he sent a "speculator"—a Latin term used by Mark, meaning "executioner."

11. *A charger*—a dish, platter, or waiter. This shows us how corrupt and cruel is the natural heart. A young girl and a base mother conspire to seek so dreadful a gratification as the murder of a good man, a prophet of the Lord, and to triumph over his bloody head, served up to

12 And his disciples came and took up the body, and buried it, and went and told Jesus.

13 ¶ When Jesus heard of it, he departed thence by ship into a desert place apart: and when the people had heard thereof, they followed him on foot out of the cities.

g Ac.8.2. h c.10.23; 12.15. Mar.6.32,&c. Lu.9.10,&c. Jno.6.1,2,&c.

them on a waiter as a luxury! So fiendish, indeed, is human nature, unrestrained, even in its best estate.

12. *Took up the body.* This would look as though the body had been thrown out unburied. John's disciples took pious care of it, and then, knowing how closely John's work and Christ's were related, and how they personally felt toward each other, "they went and told Jesus." Here was incidentally, in the manner of John's death, a proof that he was not the Messiah, for "a bone of Him should not be broken." (John 19. 36.)

OBSERVE, (1.) The terrors and tortures of a guilty conscience. (2.) As is the father, so is the son. Herod the Great sought the life of Christ. Herod Antipas, his son, takes John's life. (3.) To reprove the sins of the great is a minister's duty, though it may lose him his life.

§ 64. THE TWELVE RETURN, AND JESUS RETIRES WITH THEM ACROSS THE LAKE. FIVE THOUSAND ARE FED.—*Capernaum and N. E. coast of the Lake of Galilee.*

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
14. 13-21	6. 30-44	9. 10-17	6. 1-14

13. *When Jesus heard of it*—i. e., of John's death and Herod's opinion of Himself. He seems to have been affected by the tale of John's death, and to have sought retirement also, from the notice and malice of Herod. Mark says, that He invited the twelve, who had just returned from their mission (see Mark 6. 30. Luke 9. 10), to retire with Him to rest awhile. They

14 And Jesus went forth, and saw a great multitude, and was moved with compassion toward them, and he healed their sick.

15 ¶ And when it was evening, his disciples came to him, saying, This is a desert place, and the time is now past; send the multitude away, that they may go into the villages, and buy themselves victuals.

16 But Jesus said unto them, They need not depart; give ye them to eat.

*i* s. 9. 36; 15. 32, &c. *j* He. 4. 5.

must withdraw from the multitude, in order to have time for a meal. He would also instruct them further for their work. From Luke 9. 10, we learn that He went to the vicinity of Bethsaida, known as Bethsaida (Julias).—¶ *A desert place*—thinly populated, on the east of the Sea of Galilee.—¶ *On foot*—as distinguished from His crossing in a boat—“by ship” (see Mark 6. 33). We learn from John 6. 4, that the “passover was nigh.” Mark says, “there were many coming and going.” Such incidental agreements are proofs of the narrations.

14. *Jesus went forth*—in public.—¶ *Moved with compassion.* The Greek term is “sympathy.” They were doubtless fatigued by their travel, as we judge from its being mentioned that they had gone *on foot*—and this may be noticed in connexion with their having sick among them. Mark notes that His concern for them was, that they “were as sheep not having a shepherd” (Mark 6. 34). The *multitudes*, 5,000, besides women and children (vs. 21), affected Him. They were going to Jerusalem, to keep the feast. “He began to teach them many things” (Mark).

15. *The time is now past.* “It was evening.” The day was far spent, and it became necessary to think of the multitudes as to their physical wants. They needed food

17 And they say unto him, We have here but five loaves, and two fishes.

18 He said, Bring them hither to me.

19 And he commanded the multitude to sit down on the grass; and took the five loaves and the two fishes, and, looking up to heaven, he blessed, and brake; and gave the loaves to his disciples, and the disciples to the multitude.

20 And they did all eat, and

16. From John we learn, that Christ had said to Philip, “Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat?” This was to lead Philip to consider the actual difficulty of providing for so many by human means. “This He said to prove him, for He Himself knew what he would do” (John 6. 6). Philip had expressed the impossibility, and Christ would have it confessed that 200 pennyworth would not suffice.—¶ *They need not depart; give ye them to eat.* A challenge to human power.

17. *But five loaves*—or, *cakes*, usually made in the form of thin biscuits, round, and generally something less than a foot in diameter (see John 6. 9).—¶ *And two fishes.* All belonging to a lad in the crowd, which could be had, as Andrew ascertained (John 6. 8, 9).

19. *He blessed and brake.* He gave thanks to God, “looking up to heaven.” So His followers are taught to receive their food, and our daily bread needs the Divine blessing. As the bread was not in loaves, like ours, but in cakes, it was broken.

20, 21. *Twelve baskets full.* Such baskets as the Jews usually carried with them on a journey, holding their food. There remained more than twelve times the amount that they had at first. This miracle consisted in so increasing the quantity that all were fed (perhaps 10,000 in all), and

were filled; and they took up of the fragments that remained twelve baskets full.<sup>k</sup>

21 And they that had eaten were about five thousand men, beside women and children.

22 ¶ And straightway Jesus constrained his disciples to get

*k* 2K.4.1-7.

more was left than they had at first. This was Divine power, the same as to create a world. John says, that they were convinced by this of His being the Messiah, and Divine (John 6. 14). "How much more (says Bengel) could *all* feed in the Sacred Supper, upon the same Lord." Our Lord thus proclaimed Himself the Bread of the world—the inexhaustible supply for all—only increasing upon the draught on its fulness, and yet showing such a superabundance left. "Yet there is room." "Of His fulness have all we received, and grace for grace" (John). Since there is "bread enough and to spare" in Christ's house, why should any perish with hunger? This was a repetition of Old Testament miracles. "He gave them bread from heaven to eat" (John 6. 30, 31). This was looked for from the Messiah, a prophet like unto Moses. See also Elijah's (2 Kings 4. 42-44) feeding one hundred men with twenty loaves of barley. So also the widow's cruise of oil and barrel of meal (1 Kings 17. 16), and again (2 Kings 4. 1-7). But these only prefigured Christ's. They were only hints of His. These were servants' works, on His authority. His were the works of the Master.

OBSERVE, (1.) Though our Lord would not make bread out of stones for His own hunger, or to meet the impious challenge of the tempter, yet He will make bread out of nothing for His followers' wants, and for proper witness to His work. (2.) "God's blessing through Christ multiplies our supplies, and the food which we eat comes from His grace."

14\*

into a ship, and to go before him, unto the other side, while he sent the multitudes away.

23 And when he had sent the multitudes away, he<sup>l</sup> went up into a mountain apart to pray: and when the evening was come, he was there alone.

24 But the ship was now in the

*l* Mar.6.46.

—*Calvin.* (3.) *With Christ, our very leavings are more than all we had without Him.* (4.) Men ought indeed to believe, where they see what ample provisions Christ has for His people within His power, and how abundantly He supplies them. "This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world." John 6. 14.

§ 65. JESUS WALKS UPON THE WATER.  
—*Lake of Galilee. Gennesareth.*

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
14.22-36	6. 45-56	9. 1-17	6. 15-21

22. *Constrained*—urged, induced. The word is strong, and means *compelled*. John tells us that this was done because the men would take Him by force and make Him a king. —¶ *A ship*—"the ship." Mark.—¶ *The other side*—i. e. of the Sea of Galilee, "toward Capernaum" (John) to Bethsaida—not the town of that name on the north-east coast, but the city of Andrew and Peter, near Capernaum. Philip was of this place.

23. *Apart*—*alone*, having directed the disciples to go into the ship, and having sent the multitudes away. Mark states that the disciples were ordered to Bethsaida, and there was a town of that name on the west coast.

24. *In the midst of the sea.* John says 25 or 30 furlongs out, or about four miles, reckoning  $7\frac{1}{2}$  Jewish furlongs to the mile: and his Sea of Galilee, or Tiberias, was no where three times that width. Christ's ever-watchful love beheld them at a distance, and even at night.

25. *Fourth watch.* The Jews, in the time of Christ, like the Romans,

midst of the sea, tossed with waves: for the wind was contrary.

25 And in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea.

26 And <sup>m</sup> when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were troubled, <sup>n</sup> saying, It is a spirit; and they cried out for fear.

27 But straightway Jesus spake unto them, saying, Be <sup>o</sup> of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid.

*m* Job 9.8. *Jno.* 6.19. *n* Lu. 24.37. *o* Ac. 23.11

divided the night into four watches— evening, midnight, cock-crowing, and morning. The first, from twilight to 9 o'clock; the second, from 9 to 12; the third, from 12 to 3; the fourth, from 3 to day-break. There were *two evenings*, as noted by Matthew and Mark; the first, our afternoon (vs. 15), the other, our twilight (vs. 23).

25. *They were troubled*—at the supernatural sight. Christ is often mistaken by His people when He comes in some unusual and alarming shape—in some affliction, or cross, or mercy. Now they feared not only the *sea*, but Christ the Lord. Mark adds: "For they considered not the miracle of the loaves, and their heart was hardened."

27. *Be of good cheer.* Be cheerful, not disturbed or afraid. This is the gospel message of *peace*, on the ground—the simple ground, "*It is I.*" Christ's presence is *peace* to the soul. "My peace I give unto you." His office work is our trust and rejoicing.

28. *If it be Thou.* This would not really express a doubt, but only in his agitated feeling, and impulsive zeal, would ask a word from Christ for his complete assurance. How perfectly does Christ's word of gospel grace, "*Come,*" embolden us at all times! Yet some make a mystery of even this, and hold back and perish.

29. *Come.* Our simple trust is to

28 And Peter answered him and said, Lord, if <sup>p</sup> it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water.

29 And he said, Come. And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water to go to Jesus.

30 But when he saw the wind <sup>1</sup> boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord save me.<sup>2</sup>

31 And immediately <sup>r</sup> Jesus stretched forth *his* hand, and

<sup>p</sup> Ph. 4.13. <sup>1</sup> Or, *strong.* <sup>q</sup> Ps. 69.1.2. La. 3.57. <sup>r</sup> Is. 63.12.

be in the *word* from Christ's lips Christians do not sufficiently find their hope in the express language of the gospel. They build too much on other things, and hence have so little confidence to go forward, and so little steady and confirmed trust. Peter, it would seem, walked for a while on the water! Behold what grace in the Christian can do! What Christ's presence and word can accomplish for us and in us.

30. *But when he saw.* It was only when he saw something besides Christ, and had his fears aroused, that he began to sink. "He saw the wind boisterous and was afraid." How essential is it that we look not even at our own sins for discouragement, nor at Satan's accusations for despair, but so be taken up with Christ as not to be unnerved, even by the worst appearances. "*Lord save me,*" is the language of genuine prayer, prompted by a sense of need, and a sight of Christ at hand.

31. *Wherefore didst thou doubt?* Christ does not find fault with him for *coming*, but for *doubting*. It was not that he trusted the Master too much, but too little. So the Saviour complains never of our confidence, but only of our *diffidence*. Our faith should be firm, even on the troubled wave, when He is near. At once Christ showed His own all-sufficien-

caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?\*

32 And when they were come into the ship, the wind ceased.†

33 Then they that were in the ship came and worshipped him, saying, Of a truth thou art the Son of God.‡

34 ¶ And‡ when they were

\* Ja.1.6. † Ps.107.29. ‡ Da.3.25. Lu.4.41. Jno. 1.49; 6.69; 11.27. Ac.3.37. Ro.1.4. § Mar.6.53.

cy and Peter's groundless distrust. And even as He caught him, and while the terrified Apostle was yet in His arms, He expostulated with him at his doubting. So when Christ stretches forth His hand, and shows us His salvation, He makes us wonder that we could have doubted His power and grace at all.

32. *When they were come into the ship.* John says, "they willingly received Him," and on account of the wind abating, they came at once to port. Christ's getting in the ship was their salvation. He can both calm the tempest round us, and carry us safe to heaven.

33. *Worshipped Him.* "They that were in the ship," may mean the crew, who were moved by this display of Divine power over the elements (Psalm 77. 19. Hab. 3. 15). They were satisfied that He was God, and this was what He claimed to be. No mere man could have done this. And He both walked on the sea Himself, and saved Peter from sinking.

34. *Gennesaret.* This land or region of country was on the north-west shore of the Lake of Galilee, sometimes called the Lake of Gennesaret. John states that the disciples went to or about Capernaum, and Mark says that they were to go to Bethsaida on the west, which was a town in the land of Gennesaret. (See Map.) From John we learn (6. 25), that the people wondered how Christ

gone over, they came into the land of Gennesaret.

35 And when the men of that place had knowledge of him, they sent out into all that country round about, and brought unto him all that were diseased;

36 And besought him that they might only touch the hem\* of his garment; and as many† as touched were made perfectly whole.

‡ Jno.15.38. c.9.20 Mar.3.10. Lu.6.19. Ac.19.12. § Jno.6.37.

came thither. They had seen the disciples go in the boat without Christ, and the storm would not have allowed His crossing afterward—"for the wind was contrary" (vs. 24). So the gospels explain each other. See *Blunt's Veracity*.

35, 36. Here the people expressed their confidence in Christ as divine, bringing to Him their sick for a cure. They were now persuaded that only a touch was requisite! And even at this they were made perfectly whole. It could not be in the touch, but in the fulness of Christ. See note, 9. 20

OBSERVE, (1.) That when the disciples were in a situation to feel their helplessness, and perishing need of Him, He came near. So is it always. Here, too, He would show them the plan of His grace. Christ puts them forth unto the danger alone, even as some loving mother-bird thrusts her fledgelings from the nest, that they may find their own wings, and learn to use them.—*Trench.* "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble, therefore will not we fear." (2.) It is further taught that the church, though as that little bark upon the stormy sea, buffeted and struggling, and making little headway, and even ready to be swallowed up, is not lost sight of nor forsaken by Christ. In her extremity He does appear to save. *He descries her at a distance, and ad*

## CHAPTER XV.

**T**HEN "came to Jesus Scribes and Pharisees, which were of Jerusalem, saying,

a Mar.7.1,&c.

*night.* "When the Lord shall build up Zion He will appear in His glory. He will regard the prayer of the destitute and not despise their prayer." He is on the mountain apart praying, ever living to make intercession for us. He suddenly appears in the time of urgent necessity, and anon the toiling rowers are at the haven where they would be.—*Trench.* Mark relates that "*He would have passed them by.*" This appearance of things to them, served only to draw out their entreaties. So is it often with the church. He never has an intent like

2 Why do thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? for they wash not their hands when they eat bread.

this; for He will not depart from us to do us good, but He will often hide His face, or seem to *turn aside*. The bride must say, come! "Though Christ appeared at the proper time for rendering assistance, yet the storm did not immediately cease till *the disciples* were more fully aroused to desire and expect His grace."—*Calvin.* (3.) They who trust the more, are the more powerfully kept. They who have begun to trust in grace, says Bengel, can the less use nature. Peter feared. He had not thought to *swim*, but to *walk* to Christ, the Lord helping.

§ 66. Our Lord's Discourse to the multitude in the synagogue at Capernaum. Many Disciples turn back. Peter's profession of faith.  
*Capernaum.*

Matt.

Mark.

Luke.

John.

6. 22-71  
7. 1.

## PART V.

*From our Lord's third Passover until His final Departure from Galilee at the Feast of Tabernacles.*

Time—six months.

## CHAPTER XV.

§ 67. OUR LORD JUSTIFIES HIS DISCIPLES FOR EATING WITH UNWASHEN HANDS. Pharisaic traditions.—*Capernaum.*

Matt. | Mark. | Luke. | John.  
15. 1-20 | 7. 1-23 | |

1. *Of Jerusalem.* The most distinguished of their body from Jerusalem came, probably, to watch and ensnare Him.

2. *Tradition of the Elders.* By the *Elders* here, is meant the ancients; and their "*tradition*" is what they *handed down*; any precept or custom as taught to them, and to be observed by their successors. The Jews held that there was an oral or verbal law, of indefinite antiquity, unwritten, but delivered by God to Moses, and by

Moses to Joshua, and so down to their time. A collection of these they pretend to have in the Mishna, containing various precepts and customs of the *elders*, handed down as binding on their generations. This was one of the traditions: That it was unlawful to eat with unwashen hands. And one Rabbi asserted that neglect of washing was a greater sin than whoredom; another, that it was better to die than to omit it. *Traditions* cannot be of equal authority with *documents* written by inspiration, as the *Scriptures*. (See *Greenleaf on the Evangelists*. Appendix, No. 2.) The very existence and use of *Scripture* is to dispense with traditions.

3. *Why do ye?* Christ replied that these traditions were themselves unlawful, and violated the command

3 But he answered and said unto them, Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition? <sup>b</sup>

4 For God commanded, saying, <sup>c</sup> Honour thy father and mother: and, He <sup>d</sup> that curseth father or mother, let him die the death.

5 But ye say, Whosoever shall say to *his* father or *his* mother, *It is a gift*, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me:

6 And honour not <sup>e</sup> his father or his mother, *he shall be free*.

<sup>b</sup> Col. 2.5, 23. Tit. 1. 14. <sup>c</sup> Ex. 20. 12. De. 5. 16. <sup>d</sup> Ex. 11. 17. Le. 20. 9. <sup>e</sup> De. 27. 16.

ments of God. He gives an instance as to the fifth commandment. Men are willing to make void God's law. They are prone to be governed more by current maxims than by Divine precepts. The use of traditions among men, is mostly to set *aside the Scriptures*.

4. *Honour*. This includes respect, obedience and support.—¶ *Curseth*. Revileth. (Exodus 21. 17. Levit. 20. 9.) God's law has always been most rigorous and severe against filial ingratitude or disrespect. The language is here the strongest possible, "denoting a capital punishment of the worst sort."—*Bloomfield*.—¶ *Let him die the death*. "Let him be put to death without mercy." God commanded. Exod. 20. 12—17. They pleaded for traditions, the honour due to their ancestry. Christ takes this very commandment on this point.

5. *A gift*. *Corban*, is the Hebrew word meaning *gift*, and Mark has the word as it is in Hebrew; that is, their word which they used. It means a consecrated offering, a thing devoted to God. When they put any thing out of their power for a sacred use, they called it *corban*, *dedicated*. And this tradition was, that they who, to avoid doing their parents a benefit, should say, as a pretext, that what they had and might help them with, was

Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition.

7 Ye hypocrites! well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying,

8 This <sup>f</sup> people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with *their* lips: but their heart is far from me.

9 But in vain they do worship me, teaching *for* doctrines <sup>g</sup> the commandments of men.

10 ¶ And he called the multitude, and said unto them, Hear, and understand:

<sup>f</sup> Is. 29. 13. <sup>g</sup> Col. 2. 22.

*corban*, that is, devoted to God, *should go free*. Thus they encouraged filial ingratitude and hypocrisy, by authorizing the use of a religious term, as a release from filial obligation.

7. *Hypocrites*. Because both in their zeal for forms of worship and in their pious pretensions for an excuse of pious actions they were full of hypocrisy. God hates filial ingratitude. Christ was a son. He hates vain worship.

8, 9. *People*. (Isa. 29. 13.) Though the prophet spoke of the Jews in his own time, his language still applied prophetically to these, for they were one with those ancient hypocrites. It was a prophecy, remotely, of their character as a nation. 1st. They were insincere and heartless in their worship. It was with their *lips*—no lack of profession and words. This made it more hypocritical as there was so little in deed and truth. 2d. They followed the commandments (or institutions, ordinances) of men, as the *doctrines* and law of God. "Their *ear toward me* is taught by the precept of men" (Isa. 29. 13). The commandments of God are to be distinguished from the traditions of men in this, that they are found in the Scripture. Traditions, however, are now enjoined and regarded as authoritative, by the *Romish church*.

11 Not<sup>h</sup> that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man; but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man.

12 Then came his disciples, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the Pharisees were offended, after they heard this saying?

13 But he answered and said, Every plant<sup>i</sup> which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up.

14 Let them alone: they<sup>j</sup> be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.

<sup>h</sup> Ac. 10.15. Ro. 14.14-20. 1Tim. 4.4. Tit. 1.15.  
<sup>i</sup> Jno. 15.2.6. <sup>j</sup> c. 23.16. Lu. 6.39.

Their error is, that they set up something as binding on the conscience and practice which God has not enjoined, and these usually have the effect to set aside the precepts of revelation. The word of God in the scriptures of the Old and New Testament is the only infallible rule of faith and practice.

11, 12. Christ here states a general truth, that it is not the *eating* or *not*, in itself, which is the moral pollution, but something from within the man; that is, that sin is not *from without*, a thing of externals and ceremonies, of contact and observance, or uncleanness of the *flesh*, but a thing of the *heart*. The source of all our corruption is in the evil nature within. Yet Pharisees and proud formalists of every age are offended at this sentiment.

13, 14. As they were offended, and the disciples seem to have been disturbed by this (vs. 12), Christ took occasion to lay down this doctrine: that only the truth can ultimately triumph, and that such a course of infatuation and delusion as the Pharisees pursued, would issue in ruin. Christians need not be over-much concerned, nor make battle always

15 Then answered Peter, and said unto him, Declare unto us this parable.

16 And Jesus said, Are ye also yet without understanding?

17 Do not ye yet understand, that whatsoever entereth in at the mouth<sup>k</sup> goeth into the belly, and is cast out into the draught?

18 But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man.

19 For<sup>l</sup> out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies:

<sup>k</sup> Lu. 6.45. Ja. 3.6. <sup>l</sup> Ge. 6.5; 8.21. Pr. 6.14; 24.9. Je. 17.9. Ro. 3.10-19. Ga. 5.19-21. Ep. 2.3. Tit. 3.3.

upon error. Blind leading the blind are doomed to the ditch. Errorists are offended at being exposed. But error must ultimately fail.—¶ *Ditch*, or *pit*, such as was dug for holding rain water.

15. *This parable*—or *saying*, viz.: this last about meats. "*When He was entered into the house* (says Mark) *from the people. His disciples asked Him*"—especially Peter, who was deeply attached to the law and its injunctions.

16, 17. *Are ye also yet, &c.* Mark has it, "*Are ye so without understanding also?*" Christ means to represent by this distinction, that the pollution of sin comes from the heart, and not from outside distinctions of clean and unclean, washings, &c.

19. *Out of the heart.* These dreadful sins have their origin in the heart. They spring from depraved principles deeply seated within. *An evil nature in us*, is the root of all corruption. All evil is there before it breaks out into acts.—¶ *Evil thoughts.* The word means reasonings or "*contrivances.*"—*Campbell*. This is a general declaration that actual transgressions, of all kinds, even the most horrid and malignant, come from this seat in the bosom. Who can deny



20 These are *the things* which defile a man: but to eat with unwashen hands defileth not a man.

21 ¶ Then<sup>m</sup> Jesus went thence, and departed unto the coasts of Tyre and Sidon.

22 And, behold, a woman of Canaan came out of the same coasts, and cried unto him, say-

*m* Mar. 7.24.

man's native depravity, or that it is entire?

20. *These are, &c.* The natural state of the human heart is desperately wicked, "deceitful above all things," an unknown depth of iniquity. Evil acts have their character from the inward tempers. Bad deeds springing from an evil nature are the real defilement. Such being the disease, the remedy must be Divine and Omnipotent. No power but that which made the soul, can renew its fallen nature. We are urged by this to an immediate seeking of Christ for the new birth—"Create in me a clean heart, O God" (Psalm 51). It is not man's will that renews, for it is the will *that is renewed*. "Thy people shall be *willing*." "Born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God" (John 1).

OBSERVE, (1.) The maxims that sanction filial ingratitude or disrespect, God especially hates. The Apostle notes it as a mark of perilous times, when youth *shall be disobedient to parents* (2 Tim. 3. 1), and yet he prophesies that in the last days such times "*shall come*." Wo to the children of such a character. (2.) Men may adopt a religion of rites and vows, even, to escape a religion of the heart and life, and these hate Christ's doctrine, which exposes them. But the true religion will at length prevail. (3.) So far from all sin consisting in acts, all acts of evil have their sinfulness in the heart.

ing, Have mercy on me, O Lord, *thou* son of David! <sup>n</sup> my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil.

23 But he answered her not a word. <sup>o</sup> And his disciples came and besought him, saying, Send her away, for she crieth after us.

24 But he answered and said, <sup>r</sup> I am not sent, but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

<sup>n</sup> Lu. 18.38,39. <sup>o</sup> Ps. 28.1. La. 3.8. <sup>p</sup> c. 10.5,6. Ac. 3.28.

§ 68. THE DAUGHTER OF A SYROPHENICIAN WOMAN IS HEALED.—*Region of Tyre and Sidon.*

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
15. 21-28	7. 24-30		

21. *The coasts of Tyre and Sidon.* These cities were of Phœnicia, in the north-west part of Palestine, on the sea-coast. They were in the north-west direction from Jerusalem, and distant from it some 90 to 100 geographical miles. He departed to the confines (or "borders," Mark) of that heathen country.

22. *A woman of Canaan.* Mark calls her a Greek, and says she was "a Syrophenician by nation" (among whom she dwelt); that is, from Phœnicia, which was connected with the province of Syria, under the Roman government: yet a *Canaanite*, that is, belonging to the people of Canaan. The country was taken by Alexander the Great, and in the time of Christ, these were Greek cities. They called all foreign nations GREEKS. Our Lord's fame was abroad in Syria (4. 24). Attention is here called to her nation, because this is a remarkable instance of grace to the Gentiles. It appears from Mark that He had gone into a house, wishing not to be known; *But the ointment bewrayeth itself.*—¶ *Came out of.* For Christ did not *enter* those coasts.

24. *I am not sent but unto, &c.* He meant that His mission was first of all to the Jews, rather than to the Gentiles, of which she was one. (Comp. ch. 10, 5 and 6.) This refer

25 Then came she, and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me!

26 But he answered and said, It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it to dogs.<sup>9</sup>

27 And she said, Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs

q c.7.6. Re.22.15.

red to His own personal ministry on earth. (Rom. 15. 8, 9.)

25. *Worshipped Him, &c.* She promptly paid Him divine honour, and acknowledged Him as *Lord*. This was remarkable for a Gentile.

26. *It is not meet, or proper.*—¶ *The children's bread.* The Jews' peculiar privileges. They were ranked as the *children* of God—His peculiar people—His house. The gospel blessings were termed *their bread*, not to be wasted upon others; and as compared with them, the Gentiles are here termed *dogs* (See Psalm 87. 6). See the commission to the twelve: "Go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel," not to the *Samaritans* (10. 5, 6). This was designed not merely to test and draw out her earnestness and faith, but also to show the true order of His work. He would not vex her, but He would call public attention to the fact that she was a heathen and that His work was first with the Jews, yet not so as utterly to exclude the Gentiles, but to receive them by faith.

27. *Truth, Lord.* "Certainly, let the Jews have the *children's bread*; this will not prevent my getting the crumbs, if I am a dog, as is true also." Or the rendering may be, "*I beseech Thee, Lord, for indeed the dogs,*" &c. See Phil. 3. 2. Rev. 22. 15. Be it so that I am a dog, and let me be served as such, with the *leavings* or the *overflowings*.

28. *Great is thy faith.* He pronounced her confidence uncommon, notable! It persevered so. It hoped

which fall from their masters table.

28 Then <sup>r</sup> Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great is thy faith, be <sup>s</sup> it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very <sup>t</sup> hour.

r Job 13.15; 23.10. La.3.32. s Ps.145.19. t Jno. 4.50-53.

against hope. It would take no denial. Mark has it: "*for this saying, go thy way, the devil is gone out of thy daughter.*" He who said, "I will not let Thee go except Thou bless me," was called by that peculiar name, "*Israel,*" "*a Prince of God.*" He is not a Jew who is one outwardly. This is the true Israel. This case illustrated to the people the precise relations of Christ's work. Here, as with the Centurion and the Samaritan leper, He hinted that the Gentiles would more readily receive the gospel than the Jews. Strong faith prevails with God for Christ's sake, and lo! the faithful Gentiles are now of Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

OBSERVE, (1.) That Christ doth sometimes delay to return an answer to a well-qualified prayer. Sometimes His people do not pray earnestly enough. Sometimes they pray too earnestly for an outward and temporal mercy. Sometimes the mercy they pray for is not good for them, or may be is not *yet* good for them. Let us not then judge of God's hearing prayer by His present answer (vs. 23). (2.) Christ puts the strongest faith of His own children upon the severest trials. The trial had never been so sharp if her faith had not been so strong.—*Burkitt*. He who seemed to *repet*, in words, still *dre:o* her by His Spirit. (3.) Christ loves to be followed with faith and impatience. (4.) Humility grants the very worst as to our case, and yet the faith in Christ triumphs.

29 And <sup>u</sup> Jesus departed from thence, and came nigh unto the sea of Galilee; and went up into a mountain, and sat down there.

30 And great multitudes came unto him, having with them *those that were lame, blind, dumb, maimed, and many others*, and cast them down at Jesus' feet; and he healed them; <sup>v</sup>

31 Insomuch that the multitude wondered, when they saw the dumb to speak, the maimed to be whole, the lame to walk, and the blind to see: and they glorified the God of Israel.

32 ¶ Then <sup>w</sup> Jesus called his disciples *unto him*, and said, I have compassion on the multitude because they continue with me now three days, and have nothing to eat: and I will not send them away fasting, lest they faint in the way.

<sup>u</sup> Mar. 7. 31. <sup>v</sup> Ps. 102. 3. Is. 35. 5, 6. <sup>w</sup> Mar. 8. 1, &c.

§ 69. A DEAF AND DUMB MAN HEALED —also many others. FOUR THOUSAND ARE FED *The Decapolis. Sea of Galilee, same as Tiberias or Genesaret.*

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
15. 29-39	7. 31-37		
	8. 1-9		

29. *Jesus departed.* Mark says that from the borders of Tyre and Sidon, He came through the midst of the coasts of Decapolis, that is, in the district of those "ten cities," and around the Sea of Galilee.

30. *Cast them down.* The crowds that brought their sick to be healed, took this method with them—casting them down at Jesus' feet, throwing them entirely upon His power and grace for the cure.—¶ *And He healed them.* What numbers were compassed in this operation! The multi-

33 And <sup>x</sup> his disciples say unto him, Whence should we have so much bread in the wilderness, as to fill so great a multitude?

34 And Jesus saith unto them, How many loaves have ye? And they said, Seven, and a few little fishes.

35 And <sup>y</sup> he commanded the multitude to sit down on the ground.

36 And he took the seven loaves and the fishes, and <sup>z</sup> gave thanks, and brake *them*, and gave to his disciples, and the disciples to the multitude.

37 And they did all eat, and were filled; and they took up of the broken *meat* that was left seven baskets full.

38 And they that did eat were four thousand men, beside women and children.

39 And he sent away the mul-

<sup>x</sup> 2K. 4. 43, 44. <sup>y</sup> c. 14. 19, &c. <sup>z</sup> 1Sa. 9. 13. Lu. 21. 19; 24. 30.

tude were with Him "three days" (Mark 8. 2). Mark narrates one notable case among the many, a *deaf and dumb man*, whose amazing cure astonished the people!

31. *When they saw.* His miracles wrought such an effect upon beholders, that they glorified the God of Israel. Such evidence it was to which our Lord referred John's disciples. (See ch. 11. 4, 5.)

37. The miracle here consisted in a miraculous provision. The disciples had expressed their surprize at any such idea as the feeding of so many on so little, and it was a work as much beyond human power, as creating something out of nothing. They had already forgotten the previous miracle of five thousand (ch. 14. 15). How soon we forget our deliverances, and the resources of grace

titude, and took ship, and <sup>a</sup> came into the coasts of Magdala.

### CHAPTER XVI.

**T**HE Pharisees also with the Sadducees came and tempting, desired him that he would shew them a sign <sup>a</sup> from heaven.

2 He answered and said unto them, When it is evening, ye say, *It will be fair weather*; for the sky is red:

3 And in the morning, *It will be foul weather to-day*: for the sky is red and lowering. O ye hypocrites! ye can discern the face of the sky; but can ye not

<sup>a</sup> Mar. 8. 10.    <sup>a</sup> c. 12. 38, &c.    Mar. 8. 11, &c.    Lu. 11. 16; 12. 54-56.    1 Cor. 1. 22.

39. *Coasts of Magdala.* The *coasts* here means the *regions* round about. Mark says, He came to the *parts* of Dalmanutha. These towns adjoined. It was to the vicinity of these towns, probably on the west coast of the sea, as judged by the latest authorities. From the Decapolis, which was on the east, He took ship to reach them.

### CHAPTER XVI.

§ 70. THE PHARISEES AND SADDUCEES REQUIRE A SIGN.—Near Magdala.

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
16. 1-4	8. 10-12		

1. All parties now demanded some special, visible token from heaven. It was an unreasonable demand, and this they did "*tempting* Him," that is, *trying* Him. From Mark we learn that they disputed with Him.

3. *Foul weather*—stormy, tempestuous.—¶ *Hypocrites.* See note, ch. 6. 2.—¶ *Discern the face of the sky*, i. e., they could judge of the weather. This they did, too, from appearances founded on observation. He asks if they cannot perceive what is going on and coming to pass around them, by watching the aspects of things.

4. *A wicked and adulterous generation.* It is the character of such an evil generation to seek a sign. He referred to their generation (the Jews)

*discern* the signs of the times?

4 A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given unto it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas.<sup>b</sup> And he left them, and departed.

5 ¶ And when his disciples were come to the other side, they had forgotten to take bread.

6 Then Jesus said unto them, <sup>c</sup> Take heed, and beware of the leaven <sup>d</sup> of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees.

7 And they reasoned among

<sup>b</sup> Jon. 1. 17.    <sup>c</sup> Lu. 12. 1.    <sup>d</sup> 1 Cor. 5. 6-8.    Ga. 5. 9.    2 Tim. 2. 16, 17.

and to their own evil intent in making such a demand. (See note, Matt. 12. 38-40.)—¶ *Sign of the prophet Jonas.* (See on 12. 39.)

§ 71. THE DISCIPLES CAUTIONED AGAINST THE LEAVEN OF THE PHARISEES AND SADDUCEES.—North-east coast of the Lake of Galilee.

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
16. 5-12	8. 13-21		

5. *The other side*, i. e., of the lake or sea. See Mark. They had been on the west side, and now came to the north-east coast.—¶ *To take bread* i. e., they had neglected to take a supply. They had but one loaf, as we learn from Mark.

6. *Take heed, and beware.* This repetition of terms is emphatic.—¶ *Leaven of the Pharisees.* Mark adds, *and of the leaven of Herod.* The Jews were well acquainted with this simile. Leaven was in certain cases to be carefully put out of their houses. (See Exod. 13. 7.) It was used in making bread, to swell the flour and make it puff and light. It was very silent and effectual in its working. It would finally ferment and pervade the whole mass. "A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump." Under this familiar figure therefore, He represents the *doctrines* of these power-

themselves, saying, *It is because we have taken no bread.*

8 *Which* when Jesus perceived, he said unto them, ° *O ye of little faith, why reason ye among yourselves, because ye have brought no bread?*

9 *Do ye not yet understand, neither remember the five f loaves of the five thousand, and how many baskets ye took up?*

10 *Neither the seven s loaves of the four thousand, and how many baskets ye took up?*

e c.6.30; 8.26; 14.31. f c.14.19,&c. g c.15.24, &c.

ful sects who were false teachers. (vs. 12.)

7. *Because we have taken no bread.* They supposed the caution somehow connected with their lack of a supply, and perhaps as warning them against using bread made by such.

8. *O ye of little faith.* Their thoughts ran altogether upon their temporal supply, and so they misapplied His teachings. For this He rebukes them. His cautions are not of this kind. If they had full faith on this point, they would not have mistaken His word. "Have ye your heart yet hardened?" Mark 8. 17.

9. *Neither remember.* Mark represents Christ as questioning them on the miracles of feeding the multitudes. They should have remembered those miracles so appropriate to their case, and they should have felt at ease on this subject of a supply.

§ 72. A blind man healed.—*Bethsaida* (Julias).

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
	8. 22-26.		

§ 73. PETER AND THE REST AGAIN PROFESS THEIR FAITH IN CHRIST. (See § 66.)—*Region of Cesarea Philippi.*

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
16 13-20	8. 27-30	9. 18-21	

3. *Coasts of Cesarea Philippi.* So called to distinguish it from Cesarea on the Mediterranean coast, and in honour of the Roman emperor Tiberius

11 How is it that ye do not understand, that I spake *it* not to you concerning bread, that ye should beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees?

12 Then understood they how that he bade *them* not beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine <sup>h</sup> of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees.

13 ¶ When Jesus came into the coasts of Cesarea Philippi,

h c.15.1-9.

See 14. 15-21, and 15. 22-38. Past experience should give us confidence. Temporal anxieties will often lead us to mistake God's word. "I will remember the years of the right hand of the Most High."

11. *The leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees*, had reference to their insidious but powerful efforts at spreading false doctrine. A little of it mixed with the mass soon *works, spreads*, and pervades the whole lump.

12. *The doctrine of the Pharisees and Sadducees*, was their false teaching about true religion, formal and carnal: the one, not believing in regeneration: the other, not holding to the resurrection, and departing altogether from the truth as it is in Jesus. So we are to guard against the *beginnings* of error. The influence of it will be gradual and silent, but mischievous and pervasive in our minds.

rius Cesar, and of Philip the tetrarch, son of Herod, who enlarged it. It was in Naphtali, near the ancient Dan, and was formerly called *Pancas*. The "coasts" here means the vicinities. Mark has it, "the *towns* of" or adjacent to this—in this district, of which it was the chief city.—¶ *He asked his disciples.* Mark says it was on the journey—"by the way;" Luke

he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I, the Son of man, am?

14 And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist; some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets.

15 He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am?

16 And Simon Peter answered and said Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.

*i* Mar. 8. 27. Lu. 9. 18, &c. *f* c. 14. 2. Lu. 9. 7-9. *z* Ps. 2. 7. c. 14. 33. Jno. 1. 49. Ac. 9. 29. He. 1. 2, 5.

says it was as He was alone with them, praying, that He asked the question. On His way, it would seem, He had retired to pray, and then had put this query to them, to test and confirm their knowledge of Him.—

¶ *Son of man.* He calls Himself by this name, because this was the point of the mystery of which He would ask them—"God manifest in the flesh."

14. *John the Baptist*—i. e., risen from the dead! This was Herod's thought! This supernatural rising of the beheaded John, whom they counted as a prophet, would seem to explain his miracles and mighty works to some, as to Herod; and Christ appeared among them after John had deceased.—

¶ *Jeremias.* The Greek mode of writing *Jeremiah*. It was one of the Jewish traditions that he would appear when the Messiah came.

16. *Simon Peter*—here showed the forwardness of his faith and zeal.—

¶ *The Christ, &c.*—i. e., *the Anointed*, meaning the same in Greek as *the Messiah* in Hebrew. Mark has it, "Thou art the Christ;" Luke has it, "Thou art the Christ of God."

¶ *Son of the living God.* This expressed His Divinity. Christ had just called Himself the *Son of man*. Peter declares their conviction that he was also the *Son of the living God*! As truly then as He was a man before them, did they believe Him to be God. "The living God" was a term used

17 And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.

18 And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter; and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

*i* 1 Cor. 2. 10. Ga. 1. 6. Ep. 2. 8. *m* 1 Jno. 4. 15; 5. 20. *n* Jno. 1. 42. *o* Ep. 2. 20. Re. 21. 14. *p* Ps. 9. 13. *q* Is. 54. 17.

in the Old Testament to distinguish Jehovah from dead idols (Jer. 10. 9, 10, &c.). This, therefore, expressed a full belief in Christ as the promised Messiah. This was the point which Christ aimed at in His inquiry. But when believing in Christ is spoken of, more than this is meant. We must receive His merits for our own souls, and trust in His atoning blood.

17. *Barjona*—means the son of Jona. The word *bar* is Syriac, signifying *son*. Peter's father was named Jona, or Jonas (John 1. 42; 21. 16, 17). "Simon, son of Jonas."—

¶ *Flesh and blood*—i. e., human means. It was not natural, or of human agency, that this truth of the Divine Messiahship of Christ had been disclosed to Him. "Born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God" (John 1. 13). So in 1 Cor. 2. 12, "We have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God, that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God." Christ has declared, that thus to know Him is eternal life (John 17. 3).

18. *And I say also unto thee.* In return to this language of Peter, calling Him *the Christ*, He calls this apostle "a stone," as in John 1. 42. This name, Peter, or *Cephas*, as the word is in Syriac (both meaning *stone*), had been given to the apostle at his conversion, with reference to this confession of his faith, and to the work he should perform (John 1. 42).—

19 And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, shall be

r c. 18. 18.

¶ Upon this rock. Not upon thee, nor upon this Peter—but (with the term now in a different gender—*petra*—keeping the sense, but shifting the subject) upon this doctrine—this confession of faith, as the foundation truth, will I build my church. As in 1 Cor 3. 11, “Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.” It could not refer to Peter, personally or officially, for in no sense could he be the foundation to build upon—a founder even, is not the foundation. Yet the allusion is to Peter, and the sense is—UPON THIS DOCTRINE, CONFESSED AND PREACHED, will I build my church—alluding to Peter’s prominent part in preaching the gospel to Jews and Gentiles, and gathering a visible Christian church. This corresponds precisely with the great apostolic commission, “Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature;” and the promise annexed here, “the gates of hell shall not prevail against it,” agrees entirely with Christ’s parting promise, “Lo, I am with you always”—and “All power is given unto me in heaven and on earth” (Matt. 28. 18–20). As to Peter’s work, this indicated the part he should have in Providence, and not any primacy or prerogative among the apostles. He first planted the church among the Jews, after Christ’s resurrection, by his preaching at Pentecost, where the first thousands were gathered in (Acts 2. 41–47), and he carried the gospel to the Gentiles, and founded the Gentile church. (See the conversion of Cornelius, Acts 10. 5; 15. 7.) Peter does not claim to have been the foundation, personally or officially. He himself gives this honour to Christ (1 Pet. 2. 6, 7). We read nothing in Scripture even in the Acts of the Apostles, of such a primacy. The true and only foundation to build

15\*

bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven.

20 Then charged he his dis-

s Mar. 8. 30.

upon is Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 3. 11. Eph. 2. 20), upon whom apostles and prophets are built, and all Christians. —¶ The gates of hell. As in the walled cities of old, the gates were the places of concourse for public business, the word is here used for counsels, enterprises, combinations, and so the phrase means the schemes and powers of hell, &c.

19. The keys. A key is that which keeps the door, opening it or locking it. I will make thee the instrument of opening the door of the kingdom to the Gentiles (Acts 10). The act was future. Christ would soon devolve the authority in the visible church upon the twelve, and all its affairs for the establishment and government of the church visible. —¶ And whatsoever thou shalt bind. This language, in ch. 18. 18, is addressed to the twelve. As Christ gave the keys to them at the Ascension, and not to Peter alone, so we find them charged there to “preach the gospel” which they professed, and to exercise this official authority in the visible church. Disciple all nations—baptize—bind and loose. As Peter answered for the twelve, so he might be addressed for the twelve, as having a certain prominence. He was first to preach to the Jews after Christ’s death (Acts 2. 14), and to the Gentiles (Acts 10). Peter answered for all the apostles, as Christ had asked, “Whom say ye that I am?” The binding and loosing refers to the ministerial authority in Christ’s house, common to Peter with the rest of the twelve, and all Christian ministers. As Christ had just spoken of building His church, this visible body would require government, for which He here provides. So Peter addresses his fellow-ministers (1 Pet. 5. 1), “The elders or Presbyters which are among you, I exhort, who am also a presbyter (as the word is), Feed the

ciples, that they should tell no man that he was Jesus the Christ.

21 ¶ From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto his

† Lu 9.22; 18.31; 24.6,7. 1Cor.15.3,4.

flock of God," &c., as a *pastor*. The terms *binding* and *loosing* were commonly in use to denote *forbidding* and *allowing*. They should have authority to found and govern the Christian church on earth, prescribing and prohibiting according to Divine direction, and so their acts should have Divine authority (see Acts 15. 20). This binding and loosing extended to *things*, as doctrine and discipline (Acts 10. 28, and 21. 24), and to *persons* (John 20. 23). In ch. 18. 18, a case is given, and the church court is thus spoken of. But we find James' advice taken rather than Peter's. He could not have been regarded as necessarily Head, and less, an infallible Head (see Gal. 2. 11). Christ calls him *Satan*, immediately after! Alas, too fallible was Peter! The stone can soon become a *stumbling-block*. Put before Christ, it stands in His way, and must *get behind Him*.

20. *Then charged He, &c.* After this very special conversation, He thought fit to enjoin upon them secrecy respecting His Messiahship, which they had admitted. It was not that He wished now to promulgate it, that He had inquired for men's opinions and theirs. He wished to confirm them in the great truth, but the time had not come for its open dissemination. The Jews would only seek His life, and their malice would only hinder His work.

OBSERVE, (1.) The authority given to Christ's ministers in the Church, is based upon the confession of Christ in His person and offices, as the truth is in Jesus. Hence the true and only succession of the ministry cannot be traced independently of this requisite (vss. 16 and 17). (2.) Grace from Heaven is essential to this ministerial work, even before office (vs. 17).

disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day.

22 Then Peter took him, and

(3.) Christian doctrine is the stability of the Christian Church (vs. 18). (4.) The government of the Church comes from Christ, as the Head, and looks for the ratification of its acts in Heaven (vs. 19).

§ 74. OUR LORD FORETELLS HIS OWN DEATH AND RESURRECTION, AND THE TRIALS OF HIS FOLLOWERS.—*Region of Cesarea Philippi.*

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
16. 21-28	8. 31-38	9. 22-27	
	9. 1		

21. *From that time forth.* Having now signified to them their office-work, He speaks of His own, and would have them understand what was to come. This language calls attention to the fact that now, for the first, He discloses to His disciples the particulars of His cruel death. This belongs to the year 32, in His 33d year, some nine months before His death.—¶ *Elders and chief priests and Scribes*, as of the Sanhedrim. See note, 5. 22. He showed these things to them beforehand, that when they should come to pass, their faith in His Divine character and claims might be most fully established (John 13. 19). He had always known all that was to happen (John 18. 14), and He could have avoided death if He had so preferred. It was entirely a voluntary offering of Himself. "Lo I come." This proved His love to men, that He should have willingly laid down His life. "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life that I might take it again."

22. *Then Peter took Him, &c.* The word is expressive, having the same force as our word *assume*.—¶ *To rebuke* is to blame, and here, to *reply harshly*. We have his language, de-



began to rebuke him, saying, 'Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee.

23 But he turned, and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan; "thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men.

24 ¶ Then said Jesus unto his

1 *Pity thyself.* u 2Sa.19.22. v Ro.14.13.

declaring what Christ had said impossible, and vouching that it should not come to pass. Peter said this, doubtless, because of his surprize at such a statement, and because he thought he could warrant its not occurring, as he afterward offered to lay down his own life for Christ. The Apostles did not know before this, these particulars of Christ's death.—¶ *Be it far from thee,* (ἰλασμός) translated Heb. 8. 12, "merciful." It is an exclamation invoking mercy. Let God in mercy avert such a thing.

23. *Satan.* This word means an *accuser*, an *adversary*, and so Christ applies it here, intimating that Peter knows not his own heart in all this, but accuses and contradicts Christ with something of Satan in him, that shall yet appear in connexion with this very event of His crucifixion. He orders him to stand back and not to interrupt or cross His designs. So He ordered Satan himself (ch. 4. 10) to get behind Him. See also John 6. 70.—¶ *Offence.* This word means a *stumbling-block*. Bengel remarks, it is an antithesis to the name just given him, 'a stone.' You are now a *stone in my way*. All this outcry of Peter against such an event, is in truth against the plan of Christ's great work, for which He came into the world.—¶ *Thou savourest not.* Thou mindest not the things Divine and spiritual, but the things human and carnal. He did not discern as yet the mystery of the cross.

24. *Then.* The doctrines of the cross are not the things of men, but

disciples, If any *man* will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.

25 For <sup>x</sup> whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake, shall find it.

26 For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world,

10 c.10.38. Mar.8.34. Lu.9.23; 14.27. Ac.14.22. 1Th.3.3. x Jno.12.25. Est.4.14.

of God. Christ took this opportunity to lay down the requisitions of discipleship—denial and perseverance. He was to suffer indeed for them. They were to suffer with Him. It was not to be a life of ease. Christians are called the followers of Christ, as His disciples and adherents. "*Follow me,*" was the call to each of them. To forsake all and follow Him, was the substance of duty, to take Him instead of all things else.—¶ *Deny himself.* Sacrifice yourself indulgence, give up worldly ease, labour and suffer, and endure reproach, if need be. "Even Christ pleased not Himself" (Rom. 15. 3). The same word is used for Peter's *denying* Christ—disclaim, disown.—¶ *Take up his cross.* Cheerfully bear all the burdens of Christ's service, as they come, *daily*.

25. He that has for his object to *spare himself*, shall be at last the loser, and shall sacrifice himself, while he that spares not himself, but gives up his own will and pleasure for Christ, shall have salvation. By losing one's life for Christ's sake, is meant the enduring of all personal sacrifice and loss, "not counting his life dear," and "*counting all things but loss*" (Phil. 3. 8), and laying down one's life even for Christ. Many of the first disciples actually lost their lives for Christ's sake.—¶ *Shall find it.* Bengel remarks, that the soul which is saved is *found*.

26. *For what is a man profited?* Christ here passes to estimate 'he profit and loss. To lose the soul, is to lose all the opportunities of its sal-

and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?\*

27 For<sup>a</sup> the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father, with his angels, and<sup>a</sup> then he

<sup>y</sup> Ps.49.7,8.    <sup>z</sup> Da.7.9,10.    <sup>z</sup> Ec.14.15.    <sup>z</sup> Jude 14.  
<sup>a</sup> Re.22.12.

vation, and die eternally. This will be the result, if Christ is not followed, because He is *the way and the truth and the life* (John 14. 6). And of course the soul is more valuable than the world, because even with all that a man can have of the world, he cannot enjoy any thing here if his soul be in distress. And the soul will live forever, after all that is of earth has passed away. So that if a man should possibly gain all the world (which men would like to do, but cannot), he could keep it only for a few years at longest. And if his soul is lost, it is lost for ever and ever. A man runs great risk of losing his soul if he loves the world, because his heart cannot be set upon two opposite objects at a time. "Where the treasure is, there will the heart be also"

Mat. 6. 21). He cannot serve God and mammon. And one that is devoted to worldliness and in pursuit of its joys, cannot follow Christ, or seek his soul's concerns. "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him."—¶ *Give in exchange for his soul?* To redeem it, buy it back. The word means, give as a ransom. No man can redeem his own soul, and "none can by any means redeem his brother, or give to God a ransom for him."

27. *The Son of man.* This points to the judgment, and refers to Christ's exaltation, as an offset to all His humiliation which so offended Peter. The Lord Jesus Christ, who has an interest in men and is related to our nature, has "authority given Him to execute judgment because He is the Son of man." The works of people are to be brought up in the day of judgment, that every mouth may be stopped, and that God's justice may be

shall reward every man according to his works.

28 Verily I say unto you. There<sup>b</sup> be some standing here which shall not taste<sup>c</sup> of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom.

<sup>b</sup> Mar.9.1.    <sup>c</sup> He.2.9.

fully vindicated. Men will be rewarded according to their works. They shall receive such a measure of retribution and reward as will comport with their respective works, the strictest equity being observed in every case. "We must all appear (on that day) before the judgment seat of Christ."—¶ *The glory.* Christ here opened to their view His future and final glory, that they might not despond at His coming death.

28. This verse gives a hint of the *transfiguration* which was about to take place, when Peter, James, and John should see Christ in His glory so soon, for their encouragement. Peter speaks of that sight (2<sup>d</sup> Pet. 1. 16), as "the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ," when they were eyewitnesses of His majesty.—¶ *Not taste of death.* A Hebraic idiom for *shall not die.*—¶ *In His kingdom.* Mark has it: "Till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power." Luke reads it: "Till they see the kingdom of God."

OBSERVE, (1.) We more readily receive the doctrine of Christ's *person* than that of His *cross*. Peter could profess Christ as the *Son*, but not as the *sacrifice*. (2.) OFFICE in the church is nothing but an offence without Christian doctrine and conduct. (3.) The doctrines of the cross are not of men, but of God, and those sentiments which spring from men's own wisdom and natural choice, are false. The word of God must be beyond human reason in substantiating doctrine.

#### CHAPTER XVII.

§ 75. THE TRANSFIGURATION. OUR Lord's subsequent discourse with the three disciples.—*Region of Caesarea Philippi.*

## CHAPTER XVII.

**A**ND after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into a high mountain apart.

2 And was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, <sup>b</sup> and his raiment was white as the light.

α Mar. 9. 2, &c. Lu. 9. 28, &c. β Re. 1. 16.

Matt. 17. 1-13	Mark. 9. 2-13	Luke. 9. 28-36	John.
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Our Lord was still in the vicinity of Cesarea Philippi, in the northern-most part of Palestine.

1. *Jesus taketh Peter, James and John.* (He would have two or three witnesses. Deut. 17. 6.) These three He selected also to go with Him to Gethsemane, Mark 14. 33, and to the house of the ruler of the synagogue, whose daughter He raised from the dead (Mark 5. 37). He would specially train them for their special work.—

¶ *After six days.* Luke says about an eight days after, that is inclusive of the two which bounded the reckoning. This was a common mode of computing time.—¶ *A high mountain apart.* Apart from the rest of the twelve. Mark has it, "*apart by themselves.*" Luke adds that He went up there to pray (9. 28). This high mountain is not mentioned to us by name. Most have thought it to be mount Tabor. But we find Him afterward still in this region farther north. He was near the mountain range of *Hermon*.—¶ *Transfigured.* The word is "*metamorphosed.*" The meaning of the term is, that His appearance was changed, as is afterward described. His face shone as the sun. The same word is rendered in Romans 12. 2, *transformed*. And in 2 Cor. 3. 18, *changed* into the same image, &c. So Moses is spoken of when he came down from talking with God on Sinai. Exod. 24. 29, 30.—¶ *His raiment*, or clothing, was white as the light. Mark has it: "White as snow, so as no fuller (or *clothes bleacher*) on earth can white

3 And, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias, talking with him.

4 Then answered Peter and said unto Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here: if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias.

them." His body underwent no change.

3. *Moses and Elias.* These were prominent characters of the Old Testament dispensation, that was now coming to an end. It was fit that they should appear. *Moses* as the mediator of the old Covenant and giver of the Law from Sinai, and a type of Christ, represented the Old Law.—¶ *And Elias.* (See Matt. 21. 13.) For all the prophets and the law were until John, and if ye will receive it, this is Elias, which was for to come. Elias, or Elijah, the symbol of Christ's forerunner, John, represented the prophets. The Law and the Prophets waited here upon Christ the Redeemer, for they all had an eye to His work. They talked with Him. Luke says, they conversed about His decease which He should accomplish at Jerusalem (Luke 9. 31). Moses had now been dead nearly 1500 years. He died on the top of Pisgah, over against Jericho, and was buried in an unknown spot, in a valley, Deut. 34. Elijah had not died, but had been *translated*, or taken to heaven without death (2 Kings 2. 11). This occurred about 900 years before Christ's birth. This appearance of two that had gone to eternity, shows us that a resurrection of the body is no impossible thing. Moses' dead body was raised, and both these were the identical persons they had been on earth.

4. *Tabernacles*, tents, booths (see Levit. 23. 34), for shelter, and a dwelling. This expressed Peter's desire to abide there. Yet he would build *three*, not *six*. He would plan

5 While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold, a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.

6 And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their face, and were sore afraid.

7 And Jesus came and touched them, and said, Arise, and be not afraid.

c c.3.17. Mar 1.11. Lu.3.22. 2Pe.1.17. d Is.42.1. 34. e De.18.15,19. Ac.3.22,23. He.1.1,2; 1.1-3. Da.10.10,18. Re.1.17.

only to keep these glorious personages there, "not knowing what he said" (Luke). Mark: "For he wist not what to say, for they were sore afraid."

5. *A bright cloud overshadowed—spread over them*, all light and glorious. A cloud of glory was God's symbol of His presence in former times. Ex. 24. 16, 17. "Upon the mercy seat," Levit. 16. 2. Such a cloud was the shechinah which abode in the temple. 1 Kings 8. 10, 11.—¶ *A voice*. Of Jehovah, which formerly spoke out of the cloud that symbolized His presence.—¶ *Hear Him*. The same had been declared at Christ's baptism. (3. 17.) (See also John 12. 28.) This gave another attestation of Christ's divine glory and authority, and placed Him before Moses and the prophets. See 2 Peter 1. 17, 18. They needed this confirmation of their faith, and this reiteration of Divine testimony to His mediatorial person and work, in order to be strengthened for the events of His death.—¶ *Hear Him*. This is to attend upon His instructions and obey Him. The same word in Hebrew, means to hear and to obey. If we disobey this command, refusing to acknowledge, receive and follow Christ, we must perish.

6. *They fell on their face*, with reverence and fear. At once prostrate and enveloped in the cloud. Luke 9. 34. The exceeding (excellent) glory

8 And when they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no man, save Jesus only.

9 And as they came down from the mountain, Jesus charged them, saying, Tell the vision to no man, until the Son of man be risen again from the dead.

10 And his disciples asked him, saying, Why then say the scribes that Elias must first come?

11 And Jesus answered and

g Mal.4.5,6. c.11.14.

made them afraid. Men should fear the voice of God, because they are sinners and lost, and to Christ Jesus they must attend if they would live. Adam was afraid of God's voice as soon as he had sinned, but not before. And if God should now so utter His will, as He did at Sinai, men would tremble as they did there, where even Moses said, "I exceedingly fear and quake," and the multitude begged that God's voice be not spoken to them any more, lest they die (Heb. 12. 19-21).

9. *Tell the vision*. A vision is a supernatural exhibition to the sight—"the things which they had seen." Luke. They were not to tell it until He had risen, for then it would be understood, and not till then could it have its full force, but would be only abused to the hindrance of His work. Mark says, they kept this saying with themselves, questioning what the rising from the dead should mean. (Mark 9. 10.) Luke says, they kept it close, and told no man "in those days."

10. *Why then?* i. e., If, as now plainly appears, Thou art the Messiah, why do the scribes say that Elias must come first? They knew this to be a received doctrine among the Jews, and they thought it involved a contradiction—for here was Christ and where was Elias? They had not known of his coming in John the Baptist. The prophecy is found in Malachi, the last verses. And as the

said unto them, Elias truly shall first come, and restore all things.

12 But I say unto you, that Elias is come already, and they knew him not, but have done unto him whatsoever they listed. Likewise shall also the Son of man suffer <sup>h</sup> of them.

13 Then the disciples under-

*h* c.16.21.

scribes were writers and teachers of the law, and familiar with the Old Testament scriptures, they were quoted as good authority. They held, however, that the prophet Elijah would personally re-appear.

11. *Elias truly shall first come.* That is, this is true as it was prophesied.—

¶ *And restore all things*, as was predicted by Malachi, “turning the hearts of the fathers unto the children,” &c., reforming the people in their scriptural views, and in their relations to the covenant made with their fathers, and doing this *thoroughly*, as the parallel form of expression imports, fathers to children and children to fathers.

12. *Elias is come already*, i. e., John the Baptist, who came “*in the spirit and power of Elias*” (Luke 1. 17), and who was the one prophesied as to come in the character of Elijah of old. So Christ had declared, ch. 11. 14, that John was the Elijah mentioned by Malachi.—¶ *Knew him not*, did not recognize or acknowledge him.—¶ *Whosoever they listed, or chose.* They had treated John according to their inclinations, reckless of his character and office. They had imprisoned and beheaded him, Matt. 14. 10, “*as it is written of him.*” Mark.—¶ *Likewise.* What is more amazing, He Himself, their Lord, should share of the people a similar treatment! So He afterward did! (See Mark 9. 12. Isa. 53d ch.)

13. *That He spake unto them of John the Baptist.* Their question was fairly answered. Christ passed through all these scenes in order to establish them in the faith, and we see how

stood that he spake unto them of John the Baptist.

14 ¶ And when they were come to the multitude, there came to him a *certain* man kneeling down to him, and saying,

15 Lord, have mercy on me

*i* Mar.9.14,&c. Lu.9.37,&c.

He is gradually bringing them into the light.

OBSERVE, (1.) Christ manifests Himself and His work to His people, as their case demands, and as their training will bear. (2.) The thrice reiterated testimony from the Father is that in Christ and not in the sinner God is well pleased. Hence Christ is all in all to us—His vicarious sacrifice, His perfect obedience, His finished work. (3.) How fearful yet delightful is the presence of God in Christ! how ample is Christ’s revealing of Himself in His word and works, yet how slow are we at best, to understand or believe the glorious reality!

§ 76. THE HEALING OF A DEMONIAK, whom the disciples could not heal. —*Region of Cesarea Philippi.*

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
17.14-21	9. 14-29	9. 37-43	

14. *To the multitude.* It is to be remembered that only three of the twelve had gone up into the mount of transfiguration with Christ. The rest had remained below where they were now found, “the next day,” Luke 9. 37, surrounded by a crowd of people, and by scribes questioning with them, as we learn from Mark 9. 15. They ran to Him *amazed* to see Him, and *saluted* Him. Jesus asked them why they questioned thus with the disciples, involving them probably in disputes and puzzling queries.

15. *My son.* An “*only child*” (Luke) possessed with a devil, “*hath a dumb spirit.*” Mark. So that he was lunatic or crazy, and  *sore vexed*—in a

son; for he is lunatic, and sore vexed: for oft-times he falleth into the fire, and oft into the water.

16 And I brought him to thy disciples, and they could not cure him.

17 Then Jesus answered and said, O faithless and perverse generation! how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? Bring him hither to me.

18 And Jesus rebuked the devil, and he departed out of him:

rage, mad, furious. Mark adds: "whosoever he taketh him he tear-eth him, and he foameth and gnasheth with his teeth, and pineth away." Luke also adds other symptoms, as that the devil *tor* him, *bruised* him, &c., "hardly departed from him."

16. *To thy disciples.* Their failure during Christ's absence, doubtless gave the scribes ground to gainsay and reproach them and their Master. This accounts for Christ's rebuke, not of the man but of His disciples.

17. *O faithless!* Addressing the multitude He asked how much longer He must give them evidence of His Messiahship which yet the scribes were disputing, and which all were so slow fully to believe. So with Philip (John 14. 9). So Moses was shocked at the weak Israelites when he came down from the mount. See the account in Mark for fuller particulars.

18. *Rebuked the devil.* As He had full authority over these emissaries of the pit, He displayed it signally here, as another proof of His Divinity. The other Evangelists state more particularly. The man had come with a doubt, "If *Thou canst do any thing, have compassion on us.*" Christ had challenged his faith, "all things are possible to him that believeth," and so He had helped the delivery in that difficult birth. "Lord

and the child was cured from that very hour.

19 Then came the disciples to Jesus apart, and said, Why could not we cast him out?

20 And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, if ye have faith as a grain of mustard-seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place, and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you.

21 Howbeit this kind goeth

j He.3.19. k c.21.21. Mar.11.23. Lu.17.6. 1Cor. 13.2.

I believe, *help thou mine unbelief.*" Only he who truly believes (though in the smallest measure) conceives aught of the *unbelief* of his heart.

19. *To Jesus apart.* The disciples who had been baffled in an effort to cast out this evil spirit, came now to Christ apart, or in *private*, to inquire the cause of their failure. Mark says, "when He was come into the house." And they sought a private interview because they were abashed and would have a familiar explanation of the case, as it might even involve some secrets of His plan.

20. *Because of your unbelief.* This faith here alluded to is the faith of miracles. It was something more than a common belief in Christ, and was peculiar to the Apostles' age. It was a faith for such miraculous works as they were commissioned to perform. If they had this in the smallest degree, or in the proverbial phrase, "as a grain of mustard-seed," they should accomplish the most difficult things, or proverbially, should remove mountains.

21. *This kind* of difficulties expressed by the term mountains, or this kind of evil spirits, so malignant, departs not, removes not, but by prayer and fasting. The most special religious exercises were needed for so special a purpose.

OBSERVE: Great degrees of devo-

not out, but by prayer and fasting

22 ¶ And while they abode in Galilee, Jesus said unto them, The Son of man shall be betrayed into the hands of men :

23 And they shall kill him, and the third day he shall be raised again. And they were exceeding sorry.

24 ¶ And when they were come to Capernaum, they that received tribute-money came

l c. 16. 21; 20. 17. Mar. 8. 31; 9. 30, 31; 10. 33. Lu. 9. 24, 44; 18. 31; 24. 6, 26, 46. 1 *Didrachma*, Ex. 38. 26.

tion attain special measures of Divine strength and of power with the hosts of evil.

§ 77. JESUS AGAIN FORTELLS HIS OWN DEATH AND RESURRECTION. See § 74.—Galilee.

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
17. 22-23	9. 30-32	9. 43-45	

22, 23. *While they abode in Galilee.* The term rather means, "as they were travelling," &c., on their way to Capernaum, and thence to Jerusalem. The country called Galilee, it should be remembered, stretched about equally above and below (north and south) of the Sea of Galilee.—¶ *Shall be betrayed.* This is the first disclosure of the means by which He should fall into cruel and deadly hands. He should be handed over—delivered up—by a friend. Who would think it should be a *disciple*, an apostle! All that was now hinted to them of this, further than had been before, was, that He should be delivered up to death by a most criminal breach of confidence.—¶ *Exceeding sorry.* Mark and Luke add that they understood not that saying, and it was hid from them and they were afraid to ask Him.

§ 78. THE TRIBUTE MONEY MIRACULOUSLY PROVIDED—Capernaum.

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
17. 24-27	9. 33		

to Peter, and said, Doth not your master pay tribute?

25 He saith, Yes. And when he was come into the house, Jesus prevented him, saying, What thinkest thou, Simon? of whom do the kings of the earth take custom or tribute? of their own children, or of strangers?

26 Peter saith unto him, Of strangers. Jesus saith unto him, Then are the children free.

27 Notwithstanding, lest we should offend them, go thou to

m Ro. 14. 21; 15. 1-3. 2Cor 6. 3.

24. *Tribute-money*, literally, the *didrachmas*, the name for the yearly temple-tax, being a coin equal to a half shekel, or about twenty-five cents. This was allowed in the Mosaic law (Exod. 30. 11-16). It resembles the stated church collections for expenses, as it was additional to the regular church rates or tithes.

25. *Prevented, anticipated* him—began to speak of it before Peter had told Him. He was beforehand with this question. Christ knew what had been said to Peter, because He knew all things, "and needed not that any should testify to Him of man, for He knew what was in man.—¶ *Tribute.* (*kenson*, Gr.) Latin *census*, a tax. "*Custom*" was for lands, *tribute* for persons.—¶ *Their own children*, their sons and daughters of their own royal family.—¶ *Strangers*, those not of their own family.

26. Peter replied, *Of strangers*, meaning that kings do not tax their own sons. And Christ applies the conclusion to Himself, that then the *children* are free. The temple is His Father's house (John 2. 16), and as He is the Son, and greater than the temple (ch. 12. 6), why should He be taxed for the service? It was only another assertion of His Divine SONSHIP, with which He would make them every way familiar.

27. *Lest we should offend them.* He

the sea, and cast a hook, and take up the fish that first cometh up; and when thou hast opened his mouth, thou shalt find <sup>1</sup> a piece of money; that take, and give unto them for me and thee

### CHAPTER XVIII.

**A**T<sup>a</sup> the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying,

<sup>1</sup> *A stater, which was half an ounce of silver. a Mar. 9. 33, &c. Lu. 9. 46, &c.; 22. 24, &c.*

pays, under a protest, for expediency's sake (1 Cor. 8. 13); and lest a scandal should be put upon the temple service and upon Himself among the people, He would pay what He was not bound to, of right.—¶ *Go to the sea—of Galilee, near by.*—¶ *A piece of money, a stater, a Roman coin, equal to a shekel, enough, of course, for the tax of two.* The miracle consisted in His so ordering all the circumstances as to show a power over all things equal to that of creation itself. If He could make one of the numberless fish in the sea come first to Peter's hook, with a piece of money in its mouth, and just such a piece of money, He could as well have created the money and the fish for the purpose.

OBSERVE, (1.) Christ meets the law's demands for Himself and for His people. He pays for Himself and for Peter, "*for me and for thee.*" Christ would put Himself in the disciples' place, to pay the law's price for them. He came under the same yoke with men, that men might enter into the same freedom as His. "My father and your Father, my God and your God." John 20. 17. (2.) Christ confirms His gracious words by His gracious works. He protests His rightful exemption from the ceremonial tax, as much by the mode of His furnishing the money, as by His express declaration. In the miracle He proves Himself the Divine Being whom He claimed to be in words. (3.) We see how God's

Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?

2 And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them,

3 And said, Verily I say unto you, except ye be converted,<sup>b</sup> and become as little children,<sup>c</sup> ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.

4 Whosoever therefore shall

<sup>b</sup> Ps. 51. 10-13. Jno. 3. 3. <sup>c</sup> 1 Cor. 14. 20. 1 Pe. 2. 2.

most holy, wise and powerful preserving and governing all His creatures, and all their actions, can help in every extremity.

### CHAPTER XVIII

§ 79. THE DISCIPLES CONTENT WHO SHOULD BE THE GREATEST. JESUS EXHORTS.—*Capernaum.*

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
18. 1-35	9. 33-50	9. 46-50	

1. *The greatest in the kingdom of heaven.* This may have arisen from the preference just shown, at the transfiguration, for Peter, James and John (see Luke 7. 46), and from Christ's allusion to His royalty in the tribute. They were thinking of the kingdom as one of earthly kind, and were now speculating about its preferments and offices. But it is a kingdom that "cometh not with observation" (Luke 17. 20), and one which is not meat and drink, but righteousness (Rom. 14. 17). It appears from Mark and Luke, that they had disputed about it among themselves on the way to Capernaum, and that Christ had perceived the thoughts of their hearts, and questioned them, so as to elicit this distinct query from themselves. They often started such inquiries.

2, 3. *A little child.* He taught them by this *symbol*, for such was the method of teaching in the East.—¶ *Be converted*—changed, turned from such tempers, in such a thorough way as to become, instead of *aspirants*, like *little children*. It is the lowly, dependent, simple disposition of a *little*



humble himself<sup>d</sup> as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

5 And whoso shall receive one such little<sup>e</sup> child in my name receiveth me.

6 But whoso shall offend<sup>f</sup> one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him

<sup>d</sup> Lu. 14. 11. Ja. 4. 10. <sup>e</sup> Mat. 10. 42. <sup>f</sup> Mar. 9. 42. Lu. 17. 1, 2.

child, that is set forth as the symbol of piety. It is not as a pattern, but as an *image* or *figure*, that a child is set forth. It is not that children are patterns of innocence, for they are depraved, but that they are *pictures* of it to the eye. We must become as such, having a child-like spirit, happy in our dependence on God, our heavenly Father. They had asked for high places and proud stations, and had enviously inquired which of them should be first (see Mark 9. 34). This showed in them a worldly, ambitious, unhumbléd character, and Christ, instead of encouraging them with such expectations, set before them a little child. Humility, teachableness, trustfulness of spirit, are necessary, because so only can we enter in at the strait gate, and by the living way.

4. *Shall humble himself*, in true humility—whosoever shall come down to this level of a little child, in the un aspiring temper of his heart—he shall be greatest, or, *the greater*, among Christians. The deepest humility is the highest honour and joy. Lowly thoughts of self, as to merit, and sufficiency and ability, coupled with a hearty trust in Christ, make up the true Christian characteristics.

5. *Whoso shall receive one such*. One of this character may be despised among men; Christ therefore makes this special provision for such, and for those who favour such.—¶ *In my name*—on Christ's account, because he is Christ's, and resembles Him (ch. 7. 29; 10. 22); for it is the nature of true piety to love this child-like disposition, wherever it is found;

that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and *that* he were drowned in the depth of the sea.

7 Wo unto the world because of offences! for<sup>g</sup> it must needs be that offences come; but<sup>h</sup> wo to that man by whom the offence cometh!

<sup>g</sup> 1 Cor. 11. 19. Jude 4. <sup>h</sup> Jude 11.

while vain men often treat it with contempt. Christ not only regards such as His, but regards Himself as received and favoured in them (Matt. 25. 40); "Ye have done it unto me." Those who love Christians for their Christian temper, as like Christ, shall be rewarded accordingly. Mark and Luke here record a conversation omitted by Matthew. John told Him that they had seen one casting out devils in His name, and they forbade him, because he was not of their company. Jesus answered that there was a principle by which all such should be judged. If they did such things as He alone could have instigated and produced, and if so they wrought with Him, they were of needs His. "He that is not against us is for us. (See Mark and Luke.) These are proverbial sayings, like Prov. 26. 4, 5.

6. *Shall offend one*—shall put a stumbling-block or an occasion to fall in his brother's way—shall tempt to sin any of these Christian, child-like ones—"disciples"—"that believe in me" (Mark 9. 42), he is worthy of severest punishment. He sins against the Holy Spirit's work in the heart.—¶ *Millstone*. The term means a millstone large enough to be turned by an ass—not the *hand-stones*.

7. *Offences*. Occasions of sin—temptations to do wrong, as a hand or foot even may be, are a wo to the world, and wo to any one by whom they may come.—¶ *It must needs be*—it is necessary or unavoidable, as things are, that such temptations come.—¶ *But wo*—that is, curse or condemnation on that man by

8 Wherefore, <sup>1</sup> if thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and cast *them* from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than, having two hands or two feet, to be cast into everlasting fire.

9 And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast *it* from thee: it is better for thee to en-

*i* c. 5. 29, 30. *Mar.* 9. 43, 45.

whom the temptation cometh. He that leads others into sin, is a child of the devil, who is the great seducer and deceiver of men. Yet this is often done, by example, or enticement to a first step of evil doing. This teaches us that evil communications corrupt good manners, and that bad company is a wo and curse to any one.

8, 9. *If thy hand or thy foot.* Whatever is an occasion to sin, however dear it be, and valuable, though the hardest to be parted with, must be given up. This enforces the sentiment just laid down (see ch. 5. 29, 30).—¶ *Halt*—lame.—¶ *Maimed*—mutilated, as by a hand cut off. This means, that it is better to get to heaven *without* any such enjoyments, however dear, as are a snare, than to have them here, and perish at last. See the case of the rich man and Lazarus: "Thou in thy life-time receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented" (Luke 16. 25).—¶ *Into hell-fire.* This is the eternal consequence of cherishing evil passions and habits, and idol objects of sin (see ch. 5. 29, 30). We should be willing to abandon the dearest object or pursuit, rather than to sin ourselves, or lead others to sin. "Hell-fire" is torment *without end*, represented by the fire of Hinnoin, near Jerusalem. "These shall go away into everlasting punishment" (ch. 25. 46), "*everlasting fire,*" vs. 8.

10. Christ now warns more particularly against such treatment of

ter into life with one eye, rather than, having two eyes, <sup>2</sup> to be cast into hell-fire.

10 Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, that in heaven their angels <sup>1</sup> do always behold <sup>m</sup> the face of my Father which is in heaven.

11 For the Son of man is come

*j* He. 4. 11. *k* Lu. 9. 25. *l* Ac. 12. 15. *m* Ps 17. 15.

meeK-minded, child-like Christians, as men of the world are prone to, who understand nothing of the true dignities and proprieties of His kingdom.—¶ *That ye despise not*—or treat with disrespect and scorn, as though they were mean, and silly, and contemptible.—¶ *Their angels*—that is, such persons are objects of interest and care to angels in heaven (Heb. 1. 14), and this is a reason for respecting them.—¶ *Do always behold the face.* This, in Eastern courts, was a mark of special honour, to be admitted into the presence of the king. The *servants* of these disciples are the special favourites of the Heavenly King. Servants of Eastern kings also stood in their presence, to wait their orders and watch their motions of command. The angels are *theirs*—ministering spirits to them—and always intent to execute the orders of the Heavenly King.—¶ *My Father*—"and their Father" (John 20. 17). The angels serve these disciples by Divine warrant and command. This shows a greater dignity. Hence these lowly-minded Christians, though sneered at, often, by men of the world, are true dignitaries—they have the angels of God for their servants; not each having *one*, but *more*—and as many as his case should at any time require. The ministry of angels is a scriptural doctrine, and deserves to be more thought of and looked for (Ps. 34. 7. Jan. 6. 22. chs. 1. & 2).

11. *The Son of man,* &c. Christ's work has regard to just such. The humble, obscure, and *lost*, He comes to save. This is another reason for

to save<sup>n</sup> that which was lost.

12 How think ye? If<sup>o</sup> a man have an hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains, and seeketh that which is gone astray?

13 And if so be that he find it, verily I say unto you, He rejoiceth more of that *sheep*, than of the ninety and nine which went not astray.

14 Even so, it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven that one<sup>p</sup> of these little ones should perish.

<sup>n</sup> Mat.1.21. Lu.9.56; 19.10. Jno.3.17; 10.10; 12.17. 1Ti.1.15. <sup>o</sup> Lu.15.4,&c. <sup>p</sup> 2Pe.3.9.

their not being despised. By the lost, are meant sinners. This shows His condescension, which may well be pattern to all sinners among themselves. Men are said to be lost, because they are ruined and undone by sin, and need now to be saved, or they perish forever. Christ, the Son of man—the Mediator—saves the lost, by giving His life in *exchange*—a ransom—for the ruined soul. He has died, and obeyed the law in His life, and gone to intercede in heaven—all that He might save sinners. Hence, their views of greatness were altogether wrong. If they could keep in view the plan of salvation, they would see that none can boast in themselves, and that they who are *lost*, may boast in Christ.

12. Our Lord further illustrates this sentiment by a *parable*, recorded by Matthew, and not by the other evangelists. By the sheep gone astray, our Lord means, sinners strayed from His, and, like sheep, wandering from the fold and helpless, exposed to destruction. By the owner's going into the mountain to seek *one*, He would have us understand Himself *coming into the world* (among us) *to save sinners* (1 Tim 4. 15). He is our Shep-

15 ¶ Moreover, if<sup>a</sup> thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if<sup>r</sup> he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother.

16 But if he will not hear *thee*, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three<sup>s</sup> witnesses every word may be established.

17 And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell *it* unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let<sup>t</sup> him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.

<sup>q</sup> Le.19.17. Lu.17.3. <sup>r</sup> Ja.5.20. <sup>s</sup> De.19.15. <sup>t</sup> Ro.16.17. 1Cor.5.3-5. 2Th.3.6,14.

herd (Ps. 23. 1), the good Shepherd (John 10. 14), the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls (1 Pet. 2. 25).

13. *He rejoiceth more.* This is to show the peculiar joy to Christ of saving that which was lost—like the joy of the father in receiving home a prodigal son. God pursues wandering sinners, and when any would repent and return, they may be sure of His tenderness toward them, and His joy in their reception. See parable of the lost sheep and son, Luke 15. Therefore, whom God thus honours and cares for, sinners should not despise; and distinctions of least and greatest should be referred to this standard.

14. *Even so.* As in this case, God signifies it as His disposition that *not one* of these, though despised by men, should perish, or be eternally destroyed. John 12. 28.

15-17. *Thy brother.* Our Lord now proceeds to enjoin *brotherly kindness* and charity. He sets forth the Christian and Christ-like method of dealing, as instead of jealousy and envy. "Brother" here means fellow-disciple, or Christian brother.—¶ *Trespass against thee*—injure thee, transgress or sin against thee.—¶ *Go and tell*

18 Verily I say unto you, <sup>u</sup> Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven.

19 Again I say unto you, That

<sup>u</sup> c. 16. 19. Jno. 20. 23. Ac. 15. 23-31. 2 Cor. 2. 10.

*him his fault*—expostulate with him, strive to convince him. This was the rule under the old law (Levit. 19. 17).—¶ *Alone*—to give private opportunity of making explanations or confession, without a disposition to expose him, previously to such face-to-face interview.—¶ *One or two more*, for influence with him, and as *witnesses*, if the case should require to come before the church. This was the law (Deut. 19. 15).—¶ *The church*. The court of Christ's house, charged with such matters. In the Jewish synagogue, which was the parish church in that time, there was a bench of elders for such trials, &c.—¶ *As an heathen man*, &c.—as not a Christian. Do not own him any longer as such. The Jews did not own the heathen, nor have intercourse with them. So let him be to thee.

18. (See note, ch. 16. 19.) These words are addressed to the twelve. The constituted court of Christ's church has authority to pronounce upon all such cases; and their decisions, on scriptural grounds, shall have sanction from above. These important words had been spoken to Peter (ch. 16. 19), but here they are addressed to all the apostles, showing that Peter was not there set over the rest, as the Romish church asserts. These words imply that the church officers are to act in Christ's name, and their decisions, under direction of His word, are to be revered as His, though they are few men in number.

19. The meaning is, that Christ's presence and authority would give power and success in the administration of His church on earth, even to the fewest—that the whole body of

if two of you shall agree on earth, as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven.

20 For where two or three are gathered together <sup>w</sup> in my name,

<sup>v</sup> Mar. 11. 24. Jno. 16. 24. 1 Jno. 5. 14. <sup>w</sup> Jno. 20. 19. 1 Cor. 5. 4.

members was not contemplated as sitting in judgment, or ordering church affairs—but that if two of the twelve should agree in any case, especially as to binding and loosing, and they should ask counsel of God, it should be done for them (see Acts 1. 14-26). Church discipline is to be approached with united prayers to the Great Head of the church (1 Cor. 5. 3, 4).

20. *For*. It is not the numbers, but Christ's name, that gives the validity. Two or three, met according to His appointment, may be considered as sufficient—for His presence is pledged to be in their midst—Himself as one with them, and efficiently present to bless. This has, of course, a special reference to the authority granted in vs. 18 to the apostles. Yet it applies also to the discipleship. This identifies a Christian church.

OBSERVE, (1.) True greatness consists in being Christ's—sheep of His fold—freemen of Christ—children of God by faith in Christ—made kings and priests unto God and the Father (vss. 1-10). (2.) The true dignity and value of man is shown by God's redeeming work (vss. 10, 11); "the redemption of their soul is precious. and it ceaseth for ever"—and by the joy of Christ in their recovery (vs. 13), and by His eternal covenant, securing their salvation (vs. 14). (3.) How commonly would personal disputes between men be settled, by following strictly this rule of our Lord! Christians especially owe it to one another, and much more the ministers of Christ. (4.) Church discipline is provided by the Great Head of the church, as a final, but salutary resort. (5.) Christ is God (vs. 20).

there are I in the midst of them.

21 ¶ Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive \* him? till seven times?

22 Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times; but, Until seventy times seven.

23 ¶ Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king, which would take account \* of his servants.

z Mar. 11. 25. Lu. 17. 4. Col. 3. 13. y Ro. 14. 12.

21. *Then came Peter.* Our Lord having thus discoursed about the treatment of personal offenders, Peter makes an inquiry as to how often we should forgive the *same person*. To forgive is to *pass by* an offence and treat the offender as though he had not done wrong. And by a brother is meant here a fellow-Christian, as in verse 15.

22. *Until seventy times seven.* The Jews taught that three times, but not the fourth one, should be forgiven, grounding their idea on Amos 1. 3; 2. 6. "SEVEN is the number in the Divine law, with which the idea of *remission* is ever linked."—*Trench.* Peter had extended his ideas to the seventh time. Christ in this strong expression goes far beyond his farthest thoughts, and evidently means that it should have no such limit, but that we should be disposed to repeat it, *times without number.* (Luke 17. 3, 4.)

23. Our Lord on this occasion delivered the *first of His MORAL PARABLES*, and first appears in the character of KING.—¶ *A certain king.* A parable is here introduced to illustrate and set in a strong light the duty of forgiving injuries. On this point He discoursed at large in the Sermon on the Mount. The kingdom of heaven here means God's plan of dealing in His church (see Matt 5. 20), and the case proposed has reference to the mutual forgiveness of *fallen-Christians*, which, according to our Lord argues

24 And when he had begun to reckon, one was brought unto him which owed him ten thousand <sup>1</sup> talents :

25 But forasmuch as he had not to pay, his lord commanded him to be <sup>2</sup> sold, and his wife and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made.

26 The servant therefore fell down, and worshipped <sup>2</sup> him,

1 A talent is 750 ounces of silver, which, at 5s. the ounce, is 137l. 10s. z 2K. 4. 1. 1s. 50. l. 2 Or, be-sought him.

on the ground of their being more largely forgiven.—¶ *Would take account—make settlement* with his servants, not the final settlement, but such as in Luke 16, of stewardship. All the king's officers are usually called his servants, but here the collectors of revenue are probably meant. It was customary to sell out to certain tax-gatherers the revenue of a district at a round sum. This made them responsible to the king for the gross amount agreed upon. Such a contract may have brought such a servant or officer so largely in debt, say ten to fifteen millions of dollars. Yet the whole is stated in round numbers, and in the language of a parable. Or he was a satrap, who should have remitted the revenues of his province to the royal treasury. The amount is put at the highest, to express an indebtedness of the largest possible kind, representing the magnitude of our account before God. "This sum is exactly that with which Darius sought to buy off Alexander the Great, that he should not prosecute his conquests in Asia, and this was the amount imposed by the Romans on Antiochus the Great, after his defeat by them."—*Trench.*

25. *His lord commanded him to be sold.* This was allowed by the Jewish laws. A debtor could be sold into bondage with wife and children until the debt should be satisfied. (Levit. 25. 39-46. 2 Kings 4. 1. Amos 8. 6.) —¶ *And payment to be made.* Not

saying, Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all.

27 Then the Lord of that servant was moved with compassion, <sup>a</sup> and loosed him, and forgave him the debt.

28 But the same servant went out, and found one of his fellow-servants which owed him an hundred <sup>1</sup> pence, and he laid hands on him, and took *him* by the throat, saying, Pay me that thou owest.

a Ps 78.58. 1 The Roman penny is the 8th part of an ounce, which, at 5s. the ounce, is 7d. half-penny. c.20.22.

as though the sale would pay the claim.

26. *Fell down, and worshipped him.* That is, prostrated himself as a worshipper in a posture of humblest entreaty, and as was customary for Eastern subjects before their king. He asked indulgence, and declared his disposition, *pledged all for the future*, and pleaded his present inability. The hardest sinners, and even infidels, do cry for mercy when death and judgment are at hand. Convinced sinners, not yet aware of the immensity of their debt, are ready to promise full satisfaction.

27. *Moved with compassion.* This represents the tender pity of God toward sinners in their destitute and helpless case, and His prompt response to the prayer of suppliants. God's severity endures only till the sinner, burdened under his debt, seeks forgiveness. Then it proves, like Joseph's harshness, only love in disguise. So, the reckoning was good for the man (Isa. 1. 18). The parable would show that men's sins against us, cannot compare in magnitude with ours against God. Therefore we should be lenient toward them, even as we hope for mercy from God. But see.

28. *But the same servant.* The grace was not received aright.—¶ *Went out.* It is thus from *going out* of the presence of our gracious Lord that

29 And his fellow-servant fell down at his feet, and besought him, saying, <sup>b</sup> Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all.

30 And he would not; but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay the debt.

31 So when his fellow-servants saw what was done, they were very sorry, and came and told unto their lord all that was done.

32 Then his lord, after that he had called him, said unto him,

b ver.26.

we are ready so to act. This very man, just treated with such lenity by his lord, finds a fellow-servant who owes him the merest trifle in comparison—"a hundred pence." A Roman penny was equal to about 12½ of ours. This debt would be about 12½ dollars. Trench makes the proportion of the two debts to be "One million two hundred and fifty thousand, to one." As a *drop* (says Chrysostom) to the *ocean*. He asked for the debt in a most severe and abusive way. The gospel grace demands a "*benign retaliation*," to forgive as we are forgiven.

29. *Besought—entreated, begged.* Observe, he promised the same as this man had just promised to his lord! But with what different success! Only the truly '*spiritual*' can restore one "*overtaken in a fault*." Gal. 6. 1.

31. This was a mode of treatment even beneath the common feelings of humanity. How base when one who professes to have been pardoned, out of mere grace, should show himself a monster of cruelty and severity to others.—¶ *Told.* The Greek word is expressive, *told fully*.

32. *Then his lord.* We are now brought to see what judgment such conduct may reasonably expect of our Lord and Master. Christ, the Saviour, is also the Judge! As to this man, his lord had forgiven him, not a part but the whole of his debt, and that not a small debt but ir-

O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me ;

33 Shouldest not thou also have had compassion on thy fellow-servant, even as I had pity on thee ?

34 And his lord was wroth,

c Lu.19.22.

mense. And he refers him also to his own feelings, when he desired the release in his destitution and extremity. Infinite grace has come to sinners, in the gospel of Christ, and now the great question is, whether we have so received it, as that it has power with us in our lives, fashioning our conduct. "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His." (See James 2. 13.)

33. *Shouldest not thou also?* The man is judged out of his own mouth. He had besought forgiveness and it was granted, and all this bound him to grant it to the fellow-servant, on his own principles. Besides, that was a debt of 12 dollars, the merest pittance, compared with the infinite sum which he had been forgiven. The golden rule applies here, "As ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them likewise, for this is the LAW."

34. *Tormentors.* In early times of Rome, the debtor was condemned to wear a chain of fifteen pounds weight, and to live on the scantiest fare, that he might be brought to terms. In the East, those who appear the poorest will often have secret hoards of wealth. Hence the torture would be applied to elicit information. He was to be treated for *crime* now, which was worse than *indebtedness*. He was to be delivered up to the tormentors. These were executioners who applied all kinds of tortures. This iniquity of his incurred a penalty which the selling of himself, and wife, and children could not pay.—¶ *Till he should pay.* Now he was to be treated, not merely as a criminal, but as a criminal and *debtor* also. All his debts

and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him.

35 So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses.

d Pr.21.13. c.6.12. Ja.2.13.

were to be rigorously exacted of him, because he thus testified that he had never been a true recipient of the pardon.

35. *So likewise.* A sinner is like the servant in question, because he is utterly unable to satisfy God's infinite claims upon him. Men are in debt to God for every thing they have received, because they have deserved nothing but punishment. And they are in debt to Him in the way of numberless sins, of which they must give account. They owe Him thanks and service beyond account, and the debt they have incurred by constant transgression none can estimate. It is for ten thousand times ten thousand; and "he cannot answer for one of a thousand." Job. They are not only unable to pay, but if called to account, they could give no excuse for this inability, which is wilful and wicked. Yet God forgives us for Christ's sake. Therefore we should forgive men their sins, never forgetting how much greater crimes we have had forgiven. We should forgive, not merely in the act, but *from the heart*, that is, sincerely, meaning to pass by the offence, and to treat the offender as though he had not done us the wrong. There is a forgiveness *in name*, which retains the ill feeling, and forgets not the injury. This is a mere pretence, and if we should be so forgiven by our heavenly Father, how different were our case!

OBSERVE, (1.) HOW FREELY CHRIST forgives, NOT because we have forgiven others, or done any other good thing, but THAT WE MAY. (2.) HOW FULLY He forgives us the most immense indebtedness, "all that debt!"

CHAPTER XIX.

AND it came to pass, *that* when Jesus had finished

these sayings, he <sup>a</sup> departed from Galilee, and came into the coasts of Judea beyond Jordan :

*a* Mar. 10. 1. Jno 10. 40.

(vs. 32), and accepts not our vain promises to pay Him all in future. (3.) How completely we are in the power of the law for eternal punishment, except we find forgiveness in Christ Jesus. (vs. 25.) (4.) How unwarranted must be that man's hope of pardon, who is himself unforgiving (vs. 35).

(5.) Christ forgives us freely that we may be moved, by gratitude, to serve and follow Him, and that, by the power of this forgiveness in our lives, we may be actuated to forgive others and in all things imitate His gracious example.

	Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
§ 80. The Seventy instructed and sent out. <i>Capernaum.</i>	.....	.....	10. 1-16	
§ 81. Jesus goes up to the Festival of Tabernacles. His final Departure from Galilee. Incidents in Samaria. . . . .	.....	.....	9. 51-56	7. 2-10
§ 82. Ten Lepers cleansed.— <i>Samaria.</i>	.....	.....	17.11-19	

PART VI.

*Festival of Tabernacles, and the subsequent transactions until our Lord's arrival at Bethany, six days before the fourth Passover.*

Time—six months, less one week.

	Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
§ 83. Jesus at the Festival of Tabernacles. His public teaching. <i>Jerusalem.</i>	.....	.....	.....	7. 11-53 8.1
§ 84. The woman taken in adultery. <i>Jerusalem.</i>	.....	.....	.....	8. 2-11
§ 85. Further public teaching of our Lord. He reproves the unbelieving Jews, and escapes from their hands.— <i>Jerusalem.</i>	.....	.....	.....	8. 12-59
§ 86. A Lawyer instructed. Love to our Neighbour defined. Parable of the Good Samaritan. . . . . <i>Near Jerusalem.</i>	.....	.....	10.25-37	
§ 87. Jesus in the house of Martha and Mary.— <i>Bethany.</i>	.....	.....	10.38-42	
§ 88. The Disciples again taught how to pray.— <i>Near Jerusalem.</i>	.....	.....	11. 1-13	
§ 89. The Seventy return.— <i>Jerusalem.</i>	.....	.....	10.17-24	
§ 90. A man born blind is healed on the Sabbath. Our Lord's subsequent Discourses.— <i>Jerusalem.</i>	.....	.....	.....	9. 1-71 10. 1-27
§ 91. Jesus in Jerusalem at the Festival of Dedication. He retires beyond Jordan.— <i>Jerusalem. Bethany beyond Jordan.</i>	.....	.....	.....	10.22-42
§ 92. The raising of Lazarus.— <i>Bethany.</i>	.....	.....	.....	11. 1-46
§ 93. The Counsel of Caiaphas against Jesus. He retires from Jerusalem. <i>Jerusalem. Ephraim.</i>	.....	.....	.....	11.47-54



2 And great multitudes followed him; and he healed them there.

3 ¶ The Pharisees also came

unto him, tempting him, and saying unto him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?

CHAPTER XIX.

§ 94. JESUS BEYOND JORDAN, IS FOLLOWED BY MULTITUDES. The healing of the infirm woman on the Sabbath.—*Valley of Jordan. Perea.*

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
19. 1, 2	10. 1.	13. 10-21	

The Evangelist here gives, at a glance, the course of our Lord, as seen in the Harmony, declaring in a word, that He had departed from Galilee after His discourse (see § 81), and that at length He came into the coasts of Judea beyond Jordan, where we now find Him. It was in this

quarter, that he healed the woman who had an infirmity (see Luke 13. 10-21). We find that He had passed through Samaria (see § 81 and 82) to Jerusalem, where He was present at the feast of tabernacles (§ 83), and at the feast of dedication (§ 91), when He retires beyond Jordan (§ 91 and 93). We find now many incidents related of Him in Perea. Perea was a region belonging to Judea, and so called from a word which signifies *beyond*, as it lay beyond Jordan, and was formerly part of the tribes Reuben, Gad and Manasseh.

	Matt.	Mark	Luke.	John.
§ 95. Our Lord goes teaching and journeying toward Jerusalem. He is wained against Herod.— <i>Perea.</i>	.....	.....	13.22-35	
§ 96. Our Lord dines with a chief Pharisee on the Sabbath. Incidents. . . . . <i>Perea.</i>	.....	.....	14. 1-24	
§ 97. What is required of true Disciples. . . . . <i>Perea.</i>	.....	.....	14.25-35	
§ 98. Parable of the Lost Sheep, &c. Parable of the Prodigal Son. . . . . <i>Perea.</i>	.....	.....	15. 1-32	
§ 99. Parable of the Unjust Steward. . . . . <i>Perea.</i>	.....	.....	16. 1-13	
§ 100. The Pharisees reproved. Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus. . . . . <i>Perea.</i>	.....	.....	16.14-31	
§ 101. Jesus inculcates Forbearance, Faith, and Humility. . . . . <i>Perea.</i>	.....	.....	17. 1-10	
§ 102. Christ's Coming will be sudden. . . . . <i>Perea.</i>	.....	.....	17.20-37	
§ 103. Parables. The importunate Widow. The Pharisee and Publican. . . . . <i>Perea.</i>	.....	.....	18. 1-14	
§ 104. PRECEPTS RESPECTING DIVORCE. . . . . <i>Perea.</i>	19. 3-12	10. 2-12		

The Evangelist thus passes over other incidents to relate the conversation respecting divorce. The Pharisees came to Him "*tempting Him*," desiring to entangle Him in His talk. As on other occasions, so here, they wished to commit Him against one of the two parties, who took opposite sides on this question. So on the point of paying tribute to Cesar (ch. 22. 16, &c.), they sought to com-

mit Him either against the friends or the enemies of the Roman government. But in both cases, He confounded their hypocrisy by His answer.—¶ *For every cause*, i. e., for any reason. Christ had laid down the true doctrine on this subject, in His Sermon on the Mount (ch. 5. 32), viz. that there was but one sufficient cause, and that such as was in its very nature fatal to the marriage relation

4 And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that<sup>b</sup> he which made *them* at the beginning, made them male and female?

5 And said, For<sup>c</sup> this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and they twain shall be one flesh.

6 Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What<sup>d</sup> therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.

7 They say unto him, Why<sup>e</sup> did Moses then command to

<sup>b</sup> Ge.1.57; 5.2. Mal.2.15. <sup>c</sup> Ge.2.24. Ep.5.31.  
<sup>d</sup> 1Cor.7.10. <sup>e</sup> De.24.1. Is.50.1.

4. *Have ye not read?* Literally, "Do ye not know?" that is, by reading. He here refers them to their scriptures, and to the original institution of marriage. Mark has it, "What did Moses command you?"

5. *And said.* By the mouth of Adam (Gen. 2. 24).—¶ *Shall cleave.* Shall adhere firmly. The Greek word is from a noun, signifying glue.

6. *Joined together.* The term is from a metaphor taken from the yoking of oxen.

7. *Why did Moses?* They now appeal to Moses' regulations in Deut. 24. 1. Yet it was not a 'command,' but only a *permission*, the spirit of which was still in the line of our Lord's legislation, making a writing of divorcement requisite, and thus giving a lower testimony to the essential sanctity of marriage. See note on ch. 5. 31, 32. But Moses' permission had been abused, until, as in the text, they called it a *command*, and without reference to the original institution of marriage, they held among them, that divorce might be for *any and every* cause. There were two schools or sects among the Jews who took opposite sides on this subject. The school of *Shammai* interpreted Moses, as allowing divorce "only for

give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away?"

8 He saith unto them, Moses, because of the hardness of your hearts, suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so.

9 And I say unto you, Whosoever<sup>f</sup> shall put away his wife, except *it be* for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery.

10 ¶ His disciples say unto him, If the case of the man be

f c.5 32. Lu.16.18.

the cause of fornication." The school of *Hillel* construed it as referring to any cause or pretext. And instead of being entangled, by siding with either, our Lord declares that Moses' permission only showed *their hardness* which had gone so much beyond this allowance; so that this civil regulation of that day, was meant as a check upon their worse habits, and that from *the beginning*, as Moses himself had recorded (Gen. 2), "*it was not so.*"—¶ *Hardness of your hearts*—intractable disposition.—*Campbell.*

9. This verse is almost in the same language as ch. 5. 32, and states again the Christian law of marriage and divorce. Marriage has special sanctity as the shadow of that great mystery, Christ's union with His church. Mark adds (ch. 10. 12) "And if a woman shall put away her husband," &c. The practice of divorcing the husband unwarranted by the law, had been introduced (says Josephus) by Salome, sister of Herod the Great, who sent a bill of divorce to her husband Coslobarus, which had example was afterward followed by Herodias and others.—*Campbell.*

10. An objection is here urged making against the very institution of marriage, if such strictness is to be observed.

so with *his* wife, it is not good to marry.<sup>5</sup>

11 But he said unto them, All men cannot receive this saying, save *they* to whom it is given.

12 For there are some eunuchs, which were so born from *their* mother's womb: and there

g Pr.19.13; 21.9,19.

11. Our Lord replies that such a doctrine as the expediency of living unmarried, could not be received by men at all, save by a certain limited class. It is not natural with men. —¶ *All men cannot receive.* That is, *none can receive.* This use of terms is peculiar in the New Testament. So in Rom. 3. 20: "There shall no flesh be justified," reads in the Greek, "All flesh shall not be justified." It is an emphatic negative, "All shall not be." That is, the impossibility is universal and extends positively to all. The sense of this passage then is, none can receive this sentiment, suggested in verse 10, save those few to whom it is given, who are spoken of in verse 12. He meant to say that men have a different principle implanted in their very constitution. Marriage is natural as well as honourable in all. See 1 Cor. 7. 7, 26. —¶ *To whom it is given,* by nature or by grace.

12. Our Lord here speaks of a certain class fitted to live unmarried. *Eunuchs.* The term means, literally, a *bed-keeper*, chamberlain. Either such as are so born, or such as are so made by men, for the purpose commonly, of attending on females. There was such a class in the East, who served in the harem. They were sometimes promoted to high office, whence the word comes to mean also a *minister of state*, a *high officer*, whether a eunuch in fact or not. So Potiphar is called a eunuch, Gen. 39. 1. Comp. Acts 8. 27, the eunuch, a grandee under Candace, queen of the Ethiopians. —¶ *Made themselves eunuchs.* This is hyperbolic language, like ch. 5. 29. 30,

are some eunuchs, which were made eunuchs of men: and there be eunuchs, which have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake. He that is able to receive *it*, let him receive *it*.

13 ¶ Then were there

A 1 Cor. 7. 32.

cutting off a right hand, &c. Such as by mortification and denial have virtually made themselves so. That is, they willingly live unmarried, for the kingdom of heaven's sake, with the intent of more exclusively devoting themselves to the services of religion. Origen fell into sad error on this point, carrying out the literal purport of this clause. And some forbid marriage to the clergy, which is denounced by the Apostle as "a doctrine of devils" (1 Tim. 4. 1, 3). See Paul's teachings "by permission and not of commandment," in 1 Cor. ch. 7. They embody the general sentiment here annexed. —¶ *He that is able, &c.* It is good to abide even as I. *But, &c.* 1 Cor. 7. 8, 9. All the Apostles did not receive it, that is, did not live unmarried. 1 Cor. 9. 5. *An obligation to celibacy* (says Calvin) is a great mistake. It is a foolish imagination that celibacy is a virtue, especially if in it a man only consults his own ease and convenience.

OBSERVE, (1.) The sanctity of the marriage institution is proved to be "from the beginning" (4-8). (2.) Moses legislates in the same line with Christ, and gives a lower testimony in those civil regulations which must have respect to the state of society (8). (3.) The gospel of Christ restores the marriage relation to all its original sanctity and value. *For this*, even modern civilization is indebted to the gospel. And society in Christian lands owes all its domestic blessings to the religion of Jesus Christ.

§ 105. JESUS RECEIVES AND BLESSES LITTLE CHILDREN.—*Perea.*

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John
19. 13-15	10. 13-16	18. 15-17	10.

brought unto him little children, that he should put *his* hands on them, and pray : and the disciples rebuked them.

14 But Jesus said, Suffer <sup>1</sup> lit-

<sup>1</sup> Mar. 10. 14. Lu. 18. 16, & c.

13. *There were brought unto Him.* As it had been customary among the Jews to apply to children the seal of the Abrahamic covenant in circumcision, they came naturally enough, with their *little children*, under the new dispensation. This is the most obvious mode of accounting for a presentation of such children by the parent's act. In Luk<sup>2</sup> we find that these were *infants*.—¶ *That He should put His hands on them.* This was the customary sign of a blessing. In the act of pronouncing it, the hand was laid on the head of the person, expressing by such a gesture, the idea of conveying the benefit. See Gen. 48. 14. Matt. 9. 18. It has always been natural to seek such a communication of good, or sign of it, from the excellent whom we venerate. Especially was this done among the Jews. Num. 22. 6; 27. 18. Acts 8. 18. 2 Kings 5. 11.—¶ *And pray.* They sought His prayers for them, it appears, looking upon Him as "the messenger of the covenant" (Mal. 3. 1) —the Christ of God.—¶ *Rebuked*—that is, *reproved* those who brought them, found fault with them, and signified their displeasure at this. They thought it a small matter or a mere obtusion of the parents, interrupting Christ to show their children, or that *children* had nothing to do with Christ, nor He with them. This last would have seemed the point aimed at in Christ's reply, and it is the sad mistake of many.

14. *Suffer little children*, allow them. Do not cast them off as though they had no interest in my work, "*and forbid them not*," adds Mark, who also says that Christ "*was much displeased*" at the disciples for rebuking the parents. Luke has it further that Christ "*called them* unto Him." Our Lord's remark here means that of *such*

the children, and forbid them not, to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven.

15 And he laid *his* hands on them, and departed thence.

J c 18. 3.

as these is the church on earth. He meant to signify (1.) that infants of believing parents have an interest in the covenant, and are therefore to be respected and allowed this blessing from Christ. Also, (2.) That of *such like*, persons of childlike temper and character, the church consists, (rebuking their haughtiness by the way) (ch. 18. 1-5, 10), as He adds (see Mark and Luke), "Whoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a *little child*, he shall not enter therein" (ch. 18. 3, 4). This language gives encouragement to children who would seek Christ, that He pays them such marked attention and is much more willing to receive them, than men would think. They can go to Christ now, for they can pray to Him, and believe these words that He has said. And they should go now whilst they are children, because He shows here and elsewhere a special readiness to receive the young. "They that seek me early shall find me" (Prov. 8. 17).

15. *He laid His hands on them.* He complied with the parental request. Mark adds, that "*He took them up in His arms and blessed them.*"

OBSERVE, (1.) *Christian* parents, who seek in prayer the Divine blessing on their children, and so bring them now to Christ, are here encouraged. It is the way of His plans for Zion to comply with their request, for He perpetuates the church on earth by means of a *godly seed*. He can and will bless them, for of such is the kingdom of heaven. (2.) Infant baptism falls in with this sentiment of our Lord. "*Suffer*" such to come He *rebukes* such as *forbid* them. Many, like those disciples, think that children have nothing to do with Christ, and are to be held back, because unable to understand. But of such is the visible church. "The

16 ¶ And behold, one came, and said unto him, Good master, what <sup>k</sup> good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?

17 And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? *there is none good but one, that is God*: but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.

<sup>k</sup> Mar.10.17. Lu.10.25; 13.18.

promise is unto you and to your children."

§ 106. THE RICH YOUNG MAN. PARABLE OF THE LABOURERS IN THE VINEYARD.—*Perea*.

Matt. 19.16-30 20. 1-16,	Mark. 10.17-31	Luke. 18.18-30	John.
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This was "a certain ruler," as we learn from Luke. He "came running and kneeled to Him," as we learn from Mark. He was doubtless a ruler of the synagogue. Though he is here called a young man he belonged to the Jewish eldership, which was filled, like the same office now, not according to age always, but according to the standing in the church. He was no doubt of high repute.—¶ *Good Master*. A title usually given to distinguished Jewish Rabbis. —¶ *Eternal life*, that is, salvation, heaven.

17. *Why callest thou? &c.* Our Lord would take him up, upon the title he gave Him, "*good master*," and would show him that his real views of Him did not agree with this. He would thus more directly attack his low ideas of the Master. "You give me a title which properly belongs to God alone, yet you do not even receive my doctrine, much less regard me as God." Christ did not mean to say that He was not God, but rather *that He was*; and that the young man ought so to esteem Him, even to be consistent with the title which he gave Him. But he denied at heart the Divinity of Christ, and our Lord here calls attention to His own claims,

18 He saith unto him, Which? Jesus said, Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal Thou shalt not bear false witness;

19 Honour thy father and thy mother; and, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

20 The young man saith unto

<sup>l</sup> Ex.20.13. De.5.17,&c. <sup>m</sup> Le.19.18.

which he rejected. And this was a striking and appropriate way of reproving the young man.—¶ *Keep the commandments*. Christ now presents him with the claims of the Divine law upon him, charging him with his obligation to keep the commandments. He does not say that any man ever kept them so as to deserve heaven, as none ever did (Rom. 3. 20. 23; 4. 6. Gal. 2. 16. Ephes. 2. 9. 2 Tim. 1. 9). But by these he is to be judged; and only by seeing his inability to do this, and his short coming, could he feel the need of Christ's salvation. If any one is to gain eternal life by his works, he must, in all his life, keep the whole law, and not offend in one point—else he is *guilty of all*—that is, *condemned* by the whole law (James 2. 10).

18, 19. *Which?* Our Lord here points the inquirer to certain of the commandments. These were not all, yet quite enough for a trial (See Ex. 20. 12-16). These had relation to the common relative duties, and were all summed up in the last clause, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" (Matt. 22. 39). He would have him judged now by his daily conduct, to see if he had kept, *in the spirit*, these commandments; and by using the last clause as a comprehensive summary, he points him to the great truth, that there is the *spirit*, beyond the *letter*, w<sup>h</sup>ich is to be observed.

20. He holds himself unimpeached on all these points, and thought he had fully kept these requirements. So narrow had been his views of what the law of God demands of men

him, All these things have I kept from my youth up : what lack I yet ?

21 Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go <sup>n</sup> and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven ; and come *and follow* ° me.

22 But when the young man heard that saying, he went away

<sup>n</sup> Lu.12.33; 16.9. Ac.2.45; 4.34,35. 1Ti.6.18,19.  
<sup>o</sup> Jno.12.26.

—¶ *From my youth up*—rather, from my childhood.

21. Our Lord now puts to him an unexpected test, yet the most allowable.—¶ *If thou wilt be perfect.* See note, ch. 5. 48. “One thing thou lackest” (Mark, Luke). The law he had not kept. If we really had kept the ten commandments, we should be ready to obey whatever God enjoins; and the ten commandments, rightly understood, do really cover all possible duties. Though love to our neighbour does not require of us, ordinarily, to give away all we have to the poor, yet here Christ commanded it; and if He commanded it of us, we should not hesitate, else we love our possessions better than Himself. Had he *done this*, he could not have *deserved* eternal life, for it could not be bought by any amount of money or of self-sacrifice. It must needs be received by sinners as a free gift. Yet this young man could have claimed CHRIST’S PROMISE to him. But now, the heart is shown to be *worldly*, and needing to be changed. To part with wealth for Christ, and to give to the poor, were beyond his attainments. Mark says that “Jesus, beholding him, loved him” (vs. 21). As a man, He felt an interest in his amiable and ingenuous qualities; and He who loves sinners, even his enemies, so as to die for the vilest, could not be destitute of love toward this youth, though it was not his covenant love. God has a love *to the world*. But it is expressed in the plan of salvation by a

sorrowful : for he had great possessions.

23 ¶ Then said Jesus unto his disciples, Verily I say unto you, that <sup>p</sup> a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven.

24 And again I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.

<sup>p</sup> 1Ti.6.9,10.

Redeemer. “God *so* loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, *that* whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

22. It appears here, that he had great struggles and sorrows on account of such a test being applied. He could not bear to give up his worldly possessions. They were the idol of his heart, and the more wealth he had, the harder it was to yield to such a demand. “*Covetousness is IDOLATRY.*”

23. *Hardly*—with great difficulty. Christ here teaches what was shown in this case, that it is *hard*—not impossible, but extremely difficult—for a rich man to get to heaven—because it is found to be hard to put Christ’s will before his worldly possessions. Mark has it, “How hard is it for them that trust in riches.” Luke, “They that have riches.”

24. *It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle.* Lord Nugent, in his recent publication, “Lands Sacred and Classical,” has given an application of these words which strikingly shows their fitness and point. Lord N. describes himself as “about to walk out of Hebron, through the *large gate*, when his companions, seeing a train of camels approaching, desired him to go through *the eye of the needle*”—in other words, the small side of the gate. This Lord N. applies as explanatory of the Saviour’s words; for he adds, “the sumpter camel cannot pass through unless

25 When his disciples heard it, they were exceedingly amazed, saying, Who then can be saved?

26 But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, With men this is impossible; but <sup>q</sup> with God all things are possible.

27 ¶ Then <sup>r</sup> answered Peter, and said unto him, Behold, we have forsaken all <sup>s</sup> and followed

<sup>q</sup> Ps. 3.8; 62.11. Zec. 8.6. <sup>r</sup> Mar. 10.28. Lu. 18.28.  
<sup>s</sup> Ph. 3.8.

with great difficulty, and stripped of his load, his trappings, and his merchandize." This language was proverbial among the Jews, to denote an impossibility. Literally it meant, that it was easier for a huge camel, with all his load of goods, to go through this small side gate, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven—of course one who loves riches, and trusts in them (as Mark has it), is meant. This should warn us not to covet wealth, nor too eagerly to pursue what may prove to us such a serious obstacle in the way to heaven. This young man lacked *one thing* (see Mark's language); Christ had put to him this test—if he would be *perfect*—that is, if he had a disposition to be complete and entire—*wanting nothing*. But here was the lack of *one thing*—of a disposition to serve Christ fully, and to make His favour more than wealth or life. He lacked the *essential, vital thing*. So there is some one thing that keeps many from following Christ. They have too large possessions, or too many gay friends and amusements, or a self-righteousness, which they cannot consent to part with, *even for Christ Himself*. The most common thing among the young is this *love of the world*, which the scripture declares is so inconsistent with true love to God (1 John 2. 15). "They that will be rich, fall into temptation," &c. (1 Tim. 6. 9.)

25. *Exceedingly amazed.* Mark has it "were astonished out of measure."—*Who then can be saved?*

thee: what shall we have therefore?

28 And Jesus said unto them, Verily, I say unto you, that ye which have followed me, in the regeneration, when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye <sup>t</sup> also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

<sup>t</sup> c. 20. 21. Lu. 22. 29. 30. 1 Cor. 6. 2, 3. Re. 2. 26.

They are startled at such a rule laid down, and think it must exclude many—*or ALL.*

26. *With men, &c.* Our Lord replies, that this only shows the impossibility by human power—that by human means, indeed, this is quite impossible. The impotency of all human effort, and even of the *means of grace*, in themselves, to change and save the soul, is most apparent. In God is the only hope. But *with Him*, it is *possible*! "Born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God" (John 1. 13). "I can do all things through Christ, which strengtheneth me" (Phil. 4. 13).

27. *Then answered Peter.* Peter is induced by this language of our Lord, to mention the case of the twelve, and to ask what special reward they may expect for *having left all*. Their boats, and nets, and fish, and father, were *every thing* to them. They might, indeed, look for a reward, for it had been promised. But this temper is wrong, so far as it puts forth *claims* for our good deeds, as though we deserved the reward at Christ's hands. What *pay* does a man deserve for giving up a copper, or pepper-corn, for a palace?

28. *Ye which have followed me.* The words "*in the regeneration*" belong to the remainder of the verse, and are not to be read with the preceding words. Christ tells of the reward that shall be revealed for his humble followers. A time of *regeneration* is coming. The term means *renovation*—literally *new birth*—and refers to

29 And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an

hundred-fold, and shall inherit everlasting life.

30 But many that are first shall be last; and the last shall be first

u Mar. 10. 29, 30. Lu. 13. 29, 30. 1 Cor. 2. 9.

v c. 20. 16. c. 21. 31, 32. Mar. 10. 31. Lu. 13. 30 Ga. 5. 7. He. 4. 1.

the *new creation* prophesied as the glory of the latter days, "when the Son of man shall sit on the throne of his glory" (ch. 25. Isa. 65. 17; 66. 22. Rev. 21. 1). In this new state of things, wherein all things shall become new, ye shall enjoy a glorious distinction. When Christ shall come to judgment, sitting on the throne of His glory—or His glorious throne—as Mediator and Judge, then, as great kings have officers around them, dignitaries of the kingdom, ye, the twelve apostles, shall be exalted to special honour, and shall sit on twelve thrones of majesty, judging the people of God—the twelve tribes of Israel. The language is used to express most strongly to them, in a way which they could appreciate, the special glories reserved for them, in connexion with Christ's exaltation. See Luke 22. 28, 29, 30, where it is "eating and drinking at His table" that is the figure used to enforce this.

29. *Forsaken.* The forsaking here intended is such as accords with the spirit of the discourse. We must have our affections weaned from the pleasures and riches of the world, so as willingly to part with any thing and every thing for Christ. The early Christians actually gave up houses, and lands, and friends. This is not always called for; but where it is called for we are not to hesitate. The disposition—the heart is all-important.—¶ *A hundred-fold.* Such shall receive a hundred-fold of *real good.* Mark reads, a hundred-fold (that is, a hundred times as much) of the same things. But the meaning is rather, in substantial, essential value. Mark adds, "with persecutions," showing that it is not *worldly ease* that is promised, but what shall be a hundred times better.

30. This verse is thrown in, as a caution against indolence or presumption. Though great honours and rewards awaited them, they were not such as they had thought; for the *last* might come out *first*, on His plan of reckoning, and the *first* be *last* in those distributions. Also He would teach, by a proverbial saying, that this future exaltation will not be according to appearances or prospects here. The highly honoured here, will often be the most degraded and sunk, in those future awards. Hence they should not covet earthly distinctions, as Peter seemed to have sought for, in his question. This language applies to all! Those of best advantages for obtaining true religion, often turn out the worst; while those of humble opportunities are often found entering the kingdom first. Publicans and harlots enter, while the children of the kingdom are cast out. Those who seem nearest the kingdom, are often the farthest from entering in, and seem to find it most difficult to see the way, or continue most careless about it. The moral and correct in life, who are not true Christians, often seem most fixed and settled in their neglect of Christ.

OBSERVE, (1.) Many inquire what they must *do* to be saved, with the most mistaken views of Christ's person and claims. (2.) Those who would get to heaven by *doing some good thing*, must be held to a perfect obedience of the Divine law. "Do this and live." (3.) How easy is it for men to be mistaken as to their keeping the commandments. So Paul the apostle, in Romans ch. 7, "The law is spiritual." (4.) Duties to God are of superior rank—but duties to our neighbour will sufficiently test our dispositions. (5.) Christ will



## CHAPTER XX.

FOR the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man *that is* an householder, <sup>a</sup> which went out

<sup>a</sup> Ca. 8. 11, 12.

to teach men their utter impotency to reach heaven by *their works*. (6.) There is no salvation but by *embracing Christ*, acknowledging His claims, trusting to His offices, and following His gracious commands (vss. 17-21).

## CHAPTER XX.

1. *For*. This parable, on the principle of rewards in the kingdom of God, is to be read in close connexion with the preceding context. It is given to illustrate the last verse of the former chapter. Peter had asked, in view of the young ruler's shrinking, and of their forsaking *all*, "What shall we have therefore?" Christ told them that their reward should be great. But he adds a sentiment in the last verse of ch. 19., and enforces it by this parable—warning them against a *hireling spirit*.—¶ *The kingdom of heaven*—here means the church of Christ. This general doctrine is most important: SALVATION IS ALL OF GRACE—"not of works, lest any man should boast." Many shall come out very differently from their haughty expectations and claims. But God will do justly by all, and yet will do what He will with His own; and if nothing of works, but all of grace to all, then no glorying of one over another could find place—no judging of one against another—no claim as of right on the part of any. (See Rom. 4. 1-4.) As addressed to Peter, and in him to all true believers, the parable is rather aimed against their carnal calculations of reward. The same legal spirit that worked for wages (the penny a day) looked for *temporal preferments*, and asked *who* should be *greatest*. In all these things they should be disappointed. And though "they expected to have received more," they would get nothing but the substance of the gospel promise—eternal life—with persecutions; and this according to the plan of grace.

early in the morning to hire labourers into his vineyard.

2 And when he had agreed with the labourers for a penny <sup>b</sup>

<sup>b</sup> c. 18. 23.

So the last shall be first, &c. Peter's pay should so disappoint his carnal hope, that at the moment he would deny the Master. It could not be by self-complacent comparisons with others, nor by laying their demands upon God, that they could ever stand. The spirit of that question, "What shall we have therefore?" shall only, if carried out, bring itself sadly behind those who, like the other and later labourers, humbly wait upon God for all that He hath promised. Again: it is altogether a false principle in Christian duty, to have an eye always to *others'* services and rewards—comparing ourselves among ourselves. This hinders Christian engagedness. We are to work, not with eye-service, but as unto the Lord and not to men—to walk worthy of God. This Peter, at last, when told of his final trials, thought immediately of *the other disciple*, and asked the Master, "And what shall this man do?" Jesus answered, "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? Follow thou me" (John 21. 18-22). The parable would precisely meet his case, as it was foreseen. *Each man to do his own duty, irrespective of others' duties or rewards, is the true principle*. Only this can lead us to the great idea of aiming at God's will on earth—not as other men do it here, but as angels do it in heaven. "Go work to-day in my vineyard," is the call. "Follow thou me."—¶ *An householder*. The head of a family who keeps house, and has work done in his vineyard. The vineyard was a farm for raising *grape-vines*, to make *wine*; and this was a common business in Judea. God calls the visible church His vineyard, as a well-cultivated spot. Isa. 5. 7. Christ is this householder in God's house.—¶ *Went out*. God seeks His labourers, rather than they

a day, he sent them into his vineyard.

3 And he went out about the third hour, and saw others standing idle in the market-place,

4 And said unto them, Go ye also into the vineyard, and whatsoever is right, I will give you. And they went their way.

5 And again he went out about the sixth and ninth hour, and did likewise.

6 And about the eleventh hour he went out, and found others standing idle, and saith unto them, Why stand ye here all the day idle?<sup>e</sup>

c Pr.19.15. Eze.16.49. Ac.17.21. He.6.12.

Him. "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you." The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.

2. *He had agreed.* God has recorded His promises, which are to be the basis of our transactions with Him. What He will do, He has told us beforehand; and on this ground we are called to act. And His promises never fail.—¶ *A penny a day.* This Roman coin was equal to about 12 cents, or our shilling, and was the common price of labour then when every thing else was in proportion. There was a *positive agreement, at fair wages.*

3. *The third hour.* Nine o'clock in the morning.

4. This shows the understanding with others. They were standing idle in the *market-place*, where the people generally gathered for business, or to see what work could be had. In this case there was no definite price fixed, but they were hired for what was right, and they must have confidence in the employer. When we find not a definite promise personal to ourselves, we must work for our Master, and TRUST HIM for a reward.

5. *The sixth and ninth hour.* 12

7 They say unto him, Because no man hath hired us. He saith unto them, <sup>d</sup> Go ye also into the vineyard; and whatsoever is right, *that shall ye receive.*

8 So when even was come, the lord of the vineyard saith unto his steward, Call the labourers, and <sup>e</sup> give them *their* hire, beginning from the last unto the first.

9 And when they came that *were hired* about the eleventh <sup>f</sup> hour, they received every man a penny.

10 But when the first came, they supposed that they should

d Ec.9.10. Jno.9.4. e Lu.10.7. f Lu.23.30-43.

and 3 o'clock. The Jews divided their days into twelve parts, from sunrise to sunset; and there were four chief divisions, third, sixth, ninth and twelfth hours.

6. *The eleventh hour.* Just upon the close of working time—one hour only left.

8. *When even was come*—that is, the close of the day, at sunset; or the 12th hour having arrived, and the working time being finished, the settlement must be made.—¶ *His steward.* This was the man-servant or overseer who took the house under his charge—provided meals, and attended to house business—keeping accounts, &c., so as to relieve the householder.—¶ *Beginning from the last.* He had a right to *begin* the *payment* where he chose—and beginning at the bottom of the list, the others first hired found what these received. This order was chosen to illustrate the doctrine, and bring out the point of the parable.

10. *Supposed that they should have received more.* The parable would meet such false and self-complacent expectations as they evidently had, after all that had been told them. How disappointed were they to be, at their Master's trial, and at their own per-

have received more; and they likewise received every man a penny.

11 And when they had received *it*, they murmured  $\epsilon$  against the good man of the house,

12 Saying, These last <sup>1</sup> have wrought *but* one hour, and thou hast made them equal unto us, which have borne the burden and heat of the day.

13 But he answered one of

g Lu.15.29,30. 1 Or, have continued one hour only.

secuted lot! How Peter was to shrink at the announcement, by his Lord, of the outstretched hands—the girding—and violent carrying away in his old age (John 21. 18)! How James and John were to revolt at the cup (vs. 23)! No earthly throne—no right and left hand station, should be theirs in a temporal kingdom.

11. *Murmured*—at others being made equal to them—at their having no higher emolument such as they had expected, and comporting with their close personal connexion with the Master. So Peter himself should soon murmur that, instead of earthly dignity, he should have violent death—and that John should have had, at the same time, no such hard lot assigned him. But Christ should then reply substantially as here: “What is that to thee?” see John 21. 18–22, “I do thee no wrong.”

13. *Friend*. As we say, “My friend.” Christ vindicates His equity.

14. *I will give*—literally, “It is my will to give.”

15. *Is it not lawful*. Has not God a perfect right to dispense His favours, and especially His gifts of grace, as He will?—¶ *Is thine eye evil?* Does my goodness to others give you an envious eye, or alter my fairness toward yourself? It was His *extra goodness*, after all, and nothing else, that they could complain of. “An evil eye” was one not single but double

them, and said, Friend, <sup>h</sup> I do thee no wrong: didst not thou agree with me for a penny?

14 Take *that* thine *is*, and go thy way: <sup>i</sup> I will give unto this last even as unto thee.

15 Is <sup>j</sup> it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own? Is <sup>k</sup> thine eye evil because I am good?

16 So <sup>l</sup> the last shall be first, and the first last: for <sup>m</sup> many be called, but few chosen.

h c.22.12. i Jno.17.2 j Ro.9.15-24. Ja.1.15 k De.15.9. c.6.23. l c.19.30. m c.22.14. 1Th 2.13 Ja.1.23-25.

(Matt. 6. 23)—not principled and honest—double-sighted, full of duplicity and envy. In this expression, “*an evil eye*,” there lies, says Trench, the belief—one of the most wide-spread in the world—of the eye being able to put forth positive powers of mischief. “So long as I am *just* to you, may I not be *good* and liberal to them?” This distinction in the words “*righteous*” and “*good*” occurs in Romans 5. 7.

16. *So*. This proverbial language—where the parallel form of expression is for intensity gives the opening sentiment (ch. 19. 30), illustrated by the parable. Christians shall often be greatly disappointed in the temporal rewards of Christ’s service. The poverty, crosses, persecutions, are hard to understand, and harder to bear. It is yet so. We murmur at others who fare better. But is not God *faithful*? And is not salvation of *grace*? And is not Christ enough? And is it not enough for us, if we be *chosen*, from among the many that are called? Should not this one thought of God’s distinguishing grace to us in Christ, quell our rising murmurs, and make us rejoice in persecutions for His name.—¶ *For many*. This sentiment enforces the moral of the parable. Amidst so much that is unworthy and mistaken, we see how the salvation of any must be of *MERE GRACE*. This looking after rewards

17 ¶ And Jesus going up to Jerusalem, took the twelve disciples apart in the way, and said unto them,

n c. 16. 21, &c. Mar. 10. 12, &c. Lu. 13. 31, &c. Jno. 12. 12, &c.

prematurely, and wrongfully—making invidious comparisons and claims—having an envious eye to others' pay—and disposed to act so little on the high principles of individual duty—will lead to disappointment. It will make the last first and the first last—confounding all such unworthy expectations and estimates. And let it be known that, amidst many deceptions and delusions, the truly Christian are a few—chosen; for this evil spirit will reign in many that shall be found outside. “Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name,” &c. **Matt. 25.**

**OBSERVE, (1.)** A legal temper looks for reward on wrong grounds, and looks for the wrong kind of wages. It must therefore be disappointed and fall short. **(2.)** God is just and faithful. He will not fail of all that He has promised. **(3.)** It is altogether a false principle of Christian duty to compare ourselves among ourselves, or have an eye to others' duty and reward. “Follow *thou* me.” **(4.)** Every Christian inherits the promises, and gets *Christ*. They all are “heirs according to the promise.” God is a sovereign. He is not indebted to any. What He grants to some is no injury to others. His electing love, whereby some are plucked as out of the burning, does not make His proclamation of grace *insincere* to others. The true convert sees and adores His distinguishing grace, displayed in his salvation. **(5.)** Salvation is possible to the aged and to the dying; yet this parable is not spoken to teach this doctrine. They have been called long before the eleventh hour, and therefore are not like these in the parable (vss. 6 and 7). They who neglect religion, planning to come into the kingdom at the eleventh hour, may tremble at *God's* sovereign-

18 Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be betrayed unto the chief priests and unto the scribes, and they shall condemn him to death,

*ty*, as it is here taught. He will do what He wills with His own. “Because I called and ye refused, &c., I will laugh at your calamity.”

§ 107. JESUS A THIRD TIME FORETELLS HIS DEATH AND RESURRECTION. (See § 74 and § 77.)—*Perea.*

<small>Matt.</small>	<small>Mark.</small>	<small>Lukc.</small>	<small>John</small>
<small>20.17-19</small>	<small>10.33-34</small>	<small>18.31-34</small>	

17. *Jesus going up to Jerusalem.* He had been on the way from Galilee, on the other side Jordan, having left Galilee finally; and now He sets out more particularly in the direction of Jerusalem. He was probably now bending His course across from Perea to Judea, about in the line of Jerusalem. They always spoke of *going up* to Jerusalem, no matter from what quarter they went. Mark says, that “Jesus went before them, and they were amazed; and as they followed, they were afraid.”—¶ *Apart in the way.* He took them aside. There may have been others in the company, as the Passover was approaching, and many must have been going up to the feast. All the males were required to attend (Exod. 23. 17). The ground of their fear was likely His setting His face toward Jerusalem, where they knew He had enemies. He had also announced to them His coming death, which they dreaded. Accordingly He declares His intention to visit the holy city, and reveals to them more than their fears. This was a farther disclosure of the circumstances that should attend His death than He had yet made. (See ch. 17. 22) Luke has it, that He declared to them now the fulfilment of all the prophecies, and that they understood none of these things.

18. *Betrayed unto the chief priests, &c.* So Judas did betray Him into the hands of the Sanhedrim, who also condemned Him to death, for

19 And<sup>o</sup> shall deliver him to the Gentiles, to mock, and to scourge,<sup>p</sup> and to crucify *him*: and the third day he shall rise again.

20 ¶ Then<sup>q</sup> came to him the mother of Zebedee's children, with her sons, worshipping *him*, and desiring a certain thing of him.

o c.27.2.&c. Mar.15.1,16.&c. Lu.23.1,&c. Jno.18.28.&c. Ac.3.13. 1Cor.15.3-7. p Is.53.5. q Mar.10.35.

they were the highest court of the nation. (Matt. 26. 66; 27. 2.)

19. *And shall deliver Him to the Gentiles*, i. e., the Romans—because the Jews had no longer the right of executing sentence of death for crime. This should literally come to pass. Accordingly He was handed over to Pilate and the soldiers (Matt. 27. 2, 27, 30).—¶ *To mock*—with insulting looks and words.—¶ *Scourge*—or whip, with lashes made for the purpose of whipping criminals.—¶ *Crucify*. This was the severe extremity to which things should be carried. It was a Roman punishment, not Jewish.—¶ *And the third day*. There was nevertheless this consolation, that He should after all triumph and rise again. (See Mark and Luke, Harmony.)

§ 108. JAMES AND JOHN PREFER THEIR AMBITIOUS REQUEST.—*Perce.*

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
20.20-28	10.35-45		

From Luke 19. 11, it is plain that they expected the kingdom would immediately appear. He had hinted of what was to take place soon at Jerusalem, and He was drawing toward it.

20. *The mother of Zebedee's children*. The father of James and John was now in all probability dead. Hence Salome is called by this striking title, which indicates that she was now a widow.—¶ *With her sons*. She joined in the request, and would seem to have prompted it, as *they* are a 'dress-  
ed in reply

21 And he said unto her, What wilt thou? She saith unto him, Grant that these my two sons may sit, the one on thy right hand, and the other on the left, in thy kingdom.

22 But Jesus answered and said, Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the<sup>r</sup> baptism that I am baptized with? They

r Lu.12.50.

21. *Grant that these*. Mark has it that James and John made the request. Doubtless they did it in connexion with their mother, and chiefly through her. Having learned from the parable of the labourers that the reward is not of debt, but of grace, they come with the petition, "*Grant.*" "We would that thou shouldst do for us whatsoever we shall desire" (Mark 10. 35); and this paragraph closes with the same sentiment of the parable, farther enjoined (vss. 26 and 27); "Whosoever shall be great among you," &c.—¶ *Thy kingdom*. They were expecting an earthly kingdom, and they wished its honours and comforts, especially the elevation and ease of a seat beside Himself—*right and left hand stations*—the two places of greatest dignity and power. (See 1 Kings 2. 19.)

22. *The cup*. In the arrangement of feasts, in ancient times at the East, the *cup* and *dish* with their portion, expressed the personal esteem of the Master of the feast, for the guest. This term, in scripture, is used to denote a portion, especially of sorrow. So Christ speaks of *the cup* which His Father gave Him to drink (John 18. 11), and the cup at the sacramental feast, represented His suffering unto death, while it was the sign of covenant blessings to be partaken by the disciples: "Drink ye all of it, this cup is the new testament in my blood." By the cup that he should drink of, He means here the measure

say unto him, We are able.

23 And he saith unto them, Ye shall drink indeed of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with; but to sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give, but, *it shall be given to them* for whom it is prepared of my Father,

24 And when the ten heard it, they were moved with indignation against the two brethren.

25 But Jesus called them unto

s Ac.12.2. Ro.8.17. 2Cor.1.7. Re.1.9.

of His agonies, in the garden, and on the cross for sinners. (See Isa 51. 17, 22. Psalm 75. 8; 16. 5; 23. 5.) So the *baptism* under another figure, expresses the same idea. Baptism represents the *outpouring* of Divine influence upon the soul. But *this baptism* was one of suffering, and tears, and blood. The cup and baptism which they understood Him to mean, was that of an outward profession and adherence to Him, as baptism was the open profession of faith.

23. *Ye shall drink.* Our Lord here assures them, that it shall be indeed as they so promptly agree to, and beyond what they yet conceive. James was slain by Herod (Acts 1. 2), and John was banished to Patmos, a sufferer for Christ (Rev. 1. 9).

—¶ *Not mine to give, but.* Observe that the words in italics have no authority, and should be left out, because they mar the sense. These rewards (He would say) are not mine to give *except* for whom it is prepared of my Father. They should have their measure of suffering, and the reward should come to them according to Infinite equity and love. These were not matters of favouritism, but of Divine grace, and of eternal counsel. The Greek word *αλλα*, "*but*," is here used "*except*," as in Mark, 9. 8.

24. *When the ten.* The other ten

him, and said, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them.

26 But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister;

27 And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant:

28 Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto,

l Lu.22.25,26. u 1Pe.5.3. v c.23.11. Mar.9.35; 10.43.

apostles, when they heard it—that is, this ambitious request of the two brethren for a superiority, which would disparage themselves—were indignant.

25-27. *But Jesus called them.* Here our Lord took occasion to lay down the true principle on the whole subject, to show what were the true honours of His kingdom, &c. That it was unlike earthly courts, where the princes of the nations (Gentiles) are set over the subjects, and (great) men of noble rank exercise authority. Not so in His kingdom (vs. 26). The rule of pre-eminence which He would prescribe is the very opposite of earthly courts. The true greatness in His kingdom, is to *serve* or *minister*.

28. *Even as.* They had Christ's own example for this. He took the form of a servant, though He was the greatest of beings, God over all. Phil. 2. 7. This was His very object, to serve men.—¶ *And to give His life a ransom for many.* This was the most striking evidence of His coming to serve men—rather than to be served by them—that His object was to give His own life in the stead of others. The language is altogether the strongest possible. "*A ransom*" was the price of redemption which should actually buy back out of evil hands. For, in the Greek, is (*αρι*) *anti*—over

but <sup>w</sup> to minister, and <sup>s</sup> to give his life a ransom for many.

29 And as they departed from Jericho, a great multitude followed him.

30 ¶ And <sup>r</sup> behold, two blind men, sitting by the way-side, when they heard that Jesus passed by, cried out, saying,

10 Lu. 22.27. Jno.13.4,14. Ph. 2.7. x Is.53.5,8,11. Da.9.24,26. 1Tim.2.6. Tit.2.14. He.9.28. 1Pe.1.18,19. Re.1.5. y e.9.27. Mar.10.46. Lu.18.35.

*against, instead of.* Besides, the sense of a ransom is a price paid for the redemption of a captive. That price was His own life. He died *in the stead of "many,"* that is, of multitudes.

OBSERVE, (1.) Ambition, in the church, mistakes the nature of Christ's kingdom, and overlooks the spirituality of His service. (2.) Ambitious sons, even in the church, have often been put forward by ambitious mothers. Maternal training makes a sad mistake, when it seeks earthly preferment and station for children, rather than the solid graces of the Christian life. (3.) Christ's example in giving Himself, should always plead with a Christian for humility and self-sacrifice in the church and in the world. (4.) Christ declares His sacrifice to be *vicarious*. This makes it purely and only *gracious*. If it is in the *room and stead* of the sinner, it must be altogether of grace.

#### § 109. THE HEALING OF TWO BLIND MEN NEAR JERICHO.

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
20.29-34	10.46-52	18.35-43 19. 1	

29. As they departed—or "went out of Jericho," as Mark has it, in the same Greek words, though Mark had also just before said, "and they came to Jericho." We suppose that as Jericho was a prominent city, which He had not visited before. He took up a temporary abode there,

Have mercy on us, O Lord, *thou* Son of David!

31 And the multitude rebuked them, because they should hold their peace: but they cried the more, saying, Have mercy on us, O Lord, *thou* Son of David!

32 And Jesus stood still, and called them, and said, What will ye that I shall do unto you?

33 They say unto him, Lord, that our eyes may be opened.

choosing to *go out* of the city occasionally for His work and labour of love, among the crowds that were already making their way toward Jerusalem for the feast. "He went out with His disciples, and a great number of people"—Mark—and on His return, "as He was come nigh unto Jericho" (that is, on the road, *near the city*), Luke 18. 35, He restored the blind men to sight. It would seem that *after this miracle*, He entered and passed through Jericho (Luke 19. 1), passing on toward Jerusalem; or Luke's account may include in one brief sentence, the approach, and stay, and departure. Jericho was a city next in importance to Jerusalem, about 20 miles east, and a little north of it.

30. *Two blind men.* Mark and Luke mention but one—the more noted Bartimeus (chap. 10. 46)—just as Matthew soon speaks of the ass and colt, and Mark of the colt only. So Luke speaks of two angels who appeared, Matthew and Mark of one only, who spake. So of the two possessed among the tombs, there was one specially mentioned as the more noted.—¶ *Hard.* Luke says, "hearing the multitude pass by, he asked what it meant." Being informed that it was Christ, and having doubtless heard His fame, and seeming, too, to know of the scripture concerning Him, this blind man called to Him, recognizing Him as the son of David, which was the common title for the Messiah.—¶ *Cried out.* Being r<sup>e</sup>

34 So Jesus had compassion on them, and touched their eyes; and immediately their eyes received sight, and they followed him.

buked by the crowd, for what seemed an unmannerly clamour, they cried out the more. Jesus at length, after putting their earnestness to open test, halted and called them—addressed them—asking what they would have Him do to them. This elicited their more definite prayer. It was, that their eyes might be opened.

34. *Touched their eyes.* The multitude had become interested. They had seen the earnestness of the blind men, and had heard them plead for their recovery, and now to show the greatness of the miracle, He cures them by His *touch*. They received sight, and immediately became His followers.

OBSERVE, (1.) It is with the seeking soul, as with these *blind men*—when one cries out after Christ, at first, he finds from the multitude, nothing but hindrances and oppositions. But a true desire only *cries the more*, the more it is so rebuked. (2.) Then it is, that Christ shows Himself most ready to meet the earnest application. Jesus stood still and commanded him to be called (Mark); and then it is, too, that the multitude who first rebuked, are interested, and seem to fall in with the work as a mighty reality. *They call the blind man, saying unto him, "Be of good comfort—rise, He calleth thee."* (3.) Jesus is always arrested by the cry of need—nay, He

CHAPTER XXI.

AND<sup>a</sup> when they drew nigh unto Jerusalem, and were come to Bethphage, unto the

a Mar.11.1. Lu.19.29.

not only stands still, but *calls them* (vs. 32), not only waits on their request, but beckons them near, and powerfully constrains them. (4.) He whose cry was before a vague call for mercy, now becomes particular in his petition, and states his most definite want. The effect of hearing Christ's call is always to make our prayer more pointed and definite. (5.) The sinner whose eye-sight is restored, uses his new vision in following Christ.

From this narrative of the blind men, we have useful lessons. For such miracles were wrought, not merely to heal these maladies, but in them also to illustrate the great spiritual work of Christ in His cure of souls. We are taught then, that as respects our sinful case by nature we are blind—as respects Christ for a Saviour He is now passing by, and may be applied to, and be sought with success. He is always ready to hear and cure. As respects our present duty we should cry out to Him—own Him as the Messiah, the only Saviour—and beg for salvation from Him alone. And as respects the nature and grounds of the salvation, we should seek it, as bringing us "out of darkness into God's marvellous light;" "opening blind eyes," and all of *mere mercy*; of *grace* and not of *debt*.

§ 110. The visit to Zaccheus. Parable of the ten Minæ.— <i>Jericho</i> .	Matt. . . . .	Mark. . . . .	Luke. 19. 2-28	John.
§ 111. Jesus arrives at Bethany six days before the Passover.— <i>Bethany</i> .	. . . . .	. . . . .	. . . . .	11. 55-57 12. 1, 9-11

This (§ 111) brings us to the LAST WEEK of our Lord's history prior to the crucifixion. "Six days before the Passover" (John 12. 1)—which, by the Jewish reckoning, is "*the sixth day*

before the Passover"—He arrived at Bethany. It was the Jewish sabbath, our Saturday. See Appendix, 314.



Mount of Olives, then sent Jesus two disciples,

2 Saying unto them, Go into the village over against you, and straightway ye shall find an ass tied, and a colt with her: loose them, and bring them unto me.

3 And if any man say aught unto you, ye shall say, The Lord hath need of them; and straightway he will send them.

4 All this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet,<sup>b</sup> saying,

<sup>b</sup> Zec. 9. 9.

## PART VII.

### *Our Lord's Public Entry into Jerusalem, and the subsequent transactions before the fourth Passover.*

Time—Five days.

	Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
§§ 112, 113, and 114. OUR LORD'S PUBLIC ENTRY INTO JERUSALEM. . . .	21. 1-11	11. 1-11	19. 29-44	12. 12-19
FIRST day of the week.	14-17			
THE BARREN FIG-TREE. CLEANSING OF THE TEMPLE.—SECOND day of the week. Bethany. Jerusalem.	12, 13 18, 19	11. 12-19	19. 45-48 21. 37, 38	
THE BARREN FIG-TREE WITHERS AWAY.—THIRD day. Between Bethany and Jerusalem.	20-22	11. 20-26		

### CHAPTER XXI.

These verses (1-6) introduce us to the week in which Christ suffered the death of the cross.

1. *They drew nigh to Bethphage.* This village on the road from Jericho, lay very near Jerusalem to the East, separated from the city chiefly by the Mount of Olives. Luke says, "nigh to Bethphage and Bethany." Mark has it, "nigh to Jerusalem. unto Bethphage and Bethany." These villages were near to each other, and Bethphage was reached first. So that "the village over against them," from Bethphage was Bethany, where Lazarus and his two sisters dwelt. See John 12. Bethphage means "the house of figs." (Comp. Sol. Song 2. 13.) No trace of it now exists.

2. *The village over against you—viz. Bethany,* which place lay beyond them toward Jerusalem, a little above Bethphage to the west.—¶ *Ye shall find an ass tied.* The princes of the Jews were forbidden to multiply horses to themselves. Deut. 17. 16, and 20. 1. This law was imposed as

a standing law of distinction between them and other nations, to show their confidence as being not in horses but in God. (To ride on an ass, was also an emblem of peace—as opposite to the warlike aspect of riding on a horse.) David rode on a mule, and Solomon also on the day of his coronation. 1 Kings 1. 33, 34. 2 Sam. 18. 9. Subsequently this command was violated by the kings of Israel and Judah. The Messiah was predicted as coming on an ass, bringing deliverance, and salvation, and peace, and coming in the strength of the Lord. Zech. 9. 9. Judges rode on asses, and it was a mark of dignity. 1 Sam. 25. 20. Judges 10. 4; 12. 14. See Note in Greenleaf on the Evangelists. Mark and Luke speak only of the colt, for on this Christ rode, as it had never been rode before. Such were used for sacred purposes.

3. *The Lord hath need of him.* God has power over all things. He has a right to every thing, and He can so control men's hearts as to make them willing to obey Him.

5 Tell ye the daughter of Sion,  
Behold, thy king cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass.

6 And the disciples went, and did as Jesus commanded them.

7 And brought the ass, and the colt, and put on them their

c. Is. 62. 11. Mar. 11. 4, &c. Jno. 12. 15.

4, 5. *Spoken by the prophet.* Zech. 9. 9. Here Matthew again, writing for the Jews, points out the fulfilment of their prophecies. This passage was uniformly understood by the Jews, as applying to the Messiah: though they would not acknowledge Christ — ¶ *Daughter of Sion.*—Among the Jews, in their figurative mode of speech, the towns were often represented under the figure of a woman—and the population of any place was called the daughter of that place. (Isa. 37. 22. Ps. 45. 13; 137. 8. Isa. 10. 30. Jer. 46. 19. Lam. 4. 22.) Here then is meant the people of Sion, or the inhabitants of Jerusalem. — ¶ *Thy King.* Christ claimed to be the *King of the Jews* (Matt. 27. 11). — ¶ *Meek.* Not warlike—nor revengeful—but bringing peace and salvation. He came in the way of the ancient kings, who rode in the strength of God, like David. — ¶ *Sitting upon an ass, even (and) a colt, &c.* This is the force of the conjunction *and* here, as elsewhere often in the New Testament.

6, 7. *And put on them their clothes.* This was the custom of the people, as an acknowledgment of an appointed king. So when Jehu was anointed king by Elisha the prophet (2 Kings 9. 13), every man took his garment and spread it under him on the top of the steps and blew the trumpet, saying, *Jehu is king.*—¶ *Thereon;* literally, upon them, that is, properly, on one of them, as we say, “*He sprang from the horses.*”—Winer’s Idioms. Or it may refer to the garments. Mark tells us that He rode upon the colt (11. 7).

8. *A very great multitude.* This was the crowd, that was going to

clothes, and they set *him* thereon.

8 And a very great multitude spread their garments in the way; others cut down branches from the trees, and strewed them in the way.

9 And the multitudes that went before, and that followed, cried, saying, Hosanna to the Son of

the Passover, and many who came out of the city to see Him, and to see Lazarus whom He had raised from the dead. See John 12. 9.—¶ *Branches from the trees.* Besides the outer garments or mantles, which were thrown on the animal, and in the road, branches of trees were strewed all along the way. These were *palm branches*, which were symbols of joy (John 12. 13), and this was a mark of welcome and gladness often paid to Kings of the East on triumphal occasions.

9. *Cried—shouted.*—¶ *Hosanna to the son of David.* Hosanna is taken from two Hebrew words, meaning “*save now.*” It was an acclamation specially used at the *Feast of Tabernacles*, when the palm branches were used also. This feast was mainly symbolical of Christ’s advent to “*tabernacle with men;*” and this feast was called “*Hosanna,*” as they sung Ps. 118. 25, 26, which prominently introduces this word. So it was well understood by the people. This was an ascription to Christ as the appointed Saviour, and as the son of David—for under this last title, they knew and spoke of the Messiah. So the next clause further imports; “*Blessed be, &c.*” This was part of the Paschal Hymn, which in a few days they were about to recite. The words were used when the priests offered the victims. This refers also to the verses of the Psalm from which they sang at the feast of Tabernacles, Ps. 118. 26. To “*come in the name of*” or by *the authority of,* is expressed by Mark as “*the kingdom of our Father David that cometh*

David! Blessed <sup>d</sup> is he that cometh in the name of the

<sup>d</sup> Ps. 118. 26 c. 23. 39.

in the name of the Lord." They recognized Him as the Messiah, of David's line, whose kingdom was to come of Divine authority.—¶ *Hosanna in the highest.* Luke has it, "Peace in heaven, and *glory in the highest.*" See also Luke 19. 38. Glory and salvation be ascribed to Him in the highest heavens. It was at this time, descending the Mount of Olives to Jerusalem, that He uttered His lamentation over the city. Luke 19. 41, 42. This actual entry into Jerusalem, was on the *first day of the week.* This was the *tenth* day of Nisan (or Abib, the first month), and on this day the PASCHAL LAMB WAS TO BE SELECTED. Exod. 12. 3. For the better understanding of the whole history, here, we insert Dr. Robinson's harmony and schedule of the days. The Jewish day, of twenty-

Lord; Hosanna in the highest! 10 And when he was come

<sup>e</sup> Lu. 2. 14.

four hours, was reckoned from sunset to sunset, as is still the case in oriental countries. The Paschal Lamb was killed on the fourteenth day of Nisan, toward sunset; and was eaten the same evening, after the fifteenth day of Nisan had begun. Exod. 12. 6, 8. Our Lord was crucified on the day before the Jewish sabbath, that is, on Friday, Mark 15. 42; and as he had eaten the Passover on the preceding evening, it follows that the fourteenth of Nisan fell that year on Thursday, reckoning from the preceding sunset. Hence, the sixth day before the Passover, or as John reads, "Six days before the Passover" (John 12. 1), when Jesus came to Bethany, was the Jewish Sabbath, or Saturday—and the transactions of the following week are to be understood thus:

See Appendix, p. 314.

Day of Nisan. Day of the week.

- 9.....7. SAT.....*Reckoned from preceding sunset.* The Jewish Sabbath. Jesus arrives at Bethany. (John 12. 1.)
- 10.....1. SUND...*From preceding sunset.* Jesus makes his public entry into Jerusalem (§ 112), and returns at night to Bethany. (Mark 11. 11.) On this day the paschal lamb was to be selected. (Exod. 12. 3.)
- 11.....2. MOND...Jesus goes to Jerusalem. On His way the incident of the barren fig-tree occurs. He cleanses the temple (§ 113), and again returns to Bethany. (Mark 11. 19.)
- 12.....3. TUES...*From preceding sunset.* Jesus returns to the city. On the way the disciples see the fig-tree withered. (Mark 11. 20.) Our Lord discourses in the temple (§§ 115-126)—takes leave of it—and when on the Mount of Olives, on His way to Bethany, foretells His coming to destroy the city, and proceeds to speak also of His final coming to judgment (§§ 127-130).
- 13.....4 WEDN...The rulers conspire against Christ on the eve of this day (*i. e.*, the evening following Tuesday). Our Lord had partaken of the supper at Bethany, where Mary anointed Him, and where Judas laid his plan of treachery, which he made known to the chief priests in the course of this day. Jesus remained this day at Bethany.
- 14.....5. THURS. Jesus sends two disciples to the city to make ready the Passover. He Himself repairs thither in the afternoon, in order to eat the paschal supper at evening

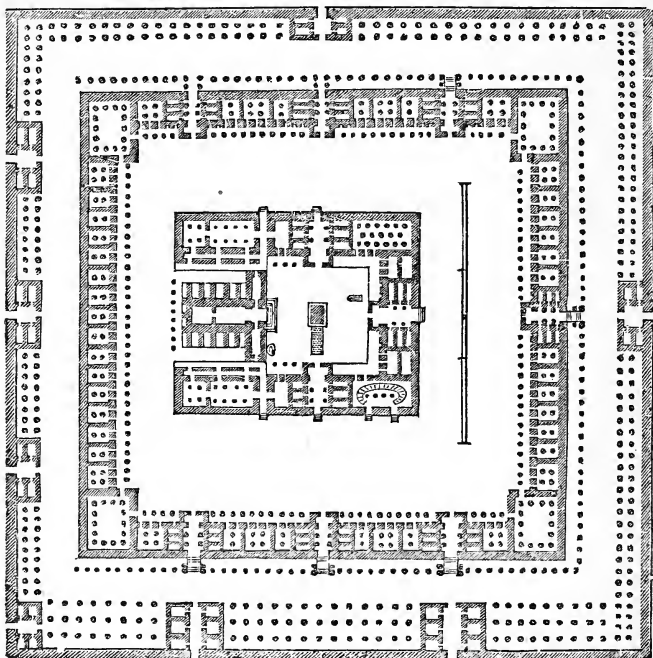
- 15..... 6. FRI ... At evening, in the very beginning of the fifteenth of Nisan, Jesus partakes of the paschal supper—is betrayed and apprehended (§§ 133-143). He is brought first before Caiaphas, and then, in the morning, before Pilate—is condemned, crucified and before sunset laid in the sepulchre (§§ 144-158).
- 16..... 7. SAT..... The Jewish Sabbath. Our Lord rests in the sepulchre.
- 17..... 1. SUND.... Jesus RISES from the dead, at early dawn. (§ 159.)

10. This wonderful sensation among such multitudes, created great excitement in the city, and led to an inquiry after the cause of it all. *Who is this?*—† *Was moved.* Was in commotion.

11. This description of Him by the multitude merely alludes to His fame, taking for granted that He had been heard of. "Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem? (Luke 24. 18.)—† *Prophet of Nazareth.* This was a common appellation. "He shall be called a Nazarene" (Matt. 2. 23).

12. *Jesus went into the temple of God.*

This, as we infer from Mark, was the *next day after* His reaching Jerusalem, having gone out to lodge at Bethany for the intervening night, and having cursed the fig-tree on His return to Jerusalem in the morning. At the first entrance into the temple Marks speaks only of His "looking round about upon all things." His first *work* there, was to clear out the temple, as Matthew relates. (See Mark 11. 12-15.) He may have taken a first step towards this on the preceding day.



into Jerusalem, all the city was moved, saying, Who is this?

11 And the multitude said,

**THE TEMPLE OF GOD.** In Malachi 3. 1, it was prophesied, "The Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come to His TEMPLE." This was the sacred structure at Jerusalem, set apart for the service of God, and recognized as His House. The temple of Solomon, or the first temple, was built about 1000 years before Christ, on Mount Moriah. It is described in 1 Kings chs. 6. and 7., and 2 Chron. 3. and 4. This costly and magnificent edifice was destroyed by the Chaldeans, 584 years before Christ (2 Chron. 36. 6, 7).

**THE SECOND TEMPLE.** This structure, rebuilt by Zerubbabel, 70 years afterwards, at the close of the Babylonish captivity, was called the Second Temple. It was on the same site. The old men who had seen the first temple, were moved to tears on beholding this, which seemed so inferior (Ezra 3. 12. Haggai 2. 3); yet not really so much in dimensions, as in glory—not having the ark of the covenant, which had been burnt with the temple of Solomon. This building was desolated and profaned during the wars from B. C. 175, and was stormed by Herod, with the Roman troops, B. C. 37. This **HEROD THE GREAT**, being anxious to ingratiate himself with the Church and State party, undertook to repair and renew the temple. He commenced it in the eighteenth year of his reign, about twenty or twenty-one years before the Christian era. Priests and Levites finished the temple itself in a year and a half. The outbuildings and courts required eight years. However, building operations were long afterward in progress, under his successors, and it is in reference to these that the Jews said to Jesus, "Forty and six years was this temple in building." A Mohammedan mosque (of Omar) now occupies this site. (See plate of modern Jerusalem.)

All the premises occupied half a

This is Jesus, the prophet of Nazareth of Galilee.

12 ¶ And Jesus went into the

f Mar. 11. 11. Lu. 19. 45, &c. Jno. 2. 15 &c.

Roman mile in circumference. This temple hill was terraced by means of massive walls thrown up; and the ground for the courts was made and laid out by this artificial means, each rising above the other, reached by a staircase, and the temple at the top, showing in all its splendour from every point of view.

**COURTS.** The outermost enclosure walled in, nearly square, was called the Court of the Gentiles, and also "the Mountain of the House." None but Jews could go beyond this court. On its east side was the Beautiful Gate (Acts 3. 2 and 19). Around the outer wall were halls, or covered porches, for the Levites' residence, and a synagogue, in which the Talmudic doctors might be asked questions (Luke 2. 46). Here Jesus had various opportunities for addressing the people and refuting cavillers. Here also the first Christians could assemble daily, with one accord (Acts 2. 46). One of these porches, called Solomon's (Acts 3. 11), was noted. It probably stood near that celebrated part of the outer wall, where the immense stones (some of them 45 cubits long, six wide and five high) are thought to have remained since Solomon's time. They form the base of that part of the wall whose eastern angle rests on the rocky precipice of Jehoshaphat. From the pinnacle or summit of the building that surmounts this point, our Lord was dared by the tempter to cast Himself down, a height of seven hundred feet in all, to the ravine below. Within this Court of the Gentiles were the tables of the money-changers, and the seats of them that sold doves, &c., for sacrifice, which our Lord cast out—cleansing the temple premises of these traffickers.

The Court of the Women was the next enclosure, reached by a staircase from the Court of the Gentiles. This

temple of God, and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the money-changers,

and the seats of them that sold doves ;

13 And said unto them, It is so written, My house shall be called

*g* Is. 56.7.

was not devoted to the women, but they might advance thus far, with others, yet no further, save when they brought a sacrifice. Lest the Gentiles should advance so far, there was a stone balustrade, some ten hands high, erected on a terrace ; and still within this, were columns, having Greek and Latin inscriptions, warning off all heathens under penalty of death to enter farther (Eph. 2. 13, 14). Compare Acts 21. 28, where Paul is accused of having brought Greeks into the temple. In this court was the ordinary worship of the Jews (Luke 18. 10-14. Acts 21. 26-30). Here was the *treasury*, consisting of small chests along the wall (Mark 12. 41), where the gifts of worshippers were cast for the temple service. It contained the sums annually paid in by the Israelites (half a shekel each), besides donations, great and small, of rich men and poor widows.

Beyond this court, and on a still higher level, was the *Court of Israel*—i. e., of the *males*—whither all the men might come up, except such as were ceremonially unclean, &c. Our Saviour, being of the tribe of Judah, entered no farther than any common Israelite. *Within* this space, as a kind of inner half of the court, and surrounded by a stone balustrade, was the *Court of the Priests*, where they performed the daily temple service. Here was the altar of burnt offering and the brazen laver. This court directly surrounded the *Sanctuary*, or *temple proper*, which stood on still higher ground, and was reached by a staircase of twelve steps. A stately porch rose in front of the temple, at the highest point, to 180 feet. Within were two grand apartments—the *Holy Place*, with the altar of incense, golden candlestick, and table of show-bread, and the *Most Holy Place*, or *Holy of*

*Holies*, separated from it by a rich *veil*, or curtain (Matt. 27. 51).

This immense and costly structure was the pride and glory of the Jew. Built of white marble, and overlaid with silver and gold, it was an object of dazzling splendour. Yet it was utterly destroyed in the siege of Titus (Sept. 7, A. D. 70), as our Lord foretold (ch. 24. 2). The apostate emperor Julian undertook (A. D. 363) to rebuild it, defying the Divine purpose ; but after much preparation and expense, he was compelled to desist by flames, which burst forth from the foundations, as historians abundantly testify.

12. *Drove out them that sold and bought.* Such an expelling of traders is recorded in John, 2d chapter. It was symbolical of his work in purifying the covenant people. This was done in the outer court (of the Gentiles), the least sacred. Animals for sacrifice were sold here, and all that was necessary for the worshippers, many of whom being strangers in the city, would find this an accommodation. There were *stands*, or "seats" of *them that sold doves*. But this business was afterward a mere matter of gain and exaction. The buying and selling became a sad profanation of the sacred place. The house of God should not be devoted to secular purposes.—¶ *Tables of the money-changers.* As the worshippers came up from all quarters—and especially as in Judea, now a Roman province, the money in use was a Roman currency, it needed to be exchanged for the Jewish coin which they were required to present for the sanctuary service. This made a business for Jewish brokers. It was often quite extensive, and was made a source of gain. The term here for *money-changers* is from a small coin, "*change*." These brokers sat in the outer court.—

the house of prayer: but ye have made it a den of<sup>h</sup> thieves.

14 And the blind and the lame came to him in the temple; and he healed them.

15 And when the chief priests and scribes saw the wonderful things that he did, and the children crying in the temple, and saying, Hosanna to the Son of David! they were sore displeas-

<sup>h</sup> Jer. 7. 11. <sup>i</sup> Is. 35. 6. <sup>j</sup> ver. 9.

¶ *Sold doves*—which were used for sacrifices (Levit. 12. 6-8).

13. *It is written* (Isa. 56. 7), Christ charges them with having made His house a den of thieves, or plunderers (see Jer. 7. 11), though, in this prophecy, it was declared and destined to be a house of prayer! These traders in religious things probably cheated the people; and this added to the profanation. The scribes and chief priests now sought to kill Him, because He was destroying their gains (as the apostles at the temple of Diana, Acts 19. 25-28), and drawing the world after Him. "If the multitude should hold their peace, the stones would cry out." They confessed that they *could prevail nothing*, and that the world had gone after Him (Luke 19. 39, 40). They dared not kill Him, for they feared the people; but they were ready to plot for His destruction. (See John 12. 19.)

14. *The blind and lame.* Here it is stated, that in the temple, to which Malachi had prophesied he should come, He did His works of healing mercy. As His purging the temple was symbolical of His work in purifying the covenant people, so this has a symbolical aspect—to teach the great truth of His coming to be a Prince and a Saviour. Besides, He would prove His work by miracles.

15. *The chief priests.* They were jealous of this great popularity which He had—and were annoyed at the ac-

clamations, especially at those of the  
16 And said unto him, Hearst thou what these say? And Jesus saith unto them, Yea: have ye never read, Out<sup>k</sup> of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise?

17 ¶ And he left them, and went out of the city into Bethany: and he lodged there.

18 Now in the morning, as he returned into the city, he hungered.

<sup>k</sup> Ps. 8. 2.

children, for it indicated a most extensive and deep feeling in the community, that the children should fall in with the Hosannas. Hence they would turn this especially to His reproach, that it was children's work.

16. *And Jesus saith.* Our Lord understood all this in a most important light—and herein He found that passage in the psalm fulfilled (Ps. 8. 2), where the Psalmist spoke of God's glorifying Himself in creation, providence, and redemption. So He takes it up, exults in it—(*Yea!*) and refers them to the scripture, which they ought to know, that these are the ways in which God was to perfect praise. (In the Hebrew, thou hast *established*, founded, ordained *strength*.) "For His strength is made perfect in weakness." He has ordained, or appointed, strength from infant praises—contrary to the ways of men. This is a symbol of His gracious plan. Christ honoured infancy by being Himself a little babe. Thus He has "set His glory above the heavens" (Ps. 8. 1); because in the arrangements of grace, He gets a glory greater than from the firmament which He has made.

17. *Into Bethany*—"house of dates"—about 15 furlongs east from Jerusalem, toward Jericho, and reaching along to within 8 furlongs of the city being a sabbath day's journey from it. Luke 24. 50. From John. we learn that the family of Lazarus (with his

19 And when he saw <sup>1</sup> a fig-tree in the way, he came to it, and found nothing thereon, but leaves only, and said unto it, Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward for ever. And presently the fig-tree withered <sup>m</sup> away.

l Mar.11.13. 1 One fig-tree. m Jude 12.

two sisters) was often visited by our Lord. (See John, chap. 12.)

18, 19. As He returned. This was on the *second day* of the week. It occurred in the morning, that is, after He had lodged for the night at Bethany, that on His return to the city, He hungered, and met a barren fig-tree, which He immediately cursed and withered, as a token of His displeasure, that it should offer Him no figs for His hunger. This occurred before His fully cleansing the temple (12, 13). We are to observe in this transaction, and its relation here, a higher object than would appear at first. It was not merely to express His indignation at the barren tree, nor any such exciting disappointment at not finding fruit when He knew it was barren. But He took this occasion of teaching them symbolically certain great truths. That leaves without fruit, or a form of godliness without the power, or a profession without the practice would be accursed. And especially that His barren church of the Jewish people, would soon be stricken and withered on account of its giving Him no fruit now, as He came to Jerusalem. This incident is quite in keeping with all the parables spoken in this connexion. They are all meant to show that He came now to the temple as a King, and in like manner as Malachi had prophesied, to call His covenant people to account, and to sit as a refiner's fire.—¶ *Presently*. This word means *immediately*—but it has obtained in common use a different sense. The term here used, is commonly rendered *immediately* in the New Testament. Sometimes,

20 And when the disciples saw it, they marvelled, saying, How soon is the fig-tree withered away!

21 Jesus answered and said unto them, Verily I say unto you, If <sup>n</sup> ye have faith and doubt not, ye shall not only do this

n c.17.20. Lu.17.6. Ja.1.6.

*straightway* (Acts 5. 10)—*forthwith* (Acts 9. 18), and in the next verse it is the same word, translated *soon*! meaning *how instantly*! Mark mentions that “the time of figs was not yet,” and seems to give it as a reason for His finding nothing. But it may be understood rather as a reason for His disappointment. At that early period of the year, March or April, (says Trench,) neither leaves nor fruit were to have been expected. But this tree had leaves, and it is to be observed that with figs, “the fruit appears before the leaves.” This tree therefore made pretension of being so much more than the rest, that our Lord approached it. It had put forth leaves, though “the time of figs was not yet.” And this symbolized exactly the sin of Israel, in boasting, vain-gloriously. They counted themselves the peculiar people of God, though rejecting Christ; they claimed to be saved without Christ the only Saviour, and to be whole without need of this only physician. They were blamed therefore, less for being *barren* than for being *false*. It is remarkable that it was with the *fig leaves* in the garden, that Adam attempted to cover his nakedness before God. (See Micah 7. 11.)

20. *They marvelled*. It is here noted that the disciples observed the sudden effect of His curse upon the barren tree (see Mark 11. 21). This was on “Tuesday”—the “third day of the week.”

21. *If ye have faith*. The faith here alluded to was connected with the working of miracles, in confirmation of the Christian religion. They wondered at this miracle wrought by



which is done to the fig-tree, but also if ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, ° and be thou cast into the sea, it shall be done.

22 And all things whatsoever ye shall ask <sup>p</sup> in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.

23 ¶ And <sup>q</sup> when he was come into the temple, the chief priests

o c.8.12. p c.7.7. Mar.11.2. Ja.5.16. Jno.3.22; 5.14. q Mar.11.27. Lu.20.1.

Christ. He shows them, that they could even expect to work such wonders and greater, in their official capacity, if they had the faith or miracles, requisite in such case.—¶ *Ye shall say to this mountain.* They were passing over the Mount of Olives.—It was a common saying among the Jews, when they would commend one of their doctors as dexterous in solving difficult questions, that he was a *router up of mountains*. And so our Lord tells the disciples that they should be able to do the most difficult things in confirmation of the Christian religion, if they had this kind of faith peculiar to the time of the Apostles, and belonging to their work.

22. *And all things.* This seems addressed specially to the twelve, and with some reference to their wide prerogative in going forth to establish the religion of Christ. Yet it would seem from the passage in Mark, that it was spoken with a wider reference. And, doubtless, whatever is asked by any true believer, in a genuine exercise of faith, with all its humility and confidence in God, will be granted. Accordingly, in Mark, our Lord is said to have conjoined Christian *forgiveness*, as essential *in order to* obtain this promise. It is not supposable that a Christian in true faith could ask, what, in the substance of the prayer, God would be unwilling to grant—for He is more willing to grant, than we are to ask the true Christian benefits and gifts.

OBSERVE, (1.) In due time, Christ

and the elders of the people came unto him as he was teaching, and said, By <sup>r</sup> what authority doest thou these things? and who gave thee this authority?

24 And Jesus answered and said unto them, I also will ask you one thing, which if ye tell me, I in likewise will tell you by what authority I do these things.

r Ex.2.14.

asserts His Kingly authority and office, whether men will hear or forbear. So He will come at last, as King of Kings, before friends and foes. (2.) Christ's triumphal entry is joined in by multitudes. So shall it be at last—"a very great multitude" (vs. 8). (3.) Christ comes to His temple and asserts His authority over it. He is Head of the Church, and he will yet purge it from all defilements (vss. 12, 13). (4.) In wrath He remembers mercy. Grace reigns with justice. He heals the blind and lame there. Sinners in the sanctuary can now be healed by Him (vs. 14). (5.) Children should join in Christ's praise, and should be trained with a view to their early uniting with God's people. Nothing more delights Christ, or offends the wicked, than youthful piety. Christ not only allows this, but plans for it. He will perpetuate His church by a godly seed. These children in the temple shouting Hosanna, should encourage sabbath-school instruction and domestic religion. (6.) Proud pretenders, like the barren fig-tree, Christ will curse.

§ 115. CHRIST'S AUTHORITY QUESTIONED. PARABLE OF THE TWO SONS.—(THIRD day of the week.) Jerusalem.

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
21. 23-32	11. 27-33	20. 1-8	

23. *When He was come into the temple.* "As He was teaching." Mark has it, "as he was walking in the temple"—Luke, "as He taught the

25 The baptism of John, whence was it? from heaven, or of men? And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; he will say unto us, Why did ye not then believe him?

26 But if we shall say, Of men: we fear the people; for \*all hold John as a prophet.

8 c.14.5.

people in the temple, and preached the gospel." He came now into the court of the Israelites, next within that of the Gentiles.—¶ *By what authority.* He had taken such bold measures, that we cannot wonder at this question of those who were in authority, and did not own His claims.

25. *The baptism of John.* That is the religion of which the baptism was a profession. He answers their question by proposing another, which involved the answer to His own. There was a close connexion between John's work and His. If they recognized John's baptism (or ministerial work) to be from heaven, and Divinely authorized, then they must own Him whom John preached, and His work which John introduced. But if they did not own John's work, they would not believe in Him. Every way this reply was calculated to silence them. They could not say it was of God, for this would convict themselves for rejecting Christ. They dared not say it was of men, for the people would rebel at this—as they held, or considered John to be a prophet. They so conceived the question. Hence they made no answer, except to own themselves *shut up*.

27. He refused to answer their question directly, because it would have done them no good. Had they been honest inquirers, His reply would have directed them to the true solution.—¶ *We cannot tell.* Literally, "We do not know."—¶ *Neither.* If they knew not this

27 And they answered Jesus, and said, We cannot tell. And he said unto them, Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things.

¶ 28 But what think ye? A certain man had two sons: and he came to the first, and said, Son, go work to-day in my vineyard.

† Lu.15.11,&c.

preliminary point, they could not fairly require to know further.

28. *But what think ye?* Our Lord in the temple, now, having met their malicious question, turns upon the chief priests and elders, and becomes Himself the assailing party, and commences that series of JUDICIAL PARABLES, which set before them as in a glass, their obdurate case. Remembering Malachi's prophecy, we find 'the Lord,' whom the rebellious Jews sought in their murmurings, "suddenly come to His temple." "But who may abide the day of His coming." He here states to them their own wicked case, under a parable, and draws from them an opinion which convicted themselves. The point of the parable is given in vs. 31, last clause, and vs. 32. It does not primarily refer to Jew and Genti'e, but to the two classes among the Jews—Pharisees and Publicans.—¶ *My vineyard.* My field for raising grapes—as we would say, my farm—grapes being in Judea a chief article of cultivation. The church is often set forth under this figure in scripture. To work in the Lord's vineyard, means to perform Christian duty in His church.

29. The *first* son represented the publicans, and notoriously wicked people—such as made no promises and received religious things with contempt. These afterward *repented*—altered their mind—changed their course—and did what was demanded, so that the result was their obedience. It was wrong to re-

29 He answered and said, I will not; but afterward <sup>u</sup> he repented and went.

30 And he came to the second, and said likewise. And he answered and said, I go, sir; and went not.

31 Whether of them twain did the will of *his* father? They

<sup>u</sup> 2Ch.33.12,13. 1Cor.6.11. Ep.2.1-13.

fuse at first. It was right to be candid and honest; and not promise and profess *with no intention* to perform. And especially it was right to repent of a wrong course, and promptly to turn from the evil ways and do well. The wicked, who have had no religious education, and have never been baptized—without Christian parents or advantages—who after all that is unpromising in their case and character, do repent and obey the Master, are like the first son. There were many such in the time of Christ.—¶ *I will not.* The representative of open, reckless sinners—who flatly refuse God's claims, and calls.

30. *Said likewise.* That is, He commanded the *second* son, as he had done the first. He replied favourably.—¶ *I go, sir.* That is, *I will go and do as you require.* By such, our Lord meant these Pharisees, who claimed to be the special people of God (see Par. Luke 18.11), and who professed to be "the church of God." They made fair promises—large pretensions—and had all the externals of an abundant piety—the form, and show, and noise. But they did not obey, after all. They said and did not. They had the form of godliness, but denied the power thereof. False professors now are like them. Those who boast aloud, and do little or nothing for the cause of Christ, and the spread of true Christianity, are like them—formalists, bigots, hypocrites. But this does not disparage an honest profession—nos excuse any who do

say unto him, The first. Jesus saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, that the publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you.

32 For John came unto you in the way of righteousness, and ye believed him not; but the publicans <sup>v</sup> and the harlots <sup>w</sup> be

<sup>v</sup> Lu.3.12. <sup>w</sup> Lu.7.37, &c.

not profess. Some decline to profess religion, as though they avoided the obligations thus. But will they class with publicans and harlots?

31. *Which of them twain*,—that is, *which of the two sons.* The will of His father, was the order given to *work in the vineyard*—like God's command to every man, to obey and serve Him in His church on earth. The first son, as they confessed, was the obedient one—for though he declined at first, he went at last. He was better than he promised. The other was not so good as he promised. Those who are full of fair promises and professions, but do nothing, are often outdone by the most unpromising characters, who become true Christians before them. So Christ declared to the Jews that the publicans and harlots, that is, the notoriously wicked—those who, as a class, had the poorest repute, and were most unlikely to follow Christ—go into the kingdom of God, or become Christians before them. This does not disparage morality, or make it worse than impiety. But there is no such fault as counting we have no fault, and fortifying ourselves against Christ.

32. *For John came.* Christ thus explains His remark. It had been proved true in their recent history. For *John*—that is, John the Baptist—came unto them (from God) *in the way of righteousness* (in the right way strict in the law, and pointing out the way of righteousness), and like the second son, though they professed to serve God more than any other people, and were full of fairest professions toward God, yet they believed

lieved him: and ye, when ye had seen *it*, repented not <sup>x</sup> afterward, that ye might believe him.

33 ¶ Hear another parable: There was a certain household-

x Re.2.21.

not (Matt. 15. 8). They *said*, and *did not* (Matt. 23. 3). But the publicans and harlots, who had taken no such prominence in religious things, but had been openly profane, believed John—and these were like the first son; and though their case had been most unpromising, yet they went into the service of Christ before the Pharisees—and what is worse, they, *when they had seen this*, did not even yet repent, were not yet provoked to jealousy, and did not enter into Christ's kingdom at all.

OBSERVE, (1.) While some think it an advantage not to have professed religion, it is not the *refusing*, but the *after repenting of that refusal*, which is here commended; while it is still shown that an insincere profession may be the most abhorrent and vile before God. Professing, with no intent to serve God, is indeed odious—but the true course is to say, "I go, sir; so help me God." (2.) To obey, *without* promising or professing, is now impossible; since we are COMMANDED TO PROFESS: "*This do.*" "With the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Rom. 10. 10). (3.) Morality is not worse than immorality. But it may be more hopeless, if it proudly and studiously tortifies itself against Christ; not only *neglecting*, but positively *rejecting* His salvation.

¶ 116. PARABLE OF THE WICKED HUSBANDMEN.—THIRD day of the week. Jerusalem.

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
21 33-46	12. 1-12	20.9-19	

33. Hear another parable. Our Lord now presses them still more closely, and signifies their ultimate rejection as a nation. Mark says,

er, which <sup>y</sup> planted a vineyard, and hedged it round about, and digged a wine-press in it, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country:

y Ps.80.8-16. Ca.8.11,12. Is.5.1-7. Je.2.21. Mar.12. 1. Lu.20.9,&c.

"He began to speak unto them by parables." He would not let them go.—¶ *A vineyard*. These several steps in laying out a vineyard, and fitting it for cultivation and production of grapes, so common in Judea, are here used to represent God's attention to His covenant people. This image runs through the whole Old Testament. The vine-stock often appears on the Maccabean coins as the emblem of Palestine. (See Deut. 32. 32. Psa. 80. 8. Isa. 5. 1. Ezek. 15. 2.)—¶ *Hedged it round*—that is, fenced it, most likely, with a hedge stout and thorny. A stone fence was also used, which makes a most secure enclosure.—¶ *Digged a wine-press in it*. Mark says, "digged a place for the wine-fat." Both are referred to, in either case—they were connected. There was a *wine-press*, in which the grapes were trodden by men, to press out the juice; and under this was the *vat*, or reservoir, into which the juice ran, through a close grating—¶ *And built a tower*. This was a tall observatory, on the premises, for watching the grounds. It served also as a lodge for the keepers.—¶ *Let it out*—hired it, so that the owner was to get a share of the products. The husbandmen were to raise grapes, and make the most profit from the vineyard. This household, or head of a family, represents God, who chose the Jews as His house and people, "to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises" (Rom. 9. 4). The *vineyard*, then, is this *covenant relation and privilege*, given to be cultivated—"the good olive stalk and root" (Rom 11. 24). The Gentiles, in these

34 And when the time of the fruit drew near, he sent his servants <sup>a</sup> to the husbandmen, that they might receive the fruits of it.

35 And <sup>a</sup> the husbandmen took his servants, and beat one, and killed another, and stoned another.

36 Again, he sent other ser-

<sup>z</sup> 2K.17.13.&c. <sup>a</sup> 2Ch.36.16. Ne.9.26. Je.26.3-7. e.5.12; 23.34-37. Ac.7.52. 1Th.2.15. He.11.36,37. Re. 5.2.

days, share all these privileges. "Whose house are we, if we hold fast," &c. (Heb. 3. 6.)—¶ *A far country.* After the Theocracy, when God so openly manifested Himself, He dealt more distantly with them in Canaan. Luke adds, "for a long while."

34. *When the time of the fruit.* The time of Christ's coming to His temple.—¶ *Sent his servants.* He had reason to expect fruit, because all the arrangements and agreements were to this effect. So with the Jews. He had chosen them as a covenant people, to show forth His praise—to bring forth grapes—not wild grapes (Isa. 5. 4). He had given them all the means of grace, and at a suitable time, He sent His servants, the *prophets*, raised up and specially sent, calling upon them for the good results. Not that God has done every thing to His vineyard *that He could*, as some construe the passage in Isaiah, limiting His power. But "what more is there to be done?" (Isa. 5. 4.) "Why, when He waited for it to bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes?" "I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard" (vs. 5). For us He has done much—has given us the gospel, and the Spirit—has sent His messengers—and He has a right to expect from us all the fruits of piety.

35. *They beat one, &c.* The word means, literally, to *skin*, or *flay*. Mark and Luke relate these modes of treatment more particularly. They indi-

vants more than the first: and they did unto them likewise.

37 But, last of all, he sent unto them his son, saying, They will reverence my son.

38 But when the husbandmen saw the son, they said among themselves, This is the heir: <sup>b</sup> come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance.

39 And they <sup>c</sup> caught him, and

<sup>b</sup> He.1.1.2. <sup>c</sup> Ac.2.23; 4.25-27.

cate the reception which God's prophets met at the hands of the Jewish people: "entreated shamefully" (Heb. 11. 37. Jer. 44. 4-6. 2 Chron. 36. 16. Neh. 9. 26. 2 Chron. 24. 20, 21). Jeremiah was stoned by the exiles in Egypt; Isaiah sawn asunder by king Manasseh. "They were stoned, sawn asunder," &c. (Heb. 11. 36.)

37. *Last of all.* This contains the point of the parable. That the various messengers and messages had been followed up at length by such an one as this. After the prophets had been abused and rejected by the Jews, God sent His Son, Jesus Christ. Mark says that this was the *one*, only Son—His well-beloved.—¶ *They will reverence*—that is, they will respect and treat with due esteem such a messenger (John 3. 16, 17).

38. *This is the heir.* They had a selfish motive, even for killing the Son! When Christ came to the Jews, their low ideas, and their pride of heart, and His own offices—caused them to reject Him. (Comp. Joseph's brethren, Gen. 37. 19.) An *heir* is one to whom property is left, called an *inheritance*: (one who is yet a minor, and coming to possess His estate.) Christ was Heir of all things, as the Son of Man—and Maker of all things, as the Son of God.

39. *Slew Him.* The Jews caught Christ, arrested Him, cast Him out of their midst, and slew Him, that the inheritance might be theirs demanding the covenant privileges ("We be Abraham's seed," &c.) in

cast *him* out of the vineyard, and slew *him*.

40 When the Lord therefore of the vineyard cometh, what will he do unto those husbandmen?

41 They say unto him, He will miserably destroy<sup>d</sup> those wicked men, and will let out *his* vineyard unto other<sup>e</sup> husbandmen, which shall render him the fruits in their seasons.

42 Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the scriptures,

*d* Ps. 2.4,5,9. Zec. 12.2. Lu. 21.24. Ro. 9.26; 11. 11.

their own way—rejecting Christ as the Messenger of the covenant.

40. *What will he do?* See the same idea applied to the vineyard (as the Jewish church), in Isa. ch. 5. 4th vs. This subject was put to them in parable, that they might decide without knowing that they would condemn themselves.—¶ *Will give the vineyard.* The covenant relation and privilege should be given to the Gentiles, who should bring forth the fruits (Rom. 11. 7, 17).

41. *They say unto Him.* They did not yet discern the application of the parable. So they pronounced judgment against their own conduct, and declared beforehand the justice of that destruction which was coming on their city and people. He was about to take their privileges from them and give them to the Gentiles (other husbandmen), who should cultivate the ground on which they were placed, and render Him the fruits. So, swift destruction may be expected by us, at the final coming in judgment, if we reject Christ as our Lord and Saviour.

42. *Have ye never read.* Christ now brings out the application of the parable, by referring them to a prediction in their own scriptures, showing that this concerns themselves (Psalm 118. 22, 23). See Acts 4. 11, and 1 Peter 2. 7. Ephes. 2. 20. By the *stone* is

The *stone* which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes?

43 Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom  $\epsilon$  of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation <sup>h</sup> bringing forth the fruits thereof.

44 And whosoever shall fall <sup>i</sup> on this stone shall be broken, but on whomsoever it shall fail, it <sup>j</sup> will grind him to powder.

*f* Ps. 118.22. Is. 28.16. 1 Pe. 2.6,7. *g* Is. 93.9. *h* 1 Cor. 13.2. *i* Is. 8.14,15. *j* He. 2.2,3.

meant Jesus Christ, and the *builders* were the Jews. The Psalm is prophetic of Christ, as the whole context beautifully shows! They would not have Christ in their building—they set Him aside, as builders would reject a stone too rough-looking or too unwieldy—or too different from the rest of the fabric. But this same stone is become the *corner-stone* of the true building! (Isa. 28. 16.) “Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner-stone, a sure foundation.” Christ is called the *corner-stone*, because the whole building of the true Church rests upon Him, and is held together by Him. He unites Jew and Gentile in one building. This image is added, to show that Christ will triumph to their shame.

43. The doom about to be executed on their nation, is here denominated stated. See Rom. 9. 25.

44. *Whosoever shall fall, &c.* To come in violent contact with Christ, even as one stumbles carelessly or blindly over a stone, shall be ruinous. They fall on this stone who are offended at His low estate. But He is Judge—He falls on obdurate opposers. But to bear the weight of His condemnation, and to suffer the penalty of openly rejecting Him, will be a crushing doom (Isa. 8. 14. Luke 2. 34. 1 Pet. 2. 8). This curse of

45 And when the chief priests and Pharisees had heard his parables, they perceived that he spake of them.

46 But when they sought to lay hands on him, they feared the multitude, because they <sup>k</sup> took him for a prophet.

<sup>k</sup> Lu. 7.16. Jno. 7.40.

rejecting Christ shall fall like a millstone on the heads of those, who, amidst the privileges of the gospel, refuse to accept the salvation.

45. *Perceived that He spake of them.* He had gradually brought out the application in its full force.

46. *Sought to lay hands on Him.* True to the parable, the chief priests and Pharisees already seek to kill Him. And if they had taken Him, the multitude would probably have cried, "Away with Him!" (See ch. 27. 25.)

OBSERVE, (1.) The amazing and distinguishing goodness of God to such as have the gospel—its ordinances—ministers—calls and offers—especially his goodness to a church. (2.) If fruit is not brought forth, the candlestick will be taken out of its place (Rev. 2. 5). (3.) The *baptized*, who have been born in such outward relations to the church, and with such privileges, will be utterly cast off if they reject Christ. "Ye are the children of the prophets and of the covenant," &c. (See Acts 3. 25.)

## CHAPTER XXII.

§ 117. PARABLE OF THE MARRIAGE OF THE KING'S SON. THIRD day of the week.—*Jerusalem.*

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
22. 1-14			

Our Lord was still in the temple. It is to be observed that there is here a series of parables bearing upon one point, and all tending to set forth one practical sentiment. The case of the two sons, and of the wicked husbandmen, exhibited the wickedness of the Jews, that deserved their utter rejection as a people—and they were calculated to forewarn them of this

## CHAPTER XXII.

AND Jesus answered and spake unto them again by parables, and said,

2 The <sup>a</sup> kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king, which made a <sup>b</sup> marriage for his son.

3 And <sup>c</sup> sent forth his servants

<sup>a</sup> Lu. 14.16. <sup>b</sup> Re. 19.7,9. <sup>c</sup> Ps. 68.11. Jer. 25.4; 35.15. Re. 22.17.

result. The boasting Pharisees were worse than the common despisers—and the nation were worse than the Gentiles; they were false to their common engagements. Moreover they had enjoyed eminent privileges, which they had only abused, and had at length been ready to slay the only son of Him whose vineyard they were set to keep, and who asked only a proper return from it at their hands. Now, in this parable of the marriage feast, He more fully opens the subject of their rejection: of His *royalty*, and their radical delinquency. They had plainly refused His offers, and the result was to be their rejection. Our Lord gave so many of His teachings by parables, partly to conceal the application of the truth, until it should gain their concurrence—as Nathan to David), and as in the parable of the two sons (see chap. 21. 31)—and partly to represent the truth in pictures, calculated to interest and impress. He seemed at times also to have an object of showing the blindness of those who could not see the truth even in the picture, and so to let the picture be seen instead of the truth it portrayed. God's revelation is a test to men, and so it is variously received and construed.

2. *A certain KING.* This represents the gospel of grace, given by God the Father to the world, through His Son Jesus Christ. It is called here the *kingdom*; and the picture is that of the king making a marriage feast for His Son. Christ is the great personage—the Son of God. This brings to view their relations to Himself, as not only the son of the householder,

to call them that were bidden to the wedding: and they would not come.

4 Again, he sent forth other servants, saying, Tell them which are bidden, Behold, I

but the King's son. This hints also of the covenant between the Father and the Son; and of Christ, as having His claims founded on that eternal covenant with Jehovah, whom they worshipped. It was also a *marriage* feast, representing the *relations of love*, revealed in the gospel (see Isa. 25. 6; 65. 13. Sol. Song 5. 1. Isa. 61. 10; 62. 5. Hosea 2. 19. Matt. 9. 15. John 3. 29. Ephes. 5. 32. 2 Cor. 11. 2).

3. *His servants.* These represent ministers of the gospel, whose work is to urge men to come, though they have been already bidden, or invited, in the word of God, the gospel message. The Jews had had invitations from the prophets before the nuptials. Now, on the nuptial day, when Christ had come, these other messengers were sent. God was not bound to make any such arrangement as this, for a ministry of reconciliation to urge His own offers upon the reluctant. The impenitent treat the gospel now, in the same manner—with all their invitations, first and last, they are disinclined to come. Men will not come to Christ because of their wicked hearts. It is not enough to say that they stay away because they *will not come*—but further than this, they will not come, because of their utterly depraved hearts.—¶ *That were bidden.* This would show that as they had been invited to this very feast long before, so, Christ was no new claimant, and His kingdom nothing sudden, but all in the line of previous calls and claims. He was Himself the end of the law. This custom of repeating the message, or after the first invitation, sending a summons when all was ready, is common at the East (comp. Esth. 5. 8. and 6. 14). This band of ser-

have prepared my dinner; my oxen and my fatlings are killed, and all things are ready: come unto the marriage.

5 But they made light of it, and went their ways, one to his

*d Ps. 106.24,25. Pr. 1.24,25. Ac.24.25. Ro.2.4.*

vants represents particularly John the Baptist, and the seventy, and the apostles, preaching Christ in His lifetime.

4. *Again.* This second band may represent the renewed invitation before and after the crucifixion, by another company, including Stephen, Barnabas, and Paul, and others, preaching "Jesus and the resurrection."—¶ *All things are ready.* This represents the substance of their preaching to the Jews—that the fulness of time had come—the Messiah prophesied had appeared. Obstacles were all removed—all provisions were made (see Acts 2. 38-39; 3. 19-26; 4. 12). The end of the law was Christ. *It is finished.* This conduct of the King represents the gospel offer, which repeats its messages, and multiplies its messengers. Various preachers, different providences, and the Holy Ghost Himself, reiterate the call, and press it for immediate action. Sinners are entreated to come to Christ, by every gospel sermon, every good tract, every providence, and every motion of the Holy Spirit in the heart. Every thing is prepared for them inasmuch as Christ has actually died, and the redeeming work is done, and now they are invited as to a feast, spread and waiting on the table. Pardon is proclaimed. The grace is free. It is most important for sinners to understand this: "Behold I have prepared my dinner." Let them see what God has done—and how the benefits are all waiting their reception.

5. *They made light of it.* There are two classes of despisers noticed here. *These first* treated it lightly as an unimportant thing. So many men do now. They show no interest in it



farm, and another to his merchant andise :

6 And the remnant took his servants, and entreated <sup>e</sup> them spitefully, and slew them.

7 But when the king heard thereof, he was wroth : and he sent forth his armies, and destroyed <sup>f</sup> those murderers, and burned up their city.

8 Then saith he to his servants, The wedding is ready,

*e* 1Th.2.15. *f* Da.9.26.Lu.19.27.

most solemn warnings, or most momentous privileges. They care more for their "farms" and "merchandizes" than for this.

6. *Entreated them spitefully*—treated them severely. This was true of the Jews who slew the prophets, and "stoned them that were sent to them." (See Acts 4. 3; 5. 18; 8. 3; also Acts 5. 40; 14. 5-13, 17. 5; 21. 30; 23. 2.)—¶ *And slew them.* (Acts 7. 58; 12. 2. Comp. Matt. 23. 34.) And it represents also the conduct of many who revile, and abuse, and persecute the ministers of Christ and His messages.

7. *Wroth*—angry. The sending forth of the king's armies, here applies to the destruction of Jerusalem by Roman armies, which they are thus forewarned should come to pass. (See Isa. 10. 5; 13. 5. Ezek. 16. 41. Jer. 25. 9.) Those who thus shamefully abuse the servants of God or their messages may expect swift destruction.—¶ *Their city. Jerusalem* is here intended. Matt. 23. 34, 35. Luke 13. 33, 34. See Acts 7. 39; 12. 2. 3. "Your house is left unto you desolate." Chap. 23. 38.

8. *Not worthy.* The unworthiness consisted in their rejecting the provisions, as the worthiness of the guests lay in their *accepting it.* This indicates the sentence passed upon the despisers and neglecters of the gospel, whether Jews or Gentiles. The Jews in rejecting the message proved that they were not worthy of their

but they which were bidden were not worthy.<sup>g</sup>

9 Go ye therefore into the highways; and as many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage.

10 So those servants went out into the highways, and gathered together all, <sup>h</sup> as many as they found, both bad and good: and the wedding was furnished with guests.

11 And when the king came

*g* c.10.11,13. Ac.13.46. Re.3.4; 22.14. *h* c.13.47.

high privileges. Seeing ye put it from you and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life—lo, we turn to the Gentiles (Acts 13. 46).

9. *Highways*—thoroughfares. This word is translated by the Wickliff version, A. D. 1380, "*the ends of ways.*" It means literally the *outlets* of streets where several ways meet, and where people pour out through some gate, or into some open square. This is the multitude. And it is meant here, that the gospel is now made universal in its call, without distinction as before. And it forewarns the Jews of its being addressed thenceforth to the Gentiles. So now, the gospel is to be preached to all, and all are invited to come. So Philip went down to Samaria (Acts 8. 5)—Peter to Cornelius—Paul to the men of Athens. The calling of the Gentiles, by occasion of the Jews' disobedience is here plainly set forth. (See Rom. 11.)

10. *Both bad and good.* That is, in men's estimate—for the gospel takes in all classes, on one common platform—merging all distinctions in this, of accepting or rejecting Christ and His provisions. By grace alone are we called and saved.—¶ *Guests*—partakers of the feast. That these were "*good and bad*" only means that they were of all characters, some better, some worse. None come to Christ's provisions on the ground of their goodness. All must come on

in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment :

12 And he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither, not having a wedding garment? And he was <sup>k</sup> speechless.

† Zep. 1. 12. j Ps. 45. 14. Is. 61. 10. 2 Cor. 5. 3. Ep. 4. 24. Ru. 16. 15; 19. 8. k Je. 2. 26.

the same footing—and whatever their character.

11. *A wedding garment.* That is, a dress provided for the purpose. This was the custom of Eastern kings on special occasions. Changes of raiment were reckoned as an article of wealth (Job 27. 16. Isa. 3. 6. James 5. 2. 2 Kings 10. 22), and kings made much of presenting favourites with a dress in which they might appear before them. (See 1 Sam. 18. 4. 2 Kings 5. 5. Dan. 5. 7. Esth. 6. 8.) Not to wear it in such case would be the most pointed contempt. Sir John Chardin relates an instance where such a refusal cost a vizier his life. It was a custom calculated to show at once the king's liberality and the subject's dependence on the king. It had a very important meaning in this connexion. (See Zechariah 3. 4.) Such are they in the church, who make a false profession. They who come to the gospel feast without Christ's robe of righteousness upon them, and are not clothed with humility, are represented here. No matter what be our professions, or stations in the church, if our hearts are not changed, if our lives be not Christian, and if our hope be not in Christ alone. This figure of a dress or clothing, runs through the whole scripture. We are bidden to *put on* the Lord Jesus Christ (Rom. 13. 14. Gal. 3. 27), to *put off* the old and put on the new man (Col. 3. 10. Ephes. 4. 22), to put on the whole armour of God (Ephes. 6. 13-16. 1 Thess. 5. 8). *Be clothed with humility.* "Clothed upon with our house which is from heaven." By faith we recognize a righteousness out of and above

13 Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

14 For many are called, but few are chosen.

l Is. 52. 1. Re. 21. 27. m c. 8. 12. n c. 7. 14; 20. 16. Lu. 13. 23, 24.

us, wherewith our spirits can be clothed, which righteousness is in Christ, who is "the Lord our Righteousness." "And this righteousness we so appropriate by faith as to make it ours, so that it becomes, in that singularly expressive term our *HABIT*." —*Trench.* So, in heaven—"white robes," "like a bride adorned for her husband." The term here for *wedding garment* seems to denote rather that of the bridegroom. It is Christ's righteousness that is put on. As He is, so are they in the world. *Tavernier* mentions a king of Persia who was so pleased by the conduct of a *nazar* that he caused himself to be unrobed, and gave his own habit to the *nazar*, "which is the greatest honour a king of Persia can bestow on a subject." p. 43.

12. *How camest thou, &c.* Our Lord is represented as detecting every false professor. We may learn that our true character is known to Him, and will not escape His judgment. The man was *speechless*, because he was clearly without excuse—self-condemned and his own destroyer. No man can offer any excuse at the judgment-day. "Every mouth shall be stopped" (Rom. 3. 19).—¶ *Speechless*; literally, muffled or gagged.

13 *Bind him hand and foot.* Here the punishment is denoted that shall come upon all, Jew and Gentile, who so contemptuously refuse Christ's salvation. The hypocrite's hope shall perish (Job 8. 13).—¶ *Outer darkness*, is exclusion from the blissful presence of God. As the wedding feast was usually at night, and all was brilliancy *within* the house, so, *outside*, it was the deepest contrast of dark-

15 ¶ Then ° went the Pharisees, and took counsel how they might entangle him in his talk.

16 And they sent out unto him

o Mar.12.13.&c. Lu.20.20,&c.

ness. (See note, ch. 8. 12).—¶ *Weeping and gnashing of teeth* are terms, expressive of the severest rage, agony, and despair. This there will be. A sense of the self-destruction and a memory of the free grace, will make this eternal as the mind in its future estate. The previous parables had been against the avowed opposers; this is directed farther against the false pretenders—those among the actual comers to the feast, who have rejected Christ, the only way. This is a second sitting and separation. This fulfils John's forewarning, "Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor;" and the sitting by the fan was the last process of purging. See note, ch. 3. 12.

14. *Many are called.* This verse is the general application given to the parable by our Lord. It was true in respect to the Jews, since the great mass of them that were addressed with gospel offers did not and would not come, and hence were not the true Israel (see vs. 3). This is also true of many others (see vs. 11), who even enter the church, and are not truly of Christ's chosen.

OBSERVE, (1.) Under the gospel, men are repeatedly bidden to the feast of grace. (2.) All things are now ready. It is a *feast* which is spread. Sinners are invited to partake what Christ has freely and fully furnished. The gospel is glad tidings. (3.) Men prefer the world to Christ and heaven. (4.) Many who have had fewer calls and privileges will be saved, while those most favoured with religious opportunities will often stand aloof and be lost. (5.) It is not enough to accept the message formally. Every man must have on the *wedding garment* of Christ's righteousness, and must put on Christ. None can

their disciples, with the Herodians, saying; Master, we know that thou art true, and teachest the way of God in truth, neither carest thou for any man; for

object that they have it not. It is freely furnished them. (6.) The church will yet be sifted. He will thoroughly purge His floor. False professors have a fearful doom, as well as open opposers. *The King will soon come in to see the guests.*

§ 118. INSIDIOUS QUESTIONS OF THE PHARISEES. TRIBUTE TO CESAR.

Matt. 22.15-22 | Mark. 12.13-17 | Luke. 20.20-26 | John.

15. *Entangle him,* or ensnare him in talk. The term is properly used of ensnaring birds, leading them into a trap by some bait. The meaning is that they planned to see how they might draw Him into some conversation that would work His ruin.

16. *The Herodians.* The old versions have it "the servants of Herod." They were doubtless his adherents, and as he was tetrarch of Galilee under the Romans, Christ was at once under his civil jurisdiction and a rival to his claims. These, therefore, were brought forward to entrap Christ in a political matter. They proposed a question which would be likely to involve a dispute *either* with the Pharisees or the Herodians. The Pharisees condemned the practice of paying tribute to a foreign power, as contrary to the laws of Moses (Deut. 17. 15). But the Herodians approved it, since Herod held his office under the Romans. Therefore if Christ declared it unlawful, He would be complained of as undermining the authority of Cesar. If He declared it lawful, He would be represented as a foe to the Pharisees and Jewish people. We see that though the Pharisees hated the Herodians, they could league with them to overthrow Christ.—¶ *Master, we know that thou art true.* Luke mentions more particularly (ch. 20. 20) that these were "spies, which

thou regardest not the person of men.

17 Tell us therefore, What thinkest thou? Is it lawful to give tribute unto Cesar, or not?

18 But Jesus perceived their wickedness, and said, Why tempt ye me, ye hypocrites?

19 Show me the tribute-money. And they brought unto him a penny.

1 In value, 7 pence halfpenny.

should feign themselves *just men*, that they might take hold of His words so that they might deliver Him unto the power and authority of the governor." Of course they had no such exalted opinion of Christ as they here express, but used the most wicked flattery, intending to deceive Him. They therefore praised Him for an *independent* course, as not afraid of any man, hoping thus to have Him speak disrespectfully of the king.—¶ *Regardest not the person.* A Hebrew idiom. Literally, thou lookest not upon the face.

17. *Tribute.* A tax paid by the Jews as a conquered people to the Roman government or Cesar.—¶ *Cesar* was a common title for the Roman emperors at this time, as Pharaoh was for the Egyptian kings. This Cesar was Tiberius.

18. *Their wickedness.* It was their malice and hypocrisy. Our Lord perceived it. He was the searcher of hearts. The temptation which they used was an artful device to have Him say something to His injury. It was no temptation in the sense of an inclination of His, as we often use the word. He showed His knowledge of their artifice by calling them deceivers, pretenders, *hypocrites*.

19. *Tribute-money.* The Roman coin with which they paid their tax.—¶ *A penny.* It was a silver coin, the principal money at the time. It was formerly of 8½ pence value, after ward 7½ pence, say about 14 cents of ours. See note, ch. 20. 2.

20. *Image and superscription.* Lit-

20 And he saith unto them, Whose is this image and <sup>1</sup> superscription?

21 They say unto him, Cesar's. Then saith he unto them, Render <sup>2</sup> therefore unto Cesar the things which are Cesar's, and unto God <sup>3</sup> the things that are God's.

22 When they had heard *these words*, they marvelled, and

<sup>1</sup> Or, *inscription.* p c.17.25,27. Ro.13.7. q Mal. 1.6-8; 3.8-10.

erally, *epigraph.* In the time of our Lord it bore the image and titles of the emperor, as common Spanish or English coin at this day, though formerly it was impressed with the symbols of the republic. The inscription was *Καισαρ Ανγονστ. Ιουδαιας εαλωκυιας.*



21. *Render therefore.* The general rule prescribed here is to give every one his due, or what belongs to him. Their coin, having Cesar's impress on it, showed that they were in his dominions and under his government. Their ordinary currency acknowledged him as their civil ruler, and they should pay to him a rightful obedience as such. This was aimed at the Pharisees, who resisted the Roman authority. At the same time God had His claims, and they were bound to render to Him His due. He came not to settle their political disputes, nor to interfere with the civil affairs of the country, nor would He be embroiled in such questions. Their duties to God did not absolve them from duties to the state (Rom. 13. 1), nor were their civil duties to release them from religious obligations. This was aimed at the Herodians, and all at both.

left him, and went their way.

23 ¶ The same day came to him the Sadducees, which say that there is no resurrection, and asked him,

24 Saying, Master, Moses said, If a man die, having no children, his brother shall marry his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother.

25 Now there were with us seven brethren: and the first,

r Mar. 12. 19, & c. Lu. 20. 27, & c. s Ac. 23. 8. t De. 25. 5. Ru. 1. 11.

22. *They marvelled.* They were taken by surprise at such an answer, which so utterly defeated their design against Him. Luke says *they marvelled at His answer, and held their peace.*

OBSERVE, (1.) It is a favourite device of opposers, to bring the religion of Christ into conflict with the state, hoping to harm the cause. But the position of Christ is plain: that Christians are to be good citizens—and *they are*—and that properly understood, the church and the state may have their respective dues without their union, or their opposition. But Christ is head of the church, and head over all things to the church.

(2.) We are to be subject to civil rulers—the powers that be are ordained of God. But “the things that are Cesar’s” do not include an infringement on “the things that are God’s.” (3.) All malicious opposers of Christ’s cause will be fearfully silenced and shamed.

§ 119. INSIDIOUS QUESTION OF THE SADDUCEES. — *The Resurrection.*  
THIRD day of the week.

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
22. 23-33	12. 18-27	20. 27-40	

23. *The Sadducees.* This was another attempt to entangle Him in conversation by another party, whose doctrine was known to be a denial of the resurrection of the body, and of

when he had married a wife, deceased, and, having no issue, left his wife unto his brother

26 Likewise the second also, and the third, unto the seventh.

27 And last of all the woman died also.

28 Therefore, in the resurrection, whose wife shall she be of the seven? for they all had her.

29 Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God.

1 Seven. u Jno. 20. 9.

the soul’s immortality. They proposed to Him a difficulty that would grow out of their law, if the relations which it prescribed were to be extended beyond the grave. It was the case of a woman having seven husbands, all brothers of each other, according to a Mosaic provision in special circumstances, by which a woman might marry a husband’s brother, and several brethren might come by the law to have successively the same woman to wife. The question was, who should claim her, of these seven, in the future world? They conceived this an insuperable objection to the doctrine of a future state. Deut. 25. 5.

29. *Ye do err.* The difficulty was not in the case proposed, but in their mistake of the future estate and its relations. They were ignorant of the scriptures which plainly enough in the Old Testament, taught the resurrection (see vs. 32), also (Dan. 12. 2. Isa. 26. 19. Job. 19. 25-27); and they knew not the *power of God*, which men overlook when they say that the body cannot be raised.—“Thou fool” (1 Cor. 15. 36), why should we reason that a thing cannot be done by God Himself, because we have never seen it done, and because we cannot conceive it possible to be done? Why bind God to laws of nature, when nature’s laws are only His ordinary modes of action, which He

30 For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels v of God in heaven.

31 But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying,

32 I w am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the

v c. 18. 10. 1 Jno. 3. 2. w Ex. 3. 6, 15, 16. He. 11. 16.

chooses for the present to adopt? His word is *above* all the teachings of nature, wherever the authorities may seem to us to conflict.

30. *In the resurrection.* In that future estate, about which they were so puzzled, there are none of these temporal and temporary arrangements; but they are as the angels of God, or, as Luke says, equal to the angels; that is, in like circumstances, as concerns these points. They are above these mere temporal and temporary conditions, not dying any more (as Luke adds), but fixed in a superior state.

31, 32. *As touching the resurrection.* Our Lord appeals here to a passage from their scriptures with which they ought to have been familiar, and which they were bound to credit as spoken unto them by God. It was found in Exod. 3. 6, 15. It was in the conversation of Jehovah and Moses at the burning bush (see Mark and Luke). This was a common title which Jehovah assumed to Himself, and which the ancient saints accorded to Him. Hundreds of years after the death of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, God is found claiming to be their God, and this shows that *then* they must have been *living*, for He is not the God of the *dead*. This proved a future existence which the Sadducees denied, and which was the great point. They said there was no resurrection, neither angel, nor spirit. Acts 23. 8. But a future *personal* existence, where Abraham is Abraham still, involves a resurrection

God of *Jacob*. God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.

33 And when the multitude heard *this*, they were astonished \* at his doctrine.

34 ¶ But when the Pharisees had heard that he had put the

x c. 7. 28. Mar. 12. 17

of the body, though that body may have gone through important changes, as it does on earth, while it continues essentially and personally the same.

OBSERVE, (1.) They who understand the scriptures will find the resurrection of the body sufficiently taught in the Old Testament. So many passages, as this that is quoted, teach it plainly *by implication*. (2.) They who know the *power of God*, will not think it a thing incredible that God should raise the dead. He brought Adam into life full grown—out of the dust—and Eve out of a rib—and Lazarus out of the sepulchre—and brought Moses and Elias—one of whom was buried in an unknown place, and the other translated without death—both in their bodies to the *transfiguration*. (3.) The *scripture* is the authority, and God's *power* the warrant, for this belief. (4.) How glorious shall be the resurrection estate of believers! Who can conceive it? No longer these fleshly and dying relations, but as the angels—pure and celestial, our relations shall be higher and more extensive. "We shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob." "It doth not yet appear what we shall be."

§ 120. A LAWYER QUESTIONS JESUS. THE TWO GREAT COMMANDMENTS.—THIRD day of the week.

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
22 34-40	12. 28-34		

34. *When the Pharisees heard.* It seems to have been the great object of these rival parties only to entrap Christ; and the Pharisees would have

Sadducees to silence, they were gathered together.

35 Then <sup>v</sup> one of them, *which was a lawyer*, asked *him a question*, tempting him, and saying,

36 Master, *which is the great commandment in the law?*

37 Jesus said unto him, Thou <sup>v</sup> shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all

<sup>v</sup> Lu. 10, 25, &c. <sup>z</sup> De. 6. 5; 10. 12.

been glad if the Sadducees had succeeded in so doing. But now that they had failed, some new device must be raised.

35. *A lawyer.* That is, one of the scribes (see Mark), whose business it was to expound and write the laws.

36. *The great commandment in the law.* That is, the most important commandment in the Mosaic law. Mark has it, "Which is the first commandment of all?" This question was put to Him to get an opinion on a *disputed point*, so that He might come into collision with one or the other party. The Jews divided the commandments of their law into *greater* and *lesser* (see ch. 5. 19; "one of these *least* commandments"), but they were not agreed in the particulars. Some contended for the law of circumcision; others for that of sacrifice; others for that of phylacteries.

37. *Jesus said unto him.* This reply was not what the scribe had desired, but from particulars it ascended to the general and comprehensive spirit of obedience. Supreme love to God, which is at the basis of all the commandments, was given as the chief requirement. Heart, soul, mind and strength, all of each, and all together, is the entire obedience required (Deut. 6. 5. Levit. 19. 18).

39. *The second.* Our Lord adds the second commandment, which is equally broad and comprehensive. These two agree with the two tables of the moral law. The first four commandments of the decalogue have respect to our duties toward God. The last six commands respect our duties

thy soul, and with all thy mind.

38 This is the first and great commandment.

39 And the second *is* like unto it, <sup>a</sup> Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

40 On these two commandments <sup>b</sup> hang all the law and the prophets.

41 ¶ While the

<sup>a</sup> Le. 19. 18. <sup>b</sup> Ro. 13. 9. Ja. 2. 8.

toward fellow-men. This last table is here given in a summary, and is called the *second commandment*.

40. *On these two.* These are represented as the grand fundamental principles on which all the law and all religion depend. Duties to fellow-men are not enough without duties to God, and these latter are essential to the former.—¶ *Hang*—that is, *depend*. Mark adds, that the scribe owned this as *truth*, and that upon this, Christ declared that he was "*not far from the kingdom of heaven*"—nearly understanding and embracing the gospel doctrine. This whole conversation (vss. 15–40) had quite confounded all parties that came against Him. And none of them, after that, durst ask Him any questions. (See Mark and Luke.)

OBSERVE, (1.) Many raise questions about specific points of duty, and give them a prominence beyond the great question of love to God—neglecting thus the gospel, and the gospel plan of salvation. (2.) Love to God and to man are kindred precepts of the same law—nor can we properly and fully love our neighbour, without first of all, and above all, loving God. They who boast a religion of *social piety*, and reject Christ, and have no supreme regard to God's will, do not understand the commandments.

§ 121. HOW IS CHRIST THE SON OF DAVID?—THIRD day of the week.—Jerusalem.

Matt. 22. 41–46 | Mark. 12 35 37 | Luke. 20. 41–44 | John

Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them,

42 Saying, What think ye of Christ? whose son is he? They say unto him, *The Son of David.*

43 He saith unto them, How then doth David in spirit call him Lord, saying,

44 The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool.

c Mar.12.35,&c. Lu.20.41,&c. d Ps.110.1. Ac.2.34,35. He.1.13; 10.12,13.

42. *What think ye of Christ?* Our Lord now in turn (while He was yet teaching in the temple—Mark) puts a question to them, which should show their ignorance of the scriptures, and of the Christ whom they professed to look for. The difficulty which this question involved, had reference to the two natures of Christ in one person; and because they could not understand how He could be God and man at the same time, they rejected Jesus of Nazareth, who was the son of David (Matt. 1. 1), and also David's Lord, as the co-equal Son of God. David "in spirit"—that is, by inspiration of the Holy Ghost—calls Him "Lord" (Ps. 110. 1).

45. *How is He his Son?* This is substantially the difficulty which Socinians find in the doctrine of Christ's divinity. They ask how Christ can be equal with God, and be the Son of God, at the same time? Yet their own scripture plainly asserts that He is both, just as it asserts that He was David's Son and Lord. And where the scripture testimony is acknowledged, as it was by the Jews, the result must be the same as in their case—"No man was able to answer Him a word," &c. (vs. 46.) Mark adds, beautifully, "The common people heard Him gladly."

OBSERVE, (1.) From these repeated triumphs over His most cunning enemies, we infer Christ's Divinity. He was beyond the power of His most bitter and venomous assailants to

45 If David then call him Lord, how is he his son?

46 And no man was able to answer him a word; neither durst any man, from that day forth, ask him any more questions.

### CHAPTER XXIII.

THEN spake Jesus to the multitude, and to his disciples,

2 Saying, The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat:

e Lu.14.66. f Mar.12.34. Lu.20.40. a Mal.2.7.

overthrow Him in doctrine, or ensnare Him in conversation. He could read their hearts, and so He could well adapt His replies to their inquiries, so as to foil them in their base attempts. (2.) The scripture is full of authority for the doctrine of Christ's Divinity—and on this ground it must irrefragably stand. They who deny it, must be silenced from the plain word of God. (3.) "Common people" receive this doctrine with joy, while disputers of this world reject it. Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? "Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes."

### CHAPTER XXIII.

§ 122. WARNINGS AGAINST THE EVIL EXAMPLE OF THE SCRIBES AND PHARISEES. — THIRD day of the week. Jerusalem.

Matt. Mark. Luke. John.  
23. 1-12 | 12.38,39 | 20. 45, 46 |

1. *Then spake Jesus.* Our Lord now takes occasion to expose those who had laboured to entangle Him. He had utterly foiled them in their attempts, and overthrown them in His questions, and now He would expose their real character and standing. Mark has it, "*Beware of the Scribes.*" Luke has an instructive clause, introductory, "*Then in the audience of all the people, He said unto His disciples,*" &c.

2. *Sit in Moses' seat.* As Moses was



3 All therefore, whatsoever they bid you observe, *that* observe and do: but do not ye after their works: for <sup>b</sup> they say, and do not.

4 For they bind heavy burdens, <sup>c</sup> and grievous to be borne, and lay *them* on men's shoulders; but they *themselves* will

<sup>b</sup> Ro. 2.21-23. <sup>c</sup> Ac. 15.10.

the law-giver, so these were the public expounders of the law. In this sense they sat in His seat, or chair, as teachers. This alludes to the fact that the Jewish Doctors *sat* when they taught.

3. *All therefore.* On account of their holding this place as authorized teachers of the Mosaic law, they were to be respected. But as it was expressly on *account* of this relation in which they stood to Moses and his seat, that they were to be followed, it must be only so far as their teachings were consistent with Moses' law. Their *works* were to be avoided, for they practised inconsistently with their instructions.

4. *They bind heavy burdens.* As the loads were packed on beasts of burden, so they imposed the heaviest requisitions of the ritual, with all their grievous additions. This was the yoke upon the neck, which neither their fathers nor they were able to bear (Acts 15. 10). They were intolerant and exacting. Those rites, however numerous and costly, they loved to enforce upon others, but would not touch for themselves "with one of their fingers"—that is, in the least. They would not carry "the burdens, no not even touch them." They sought indulgence and applause rather.

5. *All their works, &c.* They loved the praise of men more than the praise of God. They practised not self-denial, but self-exaltation. Some of their self-sufficient practises are here mentioned. —¶ *They make broad their phylacteries.* These were

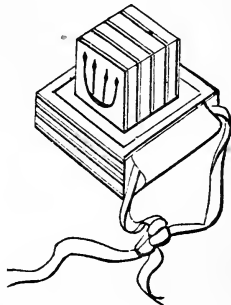
not move them with one of their fingers.

5 But <sup>d</sup> all their works they do for to be seen of men: they make broad their phylacteries <sup>e</sup> and enlarge the borders of their garments,

6 And <sup>f</sup> love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief

<sup>d</sup> c. 6. 1-16. <sup>e</sup> Nu. 15. 38. <sup>f</sup> Mar. 12. 39, &c. Lu. 14. 3, &c.

scraps of parchment containing certain passages from the law, which they rolled up in a leathern case, and bound by leather thongs to the hand and forehead—according to the letter of that direction in Deut. 6. 8; 11. 18. The passages so carried about the person were, Exod. 13. 1-10, 11-16. Deut. 6. 4-9; 11. 13-21. These parchments *they* made broader than common, in order to seem more religious than others. (*See cut.*)



—¶ *Borders of their garments* These were fringes on the edges of their garments, called the hem, (ch. 9. 20,) which they were commanded to have, as a distinction from other nations, and as a memorial of God's statutes, and which He also wore (ch. 14. 36. Num. 15. 32-41). These people made them wider than others, to seem extra religious (ch. 5. 40; 9. 26).

6. *Uppermost rooms.* Rather the uppermost *places*. The Jews reclined at table instead of sitting as we

seats in the synagogues,

7 And greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi.

8 But <sup>s</sup> be not ye called Rabbi, for one is your Master, *even* Christ; and all ye are brethren.

9 And call no *man* your Father upon the earth: for one is

*g* Ja.3.1.

do. The table was composed of three parts—forming two sides and an end. The couches were ranged along the three sides—and the uppermost room or place, was that at the head of the table—looking down the two sides. It was the place of the most honoured guest. John reclined on Christ's bosom. (*See cut.*) —¶ *The chief seats in the*



and here also, they loved show and distinction and applause. They were fond of being saluted and greeted there by the crowd. —¶ *Rabbi*. This was a title of honour given to the doctors of the law in the time of Christ, equivalent to our *doctor* and *master*, combining the sense of both. They loved to be saluted by men as their superiors. It is from a word meaning *great*.

8. *Be not ye*. Such fondness for titles was forbidden by our Lord. It showed a wrong heart. The custom made invidious distinctions and fostered pride, and was unfit among the apostles, as He had previously shown, when they asked who should be the greatest. And there was this broad reason against it, that Christ claimed to be their Master, and no other should be owned as such.

your <sup>h</sup> Father, which is in heaven.

10 Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, *even* Christ.

11 But <sup>i</sup> he that is greatest among you, shall be your servant.

12 And <sup>j</sup> whosoever shall ex-

*h* c.6.9. *i* c.20.26,27. *j* Pr.15.33. Ja.4.6.

*synagogues*. In the Jewish synagogues there was a class of officers called Elders, whose seats were conspicuous near the minister, under the pulpit and fronting the people. These seats they loved, as bringing them into notice.

7. *Greetings, &c.* The markets were public places where a large concourse usually met for business,

9. *Call no man your Father, &c.* Neither treat others so, nor demand so to be treated. They who own a religious head on earth as infallible and supreme, violate this precept. So the Papists own the Pope as their *papa* or *father*, and they call other religious dignitaries by this title. They who make ranks in the clergy, who are set to be equal, foster this spirit.

11, 12. *But he that is greatest, &c.* The highest honour in the church is not superiority of station, but of service. Humility is the most excellent distinction of the truly great and good. Only they who are humble shall be exalted, and they who seek earthly exaltation, whose hearts are proud and presumptuous, shall be abased. The spirit of ambitious rivalry and proud self-seeking is re-  
buked.

alt himself, shall be abased ; and he that shall humble himself, shall be exalted.

13 ¶ But wo unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites ! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men : for ye neither go in *yourselves*, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in.

14 Wo unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites ! for ye

devour widows houses, and for a pretence make long prayer : therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation.

15 Wo unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites ! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte ; and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves.

16 Woe unto you, *ye blind* "

*k* 2Ti.3.6. Tit.1.11. 1 Jno.8.44. Ac.13.10. Ep.2.3. *m* c.15.14.

§ 123. WOES AGAINST THE SCRIBES AND PHARISEES. LAMENTATION OVER JERUSALEM. — THIRD day of the week.

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
23.13-39	12. 40	20. 47	

13. *Wo unto you.* Our Lord now puts forth the severest denunciations against those who had so attacked Him, and of whom He had just warned the people. They were guilty of shutting up the kingdom of heaven. All their influence was turned against the gospel, so as to prevent the multitude from receiving it. They professed to be guardians of the church, and this had been their office. But they abused it to exclude men from this salvation. Holding the keys in this sense, they locked the door and kept men from entering. They persecuted the true Messiah, and they taught for doctrines the commandments of men.

14. *Devour widows' houses.* Cruelty, avarice, and hypocrisy, are here charged upon them. Such was their greedy avarice, that they even swallowed up the 'houses' (or property) of widows, as they went about seeking whose estates they could devour. They often took advantage of the unprotected, and perverted their office as ecclesiastics and lawyers, to get possession of their property. — ¶ *For a pretence*—for a disguise. In Luke, we read "*for a show*," but the same Greek word. With all this, they pre-

tended the greatest piety, so they made long prayer (see ch. 6. 5), "standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets," and continuing several hours in these showy devotions. For this hypocrisy, doing the most despicable deeds under the show of piety, they should be the more severely punished in the future world.

15. *Ye compass sea and land*—or traverse. This is a proverbial phrase, expressing the most extensive and assiduous efforts. They would leave no stone unturned, and would spare no pains to make *one proselyte*—that is, to convert one man to their religion, more or less fully. — ¶ *Two-fold more.* The result was, that those whom they so won over to the Jewish rites, were made twice as bad as themselves. — ¶ *A child of hell*, is a Hebrew mode of speech, to denote one who belongs to hell—the offspring and heir of perdition. So in Sam. 20. 31, marg., "Son of death"—devoted to death. And it was notorious that their adherents became more awfully wicked than themselves—doubly so. The proselytes were called "the scabs of Israel, as hindering the coming of the Messiah, being ignorant of the law and bringing in revenge." Their zeal for proselyting was proverbial among the heathen. The Latin poet Horace speaks of it.

16, 17. *Ye blind guides.* Here they are denounced for their mischievous

guides, which say, Whosoever shall swear by the temple, it is nothing; but whosoever shall swear by the gold of the temple, he is a debtor.

17 *Ye* fools and blind! for whether is greater, the gold, or the temple that sanctifieth the gold?

18 And, whosoever shall swear by the altar, it is nothing; but whosoever sweareth by the gift that is upon it, he is <sup>1</sup> guilty.

19 *Ye* fools and blind! for

*n* Ps. 94.8. 1 Or, *debtor, or, bound.*

doctrines in the community—calculated to lead men sadly astray. As to the obligation of oaths, they were wont to swear by a variety of objects most foolishly. They made the most arbitrary distinctions, calculated to confound all such obligations. To swear by the temple, was to take an oath by the temple that what was said or promised was *truth*. The folly of it was, that it was no test of sincerity, and that it confounded a building with God Himself, who alone could search the heart. If one swore by the temple, it was nothing, that is, of no account—having no force in their esteem. But if he swore by the gold of the temple, his oath was solemnly binding. Whereas no reason could be given why there should be more force in one oath than in the other; and if either was greater, it was the temple greater than the gold: for all the golden vessels and furniture had their sanctity from the temple itself. (See ch. 5. 33, &c.)

18, 19. *Shall swear by the altar.* The altar of *burnt-offerings* (2 Chron. 4. 1). This, men could swear by, without the oath having any force; but if they swore by the gift upon the altar, they were "*guilty*," that is, *liable to condemnation*, for breaking the oath. This is the force of the words "*guilt*" and "*guilty*" in the old English. This figure shows an altar, thought by many

whether is greater, the gift, or the altar that sanctifieth the gift?

20 Whoso therefore shall swear by the altar, sweareth by it, and by all things thereon.

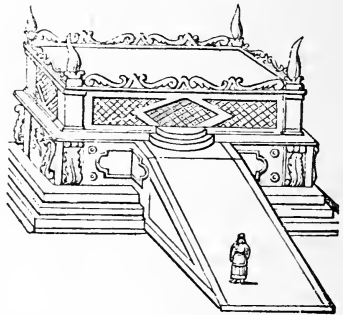
21 And whoso shall swear by the temple, sweareth by it, and by him <sup>p</sup> that dwelleth therein.

22 And he that shall swear by heaven, sweareth by the throne <sup>q</sup> of God, and by him that sitteth thereon.\*

23 Wo unto you, scribes and

*o* Ex. 29.37; 30.29. *p* 2Ch. 6.2. Ps. 26.8. *q* Ps. 11.4. Is. 66.1. c.5.34.

to be the form of that in the temple. The horns of the altar are seen here.



20, 21. *Whoso therefore.* Here the true doctrine is laid down in regard to the solemnity and sanctity of oaths. The Jews had many foolish oaths that they regarded as having no force. But they are here declared to be solemn and awful appeals to Jehovah, though they did not so regard them. (See ch. 5. 34, &c.) Hence (as in the 5th chap.) they were shown that this was profane jesting, for God was concerned in it all. Hence it was the subject of *profanity* that was here treated of, for it prevailed extensively among the Jews. The sin of profane swearing consists in using lightly terms of the greatest solemnity—when

Pharisees, hypocrites ! for ye pay tithe of mint, and anise, <sup>1</sup> and cummin, and have omitted the weightier *matters* <sup>2</sup> of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.

24 *Ye blind guides ! which*

<sup>1</sup> Lu. 11. 42. <sup>2</sup> 1 *Dill.* s 1Sa. 15. 22. Je. 22. 15, 16. Ho. 6. 6. Mi. 6. 8. c. 9. 13.

ther God's names, titles, attributes, words, works, or any thing relating to His worship. It is a frivolous trifling with holy things.

23. *Ye pay tithe.* A tithe means a *tenth part*. The Jews were required strictly to pay a tenth of all their yearly produce of corn, cattle, &c., to the Levites, and after that, a second tenth or tithe to the sanctuary service, and then, a third tenth, that is, of the remainder, to the poor widows, the fatherless, &c. There seems to have been no law for a tithe of herbs; but in this the Pharisees would show an extra devotion. They paid tithe, even to the merest herbs, and were exact to the very smallest items. (Numb. 18. 20-24. Deut. 14. 22-29.) These herbs, here mentioned, are from the garden and of little value, except for odour or flavour. They represent here, the minor matters in which the Pharisees were so strict. It was not condemned. They did right to pay tithes to the utmost. But, with all this attention to smallest matters, they neglected things of more importance—their *social and religious duties*.—**¶ Judgment**—or justice, for they were great extortioners, and unjust.—**¶ Mercy**—for they were unfeeling and cruel.—**¶ Faith**—for they were the grossest unbelievers, and had not piety towards God; and so also they were *unfaithful*. These things were their first duty, while the others should have been done also.

24. *Blind guides.* The allusion may here be to some of the more ostentatious of the sect, who wore *bandages* on their eyes in public, as not

strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel.

25 *Wo unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites ! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess.*

26 *Thou blind Pharisee !*

<sup>1</sup> Mar. 7. 4, &c.

looking on iniquity, lest they should be defiled. They claimed to be leaders in morals, and undertook to be instructors of the people. But Christ shows their utter incapacity for this, and the mischief they must do in such a work. They lacked the very quality which a guide should have. Hence they must lead into evil.—**¶** "*Which strain at a gnat.*" The word means *filter*. This is a proverbial expression. The term refers to the straining of wine, or water, to get it pure. (See Amos 6. 6.) Their conduct is represented by this: straining their drink to avoid swallowing a gnat, and yet swallowing—gulping down—a camel;—particular about little sins, but careless about great ones—seeing *motes*, but overlooking *beams*—affecting the greatest dread of trivial improprieties, but committing the grossest crimes. This was the spirit that could see the mote in another's eye, and think nothing of the *beam* in its own. The old versions read it, "*Strain out a gnat,*" and "*S'train a gnat.*" This, "*Strain at a gnat,*" may be understood in the same sense—straining over and over to get out the last gnat in the wine. The Jews had a proverb of *swallowing an elephant*, analogous to this.

25, 26. These verses are properly connected with the 24th, as explaining it, and showing the danger of their guidance. They were careful of outside ceremonies, but at heart (within), they were full of extortion and excess. The washing of pots and cups, and other such things they did (Mark 7. 8) careful about ex-

cleanse first that *which is* within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also.

27 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto "whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are with-

*u* Lu. 11. 44. Ac. 23. 3.

ternal niceties, but careless about the heart. Even their cups and platters, which they would so ceremoniously wash, were filled with the fruits of extortion and with all excess.—

¶ *Cleanse first.* They are here exhorted to pay first attention to the things *within* their cup and platter. How ridiculous for one to be careless of what was within his dish, and only to see that it have a clean outside.

27, 28. Still further warning the people against the deceits of their wicked teachers, our Lord here further likens them to whited sepulchres. The Jews were accustomed yearly, on the 15th day of Adar, to whiten the vaults or tombs which they had built. This was the season for it, *just before the Passover*, and the fresh white paint would now be conspicuous on the adjoining hills and

in full of dead *me. i.*'s bones, and of all uncleanness.

28 Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.

29 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because

valleys. This gave them a bright, beautiful appearance, and was a token of their attention and respect. It also served to keep them visible to passers by, that they might not touch them and be polluted. (See Numb. 19. 16. Luke 11. 44.)—¶ *Beautiful outward* (*ωπατοι*). The Jews paid great respect to burial. The more opulent had ornamented tombs, and the women visited them, especially a few days after the burial, to strew flowers, or to weep. So the sisters of Lazarus (John 11. 31). (See *cut, from Kitto*.) So the Pharisees kept up their own appearance by mere whitewash, while at heart, they were full of rottenness and corruption. Outwardly they seemed righteous *unto men*, but to God they were known to be full of hypocrisy and iniquity. This is the character of all hypocrites.

29. *Ye build the tombs of the prophets.* Another deception which they practised was this of affecting the greatest respect for the deceased prophets. This would make them seem to the Jews to be zealously devoted to their religion. They showed the greatest zeal in preserving their memory and honour, by erecting tombs of stone sacred to their names.—¶ *And garnish*—that is, *decorate, adorn*. By adding various ornaments to the sepulchres of eminent saints, they affected a great reverence and love for the piety of such. Josephus tells us of the splendid manner in which Herod repaired David's sepulchre, mentioned Acts 2. 29.

30. *And say.* They further pretended by these and other acts, and in their language, that they abhorred the crime of those who killed the pro-



ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous,

30 And say, If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets.

31 Wherefore ye be witnesses unto yourselves, that ye are the children of them which killed the prophets.

v Ac.7.52. 1Th.2.15.

phets: and all this was a mere hollow parade—a vain pretence of hypocrites. People often talk against other sinners, while they are just as bad themselves: “Thou that judgest, doest the same things.”

31. *Ye be witnesses unto yourselves.* Their own consciences and conduct told them that they were the genuine offspring of those who murdered the prophets—that they were like them, as children are like their parents, and not only naturally descended from them, but really of the same sort. So their persecutions of the apostles would soon prove.

32. *Fill ye up then.* This is as much as to say, Go on, then, as you are going, and you will only do as your wicked fathers have done, and will fill up their measure of iniquity—that is, in other words, will complete the iniquity which they have begun. There is an air of irony in the language. Yet it is spoken with the force of a judicial abandonment, as if, at length ordering them to do, what it was so certain they would do; like the language in Isaiah 6. 9, 10 (quoted in Matt. 13. 14, 15—see note), where the prophet’s word to that people was to be, “Hear ye, indeed, but understand not,” and the prophet is commanded, “Make the heart of this people fat.” (See Alexander on the passage in Isaiah.) Comp. Acts 7.57.

33. *Ye serpents.* This further expresses their specious hypocrisy. “The old serpent,” is a scriptural name

32 Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers.

33 Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers! how can ye escape the damnation of hell?

34 Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and some of them ye shall kill and crucify; and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues,

v Ge.15.18. 1Th.2.16. x c.3.7. y Ac.7.59. z Ac. 5.40. 2Cor.11.24,25.

for the devil, who is also called “the father of lies.”—¶ *Generation of vipers.* This alludes again to their being the true children of those who murdered the prophets, and like them in heart—and so they are called a family or brood of vipers, instead of being such a generation as they claimed. As the *serpent* expressed their wicked deceitfulness, so the *viper* expressed their mischievous, poisonous power. They were plainly rushing to destruction, and in the strongest terms, Christ charges them that eternal damnation was most sure to be their lot. He who knew the end from the beginning could predic the result.

34. *Wherefore, behold*—Accordingly, He now shows how their perseverance in iniquity like this, should even now go on and bring them to such a fearful end. Luke speaks of this, as a previous prediction. “Behold the wisdom of God hath said.” The gospel teachers should go among them—that is, the apostles, and others—and they should treat them as cruelly as their fathers had treated their prophets. The Jews called their doctors by these names, *prophets, wise men and scribes*; and Christ so calls His gospel teachers who ought to supersede them. These things were fulfilled after Christ’s death. Stephen was stoned (Acts 7. 59); James was killed with a sword (Acts 12. 1, 2), see Acts 5. 40. Acts 22. 19–24. 2 Cor. 11. 24, 25; and persecution was re-

and persecute them from city <sup>a</sup> to city.

35 That <sup>b</sup> upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel <sup>c</sup> unto the blood of Zacharias <sup>d</sup> son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar.

36 Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation.

<sup>a</sup> He. 11. 37. <sup>b</sup> Re. 18. 24. <sup>c</sup> Ge. 4. 9. <sup>d</sup> 2 Ch. 24. 20, 21.

alized by all the gospel teachers—as Peter (Acts 12. 3), and the brethren (Acts 14. 2). Paul and Barnabas were persecuted from city to city.

35. *That upon you.* This was the result to which all their wicked conduct should tend. They should fill up their cup, or measure of iniquity, until the nation should suffer at length the punishment due for all this continued sin. As they had always been bent on slaying the righteous, so, the blood of righteous Abel, though he was not slain by them (Gen. 4. 8), is laid to their charge. Their spirit was just such as would have slain him also. This is a striking contrast with their pretence in vs. 30.—¶ *Zacharias*—or Zechariah. This is another case of ancient date, recorded in 2 Chron. 24. 20, 21. The object is to show that, as the nation had persisted in like cruelties, they were to be fairly held accountable for those long ago perpetrated by their fathers. This Zacharias was stoned in the porch of the temple, in sight of every thing sacred, which their fury would not allow them to regard. He is mentioned as the son of Jehoiada; but it was customary among the Jews to have two names.—¶ *Whom ye slew*—that is, the Jewish people. Between the temple, or sanctuary, and the altar—i. e., of burnt-offerings.

36. *Upon this generation.* This refers to the coming destruction of Jerusalem, which was prophesied as to come upon the city for the sins of

37 O Jerusalem, Jerusalem thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!

38 Behold, your house is left unto you desolate.<sup>s</sup>

39 For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till

<sup>e</sup> Lu. 13. 34. <sup>f</sup> De. 32 11, 12. <sup>g</sup> Ps. 91. 4. <sup>g</sup> Zec. 11. 6.

the nation. It occurred in about forty years after this time, and would come upon many then living. See Matt. 27. 25.

37. *O Jerusalem.* The holy city of the Jews is here taken for the nation—and this served to set forth more strongly the shocking case—that God's chosen city should have become used to such crime and blood, as killing the prophets.—¶ *That killest.* This is a present participle, and has a special force expressing constant practice. The case of Isaiah, Jeremiah and others, is here referred to. 'They were stoned, they were sawn asunder,' (see Heb. 11).—¶ *How often!* Our Lord here declares that He had cherished toward them the most tender affection, and would often have taken them under His protection and care, as His children.—¶ *Thy children.* The population of a city or country are spoken of in Scripture as the children of that place. This declaration of our Lord, shows to what a pitch of obduracy and impiety they had attained (Isa. 65. 2). They had refused His fondest love (see Deut. 32. 11. Isa. 31. 5. Psalm 17. 8).

38. *Your house*—especially the temple, and generally, including all their estate. The temple was desolate, because God now forsook it in righteous judgment, and it would pass into the hands of their Roman invaders and be destroyed, according to the predictions of the next chapter.

39. *For I say.* Their destruction



ye shall say, \* Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

CHAPTER XXIV.

AND \* Jesus went out, and departed from the temple : and his disciples came to him

*h Ps. 118. 26. c. 21. 9. a Mar. 13. 1. Lu. 21. 5.*

should be certain, because He should depart from them in just judgment—and they should yet see the day when they would hail a Deliverer—the Messiah from God.—¶ *Blessed.* This they sung daily in their Psalm (118. 26), and their nation would yet call for Him as their Messiah, before He should come again. This is prophetic of their restoration, and presents their obdurate unbelief under this striking aspect as a thing yet to be bitterly repudiated by themselves.—¶ *He*

for to shew him the buildings of the temple.

2 And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? Verily I say unto you, There <sup>l</sup> shall not be left here one stone upon

*b 1Ki. 9. 7. Je. 26. 18. Lu. 19. 44.*

*that cometh.* “He that should come,” as John’s disciples termed the Messiah. It was a title by which the predicted Messenger of the Covenant was known. See Mal. 3. 1.

OBSERVE (1.) The sins of religious teachers are most odious before God. (2.) Ostentatious hypocrisy is abominable in God’s sight, and shall be visited with terrible woes, here and hereafter. “Behold the goodness and severity of God” (Rom. 11. 22).

	Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
§ 124. The Widow’s Mite.—THIRD day of the week.—Jerusalem.	....	12.41-44	21. 1-4	
§ 125. Certain Greeks desire to see Jesus. Same day.	....	....	....	12.20-36
§ 126. Reflections upon the Unbelief of the Jews. Same day.	....	....	....	12.37-50

CHAPTER XXIV.

§ 127. JESUS ON TAKING LEAVE OF THE TEMPLE FORETELLS ITS DESTRUCTION.—THIRD day of the week. Jerusalem. Mount of Olives.

Matt. 24. 1-14 | Mark. 13. 1-13 | Luke. 21. 5-19 | John.

1. And Jesus went out. This departer from the temple, expressed in immediate action, what should more fully and fearfully come to pass. He had “*come to His temple,*” as the prophet had said, and now He was about to leave it to destruction. He was passing now out of the city to the Mount of Olives. This temple was of most costly and solid structure. The several buildings included courts, towers, walls, porches, &c. Mark speaks of the stones as being pointed at by the disciples. Luke also speaks of their calling attention to the massive and magnificent materials. Some of these stones were forty cubits long, six wide, and five high—or about sixty feet in length, about nine in height, &c. Some such enormous

blocks are thought to have remained in the north-east wall toward Olivet, since Solomon’s time. They regarded this building as beyond possible destruction. And it was the boast and glory of the Jewish nation.

2. Verily I say unto you. He now takes occasion to foretell the utter ruin of the temple, buildings, &c. The massive structure should be levelled with the ground. This was literally fulfilled to such an incredible extent. The Roman conqueror Titus sought to spare the temple, but the Jews would not come to terms. He even gave orders to extinguish the flames. And after its fall, the foundations were actually p’oughed up, in search of the treasure that so abounded in the furniture and vessels. See Josephus—Alexander’s Evidences. It is estimated that in the erection of the first temple (Solomon’s), 183,000 men were employed seven years—48,000 tons of gold and silver used, computed at \$35,520,000, besides immense quantities of brass, iron and stone.

another, that shall not be thrown down.

3 ¶ And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? And what *shall be* the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world? <sup>c</sup>

4 And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take <sup>d</sup> heed that no man deceive you.

5 For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ;

<sup>c</sup> 1Th.5.1,&c. <sup>d</sup> Col.2.8. 2Th.2.3. <sup>e</sup> Je.14.14.

3. *The Mount of Olives*—is one of "the mountains round about Jerusalem." It overlooked the city, and was about 625 paces east. Between lay the valley of Jehoshaphat—the brook Cedron—and the garden of Gethsemane. Mark mentions Peter, James, John, and Andrew, as inquiring of Christ. They went to Him *privately* as Nicodemus did, because they were amazed, and in the dark, and full of secret misgivings and doubts which they would have Him relieve. They asked of the signs of His coming and of the end of the world, because they had always believed that the temple would stand till the world should end. His coming here refers to the last verse of the last chapter, where He had hinted of such an event. The answer is such as applies both to the destruction of Jerusalem and to the end of the world.

4, 5. *Take heed, &c.* Beware of deceivers. Many should come in His name—that is, claiming to be Christ, and bearing His name. As the Messiah was generally looked for at that time, and as Jesus was disbelieved by the Jews, many deceivers would naturally claim to be the true Messiah. Josephus tells us that this was actually the case, and that many went after them and followed their false teachings. See

and shall deceive many.

6 And ye shall hear of wars, <sup>f</sup> and rumours of wars—see that ye be not troubled: for all *these things* must come to pass, but the end is not yet.

7 For <sup>g</sup> nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places.

8 All these *are* the beginning of sorrows.

9 Then <sup>h</sup> shall they deliver

<sup>f</sup> Da.ch.11. <sup>g</sup> Hag.2.21,22. <sup>h</sup> Lu.21.12.

Alexander's Evidences.—¶ *In my name.* Not by my authority, but *claiming* it.

6-8. *Wars, &c.* The world was now at peace, therefore this marked change in affairs should be a sign. And though wars and commotions, were not peculiar to any age or clime, yet men should remark these things as precursors of the end. They were mentioned here, rather to show that such commotions must be met first—that these were not *the end*—that the disciples must not be soon shaken in mind, nor troubled at such agitations as though the end had come (2 Thess. 2. 2). But they must prepare for the rest and worst, that should follow. Wars and rumors (or reports) of wars abounded throughout the Roman empire, prior to the destruction of Jerusalem. (See Josephus and Tacitus.) —¶ *The end is not yet.* Luke has it, "is not *by and by*," that is, not *immediately*, as the phrase meant.

7. *Famines and pestilences.* The terms and things are often connected. Comp. Acts 11. 28. In Greece, and Rome, and Palestine, there were famines prior to the end.—¶ *Earthquakes.* Pompeii was nearly destroyed by an earthquake, and several cities are mentioned in Asia Minor as being overthrown—also in Greece Earthquakes presaged times of distress. (See Joel 3. 16: 2. 10.)

# MODERN JERUSALEM

ZION

ACNA

MURJAH

DEFFUDA



- A. Road from Jaffa
- B. Tiger Pool of Salomon
- C. Lower Mo. Do.
- D. Hill of Evil Counsel
- E. Fat Hinged Fountain
- F. Pool of Solomon
- G. Tomb of David

- H. Zion Gate
- I. Tower of Hippodrom, Jaffa Gate
- J. Jews Quarter
- K. Church of the Sepulchre
- L. Mosque of Omar
- M. Mosque el Aksa
- N. Constantin's Towers
- O. Golden Gate
- P. St. Stephen's Gate
- Q. Tombs of Kings
- R. Weby Saueel
- S. Road to Azaria

a a Tombs      b b Hill of Offence.

- T. Mt. of Olives. Path to Bethany
- U. Garden of Gethsemane
- V. Tombs Jewish Cemetery
- W. Well of the Virgin
- X. Village of Silwan
- Y. Road from Jerticho
- Z. Pentateuch Gate

Main body of text, consisting of several paragraphs of very faint, illegible handwriting or printed text. The text is too light to transcribe accurately.

you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake.

10 And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another.

i Jno. 16. 2. Ac. 7. 59. j c. 13. 21.

8. *Sorrows.* This term signifies the pangs of childbirth, to which severe afflictions and judgments are frequently compared in the scriptures—also in other writers.

9. *Then.* Luke has it, "before these things." The persecutions of the Christians commenced shortly after Christ's ascension, and continued after the city's destruction.—¶ *Deliver you up, &c.*, i. e. to the authorities. Mark has it, "to councils" or the Sanhedrim.—¶ *To be afflicted*, literally *to tribulation*, to be tried and punished—"and ye shall be beaten in the synagogues, and ye shall be brought before rulers and kings for my sake," &c.; and all this shall be for a testimony in behalf of the gospel and against the persecutors (Mark 13. 9). These things happened after our Lord's resurrection, and are recorded in the Acts of the Apostles. Peter and John suffered imprisonment (Acts 4. 3). So did Paul and Silas (Acts 16. 24), and they were beaten (16. 23). James was killed by Herod (Acts 12. 2). Peter was put to death in the persecution under Nero, before the destruction of Jerusalem, as Christ forewarned (John 21. 18). It was also considered a crime to be a Christian, and adherence to Christ was a sufficient cause for persecution to death.

10. *Shall be offended.* Many shall be turned away from this religion, because of its trials, and many who had professed to follow Christ should fall away and desert His cause.—¶ *Betray one another.* Tacitus states that in Nero's persecution, several were seized at first who confessed, and by their information a multitude of

11 And <sup>k</sup> many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive <sup>l</sup> many.

12 And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax <sup>m</sup> cold.

13 But <sup>n</sup> he that shall endure

<sup>k</sup> 2Pe. 2. 1. 1Jno. 4. 3. <sup>l</sup> 1Ti. 4. 1. <sup>m</sup> Re. 3. 15, 16. <sup>n</sup> Re. 2. 10.

others were convicted and slain. Such shall be the bitterness and severity that shall prevail. Many, to save themselves, will prove treacherous to their fellow-professors—not only deserting them, but handing them over to their persecutors. Luke says "that this shall be done by parents and brethren, and kinsfolk and friends." And the hatred against Christians would be such as to destroy all natural affection. Phygellus and Hermogenes forsook Paul (2 Tim. 1. 15). Hymeneus and Philetus were apostates (2 Tim. 2. 17, 18).

11. *Many false prophets.* Of such also, Josephus is found to testify. Many such appeared during the siege, predicting help from God, to embolden the Jews, and make them obstinate.

12. *And because iniquity.* A caution to the disciples. This is mentioned in this way to show that those times of persecution should be calculated to overthrow the faith of some, and, if possible, destroy the love and trust of the very elect. The general prevalence of iniquity (literally *lawlessness*,) would be such as to discountenance Christianity, and it would have a fearful effect upon the love of many, which would wax (or grow) cold on this account. So the fear of persecution and of desertion by friends, would cool the ardor of Christians.

13. *He that shall endure, &c.* No Christian professor could expect salvation unless he endured to the end. Luke adds encouragements and exhortations. "There shall not an hair of your head perish. In your patience possess ye your souls." This however is a *principle* of universal appli-

unto the end, the same shall be saved.

14 And this gospel of the kingdom shall be °preached in all

o c.28.19. Ro.10.18. Re.14.6.

cation. Those that fall and endure only for a while, cannot expect to be saved. The promise is "to him that overcometh" (Rev. 3. 12).

14. *This Gospel.* All the world, means the whole Roman empire, as referring to that time, and in its more extended application, means the entire globe. In its narrower and wider sense, it is true. The offer of salvation would first be made to them in every part of the world where they should be dispersed, so that by all, their punishment should be acknowledged just. *The Gospel of the Kingdom,* is the gospel of Christ, who sets up the kingdom of grace upon earth. This shows them the kind of universal kingdom He is to have and the wide extent to which it should be promulgated.

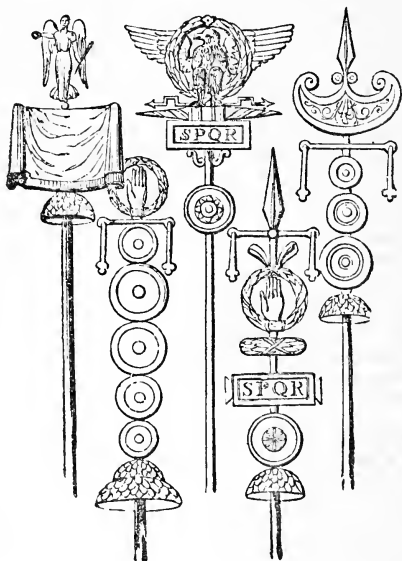
the world for a witness unto all nations ; and then shall the end come.

15 When ye, there-

This message of grace was first to be preached for a testimony or witness to all nations concerned. It was to bear a special witness or manifestation of God to the world. To the Roman empire, it was to go forth as a witness, before the Romans should be embattled with the Jews in the destruction of the city and temple ; and to the then known world it was to go abroad within thirty years after the crucifixion (see Rom. 1. 8 ; 15. 24-28), and before the final coming of Christ and the end of the world, it was to be universally made known.

§ 128. THE SIGNS OF CHRIST'S COMING TO DESTROY JERUSALEM. THIRD day. Mount of Olives.

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	Jo. 2
24. 15-42	13. 14-37	21. 20-36	



fore, shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand :)

16 Then let them which be in Judea flee into the mountains :

17 Let him which is on the house-top not come down to take any thing out of his house :

*p* Da.9.27 ; 12.11.

15. Daniel (12. 11) speaks of the *abomination that maketh desolate*, in connexion with the abrogation of the legal services. The abomination set up was to be the sign of final desolation to Jerusalem. And the allusion of the prophet and of this passage is to the standards of the Roman armies, which bore idolatrous ensigns—eagles. The images of the emperor were carried in front and treated with divine honours ; and Josephus relates that in Jerusalem sacrifice was paid by the Romans to their idols after the conquest of the city. (*See cut.*)—  
—¶ *In the holy place*—“where it ought not” (*Mark*)—i. e., in the temple (see Isa. 60. 13. Acts 6. 13 ; 21. 28). “When ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with these (heathen) armies” (Luke 21 20), as was predicted by Daniel long ago to occur in a specified time.—¶ *Whoso readeth*—i. e. the prophecy. This calls attention to the fulfilment.

16. *Then let them, &c.* These warnings indicate the suddenness of the destruction, and the haste which should be made in flight. Here were directions for the escape of the Christians. These directions were followed, and it is believed that not a single Christian perished in the siege. (Eusebius.) They were to flee to the mountains as was often done for security, and they were not to delay for any articles of furniture or clothing, but to hasten their escape. Many fled to Pella and elsewhere, beyond Jordan, and were safe. A warning is here included of the suddenness of death and the last judgment

18 Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes.

19 And <sup>q</sup> wo unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days !

20 But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day :

21 For <sup>r</sup> then shall be great

*q* Lu.23.29. *r* Da.12.1.

and of our need of timely preparation.

17. *Not come down.* (See figure ch. 19.) The houses were so constructed that by an outside stairs persons could get from the house-tops to the street without entering the house. Mark has it, “not go down into the house, neither enter therein.”

18. *His clothes.* They always laid aside or left behind their upper garments when at work.

20. *But pray ye.* Though the particulars were ordered, they might pray, and ought, for all such things as would relieve their flight. Two seasons they should specially deprecate.

—¶ *The winter.* The winter because of the cold and the state of the roads, and the short days.—¶ *The sabbath day*—they would be restricted in their journeyings on that day more than on others, either by the Jewish law limiting the distance to five furlongs (Exod. 16. 29), or by the gates of the cities being closed (Nehem. 13. 19-22), or by their religious scruples or engagements. We may pray for easy circumstances in our death.

21. *Great tribulation.* (See Luke 21. 24.) The destruction of the city took place during the passover feast, when some three millions of people were usually gathered there from all Judea. Josephus relates that in the siege about 1,100,000 perished, and the whole city ran with blood, and altogether in and about Jerusalem, there were slain fully a million three hundred and fifty thousand. Famine prevailed with all its horrors. Women ate their own children, as was

tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.

22 And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but <sup>s</sup> for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened.

23 Then <sup>t</sup> if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here *is* Christ, or there; believe *it* not.

24 For <sup>u</sup> there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and <sup>v</sup> shall shew great signs and

<sup>s</sup> Is. 65. 8, 9. <sup>t</sup> De. 13. 1-3. <sup>u</sup> ver. 5, 11. <sup>v</sup> 2Th. 2. 9-11. Re. 13. 13.

prophefied. (See Deut. 28. 53, 56, 57. Alexander's Evidences.) 97,000 were carried captive, of whom 11,000 perished from want.—¶ *No, nor ever.* Here is a most emphatic expression, being a *triple negative* in the Greek.

22. *For the elect's sake.* Those days of distress should be shortened on account of the Christians (Isa. 1. 9), who are God's elect, "*whom He hath chosen*" (Mark), and whom He will always regard. If those dreadful horrors should not be stopped before their natural time, none of the nation could be kept alive. The pestilence, famine, and war, would have swept them all away. (Compare Abraham's prayer for Sodom, "*for ten's sake,*" Gen. 18. 32.)

23. *Then if any man, &c.* As the Jews looked forward for a Messiah, as a temporal Prince and Deliverer, they could easily be imposed upon by false pretenders at such a time. Here was a warning against any such who should arise and claim to be the Christ—for the Messiah had already come.

24. *False Christs and false prophets.* Such persons did arise, and led many after them. They even pretended to work miracles. Josephus says they were magicians and sorcerers. Their deceptions were so plausible that they

wonders; insomuch that, if <sup>w</sup> *it were* possible, they shall deceive the very elect.

25 Behold, I have told you before.

26 Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: Behold, *he is* in the secret chambers, believe *it* not.

27 For as the lightning <sup>x</sup> cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

<sup>w</sup> Jno. 10. 28, 29. <sup>x</sup> Zec. 9. 14. Lu. 17. 24, &c.

would have prevailed with the Christians—if it had been possible—to draw them from their faith in Christ.

25. *I have told you before*—that is, *beforehand*, that they might mark the prediction in its fulfilment.

26. *In the desert.* This was the plan. The impostors announced that Christ was in the desert, and sought to draw the people out. Josephus, though a Jew, and an enemy of Christianity, and not intending to verify the Scripture, speaks of such. "Many impostors persuaded the people to follow them into the wilderness, promising to work miracles there"—"one led out thus 4,000 men."

¶ *Secret chambers.* The word means, properly, a store-house, or treasury, and so any private chamber. It is here spoken of the Temple chambers, where they actually looked for the appearing of these false Christs. They were warned against all this device.

27. *As the lightning.* The true Christ should come, but suddenly and manifestly as the lightning. He could be known by His works. The coming, here refer<sup>v</sup> immediately to the visitation of Je. usalem—and the language is so constructed, as to include also His final coming for the destruction of the world.—¶ *The east.* The Roman army entered Judea



28 For wheresoever the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together.

29 Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken.

y Job 39.30. z Is. 13.10. Eze. 32.7. Am. 5.20. Ac. 2.20. Re. 6.12. a 2Pe. 3.10.

at the east, and carried its conquests westward. This may be hinted here.

28. *For wheresoever.* This explains the coming of Christ. It should occur in accordance with established laws, so as to have its explanation in the circumstances. When the people's iniquity was full, and in the fulness of time He should come. And not more naturally did eagles and vultures appear in that country, wherever dead carcasses were cast out in the field, than the coming of Christ in judgment should occur just where and when the guilty transgressors spoken of were found, and when the circumstances were suited. See Job 39. 30. It was more than hinted also, that the Jewish nation were the carcass soon to be a prey for the Roman eagles.

29. *The tribulation of those days.* The same as alluded to in vss. 19, 21 and 22. The days here intended, are those of the siege in which these tribulations should be suffered. Mark has it, "In those days after that tribulation."—¶ *The sun shall be darkened, &c.* This is figurative language. Changes should occur in the government, and ruin should fall upon the cities of the nation, that should be like the putting out of the sun and moon. Fifty years later, under Adrian, occurred the overthrow and complete extirpation of the Jewish people, when they were sold as slaves, and utterly driven out from the land of their fathers. Luke adds other particulars. Similar language

30 And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory.

31 And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet; and they shall gather

b Da. 7.13. Re. 1.7. c c. 16.27. Mar. 13.26. Lu. 22.69. 1 Or, with a trumpet and a great voice d 1Th. 4.16.

is found in Isa. 13. 9, 10, where the destruction of Babylon is spoken of—and this very destruction of Jerusalem is foretold by Joel 2. 31, 3. 15, in the same language. There should be a destruction of their ecclesiastical and civil state, and of the rulers of them both, as well as of their chief cities and of the nation. This actually took place. And the language further looks to the final judgment and the universal catastrophes of that day.—¶ *Powers of the heavens.* See Deut. 4. 19—all the host of heaven.

30. *The sign of the Son of man.* The manifestation and open display of His coming (Luke 17. 30). It shall then plainly appear, as by a standard raised in the clouds, that He has come. This alludes to the prophecy in Dan. 7. 13, from which the Jews had expected a visible appearance of the Messiah in the clouds. He attaches the correct meaning to that language which they had mistaken.—¶ *And then shall all the tribes of the earth.* This is applicable both to the people of Judea, in that judgment—and to the world at the final day (Zech. 12. 12).—¶ *Mourn.* The word means to beat the breast in token of sorrow. It occurs in Rev. 1. 7.

31. *And He shall send His angels.* This shows the care that shall be had to the welfare of God's people. As they are His elec, His choser, so He will choose to defend and deliver them. They shall not suffer harm with the wicked; but their deliver-

together his elect, ° from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

32 Now † learn a parable of the fig-tree: When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh:

33 So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it † is near, even ¶ at the doors.

34 Verily I say unto you, This

° Zec.14.5. † Lu.21.29. † Or, He. † g Ja.5.9.

ance shall be certain and manifest. This was also fulfilled in the gathering of the Gentile church by the trumpet of Gospel messengers. See Rev. 2. 1, where the minister is called "the angel of the church of Ephesus." This is also applicable to the last judgment day. See Matt. 25. 31, 32. Christians who are here called Christ's elect, or chosen ones, shall be gathered from the four winds—that is, from the four quarters of the globe (see 1 Chron. 9. 24. Ezek. 37. 9). None of them shall be overlooked.

32, 33. A parable. This was spoken to show the nearness of these events, so far as they relate to the destruction of Jerusalem. The disciples had asked of the time in vs. 3. Here is a parabolical answer. The sprouting of the fig-tree and the putting forth of leaves would show that summer is nigh. So you can even now observe the indications of this event being near—that is, the destruction foretold, or, as Luke has it, "the kingdom of God (21. 31) is nigh at hand"—His coming with power and glory. These tokens which He had given them, should show that it was even at the doors.

34. This generation. (See ch. 23. 36.) A generation of men is understood to cover a space of thirty to forty years, which was the time that elapsed before the city was destroyed, or about forty years. Lest they should put off the evil day, He assured

generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled.

35 Heaven † and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.

36 But † of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only.

37 But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

38 For as in the days that were

† Ps.102.26. Is.51.6. † Zec.14.7. † Th.5.2.

them how imminent was the destruction which should come upon their land, and that there were none of these things which people then living should not experience. This does not forbid an extension of the prophecy to the last judgment day. For the language has a secondary reference to that event, and that alone exhausts the meaning. The judgment immediately referred to, should occur within that generation. Some, as John the Evangelist, doubtless lived to see these things come to pass. The last judgment is substantially passed upon all at death.

35. Heaven and earth, &c. God's immutability is beyond the steadfastness of the natural world. This language is proverbial. Nothing seems more permanent than the solid earth. So we say a thing shall not occur while the world stands, or the world shall pass away sooner. See Matt. 5. 18. The material world shall finally pass away; but God's words shall not pass away or all. God's truth cannot possibly fail. "Yea, let God be true, but every man a liar."

36. Knoweth no man. This is to declare, in the strongest language, that the precise time is unknown. Mark adds, "neither the Son," that is, as man. It is utterly hidden from human knowledge.

37. As the days of Noe. Here He likens His coming, to the judgment that occurred in the days of Noah by

before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark,

39 And knew not, until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming

J Ge.6.2.

the flood. (*Noe* is the Greek.) Their coming destruction should be equally sudden and surprizing to the unbelieving Jews, as also the final coming to judgment should surprize the unbelieving world.

38. *For.* The people in Noah's time, though so abundantly forewarned, were giving attention to worldly things, and indulging in common gratifications up to the very day of the flood, as though nothing would occur. See 1 Pet. 3. 20.

39. *Knew not*—the real truth of the case, until they experienced the destruction. So far did they persist in their willful ignorance and unbelief—and so it should be with the Jewish nation.

40. *Then shall two be in the field.* So Christ's coming whether to the Jewish nation then, or to the world hereafter, should overtake men at their accustomed avocations, and so it should break up connexions without a moment's warning—and so, the providence of God should distinguish, and take one and leave another, sparing His people, and sweeping away the wicked from their side. The doctrine of distinguishing grace is here also taught.

41. *At the mill.* Mills among the Hebrews were driven by the hand; and two persons, commonly women, were employed in the operation. It was laborious work, and belonged to the lowest maid-servants. See Job 31.

19 The mill itself consisted of two circular stones, commonly two feet in diameter, and half-a-foot thick. The lower is called "the nether millstone," Job 41. 16, which was fixed firmly to the floor or ground, while the upper was turned upon it, by a

ing of the Son of man be.  
40 Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left.

41 Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left.

42 Watch therefore; for ye

k Lu.12.39,40. Re.3.3; 16.15.



stick or handle—one of the women turning it half round—the other driving it the rest of the way. As the nether stone had an elevation in the centre, which fitted in a corresponding hole in the upper stone, the corn was ground by the revolutions, and came out at the edges.

42. *Watch therefore.* All this was calculated to make them watchful and anxious.

§ 129. TRANSITION TO CHRIST'S FINAL COMING AT THE DAY OF JUDGMENT PARABLES—*Ten Virgins. The five Talents.*

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
24. 43-51			
25. 1-30			

know not what hour your Lord doth come.

43 But know this, that if the good man of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up.

44 Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh.

45 Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household,

to give them <sup>1</sup> meat in due season? <sup>m</sup>

46 Blessed is that servant, whom his lord, when he cometh, shall find so doing.

47 Verily I say unto you, that he shall make him ruler <sup>n</sup> over all his goods.

48 But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming:

49 And shall begin to smite his fellow-servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken;

1 Je. 3. 15. m c. 13. 52. n c. 25. 21.

That our Lord here makes a transition and proceeds to speak of His final coming at the day of judgment, appears from the fact, that here the parallel reports of Mark and Luke end, and that which in Luke is parallel to this paragraph (Luke 12. 39), has obvious reference to this final coming at the last day. And that it has here the same reference is apparent from the subsequent warnings, and their intimate connexion with Matt. 25. 31-46. See Robinson's *Harmony—Notes*. The destruction of Jerusalem was a proper emblem of the dissolution of the world, and the warnings which had just been delivered in reference to impending national judgments, would naturally lead to a caution against a more awful surprize by His coming at the final day.

43. *But know this.* As with a man whose house is robbed, he would certainly have watched, if he had known the hour when it would be, so every one that is overtaken by Christ's coming, if he had known the *time* of it would have *watched*. There is really *every motive* for watchfulness; and here is exposed the folly of that man who does not watch, merely because he does not know the time. This would rather be a reason for keeping *constant watch*—and this is *argued* by our Lord in the next verse.

44. *Be ye also ready.* That is, be fully prepared, so as not to be taken by surprize—because death will come without warning, even as a thief. 1 Thess. 5. 2. 2 Pet. 3. 10. Rev. 3. 3. A deathbed is no place for preparation. And none can count on having timely notice. Commonly we find that men are called to eternity in most unexpected times and ways. See Luke 21. 36; 12. 36.

45-47. *Who then.* This duty of vigilance and diligence is illustrated by the case of a servant in his master's absence. A faithful servant looks out for the master's return, and acts in his absence as though he were there, or would any moment appear. A wicked servant takes advantage of the delay, and abuses his trust. The good servant is rewarded by his master's increased confidence. The evil servant represents the careless professor or minister, who acts as though God would not see him, or call him to account. These acts here mentioned indicate dishonesty and cruelty—worthy of severest punishment. Professing Christians or ministers may act so unfaithfully, when they forget their Lord and His promised return.—¶ *Wise*—discreet—prudent.—¶ *Household*—family of servants. Provisions were distributed monthly.

50. *When he looketh not for him.* Be-

50 The lord of that servant shall come in a day<sup>o</sup> when he looketh not for *him*, and in an hour that he is not aware of.

51 And shall<sup>1</sup> cut him asunder, and appoint *him* his portion with the hypocrites: there<sup>p</sup>

<sup>o</sup> 1Th.5.4. Re.3.3. 1 Or, *cut him off.* p c 25.30.

cause he has forgotten his Master, and nas not believed that he would soon return, and so has given himself up to sinful pleasure.—¶ *Day and hour*—are here used, to denote the suddenness. It might occur the next hour of this day, as easily as the next *day*.

51. *Shall cut him asunder.* A most severe punishment. It was sometimes practised. (Daniel, ch. 3. 29. 1 Sam. 15, 33.) And the term is used here only to show that the retribution will be of *the severest kind*. Unfaithful servants of God, ministers or members, who take such advantage, and so abuse their trust, shall have the most dreadful doom.—

¶ *With the hypocrites.* This is to show that hypocrisy is the foulest crime; and that all hypocrites shall dwell in everlasting torment; “all liars shall have their part in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone.” (Rev. 21. 8.)—¶ *Weeping and gnashing of teeth*—is a phrase often used to denote the bitterest agony and convulsions of pain and rage. (See Matt. 8. 12, note.) Death to each of us is the same as Christ’s coming, or at death we are separately judged. And from this passage we learn how wise it is to be prepared *now*, so that whenever death may come we may be ready.

OBSERVE, (1.) Christ’s second coming is purposely concealed as to the precise time, and they who presume to fix its date, go counter to the express warning of God. Our business is to be ready, and count practically in our living, that it may come immediately. As of the former coming, we are to reckon that “the end of all

shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

### CHAPTER XXV.

THEN shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins,<sup>a</sup> which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom.<sup>b</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Ps.45.14. Ca.6.8,9 2Cor.11.2. <sup>b</sup> Jno.3.29.

things is at hand,” and by faith, we are to consider it “nigh, even at the doors.” It will burst upon the world, in the midst of other calculations. (2.) Christ’s coming to us, in death and judgment will be the most sudden—requiring the utmost readiness. (3.) If we knew just when He will come to us, in death, and could know the very date, we should be watching now. (4.) The professed servants of Christ are blessed only as they are watchful and faithful, looking for, and hastening unto, the coming of the day of God. They who make His delay to be slackness, and live like the careless world, must have their portion with the hypocrites. (See 2 Pet. 3. 9.)

### CHAPTER XXV.

1. *Then shall the kingdom of heaven, &c.* This parable is now introduced to enforce the duty of watchfulness, to warn against declension, and to show the danger of neglect. He had spoken of His coming in judgment upon their city and nation, and then He had passed to speak of His final coming.—¶ *The kingdom of heaven*, here refers to the results of the Christian economy among men, and the closing up of means of grace at the end. Christ’s relation to the Church is compared in Scripture to the marriage relation, and symbolized by it. (Matt. 9. 15. Rev. 21. 9. Ephes. 5. 25–32.) This parable refers to the circumstances attending the final consummation, when Christ shall come to be glorified in His saints, and admired in all them that believe. Allusion is here made to the Jewish customs at a wedding. The bridegroom was the newly married husband. Af-

2 And five of them were wise, and five were foolish.

3 They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them :

c Je.24.2-9. c.22.10. d Is.48.1.

ter the marriage feast, which occupied a week, the husband, with the children of the bridechamber, led the bride to his own home. (Ps. 45. 10.) She is accompanied from her father's house by her young friends and companions, while others of these (the virgins here), at some convenient place, meet and join in the procession, and enter with the rest of the bridal company into the hall of feasting. There were usually ten for this ceremony. This number was the number of completeness among the Jews. Where there were "ten men of leisure," a synagogue might be built. —¶ *Lamps.* As this was done commonly at night, they had lamps or torches—a bunch of rags wound thickly round the end of an iron rod, and dipped in oil, was the common torch. —¶ *The bridegroom.* By this is meant the Lord Jesus Christ, whose coming is here illustrated, with its results, when the New Jerusalem shall come down from heaven as a bride adorned for her husband.

2. *Wise, &c.* Some were wise enough to take oil, and others foolish enough to neglect it. These two classes represent the faithful and unfaithful professor—the one prepared for Christ's coming, the other unprepared.

3. *Took no oil.* Whatever is merely outward in the Christian profession, is the lamp; whatever is inward and spiritual, is the oil in the vessel. Oil is in the Scripture a standing symbol of the Spirit. (Exod. 30. 22-33. Zech. 4. 2, 12. Acts 10. 38. Heb. 1. 9.) They should have taken oil, because their torches were of no use without it. They had only a show of preparation, but no substance; lamps without oil, or a form of godliness without the power. They had rather expect His coming in

4 But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps.

5 While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept.

e 1Jno.2.20. f 1Th.5.6.

the day-time—for this life—or had a religion for this world and for the demands of society, with no reference to death or the judgment. There are many such, who have made no substantial or adequate preparation for Christ's coming *at length* and *at night*.

4. *The wise.* True Christians, who made suitable and special preparation for Christ's coming, and had regarded His coming as needing a special provision—as not in the common course of things, and as requiring the spirit in them—these had graces of the Spirit, and good hope through grace. They who prepare for the future are wise, that they may be always prepared—ready at all times for whatever may occur.

5. *Tarried.* That is, *delayed to come.* He did not come as soon as some had expected. They had only a *day-time provision* in fact—only for *this world*—not for the deep night—the *hereafter*—the midnight of death and judgment. —¶ *Slept.* This represents the time—as now at length the night, and not the day—the future, and not the present—when, as in a city at midnight, the populace have put aside the business of the day, and are asleep; and now, only, this special coming is the great concern with the church. This is the ground-work on which the picture is painted. It is Christ's coming, as that ultimate event that shall come *at length*—beyond all other things; not as other secular comings—in the day—but at *night*, as needing the most special preparation—lamps and oil, trimmed and burning—that were not needed if this had been a common matter, or provided for by natural morality —¶ *All slumbered and slept*—not *they all*, as though speaking of the virgins—but "*all*," as indicating the time of sleep—the night.

6 And at midnight <sup>z</sup> there was a <sup>b</sup> cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh: go ye out <sup>i</sup> to meet him.

7 Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps.

8 And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for

*g* Re. 16. 15. *h* 1 Th. 4. 16. *i* Am. 4. 12.

Ward (View of the Hindoos, v. 2. p. 29), describing the parts of a marriage ceremony in India, of which he was an eye-witness, says: "After waiting two or three hours, at length near midnight, it was announced, 'Behold the bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet him.' All the persons employed now lighted their lamps, and ran with them in their hands to fill up their stations in the procession. *Some of them had lost their lights and were unprepared, but it was then too late to seek them, and the cavalcade moved forward.*"

6. *At midnight.* This was the custom, to have a crier go before the bridegroom, and give notice aloud of his coming. Sometimes part of the retinue ran before and gave the public tidings. This is done by Death, the last messenger. We know not when we shall hear that cry. We can be prepared to meet the Lord, only by embracing His offers, and accepting His gospel for our hope, and getting all our supplies of grace from Him. We must prepare *now*, if we would be ready, and we must be ready before we are called, because then, we are obliged to go whether prepared or not. Concerning the second coming of Christ, it belongs essentially to the doctrine that the time be unknown and uncertain, so that there may be this constant and ever-increasing motive to watch, because we know not the time.

7. *Then.* When the call came, all were anxious to have their lights burn. The most careless begin to examine their hopes and preparation <sup>a</sup> last, but often find their lack, nor

our lamps are gone <sup>l</sup> out. <sup>j</sup>

9 But the wise answered, saying, *Not so*; lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather <sup>k</sup> to them that sell, and buy for yourselves.

10 And <sup>i</sup> while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and

<sup>l</sup> 1 Or, *going out.* <sup>j</sup> Lu. 12. 35. <sup>k</sup> Is. 55. 1, 6. <sup>l</sup> Am. 8. 12, 13.

until it is too late. The best need to trim their lamps, examine their hopes, and refresh their faith in Christ —

¶ *Trimmed.* The hand-lamp was naturally small, and would not contain a supply for many hours' burning. The margin reads, lamps "*going out*"—needing to be constantly watched and replenished. The trimming implied two things—the infusion of fresh oil, and the removing whatever had gathered round and was clogging the wick.

8. *Give us.* The foolish now saw their deficiency. They wanted oil now, because they must go, and they applied to their fellows; but the best furnished had no oil to spare. *They* needed all they had for their own use. So the unprepared sinner finds he has nothing that will do for the trying hour. He calls upon Christians, but they cannot give him grace, nor pardon, nor hope. God alone can give saving grace; men cannot convert their fellow-men. *The wise have not* grace enough for themselves and others. "If the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?"

9. *Go ye rather.* The dying sinner must be directed for pardon to Christ alone. The wise virgins gave Christian counsel, though they could not give oil; they directed to Christ and the means.

10. *While they went to buy.* This they had put off till it was too late: verifying vs. 23. ch. 24. If they had known beforehand just when He would come, they would have looked to their timely preparation. Those that were ready were the wise who had oil

they that were ready went in with him to the marriage : and the door was shut. <sup>m</sup>

11 Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, " Lord, Lord, open to us.

12 But he answered and said,

*m* He.3.18,19. Re.22.11. *n* c.7.21-23. He.12.17.

True Christians, who have supplies in Christ, are prepared, whenever their summons may come. If they have repented, and have laid hold on the hope set before them, they are ready.—¶ *The door was shut*—because the marriage company had entered to the marriage, that is, to the celebration or wedding party, that took place in the bridegroom's house, after the ceremony and festal week. We are not sure of having any other season than the present, for this great, momentous work.

11. *Afterward came.* They had not obtained oil ; but, knowing now their extremity, they came to plead for mercy on general grounds. But though God is Love, He has expressed His Love to sinners in the gospel plan, where the door of grace stands open in Christ (Jno. 3.16).—¶ *Lord, Lord.* The impenitent often cry out for mercy when it is too late—when they have so long caviled and neglected, that their *cometh* as desolation, and because they cannot lay hold of the hope—they can only call in vain (Prov. 1. 28).

12. *I know you not.* I do not own or acknowledge you. They are not recognized as believers. The good shepherd knows His sheep, and as they also always know Him, this is as much as to say, Ye never knew me.

13. *Watch therefore.* Be on your guard—looking out for his coming—that is, for His summons at death, and His coming to you in judgment. The reason is, that you know not when He shall come to you with a call to eternity. You know not the day, nor can you be secure even of the hour of the day : for *in an hour* you may be cut off out of robust health. To

Verily I say unto you, I ° know you not.

13 Watch <sup>p</sup> therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.

14 ¶ For <sup>q</sup> the kingdom of

<sup>o</sup> Hu.1.13. <sup>p</sup> c.21.42,44. Mar.13.33,35. Lu.21.36. <sup>q</sup> Lu.12.12,3&c.

be ready, you must be a *true Christian* : loving, believing, and following Christ, and resting on Him alone for salvation, as he is offered to you in the gospel. The only certain plan for being ready on *that* day, is, to be ready *every* day—and unreadiness for that day is without a remedy. In the marriage of the King's Son, the unfurnished guest could get admission, and could be thrust out. It referred therefore to the church on earth. Here, the reference is to the church in heaven—into which nothing unholy can enter, and where they go no more out. This parable shows the mistake of those who make Christ's coming a mere social melioration. Infidels make it a mere matter of the day-time—a high state of advancement in society—a consummation of civilized culture. But it is beyond the day, and past all common changes It belongs to the *hercafter*.

OBSERVE, (1.) There are those who go out to meet the Bridegroom, professors of religion in the church, who have no grace in their hearts—These are they who have lived without thinking of the night of death, or considering well their latter end—and religion has been to them a matter of very inadequate preparation. No new heart—no new conduct—no watching—no prayer. (2.) Such find their deficiency and lack when it is too late. Only the prepared, who have been truly changed—who have embraced Christ, and watched for His appearing—are saved. (3.) The lifeless, careless professor may awake to anxiety and earnest seeking at last, and may call on others for help, but in vain. He may seek for a good hope, but with perverted views and



heaven is as a man travelling into a far country, who called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods.

15 And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one: to every man ac-

1 A talent is 187l. 10s c. 18. 24.

false calculations, he is in danger of being overtaken in his alarm by the judgment!

14. This is not the same parable as the one recorded in Luke 19. 12, though many of the terms are similar. That was spoken in the house of Zaccheus, this on mount Olivet. The last parable brought to view the possibility and danger of a *false profession*, having lamps without oil. This pursues the subject, and shows the duty of active service in Christ's cause, and the reward that awaits the faithful, as well as the doom that must come upon unfaithfulness. There they are *watching* for Him—here they are *working* for Him.—¶ *As a man* By this, is represented our Lord. His servants are His disciples who profess to follow and serve Him—more especially His ministers—and to them He delivers his goods or property, that is, the interest of His cause on the earth, and their powers of usefulness. Christians are entrusted with the concerns of His kingdom, and for this end, they have the gifts of the Spirit. Ephes. 4. 8. We are not to be idly waiting the time of His return, but are to be actively and usefully employed for Him.—¶ *Far country*. They were to look beyond the present temporal state. He was not to come in a temporal kingdom, nor immediately was His great final coming to occur. He would extend and expand their views. Those who think that the end of the world is to be at a given time, as next year or month, become distracted in their appropriate religious duties. They do not lay plans for long and laborious work.—¶ *His own servants*. Slaves of masters, at that time, were often allowed to use

ording to his several ability: and straightway took his journey.

16 Then he that had received the five talents, went, and traded with the same, and made *them* other five talents.

7 K. 12. 6. 1 Cor. 12. 4. & c. Ed 1. 11.

their masters' money in trade, and were to bring him in a share of the profits.—¶ *His goods*—his property.

15. "Talent" now has come to signify any mental endowment or faculty whatever—for these are the gifts that are to be accounted for. Time, wealth, reputation, intellect, and *calls*, are all talents which we are bound to improve. A talent of silver was, at largest calculation, fifteen hundred dollars of our money. Here the five talents are meant to signify the largest share of gifts and means of doing good— and this includes also the highest stations in the church. He gave them different sums to take care of and employ—that is, different stations to fill, and different gifts to use—powers of body and mind, means of grace and goods.—¶ *According to his several ability*—that is, each one's *ability* is his *talent*. Religion does not make all men alike, nor put them in the same circles of society. But each has his own measure of talents to improve, and this is all that is asked of any one. The one-talent men in the church, who bury the goods they have, are guilty.—¶ *Straightway*—immediately. None could complain of inferior gifts, for they were fairly distributed, and no account was asked for more than each had received. Men receive all that they have of natural and spiritual, and temporal gifts, from God alone, for who maketh us to differ from another, and what have we that we have not received (see 1 Cor. 4. 7). The master has a right to expect from us all a profitable employment of all we have and are, in advancing the interests of His cause, which are entrusted to us.

17 And likewise he that *had received* two, he also gained other two.

18 But he that had received one, went, and digged in the earth, and hid his lord's money.

19 After a long time, <sup>s</sup> the lord of those servants cometh, and reckoneth <sup>t</sup> with them.

20 And so he that had received five talents, came, and brought

*s* c.24.48. *t* c.18.23,24.

16. The faithful servants doubled their means, by a useful occupation of them. We get more graces—more means of doing good—and we gain more for Christ's cause, in proportion as we are faithful in the use of what we have. We shall find sure direction in God's word for the use of our means in His service. If a man has property he should wisely employ it in promoting true religion among men. So if he has time, or any other talent, he should use it in serving God. And whatever religious opportunities he has for increasing in knowledge and grace, he should diligently improve.

18. *He that had received one.* Those who have received but few gifts and graces are in danger of pleading excuse on this ground. But he should have put these to some profitable use. It was only this one talent that he was responsible for. Hence he could not plead his small ability or opportunity. Many will do nothing because they cannot do more. Many think themselves excused because they have not as many talents as others. But it is 'according to what a man hath, and not according to what he hath not,' that God demandeth (2 Cor. 8. 12). The Lord requires fidelity in the little as well as in the much.

19. *After a long time.* Though the master long delays, He will come at last. Concerning this subject, see 2 Pet. 3 ch.—¶ *Reckoneth with them.* Makes a final settlement of accounts (see ch. 18. 23). Christ will come at last to the final judgment (Rom. 14.

other five talents, saying, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me five talents; behold, I have gained besides them five talents more.

21 His lord said unto him, Well done, *thou good and faithful servant*: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler <sup>u</sup> over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.

*u* Lu.12.44; 22.29; Re.3.21.

10. 2 Cor. 5. 10). "We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ." The Lord will come to reckon with us *in death*.

20. *Five talents more.* He has gained this by trading (vs. 16)—by active and careful employment of his talents.—¶ *I have gained.* It was the servant's industry applied to God's property. The faithful servant acknowledges God's grace in himself. "*Thou deliveredst unto me,*" &c. (vs. 20). And yet he rejoices in the day of Christ that he has not run in vain, neither laboured in vain (Phil. 2. 16). This that he has to show is not his desert, but the results by God's grace. As Paul, "What is our hope or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ, at His coming?" (1. Thess. 2. 19.) "I—yet not I, but CHRIST LIVETH IN ME."

21. *Faithful.* Dutiful—having aimed to do one's duty. I will exalt thee to higher stations, and to the use of more abundant gifts (Rom. 2. 7). Such do rest from their labours and their works do follow them (Rev. 14. 13.—¶ *Joy of thy lord*, i. e., the entertainment provided on occasion of their lord's return, to which the faithful servants were to be admitted as the highest token of his favour. This represents the reward of faithful Christians. They shall enter into the joy of Christ upon His mediatorial throne, sitting with Him there, and sharing His bliss. "To him that overcometh, will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I overcame

22 He also that had received two talents, came, and said, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me two talents: behold, I have gained two other talents besides them.

23 His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.

24 Then he which had received the one talent, came, and said, Lord, I knew thee that thou art

and am set down with my Father in his throne" (Rev. 3. 21). "Here we have a few drops of joy which enter into our bosoms, but there we shall enter into joy, as vessels put into a sea of happiness."—*Leighton*. Among the Romans, the master's inviting his slave to sit down with him at table, did constitute in itself an act of manumission—henceforth he was free. Henceforth I call you not servants but friends (John 15. 15. Luke 12. 37. Rev. 3. 20).

23. The master will reward men not for their works, but according to their works. "According to the deeds done in the body," shall all be judged. These two received the same approbation, and virtually the same reward.

24. *Then*. This one came *reluctantly*, and *last of all*.—¶ *I knew thee*, &c. He meant to say by this, that the master demanded more of him than he had any right to require, as if a man should look for a crop from a field which he had not sown, or should look for clean grain where he had not *strawed* or scattered the chaff.—¶ *Strawed*. This was the process of fanning, to cleanse the grain from the chaff (chap. 3. 12). He pleaded his inferior gifts, and poor opportunities. There was a show of humility in this. But at the bottom of his excuse, was his false view of

an hard<sup>v</sup> man, reaping where thou hast not<sup>w</sup> sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed:

25 And I was afraid, <sup>x</sup> and went, and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, *there* thou hast *that is* thine.

26 His lord answered and said unto him, *Thou* wicked<sup>v</sup> and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strawed:

27 Thou oughtest therefore to

<sup>v</sup> Job 21.15. <sup>w</sup> Je.2.31. <sup>x</sup> Pr.26.13. Re.21 8. <sup>y</sup> Job 15.5,6. c. 18.32. Lu. 19.22. Jude 15.

*the character of God*.—¶ *An hard man*. Severe—*hard-hearted*, requiring bricks without straw (Exod. 5. 7). "They who know thy name will put their trust in thee."

25. He pleaded that God called to a labour for which He gave no ability; and so he feared Him.—¶ *I was afraid*. So utterly false were his views of the master, and of his own duty. He had the spirit of bondage. The legal spirit that *looks upon God* as an exacting master, and does not see His grace, will always bury its talent. He was afraid lest by employing the one talent in business (so small a sum), he might lose it, and so incur the severity of this harsh master. There are none who have no means of usefulness committed to them—and that obscure station which they occupy is honourable. The blame is in not serving God according to what we have. But this servant laid the blame of his unfaithfulness upon God.—¶ *That is thine*. He claimed to be strictly honest, and to be dealing justly with God. But it is proved against him. Such a slavish fear of God, and such unworthy views of Him as He is in Christ, must lead to all infidelity.

26. *Slothful*—indolent, *lazy*. He is here called "*wicked and slothful*," for his indolence was sinful, and led

have put my money to the exchangers, and *then* at my coming I should have received mine own with usury.

28 Take therefore the talent from him, and give *it* unto him which hath ten talents.

29 For<sup>a</sup> unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away<sup>a</sup> even that which he hath.

30 And cast ye the unprofitable

<sup>a</sup> c.13.12. Mar.4.25. Lu.8.18; 19.26. <sup>a</sup> Lu.12.42.

to sin. He was charged only with neglecting his duty. But for this we are justly condemned, because it is a contempt of God, and a neglect of our best interest. "How shall ye escape if ye neglect so great salvation" (Heb. 2. 3). Mere neglect of Christ, or mere indifference to religion is as certain of perdition as open sin itself, because the only way of escape is despised, and contempt is thrown upon the very grace of God. "Inasmuch as ye *did it not*" (vs. 45). —¶ *Thou knewest.* This is spoken in retort, taking him up at his word. "*Thou knewest?*" Thou oughtest *therefore.*" "Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee. (See Job 15. 6.) If you did know me to be such as you say, you should on *this very account* have been careful to serve me.

27. *Exchangers — money-dealers — bankers*, who allowed interest for the use of money. Very high rates of interest were paid for money by the ancients. Why did he not put out the money to such use, *if he was afraid* of using it in business? And especially *if he was afraid* of a strict and harsh dealing from his lord, this would have been the natural course to take. His lord did not recommend this, but thus condemns the man on his own showing. He might have known that lawful interest or *usury* would be demanded by a severe master. This was his inconsistency. Sinners in all their excuses are grossly inconsistent with themselves. They plead their inability yet they do not pray (as they are urged to do) for greater ability, nor do they honestly employ their common powers, or use the means. From those Christians

who have few means and small opportunities, God demands earnestness, prayerfulness, and growth in grace.—¶ *With usury*—with increase, or interest, as the word *usury* signified in the old English.

28. *Take therefore, &c.* The money was taken from him because he had made such bad use of it, and shown such contempt of the master. It was given to him that had ten talents, as part of his reward for his eminent improvement. The good shall be raised as high as the wicked are cast low. Dives' measure of good things is taken away from him and given to Lazarus. The slothful servant claims to have given back all that he got as in strictest justice. But not so. The law allows a rate of interest that can be *claimed*, equally with the principal. The just return would have been at least the original sum with interest added. The man who despises his talent from God, forfeits it, and shall be stripped of it at length.

29. *Every one that hath.* (See note Matt. 13. 12.) A disposition to improve his talents is here meant. The man of one talent had it not—so he buried it—he put it to no use, he only seemed to have it. To him *that hath to purpose* shall be given an increase, and he shall have *abundance*. But from him that hath not, with such a disposition for improvement, shall be taken away even the talents which he neglected and misimproved—"that *which he seemeth to have.*" If we neglect the time and opportunities given us of God, we may expect to be cast off beyond the reach of mercy (Heb. 6. 7).

30. *Outer darkness.* This is always the opposite to the brilliant festivities

servant into outer darkness : <sup>b</sup> there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

31 ¶ When <sup>c</sup> the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then

<sup>b</sup> c. 8. 12. <sup>c</sup> Da. 7. 13. Zec. 14. 5. c. 16. 27; 19. 28. Mar. 1. 38. Ac. 1. 11. 1 Th. 4. 16. 2 Th. 1. 7. Jude 14. Re. 1. 7.

of the faithful, to which they are admitted, as to an entertainment—while outside, all is utter darkness—sin and misery.

The parable of the virgins and this of the talents would seem to meet two different but common cases in the church among professed disciples. The foolish virgins were over bold and presumptuous. This *one-talent-man*, was suspicious and backward. The former counted the service easy and themselves safe; within reach of full preparation at any time. The latter regarded the Master as one not able to be pleased. The former represented a class that need to be urged and plied by the *alarming* motives. Strait is the gate (ch. 7. 14). Let a man deny himself (16. 24). The latter represents such as need the spirit of *adoption*, instead of that other spirit of *bondage*. Rom. 8. 15. Heb. 12. 18, 22, 24.

OBSERVE, (1.) We are to *work* for Christ as well as to *wait* for Him. (2.) Christians have very different talents entrusted to them for His service. Some have very many endowments and opportunities and means—others have very few. (3.) Those of moderate means and powers are the great majority, and it is of utmost consequence that such feel their high responsibility, and that every one be brought into active and faithful service. This would give prosperity to the churches. (4.) *The joy of our Lord*, is our common inheritance. "If we suffer with Him we shall also reign with Him." There is fellowship of service here—and partnership of glory hereafter. (5.) Mistaken views of God are at the bottom of unfaithfulness in the church.

shall he sit upon the throne of his glory :

32 And <sup>d</sup> before him shall be gathered all nations; and he shall separate <sup>e</sup> them one from another, as a shepherd <sup>f</sup> divideth his sheep from the goats :

<sup>d</sup> Ro. 14. 10. 2 Cor 5. 10. Re. 20. 12. <sup>e</sup> Ezr. 20. 38. c. 13. 49. <sup>f</sup> Ps. 78. 52. Jno. 10. 14, 27.

Chiefly the legal spirit—the spirit of bondage and a lack of the spirit of adoption—which fails to apprehend the *grace* of the gospel, leads to a hiding and burying of the talent. Such are the inactive, backward, and slothful servants. (6.) God claims an improvement of what we have received. The slothful will be cast off: to others He gives the increase.

#### § 130. SCENES OF THE JUDGMENT DAY THIRD day of the week.

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
25. 31-46			

31. *When the Son of man.* From the parables in regard to final retribution, He now passes to *describe* the judgment day—the scenes—the parties. The *Son of man* is Christ. This is a title which Christ generally applies to Himself, and it expresses His glorious Humanity—the mystery of His Divine and Human natures. It occurs often in connexion with something that expresses His proper Divinity. So here, "*in His glory*," in His proper authority and majesty as Governor of the universe and Judge of all. To Him is given "the authority to execute judgment, because He is the *Son of man*" (Jno. 5. 27). This authority as Mediator, is *the throne of His glory*. This makes Him the proper Judge.—¶ *The holy angels*, as distinguished from *fallen angels* (Jude 6), are attendants of His majesty.—¶ *All nations*. All mankind every where, that have ever lived. John 5. 28, 29. The Jews had a notion that the Gentiles would form no part in the resurrection. "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body"

33 And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left.

34 Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world :

*g* He.1.3. *h* Ps. 115.15. *i* Ro. 8.17. *l*Pe. 1.4. *j* 1Th.2.12. *Re*.5.10. *k* 1Cor.2.9. He.11.16.

(2 Cor. 5. 10). "He hath appointed a day in which He will judge THE WORLD." We shall be there at that day.—¶ *Separate them.* This He will do, because they are of different characters—as the *sheep* in a flock are different from the *goats*—and are divided on that account. This is an allusion to the practice of shepherds in early times, to keep the sheep and the goats in different flocks. By the sheep, are meant true *Christians*. Christ calls Himself the Shepherd, and He has a *flock*. "He calleth *His own sheep* by name, and leadeth them out." John 10. 3. By the *goats* are meant the wicked. He will know the characters of each, because He is the searcher of hearts. Wicked children shall be separated from their pious parents on that day, and so they shall remain apart for ever.

33. *On His right hand.* This denotes the favour and protection of the Sovereign and Judge. (Psalm 110. 1.) "Sit thou at my right hand." Only those who are followers of Christ shall be set there. The goats or wicked shall be placed on the left hand, which denotes the place of rejection and condemnation.

34. *The King.* This refers them back to the Parables, where in the character of King He had set forth Himself. The Lord Jesus Christ is King of Kings (Rev. 19. 16. Psalm 2. 6). He must be God, as well as man. The righteous are called "blessed of the Father," as chosen and called from eternity, and given to Him by the Father (John 17. 6), and now approved by Him, and ad-

35 For I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in :

36 Naked and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me.

*l* Is.53.7. *Eze*.13.7. *m* 1Pe.4.9. *3*Jno.5. *n* Ja.2.15,16. *o* Ja.1.27. *p* 2Ti.1.16. He.13.2.

mitted to glory. The earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the *manifestation* of the sons of God." Salvation is all of grace.—¶ *Inherit the kingdom.* This is to take possession of it, as heirs take possession of their estate.—¶ *Prepared for you.* It was made ready long beforehand. It was provided for them and intended to be theirs. It did not come to them of chance or of their own superior goodness—or of their sovereign will—but of God's free choice, "according to the election of grace." (Rom. 8. 29-30. 1 Pet. 1. 2.) And this was ordained in God's gracious purposes.—¶ *From the foundation of the world*—that is, from all eternity. Comp. Ephes. 1. 4, 5. This points back before the world was, to a founder, builder, designer of it. The same God wrought their salvation. This shows that on God's part their salvation is all of grace. No man deserves it—none can have any claim—and if He has chosen to save some, and so has sent Christ into the world, none can complain, for it is a *free gift*—and He can do what He will with His own (Matt. 20. 15). Besides, while it is of free grace on God's part, it is shown to be *according* to their works. Without holiness no man shall see God. These acts of charity and friendship were in great estimation among the Jews, though confined to their kin.

35. *For I was an hungered, &c* They had a tender regard for Him, and for His cause, and improved the means and talents entrusted them. Favours shown to His people He rewards, and will reward as fa-

37 Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee a hungered, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink?

38 When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee?

39 Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee?

40 And the King shall answer

and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch<sup>a</sup> as ye have done *it* unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done *it* unto me.

41 Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart<sup>r</sup> from me, ye cursed, into<sup>s</sup> ever lasting fire,<sup>t</sup> prepared for the devil and his angels:

42 For I was an hungered, and

<sup>q</sup> Pr. 19. 17. <sup>Mar.</sup> 9. 41. <sup>He.</sup> 6. 10. <sup>r</sup> Lu. 13. 27. <sup>s</sup> c. 13. 40. 42 <sup>Re.</sup> 14. 11. <sup>t</sup> Jude 6. <sup>Re.</sup> 20. 10.

vours shown to Himself. "*These my brethren,*" He calls them (vs. 40). Christ and His children are *one*. (John 17. 21.) "Pure religion and undefiled is this." James 1. 27.

36. *Naked*—that is, badly clothed. —¶ *Ye visited*—more literally, *looked after*.

37. *Then shall the righteous*. They were only amazed at such a notice of their meanest services. They could not have thought that small favours shown to the obscurest Christian would be mentioned at the judgment to their praise. They could not have thought that Christ would consider it as done to Himself in person. The true Christian is always humble, and feels himself unworthy of God's favours. God will praise him, where he would be silent.

40. *The least of these my brethren*. The most insignificant of His followers are His brethren (Mark 3. 35), because they do His will, and are His brethren also in tribulation. To do a kindness to His disciples is to do it to Him, because they are one with Him (Matt. 10. 42). So with injuries. Saul persecuted Him thus. (Acts 9. 4.) We should help the hungry, and thirsty, and stranger—we should attend and supply the naked and sick and imprisoned, as we are able. And especially should we regard the wants of Christians in distress, for we are to "do good to all men, especially to them that are of the household of faith" (Gal. 6. 10). These things can be done for Christ's sake—that is,

out of hearty love to Him, and a desire to do good to others because they are His—or because He requires it. Kindness to the poor is not always a sign of grace in the heart. To please Christ it must have His will and His service for the motive, "for without faith, it is impossible to please Him." (Heb. 11. 6.)

41. *Depart from me*—that is, from the presence and favour of Christ. They are *cursed*—that is, condemned, and not acquitted, nor blessed. They must *dwell*, that is, have their home, in everlasting fire. This torment was *prepared*, that is, made ready beforehand, for the devil and his angels—that is, for fallen spirits, and all the wicked who are "the children of the evil one." (Jude 6. Rev. 12. 8. 9.) The wicked must dwell with all the apostate and vile beings in the universe, and their torment must be indescribably awful. It must be real and inevitable, for the devils are already under the condemnation. And it must be eternal. It is expressly said to be *everlasting*. "Gather not my soul with sinners." (Ps. 26. 9.) *Fire* was the common image of punishment to the Jews, expressing severest suffering with all that is loathsome and outcast—as in the valley of Hin-nom. *Note*—Matt. 5. 22. The fulness of the idea cannot be given in language—and it cannot be found out any more than "the worm that never dies." Isa. 66. 24.—¶ *Prepared for the devil*, &c. Some have argued hence that it was not prepared for

ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink:

43 I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not.

44 Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked,

sinner. But Judas went "to his own PLACE." (Acts 1. 25.) They to whom Christ is a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence are not more truly disobedient, than inheritors of a doom whereunto also they were appointed (1 Pet. 2. 8)—"and all liars shall have their part in the lake," &c. Rev. 21. 8. The force of the language therefore is, that the left hand company should inherit the doom of fallen angels, and go to that torment which is already entered on by lost spirits—who are, "for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire." (Jude 6, 7.)

45. *One of the least of these*—that is, those on the right hand. The wicked will be condemned, for not serving Christ in His cause, or in His people—as the man of one talent was condemned for what he neglected to do. If omission of duty is enough to send men to perdition, how shall they answer for the sins committed? The actions of the wicked shall be brought forward in the final day to vindicate God's judgment, and to show that they cannot answer a word. *That every mouth* may be stopped. Rom. 3. 19. What vast crowds shall be compassed by such terms, of all grades of morality!

46. *These shall go away.* These indivi uals on the left hand just commanded to depart from His presence and favour *shall go into everlasting punishment.* So saith Christ the Lamb—the Judge! It is into *punishment*, or torment, inflicted on them for crime, that they are to go -- called

or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee?

45 Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch <sup>u</sup> as ye did *it* not to one of the least of these, ye did *it* not to me.

46 And <sup>v</sup> these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.

<sup>u</sup> Zec. 2. 8. Ac. 9. 5. <sup>v</sup> Da. 12. 2. Jno. 5. 29.

"the lake of fire." (Rev. 20. 14.) This punishment is *everlasting*. The word is the same in the Greek that is rendered *eternal* in the next clause. So that if the *life eternal* means *eternal life*, this everlasting punishment means punishment that is everlasting. The word is used forty-four times in the New Testament in the phrase, "everlasting life," or "eternal life." It is used frequently in phrases kindred, as, "everlasting covenant." Heb. 13. 20. "Eternal inheritance." Heb. 9. 15. "His eternal glory" (*i. e.* God's, which cannot be finite). 1 Pet. 5. 10. "Eternal salvation." Heb. 5. 9, &c. And it is used quite as distinctly, seven times, in phrases like these: "everlasting punishment"—"eternal fire." Jude 7. "Everlasting destruction." 2 Th. 1. 9. And that it can mean nothing less than eternal, without end, is proved from its use in Rom. 16. 26, "The commandment of the EVERLASTING GOD;" and in Heb. 9. 14, of God the Holy Ghost, "the ETERNAL SPIRIT." If the Divine Existence is eternal, so will be the wicked's doom. As the punishment of the wicked will be eternal or everlasting, so also will be the joy of the righteous. They enter into *the joy of their Lord.* vs. 21. This eternal life God hath given to us, in His Son. 1 John 5. 11. Christ is the author of eternal salvation. (Heb. 5. 9.) The *life* includes all that is opposite to the death of the wicked. It is perfect and eternal holiness and happiness in God's presence. "Seeing we look for such things, we should be diligent, that we



CHAPTER XXVI.

AND it came to pass, when Jesus had finished all these sayings, he said unto his disciples,

2 Ye know that after two days

*a* Mar. 14.1, &c. Lu. 22.1, &c. Jno. 13.1, &c.

may be found of Him in peace, without spot, and blameless" (2 Pet. 3. 14). Who of us shall dwell with *everlasting burnings*? Isa. 33. 14.

OBSERVE, (1.) Christ, who is now neglected and rejected, will come to judgment, in inconceivable majesty and glory—"the great white throne"—"all the holy angels." (2.) Mere morality will not be enough at His bar. There are men *who have whereof to glory, but not before God*. A mere negative religion—a barren profession—a faith that is without works—will not be accepted there. (3.) The righteous will be surprized at their good deeds being mentioned—and the wicked at their omissions being taken into account. How mistaken are the multitude in regard to God. How the men of fairest morality must be confounded on this plan of trial. How shall ye escape if ye neglect so great salvation. (4.) Christ is on earth now, in His church, as truly as He was here in the flesh. (40.) (5.) The righteous are children of God, and the wicked are children of the devil. (6.) The doom of the wicked will be eternal as the bliss of the righteous, or the existence of God. (7.) The righteous will have their smallest good works mentioned by Christ. (8.) There is no middle, or moderate doom. They who are not absolutely welcomed and rewarded, will be absolutely cast off and destroyed for ever.

CHAPTER XXVI.

§ 131. THE RULERS CONSPIRE. THE SUPPER AT BETHANY. TREACHERY OF JUDAS.—FOURTH day of the week. *Bethany. Jerusalem.*

Mat.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
26. 1-16	14. 1-11	22. 1-6	12. 2-8

On the fourth day of the week, the

is the feast of the passover, and the Son of man is betrayed to be crucified.

3 Then assembled together the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders of the people,

chief priests and others, after deliberation, came to the formal conclusion to seize Jesus and put Him to death.

1. *When Jesus had finished, &c.* These sayings had been preparatory to the closing up of His ministry. And the final scenes are now coming on.

2. *The feast of the passover.* This was the great festival among the Jews, in celebration of their deliverance from Egypt, when the destroying angel that slew the Egyptian first-born, had passed over the houses of the Israelites marked with blood, and they escaped from Pharaoh. Exod. 12. This was associated in the type, and to be associated in the fact with a greater deliverance of God's people by the blood of Christ. This joyous festival lasted seven days. In Luke and elsewhere, it is called "the *fast of unleavened bread*," because the people were forbidden to allow any *leaven*, or fermented food or yeast, in their houses during this time. Exod. 12. 18.—¶ *The Son of man.* Here again Christ calls Himself by this name, as belonging to this narrative of His humiliation, and of His mediatorial work.—¶ *Is betrayed*—is about to be betrayed, or surrendered by treachery. Here the idea of His death by foulest means, even by violated friendship, is associated with all their ideas of the passover, as a memorial of deliverance. Sinners are delivered from death, only by the sacrifice of Christ. Observe this most definite announcement now of His coming death—the mode of it; and the means by which it shall be brought to pass. The *mode* is crucifixion—the *means* is betrayal by a friend.

3. Here is noted, at the same time, a conspiracy of the Sanhedrim and chief religious officers of the people. How perfectly Jesus knew before

unto the palace of the high priest, who was called Caiaphas.

4 And <sup>b</sup> consulted that they might take Jesus by subtilty, and kill *him*.

5 But they said, Not on the

<sup>b</sup> Ps. 2. 2.

and all things that should come upon Him. They met at the palace or office of Caiaphas, who was high priest that year, as is noted also in John 11. 51. The high priest's office, that used to be hereditary in the family of Aaron, was now an office in the gift of the Romans, and filled without any sacred regard to its institution.

4. *By subtilty*—by cunning and deceit, so that He could not escape their foul purposes, and so that they should not be detected in their malicious intent.

5. *Not on the feast day.* They would have preferred another time; but God chose the passover season, and His counsel stood against their preference. Their reason against this time was, that such crowds—about three millions—assembled in Jerusalem; and in such a case, where various opinions prevailed respecting Christ, a tumult and outbreak might

feast day, lest there be an uproar among the people.

6 ¶ Now when Jesus was in Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper,

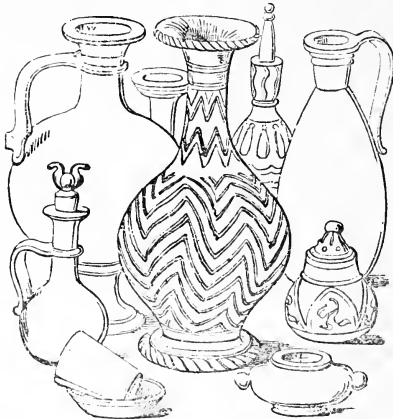
7 There <sup>c</sup> came unto him. a

<sup>c</sup> Jno. 11. 1, 2; 12. 3.

be the result. God chose this season, to have this not done in a corner—and also to have the shadow merge into the substance at the meridian. It was fit that Christ *our passover*, should be crucified at the passover festival.

6. *In Bethany.* Mark has it, "*and being in Bethany,*" as though at this very time, or about the same time. John says that Christ came to Bethany six days before the passover. Yet this supper seems to have been made on the evening following the third day of the week, which, as they reckoned the day from evening to evening, was the beginning of the *fourth* day, viz.: after sunset on Tuesday. This house was that of Simon, who had *once been* a leper, and probably had been cured by Christ. Lazarus was one of those who reclined at the table—a *guest* (see John 12).

7. *A woman.* This was Mary, sister of Martha and Lazarus. John 12. 3



woman having an alabaster box of very precious ointment, and poured it on his head, as he sat at meat.

8 But when his disciples saw it, they had indignation, saying, To what purpose is this waste?

9 For this ointment might

have been sold for much, and given to the poor

10 When Jesus understood it, he said unto them, Why trouble ye the woman? for she hath wrought a good work upon me.

11 For ye have the poor al-

d De. 15. 11.

—¶ *Alabaster box* — αλαβαστρον. These were either jars or vases, called *alabasters*, and made of different materials. More generally, they were long-necked flasks or bottles sealed at the top. The woman is said by Mark, to have *broken* it—that is, probably, the seal. (See *cut.*)—¶ *Very precious ointment*. Mark and John say, *spikenard*. It was very rare and costly, being a most rich perfume, “so that the house was filled with the odour.” John 12. 3. Ointment was used for anointing the body. Ps. 104. 15. It was believed to contribute to health and cleanliness, and to protect from the intensity of the sun. It was used for the perfume in paying visits and at home. It was omitted in mourning. Deut. 28. 40. Ruth 3. 3. It was a token of welcome to guests—among the Egyptians at least; and to be “anointed with the oil of gladness” was so understood. The practice of anointing the dead is hinted at. Mark 14. 8. Luke 23. 56. It was supposed to check the progress of corruption.—¶ *On His head*. This was the common mode. John states also the fact that she anointed His feet (12. 3). She did *both*. She had a *pound* of it, and used it in abundance, as the house was filled with the odour—and it would have brought three hundred pence (see Mark and John), that is, about \$40. As people *reclined* at the table, having their feet spread out on their couch behind them (see note, ch. 23. 6), this anointing of the feet was easily done, and was only an extra mark of her humility and affection.

8. *Indignation*—displeasure and anger. It was Judas to whom this reference is thus generally made

(John 12. 4-6), and this feeling he had, because he had the *bag* or *purse*, of the twelve. He carried the money and was a *thief*, and *bare* (that is, as the word may mean), “*carried away* what was put therein.” He grudged this expense, for he had rather have had the amount given to them, and put in the bag where he could get it. But she had a right to do with her money as she pleased. The avarice that would complain and murmur at this Christian charity and call it a waste, would steal from the disciples’ bag, and sell Christ for thirty pieces of silver, *one third as much!*

9. *Given to the poor*. Not that he cared for the poor. See John 12. 6. What hypocrisy!

10. *Why trouble ye*. This outcry of Judas had, no doubt, grieved and agitated her delicate feeling.—¶ *A good work*—good in itself as prompted by the tenderest affection for Christ, and good as being seasonable for His burial. Mary’s motive was to express her hearty welcome at the supper (John 12. 2), and her strong personal devotion to Christ. Nothing is a waste or too costly that is bestowed upon Him—and such benevolent acts will always be vindicated by Christ, and abundantly honoured (vs. 13) and rewarded.

11. *For ye have the poor*. Judas had pleaded that the expense were better laid out upon the poor, and Christ replies that this opportunity of serving and honouring Him was very special—whereas the poor could *always* be served. As He was to die soon, what was done for His person must be done *then*. Personally, He should soon be absent from them—not to be known “after the flesh.”

ways with you; but <sup>e</sup> me ye have not always.

12 For in that she hath poured this ointment on my body, she did *it* for my burial.

13 Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, *there* shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her.

*e* John 14. 19; 17. 11.

though spiritually He would be present with them always.

12. It was so timely, because (as He now declares) it would serve for a *burial anointing*, though Mary knew it not. And it was not thought extravagant to lay out large expense upon the dead body, for its anointing and embalming. (Christ cannot be present *bodily* in the sacrament of the Supper.) Nicodemus (John 19. 39) brought a hundred pounds weight for Christ's embalming. It was no loss therefore, in respect of the poor (vs. 11), nor of the disciples (Mark 14. 7), nor of the woman (vs. 13), nor of Christ (vs. 12). Christ here further warned of his death as *so near*.

13. *This gospel*—which Christ preached, and which was destined to be promulgated throughout the world. This narrative, He says, should go with the narratives of His sufferings and death, as a memorial—for the remembrance of her—to celebrate this act of piety. It should show what true Christian devotion will do for Christ, as well as what Christ has done for us. This has proved true. The scripture is inspired by God, and everything is told by Divine direction. Three of the evangelists have recorded this account of Mary.

14. *Then*. This rebuke of Judas for his interference with Mary's piety, prompted him to plot for the betrayal of Christ, though it was not the sole impulse. He was urged on by his covetousness and worldly ambition.—¶ *To the chief priests*. Luke adds, "*and captains*"—or leaders of

14 ¶ Then one <sup>f</sup> of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went unto the chief priests,

15 And said *unto them*, What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you? And they <sup>g</sup> covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver.

16 And from that time he sought opportunity to betray him.

*f* c. 10. 4. *g* Zec. 11. 12, 13. c. 27. 3.

the temple guards—heads of the watch. He went to bargain with them. He may have heard of their meeting together (vs. 3) at that time, and for the purpose of taking Christ and putting him to death.

15. *Deliver Him*—hand Him over. Such a proposal directly fell in with their wishes, and the objects of their meeting. It does not seem to have been their plan, but that of Judas. They wished to take him and kill Him (vs. 4), but they had planned to defer it, lest it might raise a tumult at the passover. This hastened the work.—¶ *They covenanted*—literally, *they placed* (in a scale), *weighed or paid*: bargained and agreed at once. Mark says, "*promised to give him money*"—to pay him the amount when the deed was done.—¶ *Thirty pieces of silver*—or shekels. This was the price of a slave. Exod. 21. 32. And this is probably the ground on which the sum was fixed. The amount is computed at fifteen or sixteen dollars (?). The prophecy was also fulfilled (Zech. 11. 12), "*So they weighed for my price thirty pieces of silver.*" So was every minute particular the same as had been foreseen and predicted. Nothing in the death of Christ was without design or calculation. If the *silver pieces* were numbered beforehand, why not the souls that should be saved?

16. *To betray Him*—to deliver Him over to the chief priests, by treachery. The opportunity sought was "the absence of the multitude." Luke 22. 6.

OBSERVE, (1.) A man without the

17 ¶ New <sup>h</sup> the first day of the feast of unleavened bread, the disciples came to Je-

A. EX. 12. 6, 18.

wedding garment. A slothful servant—a foolish virgin—a hypocrite is here. Under a pious pretence was concealed the most base malignity. He was a thief (John 12. 6)—a traitor—a murderer of Christ—and yet the treasurer of the twelve! Our being in the church does not make us safe—but our being in Christ. (2.) He who talks of loss upon Christ, is himself the son of perdition. He who thinks forty dollars too much to waste on Christ's anointing, will take sixteen dollars to betray Him to death! (3.) Behold the depth of human depravity! Judas, who had lived with Christ, and had seen His miracles, and had ranked with the apostles, and must declare Him innocent at last, could hand him over to a cruel death, for the paltriest price. (4.) Temptation to sin is no excuse for sin, no matter how strong it be—no matter if by Satan himself. Judas volunteered to betray Christ. It was his own proposal to the chief priests. Sinners act willingly in yielding to temptation, and this is the condemnation. (5.) Those who are in danger from temptation, should mark the dreadful lengths to which they may be carried, if they yield at all. They should resist at the onset. And while we resist we should pray. 'Lead us not into temptation.' And we have the promise, "Resist the devil and he shall flee from thee." (6.) Money is a snare. They who set their hearts upon it, fall into "many foolish and hurtful lusts, that drown men in destruction and perdition."

§ 132. PREPARATION FOR THE PASSOVER.—FIFTH day of the week. Jerusalem. Bethany.

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
26. 17-19	14. 12-16	22. 7-13	

17. Feast of unleavened bread. It was so called, because, as the bread had not time to be leavened when the Lord appeared for their deliverance

sus, saying unto him, Where wilt thou that we prepare for thee to eat the passover?

out of Egypt, they baked unleavened cakes out of the dough. (Exod. 12. 39.) And so, bread made with leaven or yeast, was strictly forbidden during the feast. The feast lasted from the 14th to the 21st (evening to evening), and the evening of the 14th was called the first—the fermented things having been removed during the day. (Exod. 12. 6, 15.) This feast was called the Passover, because, at that time, the paschal lamb was slain and eaten, in commemoration of their deliverance in Egypt. Luke says, "the day of unleavened bread, in which the passover must be killed." Thus, the lamb was also called "the passover;" as Christ says, "This is my body." They were wont to keep the feast in companies—a family or two together. The houses in Jerusalem were thrown open, for the immense crowd from all the land. How remarkable a company was this of the twelve, with the Master, in a guest-chamber, or spare room. The feast took place in the month Abib, which is our April. After the usual washings or purification, the master of the family, or chief guest, proceeded to give thanks, after which, the first cup of wine was partaken by all present. Then came the washing of hands, with a blessing. Next came the provisions for the table—bitter herbs, unleavened bread, the lamb roasted whole (no bone broken), and the sauce. Then another thanksgiving, taking an herb and dipping it in the sauce, to eat it with all present. (vs. 23.) The table was then removed from before the master of the feast only, who rehearsed openly the deliverance from Egypt. (1 Cor. 11. 26. Exod. 12. 17; 13. 8.) Then the second cup of wine was filled, and the question was asked by the children (Exod. 12. 26, 29), to which the master of the feast would respond, as the dishes were returned—repeating Ps. 113 and 114. Then the second cup of wine was

18 And he said, Go into the city to such a man, and say unto him, The Master saith, My time is at hand ; I will keep

the passover at thy house with my disciples.

19 And the disciples did as Jesus had appointed them : and

partaken, after the usual blessing. Then followed the blessing for the washing of hands, and a second washing took place. (John 13. 4, 5, 12.) Then he took two cakes and brake one of them, and, with the usual form, *blessed the bread*. The bread was then distributed, saying: "*This is the bread of affliction, which our fathers did eat in the land of Egypt;*"—instead of which, Christ said, "*This is my body broken.*" Then all ate, such as chose dipping their portion into the sauce. (vs. 23. John 13. 26.) The master next blessed God, and ate of the paschal lamb, in which the whole company joined. Then the third cup was blessed and drank, called "*the cup of blessing.*" (26, 27. 1 Cor. 10. 16.) And this was followed by thanksgiving for their fathers' deliverance, for the covenant of circumcision, and for the law of Moses. Hence, at this cup the Saviour said, "This cup is the *new testament,*" or covenant. A fourth cup was then usually filled, and a song or hymn sung. (vs. 30.)

The Jews were to remember at this feast, their deliverance, in the destruction of the firstborn in Egypt, when they were *passed over*—and their departure out of the land of bondage. The lamb slain at the passover, represented Christ, "the Lamb of God." A room for the feast was necessary to be prepared, and it could be had, for the houses in Jerusalem on this great occasion, were always thrown open to the public.

18. *Into the city.* Jerusalem was the city by eminence, among the Jews. The festival was kept there by law. The paschal lamb must be slain by the priests at the temple (Ezra 6. 20), and each company received it slain, from their hands, for the solemnity. —¶ *To such a man.* Mark and Luke say, "there shall meet you a man." Luke adds, "when ye are entered into the city." This, like the

case of the ass tied (Matt. 21. 2), showed the omniscience of Christ. They were to identify the man by such a coincidence which none but a Divine mind could foresee. Luke says that *Peter and John* were sent. They must needs be impressed with the fact, that the Master knew, beforehand, all the minutest particulars. Their faith needed all strengthening for the trial at hand.—¶ *The Master saith.* The man was probably a *disciple*.—¶ *My time.* That which He had called *His hour*. He had often said, "Mine hour has not yet come." In John 7. 6, 8, this word is used in the same sense as here. "My time is not yet come," and "not yet full come."

19. *They made ready.* They obtained the lamb and all the articles necessary for keeping the feast. The room was found furnished and prepared (Mark 14. 16). Our Lord partook the passover on the same night in which He was betrayed. This was His last meal with His disciples, the regular and ordinary paschal supper of the Jews, on the evening after the 14th day of Nisan. But this introduced the *festival* of unleavened bread, which lasted seven days. This is what John refers to (13. 17), the feast, or rather festival (*εορτή*), of the passover. (See Numb. 28. 16, 17.) This is distinct from the paschal supper, but from not noticing the terms, has been confounded with it. The passage in John 18. 28, might seem to decide that on the day of the crucifixion, the paschal supper had not yet been eaten. But as the term "passover" was often used to include all the feasts and festivals appertaining to it, and especially the festival of unleavened bread, and as here, there is nothing to restrict the sense to the eating of the paschal lamb, it is warrantably taken in the wider sense. (See Luke 22. 1. Matt. 26. 2. John 2. 13.) There were other paschal

they made ready the passover.

20 Now when the even was come, he sat down with the twelve.

21 And as they did eat, he said, Verily I say unto

you, that one of you shall betray me.

22 And they were exceeding sorrowful, and began every one of them to say unto him, Lord, is it I?

sacrifices connected with the passover, but less public. Special daily sacrifices were appointed for the seven days—and there was a voluntary private sacrifice—a festive thank-offering. It is observed that in the phrase, "the preparation of the passover," John 19. 14, the word *παρασκευη* (pre-

paration) refers, as elsewhere, to the Jewish sabbath, which actually occurred the next day after the crucifixion. It was at length employed as the term for the whole sixth day of the week, or Friday. It was the weekly *παρασκευη* or *παρασκευασιον* that John referred to. (See Robinson's Harmony. Notes.)

## PART VIII.

*The Fourth Passover. Our Lord's Passion and the accompanying events until the end of the Jewish Sabbath.*

Time—two days.

§ 133. THE PASSOVER MEAL. CONTENTION AMONG THE TWELVE. *Evening introducing the SIXTH day of the week. Jerusalem.*

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
26.20	14. 17	22. 14-18, 24-30	

20. *The even.* Between 3 o'clock and 9 was the time for killing the lamb, called also, *between the evenings* (Exod. 12. 6) in the Hebrew.—

¶ *The twelve* were the apostles.—

¶ *Sat down*—literally, *reclined*, as was the posture at table. (See Exod. 12.3,4, as to the number who generally ate the feast together.) Though the passover was at first eaten "standing," the posture was afterward changed to reclining, as a token of rest and security. Luke records the contention of the twelve at this time, and our Lord's instructions to them, at the same time.

§ 134. *Jesus washes the feet of his disciples. Same evening.*

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
			13. 1-20

§ 135. JESUS POINTS OUT THE TRAITOR.

JUDAS WITHDRAWS. *Same evening.*

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
16.21-25	14.18-21	22.21-23	13.21-35

21. *One of you shall betray me—*

"which eateth with me." John says, "He was troubled in spirit." He knew who it was, as He knew all the particulars with utmost exactness, because He was God as well as man, "knowing all things that should come upon Him." (John 18. 4.) Still He did not conceal Himself, because He designed to die, and for this cause He came unto this hour. The eternal purposes of God are accomplished thus by wilful and wicked men. (Acts 2. 23.) "Him being delivered," &c.

22. This was the most definite announcement of His death, in the diabolical manner of it, and they were sorry—"exceeding sorrowful"—on every account—both that He should die, and that it should be by such means. That it should be by any one of *them*, amazed and overcame them. Like innocent men, the whole eleven were agitated, and not knowing what they were to be left to, began to inquire most earnestly. It was worse for one of *them* than for any other, because they had seen His miracles and character, and had professed the closest attachment to Him. *One* of them knew who the betrayer was, and he, Judas himself, was the last to inquire about the guilty person.

23 And he answered and said, He that dippeth *his* hand with me in the dish, the same shall betray me

24 The Son of man goeth as it is written of him: but wo

i Ps.41.9; 55.12-15. j Ps.22. Is 53.

23. *He that dippeth, &c.* The Jewish mode of eating was to take the food from the dish with the hand. Spoons and knives and forks were not then in use. This reply of our Lord was intended to designate the betrayer. He sat near the Lord—John on one side, and Judas on the other, as is supposed. Peter beckoned to John that he should ask the Lord who the traitor was; and Christ, it appears, gave a most distinct sign (John 13. 26): “He it

unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! it had been good for that man if he had not been born.

25 Then Judas, which betrayed him, answered and said, Master

is to whom I shall give a sop when I have dipped it.” This was from the thick sauce, made of dates, figs, raisins, vinegar, &c., and prepared to represent the *clay* which their fathers used in Egypt in making brick. (See vs. 2, note.) That Judas was present at the *passover meal* appears from Luke 22. 21: “The hand of him that betrayeth me is with me on the table.” But that he was *not* present at the Lord’s Supper, appears from John 13. 30.



24. *Goeth as it is written, &c.* Luke “as it was determined.” All the steps in the course of our Lord, even through the betrayal and through death, were appointed and prophesied. It was not of chance, nor without design. This was all in the Divine intention, and it was eternally purposed so to be; and so all the *results* of this atoning sacrifice were purposed. He was delivered up to die by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God. (Acts 2. 23.) This was spoken for their consolation, who were already so agitated, and would soon be so overwhelmed. How consoling to view all our afflictions as ordered by the wise and good counsel of our God. How important to behold God’s eternal purposes in all the steps and issues of Christ’s death. (Acts 4. 27, 28.) Christ’s death was foretold in Isaiah, 53d chap.

Dan. 9. 26, 27. &c.—¶ *But wo unto that man.* Let him be accursed. It was none the less criminal, because it was predicted, or because it fulfilled God’s purposes. It was so great a crime, because it was the treachery of a professed follower and friend—it was against the purest being that the world ever saw—it was for the meanest objects and from the lowest motives—it was against greatest light—for he had seen His miracles, and had heard the heavenly testimonies of His being the Son of God. Jesus knew perfectly (John 6. 64) what Judas was about to do. But He made no attempt to escape. He showed no fear. He came on earth with a full understanding of all He was to suffer, and He was prepared to meet it. He was ordained to suffer all these things, to make expiation for sinners. (See Luke 21. 26,



is it I? He said unto him, Thou hast said.

26 ¶ And<sup>k</sup> as they were eat-

<sup>k</sup> 1 Cor. 11. 23, &c.

"Ought not Christ," &c.) This shows the dreadful nature of sin, that required such a sacrifice for atonement.—

¶ *It had been good for that man if he had not been born*—because in a lost eternity, he should for ever have occasion to lament his existence. This shows that his punishment would be eternal (see Luke 23. 29). This was a proverbial expression among the Jews. The Divine decree did not excuse Judas, because it neither forced him nor induced him to the act.

25. *Then Judas.* The wicked study concealment, and Judas was the last to say any thing of the criminal, for he felt the crime in his heart. He had already engaged to betray Jesus.—

¶ *Master.* Judas is remarked not to have called Jesus *Lord*. He asked this question only to escape singularity, for all the rest had now asked it.—

¶ *Thou hast said,* or, *It is as thou hast said.* Whether Judas now went out, or whether he ate the supper with the rest, has been questioned. He ate the regular paschal meal, but withdrew at the giving of the sop (John 13. 30), leaving Christ and the eleven at the Sacramental Supper. The order of items in the narrative will appear from § 133 to § 137. Matthew aims to bring out the connexion between Judas' conviction and the institution of the Supper. It was a most impressive transition. It will be seen from the sections 136 and 137 that Christ foretold the fall of Peter, &c., before proceeding to the solemnity.

§ 136. JESUS FORETELLS THE FALL OF PETER AND THE DISPERSION OF THE TWELVE.—*Evening introducing the sixth day of the week.*

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
26.31-35	14.27-31	22.31-38	13.36-38

§ 137. THE LORD'S SUPPER.—*Same evening. Jerusalem.*

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
26.26-29	14.22-25	23.19, 20	

23\*

ing, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body.

1 Many Greek copies have, *gave thanks.*

Observe, Christ foretold Peter's fall, and His desertion by the twelve, before the Sacramental Supper. (See § 136.)

26. *As they were eating,* i. e., the passover. It was of the unleavened bread or cakes there used, that our Lord took for the Sacramental Institution.—¶ *Blessed it.* The same is meant as in vs. 27, "*Gave thanks.*" This was in conformity with the Jewish custom at meals (comp. Luke 9. 16. with John 6. 11).—¶ *Brake it.* As a significant type of His body, which should be broken on the cross.—

¶ *This is my body.* This form of expression grew out of the passover forms. That feast was a memorial—and when it was asked in the ceremonies what these things meant, the method of reply was, "*This is the body of the lamb which our fathers ate in Egypt.*" Not the *same*, but this is meant to represent and commemorate that. He could not have meant that the bread was His real body, because His body was present at the table breaking the loaf, and he was speaking and acting in person among them. Observe, too, He broke it *after* it was blessed, when Papists think it was transubstantiated. See also Exod. 12. 11. Gen. 41. 26. John 15. 1, 5. So Luke 22. 20, "*This cup is the new testament in my blood.*" The bread represented His body, as an expressive emblem. "*I am that bread of life,*" and *broken*, as His body should be, the next day by the crucifixion. (See 1 Cor. 11. 23, 25.) This breaking of bread in all after time, would vividly call to mind His violent and cruel death, who "by wicked hands was crucified and slain" (Acts 2. 23). Christians can weep that they have slain the Lord. But they can also partake the emblems of their deliverance and subsistence, with joy—and so *by faith they can feed upon Him.*

27 And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it:

28 For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed

! Je.31.31.

27. *The cup.* This was the passover cup, at the *third* filling—called “the cup of blessing” (see note on vs. 2.) This cup was taken after supper (see Luke), that is, after the regular passover meal was gone through. The Jews drank wine at the paschal feast—and this wine our Saviour used as He found it, called “the fruit of the vine.” Mark 14. 35. Jesus gave the wine to His disciples as He had done with the bread.—¶ *Drink ye all.* The Greek reads “ALL YE,” in the plural, referred to the disciples, and not possibly to the wine.

28. *This is my blood*—a sign or emblem of my blood. This formula occurs again from the forms of the passover feast. They praised God for the covenant of circumcision, and spoke of the cup as a thanksgiving for that covenant, and here the form is followed. “This is my blood of the *new testament*,” or as the word properly reads, “*new COVENANT*.” In the old covenant made with the Jewish nation, the blood of the sacrifices was sprinkled (Exod. 24. 8. Jer. 31. 31-33). His blood was shed on the cross, as His heart was pierced, and He died a sacrifice appointed of God. *The blood is the life.* Levit. 17. 14. He laid down his life. It pleased the Lord to bruise Him. Isa. 53. Sinners cannot be saved in any other way—for “other foundation can no man lay” (1 Cor. 3. 11). The object of the Lord’s Supper is, 1st, a memorial—“This do in remembrance of me.” Ye do show the Lord’s death till He come. 2d. A seal—“a sacrament whereby Christ and the benefits of the new covenant are represented, sealed and applied to believers.” It is a perpetual ordinance in the church, to be observed by Christians till He come. 1 Cor. 11. 26. The friends of Christ should love to partake of it,

for many for the remission of sins.

29 But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day

because it commemorates His love, and seals to them, through faith, the benefits of the covenant. It is the lively representation of Christ crucified, and the nearest approach on earth to the Lamb. It is also His dying ordinance—most important for the visible church, and most sacred to every follower of Christ. Here we feel His preciousness and our sins, and His amazing love to sinners, most deeply, as we are brought most closely in contact with the lively symbols, and with our living Lord.—¶ *Shed for many for the remission of sins.* This language refers back to John the Baptist’s preaching, viz., the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins (Mark 1. 4), and this explains that John heralded this new dispensation of Christ, which they professed to embrace, in his baptism. Yet that baptism looked forward to this plan of remission by Christ’s blood. He preached Christ, through whom was to come this remission—and here it is announced and explained. “For without shedding of blood is no remission” (Heb. 9. 22).

29. *I will not drink henceforth.* He meant by this, to say that henceforth He should no more have to do with these ceremonies. They were about to have their accomplishment in His death, and the great future participation with them would be in heaven, where they should enjoy together the blessings represented in this feast. There all the disciples of Christ will be with Him.—¶ *Fruit of the vine.* (See Deut. 22. 9. Isa. 32. 12.)—¶ *New*, i. e., different from that which they were then partaking. The term has the same force as in the phrases “*new heavens and new earth*,” “*all things new*,” “*New Jerusalem*.”—¶ *My Father’s kingdom.* This is something different from the common

when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.<sup>m</sup>

30 And when

*m* Is. 25.6.

phrase, kingdom of God, and refers to the final consummation in glory. Christ intimates the perfect fellowship and friendship in heaven, between Himself and His people. He shall sit down and feast with them, as a guest with them.

OBSERVE, (1.) This blood-shedding was for PERSONS, not for THINGS—"FOR MANY." (2.) It was IN THEIR ROOM, not merely for their possible advantage. The term "for" in the Greek, means INSTEAD OF (*ὕπερ*)—AS A SUBSTITUTE FOR MANY, that is for all His people. Luke has it, "*which is shed for you.*" And this was His work and design, as announced by the angel at His birth. He gets His precious name from this, "*Thou shalt call his name JESUS, for He shall save His PEOPLE from their sins.*" (See John 17. 9. Ephes. 5. 2. Heb. 7. 27. Isa. 53. 10. Rom. 8. 33. ch. 1. 21. 1 John 4. 10.) "For even Christ, our PASSOVER, is sacrificed for us." (1 Cor.

they had sung an<sup>1</sup> hymn, they went out into the Mount of Olives.

<sup>1</sup> Or. *psalm.*

5. 7.) Though this precious blood is of infinite value, and amply sufficient for all, as appears in the proclamations of grace, and the calls of the gospel which it brings, yet plainly Christ died not in the same sense for all. That some are saved and others not, is traceable to distinguishing grace, and to the sovereign purpose of God, and not ultimately to men's different choosings, because their will is not the sovereign power in salvation, but God's—"Born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. (John 1. 13.) It cannot be man's will that renews, because it is his will that is renewed. "*Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power*" (Psalm 110.3). Hence we learn that all true believers may apply to their full advantage the shedding of Christ's blood. None else can do it. Let every believer approach the table, and feel that satisfaction has been made thus for his sins.

	Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
§ 138. Jesus comforts His Disciples. The Holy Spirit promised.— <i>Evening introducing the sixth day of the week. — Guest-chamber.</i>	.....	.....	.....	14. 1-31
§ 139. Christ the true Vine. His Disciples hated by the World.— <i>Same evening.</i>	.....	.....	.....	15. 1-27
§ 140. Persecution foretold. Further Promise of the Spirit.— <i>Same evening.</i>	.....	.....	.....	16. 1-33
§ 141. Christ's last Prayer with His Disciples. <i>Same evening.</i>	.....	.....	.....	17. 1-26
§ 141½. DEPARTURE TO THE Mount of Olives. . . . .	26. 30,	14. 26	22.39	18. 1

30. *And when they had sung an hymn*—or having hymned (literally). It was customary to commence the Passover service with singing or chanting Psalms 113 and 114, and to conclude the services with the 115th to the 118th from the Scripture, in which not only the events of the Exodus are commemorated, but there is a direct reference to the sorrows of the Messiah, and His resurrection from the

dead. Observe that vs. 36 is a continuation of the narrative, where they come to Gethsemane, at the foot of the Mount of Olives, passing out from the city. The retelling of Peter's fall (vs. 31-35) should occur earlier in the narrative, viz., just before the Supper. See Harmony.

OBSERVE. "FOR THE JOY THAT WAS SET BEFORE HIM He endured the cross, despising the shame" (Heb. 12. 2).

31 Then saith Jesus unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, "I will smite the Shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad.

n Zec.13.7.

[§ 136. JESUS FORETELLS THE FALL OF PETER.]

Matt. 26. 31-35 | Mark. 14. 27-31 | Luke 22 31-38 | John.

31. *Then saith Jesus.* This was a direct and startling declaration of our Lord, which may have been called forth by Peter's inquiry, "Whither goest thou?" (John 13. 36.) Or which more likely was brought suddenly upon them. —¶ *All ye shall be offended* (that is, shall *stumble*, as the word means) because of me—on my account; you will be staggered in your faith on account of my betrayal and delivery into the hands of my enemies. It shall prove an offence, or occasion of stumbling to you, that I, your Leader, shall seem to fall under the power of the wicked. —¶ *For it is written.* This refers them to one of their own prophets' predictions fulfilled in this event. Zech. 13. 7. This represents the Father as smiting Christ, the shepherd of His people. So Isa. 53. "*It pleased the Lord to bruise Him.*" The plan had the highest authority, and His covenant was with the Father. And as a substitute and sacrifice, He was accepted, and in Him the Father was well pleased. Now, when the time had come for Christ the shepherd to be smitten, the flock—that is, the disciples—would be scattered abroad, and would flee for fear (vs. 56). (See Ps. 23. 1.)

32. *But after.* This was to give them the strongest assurance of His actual rising from the dead. Here was a positive appointment made for a meeting after His burial and rising again. It was fulfilled. (See Mark 16. 7. Matt. 28. 16.) Galilee was the spot of His principal ministrations.

32 But after I am risen again, I will go before you into Galilee.

33 Peter answered and said unto him, Though all men shall be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended.

34 Jesus said unto him, Verily

o c.23.7,10,16.

33. *Though all.* This is the strong language. "Though all should be offended" (the word "*men*" is added), meaning all the apostles beside, and all others. This is characteristic of Peter—bold, forward, fearless, hearty. He had strong feeling, too much self-confidence, too little spirit of dependence. Such men are very likely to find themselves weaker and worse than they had thought. "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." —¶ *Will I never.* The phrase in the Greek is intensive—and "is used of that which in no way is or can be."—*Winer.* Luke records a warning that Christ gave first to Peter, "Satan hath desired to have thee, that he may sift thee as wheat." Still he went forward, and with all this forewarning he found himself the guilty man, before he was aware. The prediction had nothing to do with inducing his wilful denial—it would rather have prevented it—nor did it alter the crime "Lead us not into temptation."

34. *Before the cock crow.* The day-break is here meant, commonly called *cock-crow*ing, though the cock crows also at midnight, which accounts for Mark and Luke reading, "*Before the cock crow twice.*" This denial was thrice repeated (see vs. 70-74). He denied being a disciple of Jesus, and denied again and again any acquaintance with Him, or approbation of Him. Our Lord plainly foreknew all this, even in the nicest particulars, and hence, we see His divinity.

35. *Though I should die with thee.* This was the strongest form in which Peter could put his expression of confidence. It was a proverbial expression. This shows us Peter in himself.

I say unto thee, that this night, before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice.

35 Peter said unto him, Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee. Likewise also said all the disciples.

36 ¶ Then cometh Jesus

p Mar. 14.32, &c. Lu. 22.39, &c. Jno. 18.1, &c.

OBSERVE. The strength of man is weakness. However positive we may be of our principles, we should never be above praying against temptation, nor above taking the warnings which Christ gives. Christians may fall into sin, but cannot fall away, for Christ, the Great Intercessor, prays for them, that their faith fail not (Lu. 22.52).

§ 142 THE AGONY IN GETHSEMANE.—  
Evening introducing the sixth day of the week. Mount of Olives.

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
26.36-46	14.32-42	22.40-46	

36. Then cometh Jesus. John has it, "when Jesus had spoken these words," viz. the discourse to them, which he had just recorded (chap. 14-17 inclusive), encouraging them in the gospel—laying down the great practical principles upon which they should stand—opening the plan of His gracious economy, and promising them the Spirit—and concluding with the intercessory prayer. That interesting and parting address to them was made probably before they left the room—"the guest chamber"—which is quite consistent with the general terms of vs. 30, where it is meant that they sung a hymn (according to the custom) and afterward went out to Olivet. They went out probably before midnight. John mentions that Christ's parting words were spoken before they crossed the brook Cedron. This brook ran just under the city wall on the east, before rising the slope of Olivet, where Gethsemane was. (See plate of Modern Jerusalem.) John further mentions (18. 2); that "Judas knew the place—for

with them unto a place called Gethsemane, and saith unto the disciples, Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder.

37 And he took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy.

38 Then saith he unto them,

Jesus oftentimes resorted thither with His disciples." It was not for concealment, but according to His known custom. His obedience unto death was purely voluntary. The place was hallowed, doubtless, to that end, for meditation, converse and prayer.—

¶ Gethsemane. Matthew and Mark read, "a place." The term means "a place of oil presses," from two Hebrew words. John has it, "a garden;" gardens were not allowed in the holy city. A cluster of eight old olives is still found on this consecrated ground of Christ's prayers and agonies.—

¶ The disciples. He directed them to remain where they had entered, while He went on farther to pray alone. Luke says that He charged them to pray against entering into temptation, and "was withdrawn from them about a stone's cast." Matthew gives only the general narrative (22. 41), but speaks of His singling out three disciples and going on, and then withdrawing a short distance from these, to pray.—¶ Sit ye here. This same direction Abraham addressed to his servants when he went to sacrifice Isaac (Gen. 22. 5).

37. Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, viz. James and John (Matt. 10. 2). These three our Lord had taken with Him before on rare occasions. We know not why, unless it was to prepare them, by special experience, for special duties and sufferings, such as fell to their lot. They were chosen to accompany Him at the cure of the ruler's daughter (Luke 8. 51), and at the transfiguration. (Matt. 17. 1.) —¶ Began to be sorrowful. He entered now into the special griefs of

My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me.

39 And he went a little farther, and fell on his face, and prayed,

q Ps.116.3. Is.53.3,10. Jno.12.27. r He.5.7.

His approaching death, and it was as though they had just begun, though He had been a "man of sorrows." The context shows that He suffered now and was "*very heavy*"—oppressed and burdened. He had no sins of His own to make Him sorrowful, but He had assumed the responsibilities of sinners. He had undertaken to be "*made a curse for us.*" Mark says, "He began to be sore amazed and to be very heavy." He bore the curse of sin—the weight of His people's condemnation lay upon Him.

38. *My soul is exceeding sorrowful, &c.* Here He broke out in an expression of His inward agony. As yet all was quiet in the garden—no one had bruised Him—the mere dread of dying could not so have distressed Him, for martyrs have triumphed at the stake—but he was pouring out His soul unto death. (Isa. 53. last vs.) He stood already in the sinner's place, and hence, His *exceeding sorrow* of spirit, "*even unto death*"—reaching the measure of *death sufferings* before physical death came on. Observe, it was *soul-sorrow unto death!*—*¶ Watch with me.* This means substantially the same as Luke's language, "Pray that ye enter not into temptation" (22.40); yet, including, besides this vigilance and prayer for themselves, the idea of sympathizing with Him. He called for their liveliest interest. He was brought to that point of shrinking where He called in their help. It was near midnight.

39. *A little further*—that is, beyond them—removing from the three disciples so as to be quite alone in His grief. Luke's words, "about a stone's cast," refer to this—*¶ Fell on his face.* Luke says, He "kneeled down and prayed." But Matthew

saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me! nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt.

40 And he cometh unto the

s c.20.22. t Jno.5.30; 6.38. Ro.15.3. Ph.2.8.

prostrate attitude which His prayer took, expressive of a most overwhelming wo. All these attitudes of earnestness and anguish He took. This was the natural gesture of his emotion—*¶ If it be possible.* Luke has it, "If thou be willing." Mark refers it also to the Father's pleasure, and speaks of all things being possible with God. Here is the conflict and agony in the Redeemer's breast, showing the extremity to which he was brought, even to the point of shrinking! Here is His FILIAL spirit under the heaviest suffering. Here it is proved *how necessary* it was that Christ should take *this cup*, and not only that He should die, and none other, but that He should take *this cup*, and not another cup—even *this cup of the curse!* It was not possible that He should be released from *this*—for in this there was substitution and expiation. "He hath borne our griefs," &c.—*¶ Cup, or chalice.* As a cup contains something to drink, it is used to express a draught of bitter experience. *¶ Nevertheless.* This he refers at last to the Father's appointment, and thus He defers to the Father's pleasure. It was not more important that Christ should be *voluntary* in His sacrificial work, than that in Him the Father should be "*well pleased*" (Isa. 42. 21). This was expressed at His baptism. "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." "It pleased the Lord to bruise Him. He hath put him to grief." (Isa. 53. 10.) "Thou shalt make His soul an offering for sin." "The Lord hath laid on Him the iniquities of us all." (Isa. 53. 10.) "A body hast thou prepared me," he says; and now, in the sacrifice, the flesh that was taken in order to lie, scarcely survives this agony; and the hu-

disciples, and findeth them asleep, and saith unto Peter, What! could ye not watch with me one hour?

41 Watch, and pray, that ye enter not into temptation; "

u Mar. 13.35; 14.38. Lu. 22.40. Ep. 6.18. Re. 16.15.  
v Pr. 4.14,15. 1o Re. 3.10.

man soul shudders and shrinks at the endurance. This "*Nevertheless*" hints at the covenant which Christ had entered into with the Father, which bound Him to its terms. Though the curse was awful, yet the will of the Father was supreme. Though Christ shrunk, yet He was voluntary, in consideration of that covenant engagement.

40. *Asleep.* Luke has it, He "found them sleeping for sorrow." (ch. 22. 45.) This refers to the three whom He had taken apart. No other Evangelist mentions the cause of their drowsiness. But Luke was a physician (Col. 4. 14), and he was prepared to speak on this point, and he would be likely so to do. So he notices the bloody sweat (22. 44), and the cure of Malchus' ear (22. 51). Persons condemned to die are often waked from sound sleep by the executioner. Excessive sorrow brings on sleep. This is hinted at by our Lord in the next verse.—¶ *Saith unto Peter.* Peter had boasted, but now he was to see and feel his weakness. How feeble are our best resolutions or dispositions towards God. How easily are we overcome by the world, the flesh and the devil. What could we do but for upholding, and strengthening, and reclaiming grace.

41. *Watch and pray, that ye enter not;* or, in Mark, "*lest ye enter into temptation.*" They were in danger of losing their confidence in Christ, when they should see Him betrayed into the hands of sinners. And here they are directed to watch against this temptation, which He saw to be coming on. A concern for their own souls in this coming trial, should keep them watching against Satan's power in their hearts. We should always

the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.

42 He went away again the second time, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, ex-

x Is. 26.8,9. Ro. 7.18-25. Ga. 5.17.

watch, knowing that the adversary is always ready to ensnare and destroy us. They were to pray against being overcome, and lest they should be overcome by that temptation. So we are to pray that we may not run into temptation, nor come in the way of it—especially that we may not yield to it. And if we do not pray, the tempter will gain the advantage.—¶ *The spirit indeed is willing* (προθυμον). Mark has the same Greek word, but it is there rendered "*ready.*" They were in danger from the infirmities of the flesh. These are a fruitful source of temptation. Satan attacks us through the flesh, and takes advantage of our weaknesses. Therefore we are the more earnestly to pray for all needed supports and helps in the trying hour. We should take this passage (says Bengel), not to excuse our torpor, but to sharpen our vigilance (see Heb. 5. 7).

42. *He went away again.* The tenor of His prayer seems altered now, and it is rather a devout submission. He returns now to give in His free and full consent to the endurance. The sufferings are here shown to have been well understood beforehand. This was most important. This is distinctly declared by John (18. 4), "Jesus knowing all things that should come upon him." Yet, "*drinking the cup,*" that is, taking all the load of our condemnation, and going through the bitter experience, was full of agony, from which the flesh could not but shrink. Luke notes that an angel from heaven here appeared and strengthened Him (vs. 43), and that "His sweat was, as it were, great drops of blood falling down to the ground," (vs. 44.) occasioned, as in other instances on record, by the extreme suffering. Yet he

cept I drink it, thy will be done.

43 And he came and found them asleep again: for their eyes were heavy.

44 And he left them, and went away again, and prayed the third time, saying the same words.

45 Then cometh he to his disciples, and saith unto them, Sleep on, now, and take *your*

*y* 2Cor.12.8.

does not say *blood*, but "as it were" *blood—bloody*—or large as drops of blood. And this was from anguish of soul—from burdens laid upon His spirit. Already He lay under the tremendous weight of the curse, and stood charged with the iniquities of such as He had undertaken for in covenant with the Father. Yet, in the midst of it all, He declares His willingness to *drink the cup*, because this was His part in the eternal covenant of redemption, and by this means Jesus was to "save His people from their sins."

43. *Asleep again.* Mark adds, "neither wist they what to answer Him" (ch. 14. 40). They were in the extremest heaviness, completely overpowered, and *not fully awaked* by our Lord's address to them. So at the transfiguration, Peter and they that were with him (the same company of disciples, Peter, James and John) were heavy with sleep, and probably from the overpowering excitement (Luke 9. 32). How poorly able are our weak natures to enter into Christ's sufferings, or His glory.

44. *The same words* (vs. 42). This wrestling was continued, and the utmost earnestness was shown. Repeated praying is a different thing from vain repetition in prayer. From His earnestness we learn not to be discouraged or to grow weary, for "He was heard, in that He feared" (Heb. 5. 7). He was enabled to say, "not my will, but thine be done." We are heard as much by being enabled to endure, as by having the affliction spared us. Paul was heard, not by having the thorn removed, but by

rest: behold, the hour is a hand, and the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners.

46 Rise, let us be going: behold, he is at hand that doth betray me.

47 ¶ And while he yet spake, lo, <sup>z</sup> Judas, one of the twelve, came, and with him a great mul-

<sup>z</sup> Ac.1.16.

having the promise come to Him in all its consoling power—"My grace is sufficient for thee" (2 Cor. 12. 9).

45. *Sleep on now.* In perfect consistency with the foregoing narrative, He comes up to them at last, declaring that He has no longer that special need for their *watching with Him* there as at first—that He had come to the point of peace and triumph, where He had sweetly put all fears to rest, and now He could dispense with their watchings with Him, for He felt not alone as before. Besides, their watching could do Him no good any longer. For scarcely has He uttered these words, when He sees the traitor approach, and, as in the same breath, He cries out, "Rise, let us be going." Here would come in Mark's additional language, "It is enough." Luke's, "Why sleep ye?" (22. 46) would seem to have been at His *first* rising from prayer, corresponding with Matt. 26. 40.

OBSERVE, (1.) How sluggish and unworthy are the best, the favourite three among the twelve. (2.) How insupportable is the curse of sin. (3.) Christ's sufferings are seen to be vicarious—in the stead of others—and the grace free without any desert of others—all according to a *particular plan*, and an eternal covenant with the Father.

§ 143. JESUS BETRAYED AND MADE PRISONER.—*M. of Olives. Evening introducing the SIXTH day of the week.*

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
26.47-56	14.43-52	22.47-53	18.2-12
47. <i>While He yet spake</i> The dis-			



titude, with swords and staves, from the chief priests and elders of the people.

48 Now he that betrayed him gave them a sign, <sup>a</sup> saying, Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is he: hold him fast.

49 And forthwith he came to Jesus, and said, Hail, Master; and kissed <sup>b</sup> him.

50 And Jesus said unto him, <sup>c</sup> Friend, wherefore art thou

<sup>a</sup> Ps. 38. 12. <sup>b</sup> 2Sa. 3. 27; 20. 9. Ps. 23. 3. <sup>c</sup> Ps. 41. 9; 55. 13.

ciples must have marked this striking prediction of Christ and His full foresight of the events. This would naturally strengthen their confidence. Since Judas went out from the supper, He had been bargaining with the chief priests and completing the arrangements for Christ's delivery into their hands.—¶ *With him a great multitude.* John says, "a band and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees." Some have supposed that Judas was entrusted with the command of a cohort stationed in the castle of Antonia, or with the guard which attended near the temple at the time of the great feasts. These were likely Roman soldiers and Jewish guards, carrying "swords and clubs" (translation 1582). The Wicklif translation, 1580, has it "swordis and battis." Besides these, they had "*lanterns and torches.*" See John 18. 3. Guilty consciences led them to make large preparations, and to take a strong force.

48. *A sign.* That there might be no mistake or failure in seizing Christ, he gave them a mark by which they might know which was He; he was *to kiss* the person, and on his kissing Him, they were to seize Him. The *kiss* was a customary mode of friendly salutation among the Jews and early Christians. See Luke 7. 45. Hence the "holy kiss" of Paul. 1 Cor. 16. 20. Rom. 16. 16. This custom still prevails in the Eastern church. What foul hy-

come? Then came they and laid hands on Jesus, and took him.

51 And, behold, one of them which were with Jesus stretched out *his* hand, and drew his sword, and struck a servant of the high priest, and smote off his ear.

52 Then said Jesus unto him, Put up again thy sword into his place: for <sup>d</sup> all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword.

<sup>d</sup> Ge. 9. 6. Eze. 35. 5, 6. Re. 12. 16.

risky. A kiss, the signal to hold Him fast, or as Mark has it, to "take Him and lead Him away safely," or cautiously.

49. *Hail, Master.* This was part of the salutation—"Hail, Rabbi." Health to thee!

50. *Friend*—as we say, "my friend." This is the substance of the conversation which John more particularly details (18. 4-9)—Christ's question, whom seek ye? and their reply—the overpowering effect of His answer, "I am He," &c.—all as preliminary to their seizing Him. Luke has it, "Judas, betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss?" The term here, is meant as the language of recognition—that Christ *knew* Him well, and knew his object—and that the traitor could not deceive Him by his hypocrisy. Judas was not alone—but Christ accosted *him* personally—and to his amazement.

51. *One of them.* This was *Peter*, as John informs us (John 18. 10).—

¶ *A servant.* His name was Malchus. The gracious Saviour healed the wound immediately. (Luke. See Fig. ch. 18. 20.)

52. *Put up again, &c.* This was a rebuke to Peter. The sheath was the place for the sword. Such a deed was even a reflection upon the nature of His kingdom. See John 18. 36. "My kingdom is not of this world, else would my servants fight." Christ needed no such defences, and *they that take the*

53 Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels.

54 But how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?

55 In that same hour said Je-

*e* 2K.6.17. Da.7.10. c.4.11. *f* Lu.24.26,46.

*sword* render themselves liable to the same weapons, and the aggressors in such violence will be the sufferers. Compare Gen. 9. 6, "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed—for in the image of God made He man." Here again Christ shows His willingness to suffer—and the covenant grounds of it all—and John has it here, "The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" (John 18. 11.)

53. *Thinkest thou.* Such a resort betrayed an unworthy trust, and a poor understanding of His higher dependence. It was like getting bread out of stones, instead of living by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God (Matt. 4. 3). It was not for want of helpers that He gave Himself up to Judas. But "for this cause He came unto this hour."—

¶ *My Father.* Here is still the filial temper and confidence. It was not a conflict between the Father and the Son.—¶ *Twelve legions.* A legion was a body of the Roman army, varying from about 4,000 to over 6,000 men. It is taken for an indefinitely large body, as in Luke 8. 30, where the demoniac gave his name as "*Legion*, because many devils were entered into him." The number *twelve* is to the same effect. The *hint* is, that He could have a legion of angels in the place of each disciple for a body guard—and that He did not choose the twelve for such a purpose as a defence with *swords*.

54. *But how then.* Here the whole subject is explained. The Saviour plainly had *undertaken* to die (Bengel). His death was not a common death or any casual event. It had been

predicted in the Scriptures, and an eternal covenant now demanded it as the great prescribed condition of man's redemption. OUGHT not Christ to have suffered these things (i. e. was it *not necessary*). (Luke 24. 26. 27.) He labours to show throughout that His death in all these cruel circumstances, was both predetermined and voluntary. For the prophecies, see Psalms 17. 22. 69. Isa. 53. Dan. 9. 24, &c.

56 But all this was done, that the scriptures of the prophets

*g* Ge.3.15. Ps.22.69. Is.53. La.4.20. Da.9.24,26. Zec.13.7. Ac.1.16.

predicted in the Scriptures, and an eternal covenant now demanded it as the great prescribed condition of man's redemption. OUGHT not Christ to have suffered these things (i. e. was it *not necessary*). (Luke 24. 26. 27.) He labours to show throughout that His death in all these cruel circumstances, was both predetermined and voluntary. For the prophecies, see Psalms 17. 22. 69. Isa. 53. Dan. 9. 24, &c.

55. *Are ye come out, &c.* The three Evangelists have these same words, and they, doubtless, were spoken in a way to leave the strongest impression. This brings out the secret of such preparations for His seizure. It was rendered necessary only in their troubled conscience and disturbed imagination. "The wicked flee when no man pursueth."—¶ *As against a thief*—or rather robber. Here again He declares a voluntary surrender, and the *ground* of it, in the predictions which must be fulfilled. What a tremendous word to them was this, that it was not at all their strong force, but rather the hand of God, even in His arrest. What a thought to the apostate, infamous traitor, that he was fulfilling the Scripture, and that a sovereign God was higher than he—so that even in this, he could not contravene the Divine purpose, nor escape the judgment of God. Here, also, Christ vindicates His peaceable course, and His open, public manner among them. Why all this arming as against a thief, except in their own wicked thoughts? Judas might have feared His power, from the impressions he had of His

might be fulfilled. Then all the disciples forsook him, and fled.

57 ¶ And <sup>h</sup> they that had laid hold on Jesus led *him* away to Caiaphas the high priest,

*h* Mar. 14. 53. &c. Lu. 22. 54. &c. Jno. 18. 12. &c.

wondrous works. Had he not seen His omnipotence?

56. *But all this was done.* Here again occurs this phraseology of the Evangelists, and especially of Matthew, who refers the Jews constantly to their own prophecies. There was a *purpose* in all this that the scriptures should be fulfilled. Gen. 3. 15. Ps. 22. 69. Isa. 53. Dan. 4. 24, 26. Zech. 13. 7. Luke expresses it, "This is your hour, and the power of darkness." (22. 53.)—¶ *Forsook Him.* Then—at this juncture—when He was actually seized, their alarm overpowered them. Natural sense was overcome, and faith failed. The effect was the same with *all of them*, and even this fulfilled His prediction, (26. 31,) and see Zech. 13. 7. Here an incident is related of a young man who followed Him, and was

where the scribes and the elders were assembled.

58 But Peter followed him afar off, unto the high priest's palace, and went in, and sat with the servants, to see the end.

seized by the guard, but escaped. (Mark 14. 51.) Christ should *not be utterly without a follower*, even in that extremity. No suffering was ever so awful as Christ's, even in the garden. We can only judge what it must have been beyond all our thought, by knowing what it was *for*—the curse FOR SIN. "*He was made sin for us*"—i. e., He stood in the sinner's place. Those who continue to sin, after all that has been done for them, He will visit with heaviest retribution; and at the judgment He will utterly reject those who here reject Him. OBSERVE, Christ gave Himself up to death voluntarily. He was delivered up by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God; yet, *by wicked hands He was crucified and slain* (Acts 2. 23).

	Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John
§ 144. JESUS BEFORE CAIAPHAS. PETER THRICE DENIES HIM.—NIGHT introducing the SIXTH day of the week.	26. 57, 59 69-75	14. 53, 54 66-72	22. 54-62	18. 13-19 25-27
	§ 145. JESUS BEFORE CAIAPHAS AND THE SANHEDRIM—IS THE CHRIST—IS CONDEMNED AND MOCKED.—Morning of SIXTH day—Jerusalem.	26. 59-68	14. 55-65	22. 63-71

57. *Led Him away.* Our Lord was in the garden, seized now by Judas' band. The mob gave no reason for seizing Him.—¶ *Caiaphas.* John states that they led Him to *Annas* first. This was out of compliment, for he had been high priest, and those who had held the office retained some of their authority, sat in council, &c. He may have been President of the Sanhedrim at this time. The house of Annas was also a stopping place, until the Sanhedrim should be assembled at the high priest's house. The business of the high priest was to sit in judgment with the Sanhedrim (the scribes and elders), and to exer-

cise judicial authority. Deut. 17. 8, 9. Though the higher jurisdiction was now taken from the Jews, yet the *form* remained, and it was preliminary to a presentment before the Roman governor. Annas sent Him bound to Caiaphas. (18. 24.)

58. *Peter.* His conduct is here noted, since he had so boldly and boastfully pledged himself for the worst. He followed Christ—for he really loved Him, and was anxious for the result; but his fears had overcome him, and *sight* was before *faith*, so that he followed "*afes a'*" Christ has followers, but, oh! *the vast distance* from Him—*the vast distance*

59 Now the chief priests and elders, and all the council, sought false witness against Jesus, to put him to death ;

60 But found none : yea,

though many false witnesses came, yet found they none. At the last came two false witnesses,

† 1 S. 27. 12 ; 35. 11.

distance—afraid of sacrifices for Him, even when He goes to sacrifice Himself for them—afraid of taking any burdens of His blessed cause, when He bore the burden of THEIR SINS ! How little do they know that their happiness and safety lie in keeping near to Him.—† *Palace* (αυλη). This is rather the open square of the dwelling—the court which Eastern houses had in the centre (see Fig. ch 9). John here notes the fact, that another disciple (which was he himself) also followed Christ, and went in with Jesus into the high priest's house. But Peter stood at the door without. Matthew states that the maid in the porch recognized Peter. But John shows us how this occurred. Peter had been noticed, doubtless, standing outside—and then John (who was known at the high priest's house) went out and spoke to the maid and brought in Peter. This undesigned coincidence is an incidental proof of the veracity of the Evangelists.—*Blunt*.

59. Though Matthew and Mark record Peter's denials, after Christ's condemnation, yet they occurred, doubtless, while the council was sitting in judgment. Luke mentions the denial first, and so does John.—† *False witness*. The Sanhedrim sought testimony that could be urged against Him, not in the way of sheer fabrication, for such stood ready, but would not be admitted. They sought to have the show of right, though they had prejudged the case, and had resolved on putting Him to death. But the false witnesses did not agree in their testimony (Mark 14. 56). It is very difficult for two or three (which the law required) to agree in all particulars where the whole is false. Hence we see the strong proof of truth we have in the harmony of the four Evangelists.

60. *Two false witnesses*. The law required two witnesses to convict a man (Deut. 19. 15).

61. *I am able to destroy*. Here was something which they could take hold of. He had spoken of His death and resurrection, and had said that the temple of His body which they should destroy, He would raise again in three days. This language they perverted to a declaration that He would destroy their temple, "the temple of God," &c. (Mark 14. 58). "But neither so did their witness agree together" (Mark 14. 59). Therefore **THIS FIRST PLAN FAILED**. This could have been proved a capital crime, if it had so been said, since it amounted to the claim of the power of working miracles.

62. *The high priest saith*.



† *Answerest thou nothing ?* Here sundry conversations passed, as related

61 And said, This fellow said, I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to build it in three days.

62 And the high priest arose, and said unto him, Answerest thou nothing? What is it which these witness against thee?

63 But Jesus held his peace. And the high priest answered and said unto him, I adjure

j Jno.2.19-21. k Is.53.7. c.27.12,14. l 1Sa.14.26. s. 1Ki.22.16.

some by one, and some by another Evangelist. The high priest wished to draw from Him something which should give ground of procedure—as thus far nothing was shown—accordingly He pressed Him most solemnly on the great point of His alleged Divinity. Satan and the Sanhedrim both battled Him on this point, “IF THOU BE THE SON OF GOD” (ch. 4. 3, 6). *Buxtorf*, in his Talmudic Lexicon, cites a Rabbinical testimony, which admits the subornation of false witnesses against Christ, and which vindicates it by law, on the ground of His introducing a new worship (that is, of *Himself as Divine*), which they counted idolatry. See *Hales' Analysis of Chronology*, vol. 3. p. 209.

63. *He held His peace.* He made no reply, because the witnesses disagreed, and the whole matter was contradictory. The law required the concurrent testimony of two or three examined apart. See *Numb. 35 30. Deut. 17. 6.* And He was not intent on a self-vindication against their malice.—¶ *I adjure thee*—that is, I demand of thee, upon thine oath—by the living God. This was the usual form of administering an oath, and when the accused was thus sworn, it was called the *oath of adjuration*. See *Numb. 5. 19, 21. Josh. 7. 19.*—¶ *Whether thou be the Christ*—that is, the Messiah—“the Son of God”—whom the Jews expected (*Mark* reads “the Son of the Blessed”). The Jews had stoned Him for this claim,

thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God.

64 Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.

65 Then the high priest rent his clothes, saying, He hath

m c.1.6.16. jno.1.34. n Da.7.13. jno.1.51. 1Th. 4.16. Re.1.7. o Ps.110.1. Ac.7.55.

and they understood it to mean an assertion of divinity and equality with the Father, as they declared at the time (*John 10. 31*). Now, if He would confess to such a claim, they would charge Him with *blasphemy* (*Levit. 24. 16*). If He would deny it, they could charge Him with deceiving the people. *Comp. Luke 22. 67, 68.*

64. *Thou hast said.* This is the same as to say—Yes, it is so. *Caia-phas* indeed had prophesied of a vicarious death for the people. “It is expedient for us that one man should die for the people.” *John 11. 50.*—¶ *Nevertheless.* Though you disbelieve it, yet you shall see! Wicked men have no idea of Christ as the Judge, or of their dismay at His *finishing*. He here boldly declared how that tribunal of the Almighty should confound all their judgments, and how He, though now under arrest, and bound, should be seen on the right hand of power, enthroned in majesty and might.—¶ *Coming in the clouds.* According to His predictions (*Matt. 24. 30*), referring primarily to His coming for their destruction, as a city and nation, and also threatening the great final judgment.

65. *Rent his clothes.* This was a customary expression of amazement or grief, though it was a mere form, as the rent was usually in the *seam*. The question now arises upon the justice of the trial and sentence according to the Jewish law. It is plain that they understood the title, *Son*

spoken blasphemy; what further need have we of witnesses? behold, now ye have heard his blasphemy.

*God* (vs. 63), as implying divinity, for so alone could it be blasphemy and worthy of death. Blasphemy was a capital crime, regarded by the Jews with peculiar horror. And if Christ had been a mere man, this claim *would have been blasphemy*, and the death-sentence would have been lawful (see John 10. 31-33). They who deny Christ's true and proper divinity make Him out a blasphemer, and join the Jew in His condemnation and death. The law of blasphemy, as it existed among the Jews, extended not only to the offence of impiously using the name of the Supreme Being, but to every usurpation of His authority, or arrogation by a created being of the honour and power belonging to Him alone. The crime was held in such horror that whoever heard it, was obliged to rend his garments; but not the high priest, except in very special cases. So the high priest's act was an open and exciting testimony to the multitude, of His being found guilty. BUT IT WAS NOT BLASPHEMY IN CHRIST, BECAUSE HE WAS GOD.

66. *He is guilty of death.* The usual form of giving sentence—i. e., He has incurred the penalty of death. (Levit. 24. 11-16.) The high priest, as presiding over the Council or Sanhedrim, called for their verdict. They gave it unanimously, *guilty!* The judgment was now passed in their own supreme court. The next step was to present the case to the Roman government, in whose hands was the power of capital punishment. The sceptre had departed from Judah, since the Shilon had come. The Jewish prejudice was most bitterly roused against Him, on the most religious point—and now they had only to bring the matter before the Roman authority, for their consent to His death. "Pilate was now Vice-Pre-

66 What think ye? They answered and said, He is guilty of death.<sup>p</sup>

67 Then did they spit in his

p Le.24,16. Jno.19.7. q Is.50.6

sident of Judea with capital jurisdiction." (Greenleaf.) Thus far, however, the charge and condemnation was purely on Jewish grounds, in which a Roman could not be expected to sympathize. The God of the Jews, against whom the offence had been committed (as alleged), was neither respected nor recognized by the Romans. This will account for the new form under which the accusation is now made. They shifted the charges, and came before Pilate with a new specification, founded on Roman law, and from that moment, no farther allusion was made to the charge of blasphemy. (See ch. 27. 11.) "It was now a charge of high treason against the Roman State and Emperor, which was wholly within Pilate's cognizance, and which no officer of Tiberius would venture lightly to regard." This led to Pilate's arraignment of Christ. It should be remarked that trials were usually held in the morning, (Jer. 21. 12.) and by the later Jews it was held unlawful to try a capital cause in the night—or to issue a cause of this nature on the same day. This last point was entirely disregarded in the case of our Lord. Before noon He was crucified. To see the *haste* in this transaction, consider that the supper was on Thursday evening—at midnight He was arrested and led before the high priest and Sanhedrim—at six o'clock on Friday morning He was brought before Pilate—was crucified at nine o'clock—darkness reigned from twelve to three—and He was buried the same evening!

67. *Spit in His face.* This was a mark of the most utter contempt and abhorrence. See Numb. 12. 14. Deut. 25. 9. By this time the utmost bitterness of the people had been stirred up against Christ.—¶ *Buffeted* cuffed Him with the fist—Mark adds

face and buffeted him, and others smote *him* with <sup>1</sup> the palms of their hands

68 Saying, Prophecy unto us, thou Christ, who is he that smote thee?

1 Or, rods.

"and began to cover His face." Luke says, "*blindfolded Him.*" And though Matthew does not mention these things, he says they challenged Him to *prophecy who smote Him*—which intimates that He was *first* blindfolded. This shows how the Evangelists undesignedly coincide in their statements, and thus prove their honest truth.—¶ *Smote Him with the palms of their hands* (*errapisaaz*, Gr.)—rapped or slapped Him. This was expressly predicted. (Isa 50. 6; 53. 3, 7.)

68. This was a taunting challenge of His divinity—"Thou Christ." He would not confound them now, as He had it in His power to do. (See John 18. 19-23.) No such impious tests of His claims would He gratify. Luke adds, "Many other things blasphemously spake they against Him." *They were the blasphemers, and not He.*

69. The narrative now connects properly with verse 58. Our Lord was most shamefully treated—and He had prophesied at the supper that during that night, "before the cock crow," Peter should deny Him thrice (Matt. 26. 34). Mark and Luke have it, "*before the cock crow twice.*" The Jews in the time of our Lord divided the night into four periods, *even, midnight, cock-crowing, and morning.* But often it was reckoned from midnight to day-break, by three crowings of the cock—and of this period our Lord spake. Peter indeed believed it not, and all the disciples protested their steadfast adherence unto death.—¶ *Peter sat without.* Mark has it, *beneath.* This was in the hall or open court of Caiaphas' house. An oriental house is usually built around a quadrangular interior court, into which there is a passage, sometimes arched through the front part of the

69 ¶ Now Peter sat without in the palace: and a damsel came unto him, saying, Thou also wast with Jesus of Galilee.  
70 But he denied before *them*

7 Mar. 14. 66, &c. Lu. 22. 55, &c. Jno. 18. 16, &c.

house, closed next the street by a heavy folding gate, with a smaller wicket for single persons, kept by a porter, usually male, sometimes female. (See Acts 12. 13.) In the text the interior court, often paved or flagged and open to the sky, is the *αυλη* where the attendants made a fire, and the passage beneath the front of the house from the street to this court is the *προαυλιον* or *πυλων* (porch). The place where Jesus stood before the high priest may have been an open room or place of audience on the ground-floor in the rear or on one side of the court—such rooms, open in front, being customary. (See Fig. ch. 9. vs. 2.) It was close upon the court, for Jesus heard all that was going on around the fire, and turned and looked upon Peter. Luke 22. 61. Peter's *first* denial took place in the middle of the court, on his being questioned by the female porter. Peter then, according to Matthew and Mark, retreats into the passage leading into the street (or porch), where he is again questioned, and makes his *second* denial. Luke and John do not specify the place. As to the person who now questioned him, Mark says the maid saw him again and began to question him (vs. 69). Matthew has it another maid (vs. 71) Luke writes another person or man (vs. 58), while John uses the indefinite form, "they said," which gives us a key to the fact that Peter was here at length questioned and charged by *several.* The *third* denial took place an hour after, probably near the fire, or at least within the court, where our Lord and Peter could see each other (Luke 22. 61). Though the denials are narrated together, it is to be remembered that during the intervals between them, and all along,

all, saying, I know not what thou sayest.

71 And when he was gone out into the porch, another *maid* saw him, and said unto them that were there, This *fellow* was also with Jesus of Nazareth.

72 And again he denied with an oath, I do not know the man.

73 And after a while came unto *him* they that stood by,

the examination of Christ was going on before the high priest, the progress of which is given in § 145.—Robinson's Harmony, Notes.—¶ *Jesus of Galilee*. This was a title of reproach, as *Jesus of Nazareth*, which Mark reads.

70. *But he denied, &c.*—as though he was perfectly ignorant even of what was meant by the charge. "I know not what thou sayest." This was the grossest, most unblushing falsehood. Mark now testifies that he went out into the porch, and *the cock crew*. (14. 68.)

71. *Into the porch*. After this first denial, Peter withdrew into the porch or vestibule of the *front entrance*. It was now about the time of the first cock-crowing, or about midnight. He was at once met by another, who repeated the charge. It would seem to have been confirmed by others, who insisted on its truth (Luke 22. 58. John 18. 25). Amidst these charges he came up again toward the fire, embarrassed and confused.

72. *Again he denied, with an oath*—more emphatically, and even profanely. This second denial followed soon upon the first—"after a little while." Luke 22. 58.

73. *After a while*—"about the space of an hour after." (Luke 22. 59.) He had now denied twice. Peter was now in or near the court-room. He had drawn nearer within sight of Christ, (Luke 22. 61.) and now "another confidently affirmed" (Luke 22. 59), and they that stood by pressed it on him that they knew him from

and said to Peter, Surely thou also art *one* of them; for thy speech bewrayeth thee.

74 Then began he to curse and to swear, *saying*, I know not the man. And immediately the cock crew.

75 And Peter remembered the word of Jesus, which said unto him, Before the cock crew, thou shalt deny me thrice. And

8 ver. 31. Lu. 22. 31-34.

his speech. His language was Galilean.—¶ *One of them* (of the company).—¶ *Bewrayeth thee*. (Mark, "agreeth thereto.") This enraged him, as it sealed his conviction.

74. Now he denied more vehemently—"began to curse and to swear." This was about the second cock-crow, or about 3 o'clock.—¶ *And immediately the cock crew*. This made good to the letter the prediction of our Lord. Mark says, "and the second time the cock crew." Peter was now within sight of Christ. "The Lord turned and looked upon Peter." Luke 22. 61.

75. *Peter remembered*. "When he thought thereon he wept." Mark 14. 72. "The Lord turned and looked upon Peter." Luke 22. 61. "To the voice of the cock was added the look of Christ."—*Calvin*. This last was requisite. That personal notice and direct attention of Christ, causing us to remember his word (Luke 22. 61), gives the word pungency to us. The truth as it is in Jesus, is flashed upon the mind, by seeing the Saviour face to face. Peter went bitterly because he remembered Christ's love, Christ's warnings, and that tender assurance "Simon, Satan hath desired to have thee that he might sift thee as wheat, but I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not." Luke 22. 32. No one can keep himself from sin without the help of God. Behold this forward, zealous apostle *thrice* denies in so brief a period, and would have gone on to deny with viler oaths, if others had arisen to the accusation.



he went out, and wept bitterly.

### CHAPTER XXVII.

WHEN the morning was come, all the chief priests and elders of the people took

a Ps.2.2. b c.20.19.

Christ restrained the tongues of enemies, else Peter's denials had been thirty rather than three. Peter thought he could walk alone on the sea of Galilee, or go upon his own strength in the midst of temptations. But here he was taught his weakness, as there he was taught his need of Divine help. Being left of God, he cries, "Lord save, I perish." This teaches us the danger of presumption and self-confidence, and the danger especially of carnal influence. In the midst of Christ's foes, Peter thought of their power and number, and his heart failed. We should not forget the word of Christ, nor should we lose sight of the Master. Alas! for those who follow Him afar off. When shall a look from Him melt and reclaim His backsliding followers? Peter's tears did not merit salvation, but they were drawn from him by the covenant look of Christ. Repentance flows from Christ's looking at us in a way to remind us of our sins and of His word, and from our looking at Him in a way to catch this subduing glance of His. Peter after this followed out the charge of Christ—"When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren." We never read of his being any more afraid to be known as a Christian. He was the bold and intrepid champion of the infant cause after the Master was removed; and the two Epistles which bear his name, he wrote full of ripe instruction.

### CHAPTER XXVII.

§ 146. THE SANHEDRIM LEAD JESUS AWAY TO PILATE.—SIXTH day of the week. Jerusalem.

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
27. 1, 2	15. 1	23. 1	18. 28

1. When the morning was come. At early dawn of the crucifixion day.

counsel<sup>a</sup> against Jesus to put him to death.

2 And when they had bound him, they led *him* away, and delivered him<sup>b</sup> to Pontius Pilate the governor.

All the procedure, up to this point, had been carried on at night. Though this was illegal, they disregarded the law. Luke (ch. 22. 66) introduces some of these events in a kind of parenthesis, as if he had said, "As soon as it was day, our Lord having acknowledged that he was the Son of God, they pronounced their sentence of His death." These events, therefore, are to be viewed in their rapid succession, from the paschal supper to the arrest of Christ, and sentence of the Sanhedrim—ALL IN A NIGHT. Now, they consulted how to bring the matter successfully before Pilate, for His death. The events being of such rapid occurrence and sequence, and all within so short a time, the Evangelists cannot be expected to speak very precisely of the time. John says "*it was early*," and "*they led Jesus from Caiaphas unto the hall of Judgment*"—that is, Pilate's. Here, again, it is noted how the religious officers plotted for the death of Christ, and how all the show and formality of trial was with *full intent* to put Him to death. They saw that a charge of blasphemy would amount to nothing before Pilate, as he had no sympathy with the Jewish law. They must therefore frame an accusation upon grounds of Roman law. Having consulted, therefore, "*they began to accuse Him, saying, We found this fellow perverting the nation and forbidding to give tribute to Cesar, saying that He himself is Christ, a king.*"

2. When they had bound Him. "Annas had sent Him bound unto Caiaphas." John 18. 24. But in the examination He had been partly or wholly loosed, and now was rebounded, or more strongly bound, as being considered more certainly condemned.—† Pontius Pilate the gov-

3 ¶ Then Judas, which had betrayed him, when he saw that he was condemned, repented himself, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders,

4 Saying, I have sinned, in that I have betrayed the innocent blood.<sup>c</sup> And they said, What is that to us? See thou to that.

5 And he cast down the pieces

c 2K.24.4.

*ernor*, or rather, the *procurator*. He was a Roman officer, and not Jewish. And as he had jurisdiction in cases of capital crime, and the Jews had no power to put any man to death, they must needs bring the case to his bar.

Tacitus, the Roman historian, gives an account of Christ's being condemned and executed in the reign of Tiberius Cesar, Pontius Pilate being procurator.

	Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
§ 147. Jesus before Herod. . . . . <i>Jerusalem.</i>	.....	.....	23. 6-12	
§ 148. Pilate seeks to release Jesus. The Jews demand Barabbas.	27.15-26	15. 6-15	23.13-25	18. 39,40
§ 149. Pilate delivers up Jesus to death. He is scourged and mocked. .	27.26-30	15.15-19	.....	19. 1-3
§ 150. Pilate again seeks to release Jesus. .....	.....	.....	.....	19. 4-16
§ 151. JUDAS REPENTS AND HANGS HIM- SELF. <i>Jerusalem.</i>	27. 3-10			

3. When he saw that He was condemned, viz.: that Christ was condemned. Perhaps till this time he had thought to satisfy his evil intent without the guilt of his Master's blood. This is often the effect upon a guilty conscience of seeing the contemplated deed of iniquity done. So the murderer often goes frantic at the sight of his victim, or at the thought of what has been perpetrated by his bloody hands. This repentance of Judas was a sorrow of the world that worketh death. He went and hanged himself. His eyes were opened to the horrible enormity the moment he saw it enacted, and Christ actually condemned. Peter's repentance flowed from the melting look of Christ, reminding him of Christ's word. Judas' sprang from the horrors of a guilty conscience, reminding him of his own deed. The latter only drove the miserable man for solace to the parties whom he had served in his sin. The former came from a sense of the injury done to Christ; it caught a sight of His gracious face, and it led to His feet.—¶ *Thirty pieces.* This was the price of be-

trayal—the money that he had received from the Sanhedrim for his traitorous work.

4. *I have sinned, &c.* He now confesses to them this sin. He thinks not of a sinful heart and life, but of a sinful act. He confesses, not to Christ, but to the chief priests.—¶ *Betrayed the innocent blood*—or been guilty of bringing this innocent being to death. The blood he thinks of—and that blood innocent. His testimony is most important. Judas had been with Christ nearly two years, as one of His constant attendants. If He had been a malefactor or impostor, he would have known it. He had now no motive to exculpate Him, but rather the contrary. Yet against himself—against his own recent act—and in a way to condemn himself before those whom he had just now served, he declares that Christ is innocent, and that the blood that should flow on Calvary, was innocent blood. The chief priests did not let Christ go, because they were bent on His death.—¶ *What is that to us?* They care not for Judas' remorse—nor could they cure it. His own cup of iniquity

of silver in the temple, and departed, and went and hanged <sup>d</sup> himself.

6 And the chief priests took the silver pieces, and said, It is not lawful for to put them into the treasury, because it is the price of blood.

<sup>d</sup> Ps. 55. 23. 2Sa. 17. 23. Ac. 1. 18.

was full. They only cared to have their victim—and they would put Christ to death, though Judas were to hang himself for betraying Him. How often do wicked men sacrifice their partners in sin, and treat the agonies of the sufferers with the most utter hardness and contempt.

5. *Cast down the pieces.* Now he would throw away the infamous and bloody bribe; but that could not put away his sin, nor his suffering. Who can imagine this fire of torment in his soul? He went to the temple, with this desperate intent of hanging himself—and as if this would help to satisfy his mind, he threw the money on the temple floor.—¶ *Hanged himself.* On his way to this suicidal act, he cast away the silver. Entrapped by this bait, he cares no longer for the bait, but only for an escape! Alas, it is from himself and from his own undying thoughts, that he would seek a refuge. Eternity gives him only a prison. Luke has written, in the Acts 1. 18, that Judas “falling headlong, burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out.” This was the tragic result. In a hasty attempt to hang himself, he fell so as to be dashed in pieces like a potter’s vessel (Psalm 2).

6. *Not lawful.* The chief priests, who had so wickedly plotted for Christ’s death, are now very scrupulous about this point of ceremonial law. What hypocrites! They who are most rigid in mere formalities, and who find all their religion in the outward rites, can sometimes perpetrate the blackest crimes.—¶ *The treasury.* This was the chest (or chests) in the court of the women, for

7 And they took counsel, and bought with them the potter’s field, to bury strangers in.

8 Wherefore that field was called, The field of blood, unto this day.

9 Then was fulfilled that which was spoken <sup>e</sup> by Jeremy

<sup>e</sup> Ze. 11. 12, 13.

receiving the offerings of worshippers (see ch. 15. 5). They found a law against putting this money into the treasury of the temple. It was not allowable to offer to God what was regarded an abomination (Deut. 23 18).—¶ *The price of blood*—that which had been the means of death.

7. *They took counsel*—that is, about what should be done with the money—as the next clause shows.—¶ *The potter’s field.* A field near Jerusalem, that had been used for making earthenware. The size of it is not mentioned; but it was evidently a spot which was valuable for little else than a grave yard, and it was considered a charitable use of the money, to purchase this ground “to bury strangers in”—such as died at Jerusalem, not belonging there—as when they came up from all quarters to the feast. *Strangers* are provided for in death by the price of Christ’s blood. They that were far off are brought nigh by the blood of Christ, even “aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise.”

8. *Wherefore.* This field gets a name in Providence, that commemorates the bloody deed. That measure which the chief priests used as a *mock charity*, is made a memorial of their impiety. It was called *Aceldama*, which means this, Acts 1. 19, (see *View of Mod. Jerusalem*)—and it was so called at the time of Matthew’s writing this history, several years after, at least.

9. *Jeremy the prophet.* Jeremiah’s prophecy, as it anciently commenced that division of the Old Testament Scriptures, called *the prophets*, was

the prophet, saying, And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of him that was valued, whom they of the children of Israel did value;

10 And gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord appointed me.

11 ¶ And Jesus stood before

1 Or, whom they bought of the children of Israel.

often a name for the whole—and under this name, quotations from the prophets were made. This will account for these words, which are found in Zechariah, being quoted as if from Jeremiah. See Zech. 11. 12, 13. Jer. 32. 6, &c. The exact language is not recited; but the application of the idea is made. The prophet found the people ungrateful. He asked of them *his price*, or the wages they were willing to allow him. They contemptuously fixed it at thirty pieces of silver, which was the *price of a slave*. He indignantly casts it to a potter. The whole transaction was most clearly intended to presignify the train of events here narrated. The prophecy or vision would seem to relate almost alone to Christ, and the Jews refer it to the Messiah. So our Lord came to an ungrateful people, who expressed their slight of Him, by naming *this as his price*, which was the value of a slave! "They of the children of Israel did value," or estimate Him at this menial rate. We see from this history of Judas how wicked counsels may be prospered, only to the ruin of the soul—how all plotting against Christ must end in destruction—how sin brings its own punishment, and is often visited on earth with speedy and signal vengeance—the money gave him no pleasure. The pain of a guilty conscience he had—that is, the bitter sense of having done wrong. Men may now deny their Lord as Peter did—by being ashamed of Him, and refusing to bear their cross, and appearing among His despisers—and

the governor: and the governor asked him, saying, Art thou the King of the Jews? And Jesus said unto him, Thou sayest.

12 And when he was accused of the chief priests and elders, he answered nothing.

13 Then saith Pilate unto him, Hearest thou not how many things they witness against thee?

f c. 26. 63.

they may betray His cause as Judas did, by giving the enemy an advantage, and being the means of reproach to religion and of triumph to Christ's foes.

[§ 146½. CHRIST BEFORE THE GOVERNOR.]

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
27. 11-14	15. 2-5	23. 2-5	18. 29-38

Christ having been seized in Gethsemane, was taken first to Annas and Caiaphas, high priests. He was afterward led before the Sanhedrim, who decided that He was guilty, and worthy of death. They then sent Him to Pilate. Pilate was a severe and mercenary man. His administration as procurator was oppressive. The Jews complained of this, which led to his removal. He was banished to Vienne in Gaul, A. D. 36, and committed suicide, having been in office ten years.

11. *And Jesus stood, &c.* (see vs. 2) He was charged before the Roman governor, with subverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Caesar, saying that He Himself is Christ, a King (Luke 23. 2). This was a thing of which Pilate could take cognizance, and this was the charge now pending. To this point, Pilate directs his questioning.—¶ *Thou sayest, It is so.* He was the king of the Jews (John 18. 36); but His kingdom was not of this world, but spiritual (Ps. 110). John 18. 36.

12. *He answered nothing.* He knew their malignant designs; and in meekness, as He knew their charges to be ungrounded, He held His peace.

14 And he answered him to never a word; insomuch that the governor marvelled greatly.

15 ¶ Now  $\epsilon$  at *that* feast the governor was wont to release unto the people a prisoner, whom they would.

*g* Mar.15.6,&c: Lu.23.17.&c. Jno.18.39,&c.

13. *They witness against thee* (see Luke 23. 5). "He stirreth up the people, teaching throughout all Jewry, beginning from Galilee to this place."

14. *To never a word*—not even to the extent of a word—not so much as one word—"as a sheep before her shearers was dumb, so He opened not His mouth" (Isa. 53. 7). This was  $\epsilon$  accomplishment of prophecy. It showed His meekness and willingness to suffer—the innocent for the guilty. This made an impression on Pilate.—¶ *Marvelled*. He wondered that Christ should be so silent, and seemingly so indifferent about His acquittal. Pilate declared that he found no fault in this man—and the chief priests and people grew fierce, and pressed the charge that He "*stirred up the people* (seditiously), *beginning from Galilee to this place*" (Luke 23. 5). The mention of Galilee, led Pilate to ask if Christ was a Galilean; and when he found that he was, he gladly put Him off upon Herod, who was Governor of Galilee, and was then at Jerusalem, at the feast. Luke 23. 7.

[§ 148. PILATE SEKS TO RELEASE JESUS. THE JEWS DEMAND BARABAS.—SIXTH day of the week.]—*Jerusalem*.

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
27.15-26	15.6-15	23.13-25	18.39,40

15. *The governor was wont to release*—was accustomed. This custom with the Roman government in Judea, we learn, grew out of a Jewish regulation, in connexion with that feast. "*Ye have a custom.*" John 18. 39. And we infer that there was something very special in this prac-

16 And they had then a notable prisoner, called Barabbas.

17 Therefore, when they were gathered together, Pilate said unto them, Whom will ve that I release unto you? Barabbas? or Jesus which is called Christ?

tice. "For of necessity he must release one unto them at the feast." As it was only "at *that* feast"—the passover—we infer that this was a symbolical act, and embodied to the constant view of the people, the great fundamental idea of RELEASE, as connected with the Paschal sacrifice. A MAN was by a formal ceremony SET FREE—A MALEFACTOR—an elect malefactor—"whom they would"—"whomsoever they desired" (Mark). And the people were trained by such an expressive symbol, to the great doctrine of justification—the guilty released from the hands of justice—the condemned—the prisoner—dismissed as a freeman by governmental authority. So by the great Paschal sacrifice ("Christ our Passover")—the condemned, who are prisoners of law—but yet the chosen of Christ are freely and fully RELEASED.

16. *A notable prisoner*—notorious—as *famous* in the sense of *infamous*. From Mark it appears that he was the ringleader in an insurrection, and the band were bound with him in prison, and he had added murder to his sedition (Mark 15. 7).

17. *Gathered together*—in expectation of the customary release (see Mark 15. 8).—¶ *Whom will ye*. From Mark 15. 8, we learn that the multitude were clamorous for Pilate to act upon this established principle, and to release one. He then proposes Christ for this release—"the king of the Jews" (Mark)—or puts the question as between Christ and Barabbas. Pilate was evidently willing to obtain for Christ the privilege of this custom (Luke 23. 20). Already, perhaps, he had received the message

18 For he knew that for envy<sup>b</sup> they had delivered him.

19 ¶ When he was set down on the judgment-seat, his wife sent unto him, saying, Have thou nothing to do with that just man, for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of him.

<sup>a</sup> Pr.27.4. Ec.4.4. <sup>i</sup> Is.53.11. Zec.9.9. Lu.23.47. 1Pe.2.22. 1Jno.2.1.

from his wife (vs. 19), that she had "suffered many things in a dream, because of Him—" *that just man.*" It is also stated by two Evangelists, that Pilate "knew that the chief priests had delivered Him for envy." He also states to them openly, his own impressions of His innocence upon a thorough examination, in which opinion, also, Herod concurred. Luke 23, 14, 15. It was really the fear of sedition on the part of the multitude (vs. 24), and his dread of the jealousy of Tiberius, which prevailed with him, against his conscience, to deliver Christ to be crucified.

18. *For envy*—"that the chief priests had delivered Him for envy" (Mark)—that is, for uneasiness and opposition at His popularity. He had drawn away the people after Him, and had unsettled the public confidence very much in their doctrines and claims. Pilate should have let Him go if he would have judged justly. But he deferred to the voice of the people. And here it is shown, 1st, that the very authority which condemned Christ also declared him innocent; and 2d, that it is the voice of men—of the multitude—of the people, that Christ should be put to death. "They cried out *all at once.*" Men are naturally opposed to Christ, to His claims and offers.

19. *His wife sent unto him.* This tribunal was in a place that is called the Pavement (see John 19. 13), in the open court before the palace. Here was a most remarkable and direct warning to Pilate from his wife, through a dream, just at this juncture. This incidental notice of

20 But the chief priests and elders persuaded the multitude that they should ask Barabbas, and destroy Jesus.

21 The governor answered and said unto them, Whether of the twain will ye that I release unto you? They said, Barabbas.

<sup>j</sup> Ac.3.14.

her being now at Jerusalem, is a strong proof of the Evangelist's veracity, as it was only in the reign of Tiberius that the governors of provinces had been permitted to take their wives with them. (Tacitus' Ann. 3. 33, Horne's Introduction, Vol. III., p. 109.) What strange incidents hang around all the steps in the procedure. They who are tempted to give up Christ, against all their judgment and conscience, shall have many a direct warning to desist. She had strong and special convictions that Christ was a *just* or righteous man, not a transgressor against the law—" *That just man*" (see ch. 1. 19); and so she was deeply exercised respecting Him, and anxious that Pilate should not be implicated in His condemnation.

20. *Ask Barabbas.* Influences were brought to bear upon the multitude for preferring Barabbas to Christ. Observe—in this significant matter of a release, that represents the justification of the sinner through Christ, it is not the more innocent, but the more guilty, that shall illustrate the gracious plan. "*Not Christ but Barabbas.*" Yet, Barabbas, but for Christ.

21. *Whether of the twain*—or of the two. The question is now distinctly put to the people. Every thing now turns upon their decision between these opposite parties. The sinner chooses Barabbas the *robber*, before Christ the *Redeemer*. But it is not the righteous, but the sinner—the malefactor—that is released at the Passover. Christ came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

22 Pilate saith unto them, What shall I do hen with Jesus, which is called Christ? They all say unto him, Let him be crucified.

23 And the governor said, Why, what evil hath he done? But they cried out the more, saying, Let <sup>k</sup> him be crucified.

k c 21.33.39.

22. *What shall I do then.* Pilate presents, now, this difficulty. How should they dispose of Christ—"Jesus which is called Christ"—"whom ye call the King of the Jews?" (Mark.) This was designed to remind them of His claims, and to hint to them of the difficulties which they must find in His case. The question turned only incidentally upon His getting the benefit of the paschal release. He was upon His trial. He had been condemned by the Sanhedrim, but not as yet formally by Pilate. Yet the governor, finding himself in straits, would gladly be availed of this provision. But Christ must be counted as a culprit, before He can have the benefit of a release that applies only to the condemned. Pilate would fain put the responsibility upon the people. So, many a one who decides not positively for Christ, tries to shift the blame upon others, and pleads that he does only as he is impelled by necessity or stress of circumstances.

23. *And the governor said, Why?* This question Pilate asked them even to the *third time* (says Luke), and proposed a punishment that might satisfy their worst passions. "I will therefore chastise Him, and let Him go." This *chastising*, or scourging with rods, was inflicted upon those who were to be crucified. It was a first step in their punishment. Pilate wished them to be satisfied with this. This was an abandonment of the former ground. If he could not get the paschal privilege for Him, he would have them stop at their usual scourging, and upon that, would let

24 ¶ Wher Pilate saw tha he could prevail nothing, but *that* rather a tumult was made, he took water, and washed <sup>h</sup>his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye *to it*.

25 Then answered all the people, and said, His <sup>m</sup> blood be on

l De.21.6. m De.19.10. Jos.2.19. c.21.44. Ac.5.28.

Him go. They could not even tell of any evil which He had done. They only called clamorously for His crucifixion. They were instant with loud voices, requiring that He might be crucified.

24. *Took water.* The timid, unprincipled, unjust judge who sets the popular clamor before the solemn demands of justice, would now fain find a solace for his conscience in a poor ceremony. But this profession of innocence did not acquit him of his crime. No outward profession of religion, nor administration of solemn rights can expiate sin, or stand against wilful transgression. This *washing the hands* of this capital offence, was an expressive sign, which the Jews understood. Deut. 21. 6. It was a Jewish custom. He would publicly declare himself to them *as having nothing to do with this just man*; and so he testified in words. "I am innocent of the blood of this just person." And as he would formally roll the blame upon them, he adds, "*See ye to it.*" It is your business, and you must answer for it, not I.

25. *His blood be on us, &c.* This was their open assumption of all the consequences. They would take the responsibility, and would invoke it even upon their families. Little did they think what they were doing. I. was a solemn imprecation upon themselves and their posterity, of all that the Divine vengeance should recompense for His blood. The destruction which was prophesied in their Scriptures (Malachi), and forewarned by Christ Himself, was to be at their

us, and on our children.

26 Then released he Barabbas

call. Soon, their city was destroyed, with most peculiar horrors of the siege—of famine—of disease—and even of crucifixion itself (see Josephus' Jewish War, 7. 1).

[§ 149. PILATE DELIVERS UP JESUS TO DEATH—HE IS SCOURGED AND MOCKED.]—*Jerusalem.*

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
27. 26-30	15. 15-19		19. 1-3

26. *Then released.* This is the conclusion of the whole matter—the tragic act of Pilate—washing his hands of the crime, and delivering up Jesus to their will. He was an unjust judge—a self-deceiver—bound to have pronounced Christ innocent, and to have set Him free as such, without any resort to the provision of that festival. Behold, then, how Christ is at once acquitted and condemned by the same parties! He dies for sin—yet He is not a sinner—He is under condemnation in the sinner's place; but He is without fault. The Father calls Him His beloved, yet lays on Him our iniquities. How strangely wonderful, yet essential! Barabbas must have been executed, but for His stepping in where Barabbas, the sinner, should have died. He stood in his stead. And now Barabbas may go free, and trust in Christ. He may feel thankful for such an one to stand in his room, and his sins—seditious, murderous—sins as scarlet and red like crimson—may be washed in the blood of that Paschal sacrifice, which gives release and cleanses from all sin.—¶ *Scourged Jesus.* This was customary where a slave was to be crucified. Christ, then, was not merely crucified, but most ignominiously—as a common slave. This scourging was indicted on the back with a rod, sometimes sharpened by points of iron (see note, Matt. 10. 17).—¶ *Delivered Him*—i.e., officially—“gave sentence that it should be as they required.” Luke shows his education

unto them: and when he had scourged<sup>n</sup> Jesus, he delivered him to be crucified.

<sup>n</sup> Is. 53. 5. Lu. 18. 33.

in his accurate statement here, of the formal judgment pronounced by Pilate, which is only implied in the other Evangelists. The release of Barabbas involves the condemnation of Christ. The choice of “the multitude” is a rejection of the Saviour. “If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him;” yet the interposition of Christ to take the sinner's place, is the only hope of the world. We annex here, in a note, a most singular document, entitled the *Death Warrant of Christ.*

Pilate at last condemned Christ.

*Sentence rendered by Pontius Pilate, acting Governor of Lower Galilee, stating that Jesus of Nazareth shall suffer death on the cross.*

“In the year seventeen of the empire Tiberius Cæsar, and the 25th day of March, the city of holy Jerusalem, Anna and Caiaphas being priests, sacrificators of the people of God, Pontius Pilate, Governor of Lower Galilee, sitting on the presidential chair of the Prætor, condemns Jesus of Nazareth to die on the cross between two thieves—the great and notorious evidence of the people saying—

1. Jesus is a seducer.
  2. He is seditious.
  3. He is an enemy of the law.
  4. He calls himself falsely the Son of God.
  5. He calls himself falsely the King of Israel.
  6. He entered into the temple, followed by a multitude bearing palm branches in their hands.
- Order the first centurion, Quiltus Cornelius, to lead him to the place of execution.

Forbid to any person whomsoever, either poor or rich, to oppose the death of Jesus.

The witnesses that signed the condemnation of Jesus are, viz.:—1. Daniel Robani, a Pharisee; 2. Joannas Rororable; 3. Raphdel Robani; 4. Capet, a citizen.

Jesus shall go out of the city of Jerusalem by the gate of Strænus.”

The above sentence is engraved on a copper plate; on one side are written these words:—“A similar plate is sent to each tribe.” It was found in an antique vase of white marble, while excavating in the ancient city of Aquila, in the kingdom of Naples, in the year 1820, and was discovered by the Commissariats of Arts, attached to the French armies. At the expedition of Naples, it was found enclosed in a box of ebony, in the sacristy of the Chartrom—the vase in the chapel of Caserta. The French translation was made by the members of the Commission of Arts. The original is in the Hebrew language. The Chartrom requested earnestly that the plate might not be taken away from them. The request was granted as a reward for the sacrifice they had made for the army. M. Denon, one of the savans, caused a plate to be made of the same model, on which he had engraved the above sentence. At the sale of his collection of antiquities, &c., it was bought by Lord Howard for 2,890 francs.



27 Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into <sup>1</sup> the common hall, and gathered unto him the whole band of soldiers.

28 And they stripped him, and put on him a scarlet robe.

29 And when they had platted a crown of thorns, they put it

<sup>1</sup> Or, governor's house.

"He was vacillating—fearful for his office, and even for his life—for he served 'the dark and unrelenting Tiberius.'" The charge against Him was of treason against the state. Hence the people accused Pilate of opposition to Cesar, in showing lenity toward Christ (John 19. 12). Pilate gave Him up to the people.

27. *The common hall*—called (πραιτωριον) Pretorium—the governor's palace or house (αυλη) (Mark 15. 16.) Pilate's judgment seat was in an open, public place, from which Christ was now led to the house of Pilate. The Jews would not enter in there, because contact with the heathen soldiers would defile them for the pass-over (John 18. 28).—¶ *The whole band.* This was a cohort in the Roman army of from 4 to 600 men—the tenth part of a legion.

28. *A scarlet robe.* This was put upon Him in mockery, because He claimed to be king, and this was the kind of robe worn by Roman officials. Mark says it was purple. The former was a military cloak—the latter was worn by the Roman emperers. Very probably in their deep derision, an old cast-off general's cloak was put on Him, as a mock purple, to deride His claims as king. This intent appears from next verse. Hence it is said by Mark, "they clothed Him with purple," &c.

29. *A crown of thorns.* This was a chaplet or wreath of one thorn bush, woven or platted so as to fit upon His head, and further to mock His kingly pretensions. Instead of His crown of glory, they assign Him a crown of thorns. Instead of adorning His brow, it pierces His temples.—¶ *A reed.* This mocks His sceptre. In-

upon his head, and a reed in his right hand: and they bowed the knee before him, and mocked <sup>o</sup> him, saying, Hail, King of the Jews!

30 And they spit <sup>u</sup> upon him, and took the reed, and smote him on the head.

<sup>o</sup> Ps. 69. 19, 20. <sup>u</sup> Is. 49. 7; 50. 6; 53. 3, 7.

stead of a golden or ivory staff of office, which kings commonly bore, they put in *His right hand a frail reed*, that would bruise and break almost at the touch.—¶ *They bowed the knee.* This was further mockery, tantalizing Him with such pretence of subjection, and thus playing off the ridiculous farce to show how thoroughly they despised His claims as king. How vile is the human heart! What was the ground of all this bitter enmity that could not possibly be satisfied with mockeries or cruelties? "The carnal mind is ENMITY against God, for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." Human nature, at best, can only present a mock subjection—a profane bowing of the knee, more scoffing, than spiritual or sincere. To crown all the derision, they shout aloud a mock salutation—"Hail, King of the Jews"—which they used toward their emperors.

30. *Spit upon Him.* This was the mark of utmost spite and contempt, both in ancient and modern times (see ch. 26. 67). Compare Isa. 50. 6. This indignity would show us the abhorrence of which our sins are worthy, and men may now see, in all this, the infinite dishonour which they deserve, as the curse of sin; for it was in the capacity of the sinner's substitute that our Lord passed through all these bitter experiences.—¶ *Smote Him.* This despite was further shown the Sufferer. John has it "they smote Him with their hands." Matthew and Mark speak of a reed being also used, and *on the head.* Mark also adds that "bowing their knees they worshipped Him." All this was in mingled spite and derision.

31 And after that they had mocked him, they took the robe off from him, and put his own raiment on him, and led him away to crucify him.

32 And as they came out, they found a man of Cyrene,

7 Nu. 15. 35. 1K. 21. 10, 13. Ac. 7. 53. He. 13. 12.

OBSERVE, (1.) Pilate delivers Christ to be crucified, but He is delivered up also by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God (Acts 2. 23). (2.) The enmity of the heart against the claims of Christ is unprovoked and unmitigated. (3.) Men call for Christ to be crucified, and when this death is shown to be for the salvation of sinners, they reject Him even in this. (4.) Some shall awake to shame and everlasting contempt (Dan. 12. 2).

§ 152. JESUS IS LED AWAY TO BE CRUCIFIED.—SIXTH day of the week. Jerusalem.

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
27.31-34	15.20-23	23.26-33	19.16,17

31. *The robe.* Mark says, the purple, viz., the mock purple.

32. *As they came out*—viz., of the city; for the execution of criminals was commonly outside the gates. The soldiers led Him out, for they were the common executioners under the Roman governors.—¶ *A man of Cyrene.* Mark and Luke both speak of this man as “coming out of the country” towards the city, which would show that they found him as they passed out of the city gate. Mark adds that he was “the father of Alexander and Rufus.” *Cyrene* was in Africa, where there were Jews residing. The district was called Pentapolis Cyrenaica. It is stated by John (19. 17), that Christ went forth “bearing His cross,” which was the custom for criminals. They impressed this man Simon, “and on him they laid the cross, that he might bear it after Jesus.” (See Luke 23. 26.) The cross was a high post with a cross-beam near the top, and fastened

Simon by name: him they compelled to bear his cross.

33 And when they were come unto a place called Golgotha, that is to say, A place of a skull,

34 They gave him vinegar to drink, mingled with gall: and

7 Ps. 69. 21.

firmly in the ground. It usually stood some ten feet out of ground, and was in size and weight such as a man could carry with difficulty. A small seat belonged to it (about the middle), that the crucified person might rest upon it, and not hang entirely by the hands. The hands and feet were sometimes fastened to the cross with spikes, and sometimes bound fast to it with ropes. In our Saviour's case, the former method was used, as the most cruel. Christ is to be crucified for His people. Yet He would bring men into a mysterious and glorious partaking with Him of His sufferings and of His glory. The place of execution lay to the north-west, and near the city. As the bodies of the beasts that were sacrificed as types of Him were burned without the camp, so He suffered without the gate (Heb. 13. 11, 12). See Map of Mod. Jerusalem, where the spot standing outside the old walls, but afterwards enclosed, is indicated by the site of “the Holy Sepulchre.” (K.) *On the swell of Acra, beyond the Second Wall,* (see “View of Jerusalem as besieged by Titus,”) the crucifixion took place.—*Bartlett's “Walks about Jerusalem,”* p. 38.

33. *Golgotha*—“a place called the place of a skull, which is called in the Hebrew *Golgotha*” (John)—“the place *Golgotha*” (Mark)—“the place which is called *Calvary*” (Luke). This was also the meaning of *Calvary* in the Latin—“a skull.” Though called *Mount Calvary*, it was rather a knoll, just sufficient to designate the spot. It received its name, doubtless, from its being used for the execution of criminals. Comp. 2 Kings 9. 35.

34. *Vinegar mingled with gall*

when he had tasted *thereof*, he would not drink.

35 And \* they crucified him, and parted his garments, casting lots: that it might be fulfilled

\* Ps.22.16. Mar.15.24,&c. Lu. 23.34.&c. Jno.19.24, &c. † Ps.22.18.

This was a mixture offered in derision, it would seem. Mark speaks of another potion, viz. *wine*, or wine-vinegar, mingled with *myrrh*, which was the usual stupefying drink for criminals about to suffer death. It served as an opiate, like laudanum, to relieve the extreme sufferings. This fulfilled the prophecy in Psalm 69. 21.—¶ *He would not drink.* Here again He was to show how willingly he endured the curse. If He had sought relief, He could have had it from heaven, or could have destroyed His enemies at His will. He would now refuse any alleviations which His murderers would administer. He would drink the *cup* to the dregs, for it was given Him of His Father. He endured the curse voluntarily and fully.

OBSERVE, (1.) Christ must needs die, not by the scourging, nor by the sinking under the cross, but by crucifixion itself. (2.) The smallest matter in all this work entered into the particular plan. The Scriptures were fulfilled, and God's purposes were carried out.

¶ 153. THE CRUCIFIXION.—SIXTH day of the week. Jerusalem.

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
27. 35-38	15. 24-28	23. 33 34, 38	19. 18-24

35. *They crucified Him.* The manner of crucifixion was briefly this. The sentenced man was first stripped of all his clothing, saving a strip about the loins, and then severely whipped, so that he sometimes died under this. Smarting and exhausted, he was compelled as soon as possible to bear his cross to the spot. Four soldiers of the Pretorian guard, under

which was spoken by the prophet, They parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture did they cast lots.

36 And sitting down, they watched him there;

37 And set up over his head

the superintendence of a centurion, were the common executioners. These drove each a nail into the hand or foot of the man, sometimes before, and sometimes after the cross had been set up in its place in the ground. Resting on the small seat which was fixed about the middle of the cross, the person could be nailed to it after it was set up. It was a slow and severe death, not exceeded in physical suffering, perhaps, by any method of torture. It was also the most ignominious punishment, "as it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." Robbers and slaves were generally doomed to this kind of death. Hence "the offence of the cross." Hence the wonder of Christ's humiliation, "EVEN the death of THE CROSS." Such suffering must needs be short, showing how poorly our weak nature can bear the curse of sin. A person generally lived on the cross till the third, fourth, or fifth day—the nails poisoning and inflaming the whole system, and through the nerves among which they were driven, making the pain indeed EXCRUCIATING, a term which is derived from the word *crux*, a cross. With the Jews it was not lawful that a malefactor's body hang on the cross over night (Deut. 21. 23). Hence the soldier tried with the spear to see if He was yet dead, else they would break his bones to hasten His decease.—¶ *Parted His garments.* The soldiers who acted as executioners were entitled to the garments of the deceased. They "made four parts, (says John), to every soldier a part," and for His coat they *cast lots*. This was a method of deciding such a doubtful point by appealing to what was ostensibly regarded in the case

his accusation written, **THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS.**

38 Then were there two

as an expression of God's will. See Acts 1. 26, in the case of choosing an apostle who should stand in the room of Judas, and fill up the fixed number.—¶ *That it might be fulfilled.* This prophecy is found in Psalm 22. 18, which shows that the Psalm refers to Christ as a striking detail of His sufferings, in that *crucifixion experience.* Men—wicked men—may have the *raiment* of Christ. Even the *most wicked* may wear His robe of righteousness and salvation by Divine grace.

36. *They watched Him.* This they did, as *guards*, lest anything might occur to obviate their cruel purpose. This is recorded to show us how certainly and without any failure, all the malicious designs of men for His death were accomplished. Nothing failed of all His endurance on the accursed tree.

37. *His accusation*—the charge upon which He was condemned. Mark and Luke speak of the superscription, and John of the *title*. It was customary to set over the head of the criminal the crime for which he had been condemned and was about to suffer. It was usually graven on a metal plate, with black characters on a white ground. This was in order that the people might know the case. Hence we find this written in three languages, Hebrew, Greek, and Latin, that the Jews, Greeks, and Romans, who were in the crowd, might understand. These were the three sacred languages of the world. John says that *Pilate* wrote it (19. 19). The title itself is given differently by all the Evangelists, though it is the same in substance. The ground of His condemnation was that He claimed to be "the King of the Jews." It may have been variously written in the different languages. But it was not necessary that the precise words

thieves " crucified with him; one on the right hand, and another on the left.

u Isa. 53. 12.

should be stated, so long as they agreed most perfectly in the substance of the accusation. In John's narrative we find that the chief priests expostulated with Pilate, and they themselves quote the title defectively, leaving out a part (19. 21). The harmless disagreement here in the very words, would only show that the Evangelists had not copied from each other, or conspired with each other to fabricate their narrative. Here, also, by this custom of stating publicly the ground of sentence, we have an open declaration that He "had done nothing amiss." This was the *third* hour, when they crucified Him, or 9 o'clock (Mark).

38. *Two thieves*—robbers, or highwaymen, with which Judea then abounded. All the Evangelists mention this, that two malefactors were crucified with Him, one on each side. Mark notices this as in fulfilment of the prophecy (Isa. 53. 12), "And He was numbered with the transgressors." Executions were appointed at passover time, for the impression upon the greatest number. (See Deut. 17. 13.) For the same purpose, several were usually executed together. Our Lord ranked now as a capital transgressor, for He stood in the stead of sinners—*made a CURSE FOR US.*"

OBSERVE, (1.) The accusation on the cross shows Christ to have been innocent. (2.) Sinners will not have this man to reign over them (see Luke 19. 14). This is their guilt, and this procures the death of Christ. So Adam in the garden disdained subjection to God. (3.) He was numbered with the transgressors, as Mark notices (Isa. 53. 12), standing in sinners' place to save sinners (4.) Behold *Jesus in the midst of malefactors* (John). He is also in the midst of the throne (Rev. 5. 6), and in the midst of the Church. **Mat: 18 20.**

39 ¶ And they that passed by reviled him, wagging their heads,

40 And saying, Thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days, save thyself. If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross.

41 Likewise also the chief priests mocking <sup>w</sup> *him*, with the scribes and elders, said,

v Ps. 22.7; 109.25. w Job. 13.9. Ps. 35.16. Is. 28.22. Lu. 18.32.

§ 154. THE JEWS MOCK AT JESUS ON THE CROSS. *He commends His mother to John.*—(SIXTH day of the week.)

Matt. 27.39-44	Mark. 15.29-32	Luke. 23.35-37 39-43	John. 19.25-27
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39. *Reviled Him*—literally, “blasphemed.” They heaped vile epithets upon Him, shaking and tossing the head in scorn (see Job 16. 4. Psalm 109. 25). People and rulers joined in this, as we learn from Luke. Human insult was part of the bitter curse which He endured.

40. *Thou that destroyest.* This claim of His was brought up now in derision. His boast of power was challenged, dared, defied now. How easily He might have used that power to hurl them into perdition; but He forbore. He could have come down: but He came to die. He would not have Himself now, else He could not save sinners.—¶ *If thou be the Son of God.* Like SATAN in the wilderness, they challenge HIS CLAIM TO DIVINITY.

41. This scoffing was universal among all classes of the multitude—chief priests, scribes and elders, and soldiers and the thieves, are mentioned.

42. *He saved others.* This was an allusion to His miracles, which pretended even to raise the dead; but which they obstinately discredited or attributed to Beelzebub. They dared Him now to do this conclusive miracle for their belief; but this would

42 He saved others, himself he cannot save. If he be the King of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him.

43 He trusted in God; let <sup>x</sup> him deliver him now, if he will have him: for he said, <sup>y</sup> I am the Son of God.

44 The thieves also, which were crucified with him, cast

x Ps. 3.2; 22.8; 42.10; 71.11. y Jno. 5.17,18; 10.30,36.

neither have convinced them—nor would it have served His purpose of grace—nor could they demand any further sign. “A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign, but there shall no sign be given them, but the sign of Jonas the prophet.” The wondrous miracle to be wrought lay in the purposes of God, and was soon to come on, in HIS RESURRECTION, according to Jonah’s type and the ample prophecy. Nor was this a sincere demand of theirs, but only in mockery.

43. *He trusted in God.* These words are remarkably predicted in Ps. 22. 8. This also recalled His declarations of confidence in the Father and of oneness with Him, which now they would have Him test, and manifest (ch. 25. 53). So did Satan in the wilderness—“*If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down, for it is written, He shall give His angels charge over thee,*” &c. (ch. 4. 6). But would He meet such insulting challenges? Had they not had the most abundant proofs, which they utterly despised? And would the Father arrest His gracious plans to satisfy, or stop such raillery? Behold in the midst of all this, Christ had rather die to offer them salvation, than decline to die, to induce their conviction.

44. *The thieves.* Luke says, “*One of the malefactors,*” while Matthew and Mark speak in general of *the thieves*, as doing this. One of them was more conspicuous in the history, and upon his case Luke dwelt.—

the same in his teeth.

45 Now from the sixth hour there was darkness <sup>2</sup> over all the land unto the ninth hour.

46 And about the ninth hour

z Am. 8. 9.

¶ *Cast the same in His teeth*—literally, reproached Him to the same effect—or, in like manner. Luke alone tells us of the penitent one (23. 40). Here around the cross, Christ would illustrate the power of that grace which the cross should procure even for the vilest of sinners, even in the worst case, and to the last. This is no encouragement to put off repentance till death. That one is rescued amidst extremest perils, is no encouragement to take the risk, especially when this must be, by despising the grace till the last. It is not probable that this thief had enjoyed the means of knowing the Saviour. At this time, our Lord commended His mother Mary (now a widow, doubtless) to the affectionate care of the beloved disciple; as John himself narrates (19. 25-27).

RESERVE, (1.) How much of Satan's language and spirit was in this bitter trial of Christ on the cross. (See the temptation in the wilderness, ch. 4.) (2.) Christ's claim to Divinity, was that against which Satan and all God's enemies vented their malicious spite. They challenged and tantalized His Sonship. (3.) The pardoning grace is signally illustrated.

§ 155. DARKNESS PREVAILS. CHRIST EXPIRES ON THE CROSS.—SIXTH day of the week. Calvary.

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
27.45-50	15.33-37	23.44-46	19.28-30

45. *The sixth hour.* It was our noon, or twelve o'clock. Darkness at noon-day was the most striking and palpable work of God, as it could not have been a common eclipse, for the passover was always at full-moon. The darkness also lasted three hours, as an eclipse never could. Ter allian (Apolog. ch. 21) appeals to the

Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, <sup>a</sup> My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?

47 Some of them that stood

a Ps. 22. 1. Is. 53. 10. La. 1. 12

accounts of this event, contained in the Roman archives. Phlegon, a Roman astronomer, A. D. 140, speaking of this very time, testifies of this — ¶ *All the land*—or “all the earth,” as Luke (same Greek word). This phrase was often applied to Judea alone. See Bp. Watson's Reply to Gibbon, Let. 5.

46. *My God.* These words are from Psalm 22. 1, and are quoted not from the Hebrew, but from the Chaldee paraphrase. Mark gives the words in the Syro-Chaldaic (ch. 15. 34), his object not being to give the dialect in which they were spoken; but the exclamation itself. This language was spoken in Judea at that time. Here our great sacrifice cried out under the dreadful sense of the Divine wrath against sin, as He bore its load and curse. Compare the 22d Psalm, which He applied now to His case, and which the Jews had always applied to the Messiah. As He stood in the sinner's place, He saw and felt the Father's wrath, not toward Himself as a personal transgressor, but toward Himself as the sinner's Substitute. He still cried, *My God*, and retained His filial confidence. But here was the sting of death to Him, that He, the holy Lamb of God, should occupy such a place, and sustain for a moment such a relation to His Father. He cried out at this point! as He did not under His other sufferings. His human soul was left to shudder at the thought of standing under the curse, even for others, and here He felt the awful dread of sinking under such a load. “He was heard in that He feared.” Heb. 5. 7.

47. *Calleth for Elias.* It is not declared that they thought He called for Elias, but that they said, in taunt. And, as it was intended, it was a

there, when they heard *that*, said, This *man* calleth for Elias,

48 And straightway one of them ran, and took a sponge, and filled *it* with <sup>b</sup> vinegar, and

<sup>b</sup> Ps. 69. 21.

most severe and cruel mockery—tan-  
-alizing Him, as now, in vain, calling  
for Elias, who was prophesied of, as  
the Messiah's forerunner, and whom  
the Jews expected as first to appear.  
He had laboured to show that John  
the Baptist was he, but they rejected  
this with disdain. (See ch. 11. 14, 18.)  
They expected Elijah the prophet to  
appear in person, and hence they  
sneeringly adverted here to the want  
of this testimony to His being the  
true Messiah. Greenleaf notices this  
incidental allusion by Matthew and  
Mark to the popular opinion as addi-  
-tional evidence of their veracity.

48. *Gave Him to drink.* This was  
not from any misunderstanding of the  
outcry, as might seem from the con-  
-nexion, and as some have supposed,  
but from another cry which John  
reports—"that the Scripture might be  
-fulfilled He saith, *I thirst.*" John 19.  
28. See Psalm 69. 21. This was  
the rich man's outcry in torment  
(Luke 16. 24.) It expressed the se-  
-verity of perdition. As the gospel  
-benefits are represented by "the  
-waters" and by drink, so the bitter-  
-ness of sin's curse and punishment is  
-represented by THIRST. This vine-  
-gar, or *sour wine*, was the soldier's  
-drink, of which a vessel full was  
-there (John 19. 29). They put the  
-sponge on a reed, or hyssop-branch  
(John), that thus they might reach it  
-to His mouth as He hung upon the  
-cross.

49. Others expressed their rage  
-and venom thus—repeating the taunt  
-about Elias. There was all manner  
-of scorn and reviling among the ma-  
-lignant crowd.

50. *With a loud voice* This was  
-another cry. His voice was *loud* in  
-death. He was heard to say "Father,  
-into thy hands I commend my spirit"  
(Luke), showing His relations to the

put *it* on a reed, and gave him  
-to drink.

49 The rest said, Let be, let  
-us see whether Elias will come  
-to save him.

50 ¶ Jesus, when he had cried

Father as undisturbed. Stephen the  
-martyr died crying, "LORD JESUS  
-receive my spirit" (Acts 7. 59), wor-  
-shipping the risen Lamb. Christ also  
-said, "*It is finished*" (John), which  
-expressed what John had just before  
-noticed (ch. 19. 28)—"*Jesus KNOW-  
-ING THAT ALL THINGS WERE NOW ACCOM-  
-PLISHED.*" The prophecies of His  
-sacrificial death were fulfilled—the  
-covenant with the Father was met—  
-the cup given Him to drink was  
-taken to the dregs—the types and  
-shadows of the old dispensation were  
-answered in Him, and now by His  
-finished work satisfaction was made  
-for believers.—¶ *Yielded up the  
-ghost*—or in Greek, *the spirit*. He  
-expired, as Mark has it literally  
(εξέπνευσε). He laid down His life to  
-take it again. His soul was made  
-an offering for sin.

OBSERVE, (1.) Christ's sufferings  
-were more in soul than in body, and  
-this mysterious, unknown anguish of  
-spirit, was THE CUP—the STING of death  
—the CURSE for us. (2.) The ATONE-  
-MENT of Christ cannot be explained  
-except we find here the *punishment*  
-due to sin suffered by the innocent  
-for the guilty. This accounts for all  
-the history; and the last dying cry,  
-"*It is finished,*" brings peace to the  
-troubled soul, from the *finished work*  
-of Christ. The Lord provides a  
-lamb for the burnt-offering, and the  
-son of Abraham, though already  
-bound and laid upon the altar, and  
-now even under the knife, may go  
-free (Gen. 22. 13), may even worship  
-there. (3.) The *crucifixion experience*  
-of Christ, as expressed from the cross,  
-exhibits the whole truth. The FOR-  
-SAKING and the THIRST show the CURSE.  
-The works of LOVE, and FORGIVE-  
-NESS, and PROMISE to sinners, there  
-also expressed, show the GRACE.  
-"*Behold thy mother.*" "*Father for-*

again with a loud voice, y elded up the ghost.

51 And, behold, the vail<sup>c</sup> of the temple was rent<sup>d</sup> in twain, from the top to the bottom;

<sup>c</sup> Ex.26.31. Le.16.2,15; 21.23. 2Ch.3.14. <sup>d</sup> Is.25.7.

give them." "To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise." And the DYING WORDS SHOW THE ACCEPTANCE OF His work in heaven. "*It is finished.*" "Father into thy hands I commend my spirit."

§ 156. THE VAIL OF THE TEMPLE RENT. THE GRAVES OPENED. THE WOMEN AT THE CROSS.—SIXTH day of the week.

Matt. | Mark. | Luke. | John.  
27.51-56 | 15.38-41 | 23.45,47-49 |

51. *The vail of the temple.* This was the interior vail in Herod's temple, which separated the holy place from the Holy of Holies (see Temple, ch. 21). Exodus 26. 33. Paul refers to this event, and to the important symbolical purport of it. See Heb. 9. 8. and 10. 20. It was rent in two parts, torn from top to bottom, exposing all the sacred mysteries of the Most Holy Place. Thus, "*the way into the holiest of all was (now) made manifest,*" and laid open to all nations. The sacred ceremonies of the day of atonement, when the high priest entered into the Most Holy Place—viz., once a year—were now to be dispensed with, as the great high priest had furnished His own blood and offices, and gone within the vail to show His blood in heaven; and thus, also, believers have boldness to enter into the holiest by a new and living way which He hath consecrated for us through the vail, that is to say, His flesh. The priest was probably burning incense in the holy place at this hour of the evening sacrifice. — ¶ *The earth did quake*—or shake. The ground that was cursed sympathizes. There are traces of this remarkable earthquake in Judea, and heathen writers speak of one which occurred in this reign of Tiberius

and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent;

52 And<sup>e</sup> the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which<sup>f</sup> slept, arose,

53 And came out of the graves<sup>g</sup>

<sup>e</sup> Is.25.8; 26.19. Ho.13.14. Jno.5.25,28. <sup>f</sup> Da.12.2. 1Th.4.14. <sup>g</sup> 1Cor.15.20.

that destroyed twelve Asiatic cities (see Macrobius). Tacitus' Ann. II. 47. Suetonius in Tib. 48. That it was great, would appear from the additional clause, "*the rocks rent.*" This was entirely miraculous, in testimony to Christ's work; and so it impressed the centurion (54).

52. *The graves were opened.* This was another testimony to Christ's work. As the rending of the vail symbolically showed the mysteries of the ritual opened, and the way to heaven opened, and Christ's office opened as superseding that of the Levitical law—so this demonstrated that the power of death and the grave was vanquished, and an earnest was given of a general resurrection. — ¶ *The saints*—the pious dead. These were probably such as old Simeon, who was known in Jerusalem, and who had but recently died. — ¶ *Which slept.* Believers are said to *sleep in Jesus*. Death is to them a calm and sweet repose, which the softest slumber of the pillow only typifies. They are said to sleep also, because for them there is a blest awaking when the resurrection day shall dawn. See 1 Thess. 4. 14. John 11. 11. 1 Cor. 15. 20.

53. *Came out of the graves after His resurrection.* Though the graves were shaken and torn open by the earthquake, it was not until after He arose (day after next), that their tenants came forth. This, therefore, showed that there was POWER in His DEATH TO OPEN THE GRAVES of believers—and POWER in His RESURRECTION TO BRING THEM FORTH. Christ was Himself "the first-fruits of them that slept." 1 Cor. 15. 20. Col. 1. 18. — ¶ *The holy city*—Jerusalem. The burial grounds were around the city, in the



after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many.

54 Now <sup>h</sup> when the centurion, and they that were with him watching Jesus, saw the earthquake, and those things that were done, they feared greatly,

*h* Mar. 15.39. Lu. 23.47,&c.

valleys, or along the slopes adjacent. For a remarkable prophetic delineation of Christ's sufferings on the cross, see the 22d Psalm. And for a sound and devotional exposition of the language, see Stevenson's work, entitled, "*Christ on the Cross.*" Behold the Lamb of God, our Passover, sacrificed for us. Though the cross was of all punishments most ignominious, yet Christians find here their hope. This was the shame due to their sin. Christ is the power of God, and the wisdom of God unto salvation to every one that believeth (1 Cor. 1. 24). They glory in the cross. For hereby Christ spoiled principalities and powers, and made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in His cross (Col. 2. 15). Behold! Jews and Gentiles (Sanhedrim and Pilate) condemned Christ—the Roman soldiers crucified Him—the mixed multitude, rapacious and malignant, called for His sentence and crucifixion, until they prevailed on Pilate—and all without a reason. No reason can be given for the death of Christ, except that thus it behooved Him to suffer the punishment due to sin, in order to the salvation of any.

54. *The centurion.* As the name imports, this officer had command of a hundred soldiers. He superintended the crucifixion.—¶ *Watching.* This was the Pretorian guard who attended to keep watch throughout.—¶ *Truly, &c.* He knew the alleged blasphemy for which Christ suffered; and these tokens from Jehovah were most convincing. All "those things that were done"—the miraculous darkness, and rending of the vail, and the opening graves,

26

saying, Truly this was the Son of God.

55 And many women were there, (beholding afar off,) which followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering unto him;

56 Among which was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the moth

*i* Lu. 8.2,3.

had power as testimonies from the Most High. They were evident attestations of His claims, and proved Him to be the Son of God, by setting a seal to His work. Luke records another saying of the centurion—"Truly this was a righteous man"—as Pilate's wife had warned the governor before this very guard—"that just man." See Acts 3. 14; 7. 52; 22. 14.

55, 56. *Many women.* John speaks of Mary His mother, and His mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleopas, and Mary Magdalene. Mark omits our Lord's mother, and adds Salome. These were afterward prominent in the resurrection scenes (Mark 16. 1). This last is she whom Matthew calls the mother of Zebedee's children—John alone making mention of our Lord's mother, who was so specially entrusted to his care. These followed Him from Galilee, ministering to Him—that is, waiting upon Him and serving Him. Mary Magdalene was so called, because she was from the district of Magdala (see ch. 15. 39, note), near the sea of Tiberias, and not far from Capernaum, on the same side. These at first came near the cross, and Christ spoke to His mother, "Behold thy son," referring to John, whom He commended to her as protector and son (John 19. 26). Afterward, as the terrors of the dying moment came on, and the awful tokens from Heaven appeared, they retired from the horror of the scene. See Wall's Critical Notes, p. 116, and Watson's Reply to Gibbon, Let. 5, and Newcome.

OBSERVE, What follows upon the death of Christ. (1.) The temple

er of James and Joses, and the brother of Zebedee's children.

57 ¶ When the even was come, there came a rich man of Arimathea, named Joseph, who

j Mar. 15. 47. Lu. 23. 50. Jno. 19. 38.

vail is rent—the ritual is abolished. Heaven is opened, and Christ the forerunner enters for us within the vail—and there we may cast our hope—sure and steadfast—as an anchor that takes hold upon the rock (Heb. 6. 19, 20). (2.) Death is vanquished for believers—and a resurrection is secured, and the glorious rising of the saints is demonstrated. (3.) Sinners are convinced by His death. The preaching of the cross and the scenes of His *blood-shedding* shall yet powerfully convince the most obdurate hearts. Jehovah's inflexible justice—Christ's dying love—the awful cup of the curse, and the acceptance of the work in heaven, are the great truths which shall always have convincing power, by the Holy Ghost. (4.) His people are willing. The last at the cross and the first at the sepulchre are the women—ministering—following from far—and when they can do nothing more, bringing sweet spices to embalm His corpse.

§ 157. THE TAKING DOWN FROM THE CROSS. THE BURIAL.—*Jerusalem.*

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
27.57-61	15.42-47	23.50-56	19.31-42

57. *Joseph.* A rich man, and a disciple. Not many such were found among Christ's followers. But the Scripture was to be fulfilled in this, "He made His grave with the wicked and with the rich in His death." Isa. 53. 9. This man is called by Luke, "a counsellor—a good man and a just. The same had not consented to the counsel and deed of them (i. e., who condemned and crucified Him)—who also himself waited for the kingdom of God." John says of him, "being a disciple of Jesus, but *secretly*, for fear of the Jews."—¶ *Arimathea.* This is supposed by some to be the

also himself was Jesus' disciple :

58 He went to Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus. Then Pilate commanded the body to be delivered.

59 And when Joseph had ta-

same as Ramah, six miles north of Jerusalem. It is more likely the same as Ramleh, near Lydda, about thirty miles north-west of Jerusalem. This was Samuel's birth-place (see 1 Sam. 1. 1). "Ramathaim-Zophim."

58. *Begged the body.* This incidental allusion to existing customs, shows the veracity of the narrative. Those crucified by the Romans, are said to have been usually exposed to the birds of prey—and a guard was set to prevent their friends from burying the bodies. The body of Jesus, therefore, could not be obtained for burial, without leave from Pilate. The Evangelists only relate that it was applied for.—See "*Greenleaf's Testimony of the Evangelists.*" With the Jews, it was not lawful for the bodies of criminals to remain all night upon the tree, "but thou shalt in any wise bury him that day." Deut. 21. 23. Mark says that Joseph "*went in boldly unto Pilate.*" This is expressive, considering what John says of him, that he was a disciple *secretly* for fear of the Jews. The most timid Christians do sometimes show the greatest courage, and accomplish the boldest things for Christ. Who would not plead for Christ's body? But *the church* is not *His body* (Col. 1. 24). Who will go forward before governors and kings for it? Pilate ordered the body to be given up. But, the most completely to forestal any allegation of His being yet alive, in order to account for His rising, Mark records (15. 44), that "Pilate marvelled if He were already dead, and calling unto him the centurion, he asked him if He had been any while dead. And when he knew it of the centurion, he gave the body to Joseph." John gives another confirmation of His actual death (19. 31), that because it was the (*παρασκην*)

ken the body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth,

60 And <sup>h</sup> laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock : and he rolled a great stone to the door of the sepulchre, and departed.

61 And there was Mary Mag-

*h* Is. 53. 9.

day of preparation (see ch. 26. 19, note), and the bodies were not allowed to remain on the cross on the sabbath day, they asked to have the legs of all the bodies broken, and the corpses removed. And the manifest fact of Jesus' death (dead already), kept them from breaking His legs, and thus fulfilled the Scripture (Ps. 34. 20), and answered to the type, for the paschal lamb was to have no bone broken. Exod. 12. 46.

59. *Clean linen cloth.* This was a large square wrapper, in which the body was shrouded, and then bound by linen bandages, with spices. This was the Jewish mode of burying. John 19. 40. So also the Egyptians embalmed—and it seems of Egyptian origin. John tells us, in this connexion, of the *Nicodemus*—whose night visit to Christ he records also (chap. 3)—that he came at this time, and “brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pounds weight,” to embalm the Saviour.

60. *In his own new tomb.* John tells us more precisely, that this sepulchre was in a garden adjoining the place where Christ was crucified—i. e., in

dalene, and the other Mary, sitting over against the sepulchre.

62 Now the next day, that followed the day of the preparation, the chief priests and Pharisees came together unto Pilate,

the near vicinity of Calvary, outside the city—where, in the rocky slopes, tombs were excavated (see ch. 23. 27, 29, note). Gethsemane was called “a garden.” No other tenant occupied this tomb.—¶ *Rolled a great stone.* It was customary to close the mouths of tombs and caves thus, to preserve from wild beasts.

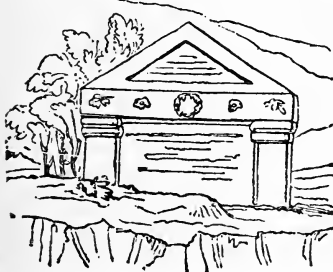
61. While this was doing, and after it was done, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary, in their warm and undying affection, sat *over against*, or opposite the sepulchre, gazing at the sacred spot. Luke says, they “beheld the sepulchre and *how the body was laid.*”

OBSERVE, (1.) These particulars are so fully given—viz., of Christ's ascertained death and of His being alone in the tomb, so that the rising could not have been another's—that we shall have the fullest evidence of His resurrection. (2.) We see the Scripture fulfilled in this case, to the last and least details, and we may look for all Scripture to be equally made good. (3.) Christ shall never be without some faithful followers. (4.) Timid faith is drawn out and emboldened by contact with the realities of *Christ's death*—e. g. *Joseph and Nicodemus.*

§ 158. THE WATCH AT THE SEPULCHRE. —SEVENTH day of the week, or Jewish SABBATH. Jerusalem.

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
27.62-66			

62. *The day of the preparation.* The *fore-sabbath* (see ch. 26. 19, note). The day *after* preparation-day was therefore the sabbath. Because this was a sabbath occurring amidst the the great festival season, “that sabbath lay was a *high day*” (John 19.



63 Saying, Sir, we remember that that deceiver<sup>1</sup> said, while he was yet alive, After<sup>m</sup> three days I will rise again.

64 Command therefore that the sepulchre be made sure until the third day, lest his disciples come by night, and<sup>n</sup> steal him away, and say unto the

<sup>1</sup> Jno.7.12,47. 2Cor.6.8. *m* c.16.21; 17.23; 20.19. Lu.24.6,7. Jno.2.19. *n* c.28.13.

31). As the Jews reckoned their days *from evening to evening*, this day spoken of, means *not* the next morning, but *after sunset* of Friday, when the Jewish day commenced. Saturday was the Sabbath at that time. Hence they took the *very promptest* measures, before a night should intervene.

63. Here we find the utmost precaution of Christ's enemies taken against His rising, and against any possible deceptions to that effect. Hence they call Him "*that deceiver*"—or impostor. They speak of Him as an impostor, because they have not the least confidence in His rising from the dead. See ch. 12. 40; 26. 61.

64. *Until the third day.* This is the sense in which the Jews evidently understood the time, "after three days" in the preceding verse. The period for Christ's remaining in the grave, was the intervening time *until the third day*, taking in the parts of three days. They supposed that His disciples would steal away His body, as the only means of making His word seem good—deceiving the people, by declaring Him risen. This is introduced to show that they were on the sharpest look out for any deception. —¶ *The last error*, or fraud—imposition. If this should succeed, and they could pretend that He had risen, this last pretence would more powerfully influence the people than the first, or His pretending to be the Messiah. This confession of theirs is their *testimony*, that *if He should really rise*, it would carry the most overpowering conviction.

65 *A watch.* (κουστωδία) —Latin—

people, He is risen from the dead: so the last error shall be worse than the first.

65 Pilate said unto them, Ye have a watch: go your way, make *it* as sure as you can.

66 So they went, and made the sepulchre sure, sealing<sup>o</sup> the stone, and setting a watch.

<sup>o</sup> Da.6.17.

*Custodia.* The guard from the castle of Antonia—used at the festivals for any service needed in the city. "A watch" consisted, usually, of about *sixty* soldiers. This watch had already been in use in the trial and crucifixion.—¶ *As sure as you can*—literally (*ωσ οιδατε*), *as ye know*, or *know how*.

66. *Sealing the stone.* This was the utmost security that could be given. Pilate's signet was stamped on a seal set to the extremities of a leathern band, that passed round the stone. This was done probably to prevent the guards being bribed by the disciples, as they suspected to be possible. Daniel's den was sealed (Dan. 6. 17).

—¶ *Setting a watch.* They stationed this military guard at the sepulchre, and gave them charge to duty.

OBSERVE, (1.) It is plain that all deception was most thoroughly guarded against, as to the resurrection of Christ. At the earliest moment—*before night*—in a way utterly to prevent His leaving the tomb, except by Divine power—the *stone*, the *guard*, the *seal*, and the active *suspicion* of any possible fraud, all invested the sepulchre with the utmost possible security. Let us see whether He will rise again. This will settle the evidence of His work. (2.) Every sinner should weep at the sufferings and death of Christ, both in penitence for his own sins, and in gratitude for the grace of our Lord Jesus. (3.) Christians have comfort in looking forward to death, because Christ went through the grave for them, to make its darkness bright with hope, and its repose

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

[IN<sup>a</sup> the end of the sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the

*a* Mar. 16. 1. Lu. 24. 1, & c. Jno. 20. 1, & c.

sweet in Him—and to take away its victory. (4.) He needed to lie under the power of death for a time, to taste death for others, that so also He might vanquish and despoil the last enemy.

first *day* of the week, came Mary Magdalene, <sup>b</sup> and the other Mary, to see the sepulchre.

*b* c. 27. 56.

“O Death, where is thy sting? O Grave, where is thy victory? Thank be unto God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ’ (2 Cor. 15. 55, 57).

## PART IX.

*Our Lord's Resurrection. His subsequent appearances and His Ascension.*

Time—Forty days.

	Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John
{ § 159. THE MORNING OF THE RESURRECTION.—FIRST <i>day of the week</i> . <i>Jerusalem.</i>	28. 2-4	16. 1		
{ § 160. VISIT OF THE WOMEN TO THE SEPULCHRE. Mary Magdalene returns.— <i>Same day.</i>	28. 1	16. 2-4	24. 1-3	20. 1, 2

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

1. *In the end of the sabbath*—literally (*ἡσπέρ*), *in the evening* of the sabbath. And as in Jewish reckoning, the day ended at six o'clock, P. M., this phrase refers to the opening of the subsequent day. The next clause more exactly specifies the time. Quite as soon as the sabbath time had passed, and the earliest dawn of the following day was breaking, these anxious and affectionate followers of Christ hastened to the sepulchre. John says, “*early*.” Luke, “*very early*.” Mark, “*very early, at the rising of the sun*.” Matthew, “*as it began to dawn*.” The time was early dawn, or at day-break. This early movement shows their devotion to the Master; for as the other Evangelists tell us, they came “*bringing the spices which they had prepared*” (Luke). They had “*bought sweet spices, that they might come and anoint Him*” (Mark). The women reached the sepulchre, *after the incidents recorded in the next verses (2-4)*.—¶ *The first day of the week*—an unusual phrase (*μὴν αἰ 38αῶν*)—

literally, “*one of the Sabbaths*.” The same phrase and no other is used by each of the Evangelists, in their mention of this *first Christian sabbath*. Mark uses it twice; Luke once, as Matthew and John twice, and only in the records of the resurrection. Besides, it is used in Acts 20. 7, and in 1 Cor. 16. 2, both to designate the Christian sabbath. Bengel remarks, that “*with the resurrection of our Lord, is associated the first remarkable mention of the Dominical day*.” The Cranmer version of the New Testament (A. D. 1539) reads, “*Upon an evening of the sabbathes which dawneth the first daye of the sabbathes*.” Wicklif (A. D. 1380) reads, “*In the eventide of the saboth, that bigynneth to schyne in the first dai of the wike*.” The evening of the old dispensation is the dawning of the new.—¶ *Mary Magdalene, &c.* Besides, there are mentioned in all, the other Mary, wife of Alpheus, and mother of James and Jesus—Salome, the mother of Zebedee's children—viz. James and John—and Joanna, the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward.—¶ *To see* (*θεωρησαι*)

2 And, behold, there <sup>1</sup> was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it.

3 His <sup>c</sup> countenance was like

<sup>1</sup> Or, had been. c Ps. 104. 4. Eze. 1. 4-14. Da. 10. 6. Re. 1. 14-16.

—to *visit*. Bengel remarks here, “that they came for such offices as belonged to those who were not near relatives—viz., of embalming—and hence it is not wonderful that our Lord’s mother was not in the company.”

2. *Great earthquake*. This had taken place before their arrival. Such an event had accompanied the death of Christ, and the graves of His people were opened. Much more shall it occur at His own rising, when His own sepulchre is burst.—¶ *The angel of the Lord*. He came with *authority* “from heaven.” Matthew describes him as sitting. Luke speaks of *two* that were seen *standing*. Twelve legions of angels could have been there at Christ’s command. These were *His* angels (“of the Lord”). Theophylact remarks, that “the stone was removed, *not to let Jesus out, but to let the disciples in.*”

3. *His countenance*—literally, his *form or appearance*. This was heavenly apparel. Christ at His transfiguration had His face shining as the sun, and His raiment white and glistening. This dazzling whiteness was the symbol of joy and purity and glory. Bengel remarks, that we do not read of celestial messengers appearing before this, in such dress; but afterward they so appeared. Acts 1. 10, and 10. 30.

4. *For fear of him*—i. e., of the angel.—¶ *Did shake*—or *quake*. The verb here has the same force as the noun, vs. 2—“*earthquake*.” The military guards were struck with tremor and terror, and fell down as dead. Mark records the query of the women on the way, about who should roll away the stone for them, and of

lightning, and his raiment white as snow:

4 And for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead *men*.

5 And the angel answered <sup>d</sup>

d He. 1. 14.

their finding the stone rolled away (16. 3, 4). Luke tells further of their entering into the sepulchre (24. 3). John tells further still, of Mary Magdalene’s returning with the message to Simon Peter (20. 2).

§ 161. VISION OF ANGELS IN THE SEPULCHRE.—FIRST day of the week. Jerusalem.

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
28. 5-7	16. 5-7	24. 4-8	

5. *And the angel answered*. Mark says that this address of the angel was as they had entered the sepulchre—the heavenly messenger “*sitting on the right side*”—viz., on the stone, as Matthew records. There was an inner vault where the bodies were laid, and the stone was at the mouth of this, while there was also an *outer* enclosure, into which the women entered, as stated by Mark—and saw the angel sitting, as told by Matthew. This reconciles the seeming discrepancy. Mark further describes him as “a young man (that is in form), clothed in a long white garment, and *they were affrighted.*” This last statement by Mark, of the women’s fear, accounts for the conciliatory address of the angel, here given. The angel knew whom they sought, because he was sent on this Divine commission. In vs. 8, Matthew intimates by the Greek term rendered “*departed*” (or having gone out from), that they had been inside. The fact that Luke records the appearing of *two* angels who stood by them, is not inconsistent with the other statements; because Matthew and Mark speak only of the one who addressed the women. This is natural, and occurs elsewhere as in

and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified.

6 He is not here; for he is risen, as he said. <sup>e</sup> Come, see the place where the Lord lay.

7 And go quickly, and tell his

<sup>e</sup> Ps. 105. 3, 4. <sup>f</sup> c. 27. 63.

regard to the blind men at Jericho, and the demoniacs at Gadara. And as to the *standing* posture, the word rendered "*stood*" in Luke, means more literally, "*appeared suddenly*." Besides, they might easily have both sat and stood, during the interview—might have been both outside and inside at different moments—and they might have been seen both singly and together in the sudden and shifting apparition. When infidels would make war against the Scripture on such slight grounds, they show alike their zealous hostility, and their lack of better weapons.

6. *He is not here.* This was the consoling message to the affrighted disciples—that Christ, though not there, was where His promise had appointed—not dead and buried any longer, but alive and faithful. They needed an angel message to remind them of Christ's word. They were looking for Him other than in the way of His appointment—and they should not find Him there. They were guided by natural expectations, and not by the calculations of faith grounded on the express word of promise.—¶ *See the place.* This was a niche in the inner chamber of the tomb. The angel thus convinces them of Christ's having actually risen, and of his own Divine commission to assure them of the fact. He calls the Saviour "*the Lord*."—A glorious appellation, says Bengel. The object of the angel was to remind them of Christ's promise to *rise on the third day*, which was fulfilled, and of His appointment to meet them in Galilee, which was ready to be fulfilled. So our finding one promise made good, increases our faith in all the promises.

disciples that he is risen from the dead; and, behold, he goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see him: lo, I have told you.

8 And they departed quickly

<sup>g</sup> Lu. 24. 34. <sup>1</sup> Co. 15. 4. <sup>h</sup> ver. 16, 17.

The body of Christ was laid in the tomb before sunset on Friday—and he rose early on the morning of Sunday. He therefore rose *on the third day*, having lain in the tomb during one whole day and a part of two others—in all, not far from thirty-six hours.

7. *Go quickly.* Bengel remarks that the apostles especially ought to have believed before they had the sight. Therefore, they shall be informed of these scenes by the *women*, and their faith shall be tried.—¶ *Tell His disciples.* Mark adds, emphatically, "*and tell Peter*." What a tender care had Christ for the faith of this unfaithful apostle, who had so lately denied Him. This accords well with His praying for him, that his faith fail not—an angel message now to rally his faith.—¶ *He is risen.* This was the animating word—"risen from the dead."—¶ *He goeth before you.* How faithful was Christ, though they were so unbelieving. Why had they not hurried to Galilee instead of to the tomb? Alas, notwithstanding the very word of promise, they had gone to the sepulchre with spices to *embalm His corpse!* Yet Christ is *faithful!* He went where He had appointed, and waited for them there. How He goes before us—anticipates our promptest movements. This was only a hint of what His anticipating, foregoing grace should always do—going before us even where we have promises—and being *beforehand* with us. "Before that Philip called thee, &c., Jno. 1. 48.

§ 162. THE WOMEN RETURN TO THE CITY. JESUS MEETS THEM.—FIRST day of the week.

Matt.	Mark.	Like.	John.
28. 8-10	16. 8	24. 9-11	

from the sepulchre, with fear and great joy, and did run to bring his disciples word.

9 ¶ And as they went to tell his disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, All hail.<sup>i</sup> And they came and held him by the feet, and worshipped him.

10 Then said Jesus unto them,

*i* Jno. 20. 19.

8. *And they departed quickly*—literally, *went out of, or from* the sepulchre. This is a hint in the language, that they had been *inside*, as the other Evangelists mention.—¶ *Fear and great joy.* *Fear*, at the astounding sights of the angels and the vacant sepulchre—and *great joy*, at the Divine messages, and at their new views of the promises. So “*we tremble and rejoice*” in our discoveries of Christ’s gracious words and ways.—¶ *Quickly.* At the thought of *seeing* Christ as had been promised (vs. 7), and with zeal to convey the glad news to the rest.

9. *And as they went.* This was plainly our Lord’s *first* appearing, for though Mark speaks of His having appeared *first* to Mary Magdalene (16. 9), yet the term is used relatively. It was the first of those several appearances, which Mark records. Mary Magdalene was not with the other women at this appearing, as we infer from her language to Peter and John (John 20. 2). She had not yet seen the Lord. (See the narratives harmonized at the end.)—¶ *All Hail*—or rather, *Hail.* A term of salutation. The literal meaning of the Greek word is, *rejoice*—i. e., *joy to thee!*—¶ *Held Him by the feet.* This phrase, with the next term which signifies the act of prostration on the ground in reverence (see note 2. 2), describes their earnest and overjoyed devotion. They cast themselves before Him, and took Him by the feet. So promptly did they find that He was verily the same Lord that was crucified. And if He was indeed their *RISEN LORD* they must needs pay Him Divine

Be not afraid: go tell my brethren that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see me.

11 ¶ Now when they were going, behold, some of the watch came into the city, and shewed unto the chief priests all the things that were done.

*j* He. 2. 11.

homage. It is intimated that their holding Him by the feet was an expression of their dread of separating from Him again, even for an instant. This explains the opening of vs. 10.

10. *Be not afraid*—that is, to part from me on this errand, especially, when it is to *meet me with the rest*, in a place *beyond*. This meeting now by the way was more than Christ had promised. He will sometimes do *more than He has said* for His people, to confirm them in all that *He has said*. We may go out from our closet interviews on our errands of Christian duty—for he has appointed to meet us *beyond*. In the way of our cheerful obedience He will often meet us, crying, *Hail! Peace!*—¶ *My brethren.* How tender the message! It was not enough to have *promised*—He must every way remind and assure them that He would *keep* His *promise*. Surely this was Christ, “*Thy speech bewrayeth thee!*” He is “the first-born among many brethren” (Rom. 8. 29. comp. Heb. 3. 11).—¶ *Galilee.* He went up to Jerusalem to be crucified. He would now go to Galilee, where most of His mighty works were done. There was His nativity, and the place where He had been brought up. It was Galilee of the Gentiles where *the light* had sprung up upon the region and shadow of death. ch. 4. 13-16.

OBSERVE, (1.) “The sign of the prophet Jonas” is given (ch. 16. 4). Let us enter the vacant sepulchre, and, like John, SEE AND BELIEVE (John 20. 8). (2.) Christ *proves to us* His resurrection, by *meeting us*, and confirming to us His promises.



12 And when they were assembled with the elders, and had taken counsel, they gave large money unto the soldiers,

13 Saying, Say ye, His disciples came by night, and stole

K c. 26. 64.

him away while we slept

14 And if this come to the governor's ears, we will persuade him, and secure you.

15 So they took the money, and did as they were taught :

	Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
§ 163. Peter and John run to the Sepulchre.—FIRST day of the week. Jerusalem.	.....	.....	24. 12	20. 3-10
§ 164. Our Lord is seen by Mary Magdalene at the Sepulchre.—Same day.	.....	19. 9-11		20. 11-18
§ 165. REPORT OF THE WATCH.—FIRST day of the week. Jerusalem.	23. 11-15			

11. When they were going, or rather when they had gone. The guard (or keepers, vs. 4), having now recovered sufficiently from their stunning fright, and seeing their own liability to charges for not having kept the tomb safely, went to make report of all that had occurred.—¶ *Unto the chief priests.* The chief priests were well understood to be the parties interested, and the active agents in Christ's death, though the charge and condemnation before Pilate had been one which concerned the state. Moreover the guard had been put at command of the chief priests (ch. 27. 65). The guards themselves were convinced of a miraculous work at the sepulchre.

12. At this astounding news, they convene the Sanhedrim.—¶ *Large money*—literally *sufficient*, in the sense of abundant. They could think now any of lying and bribery. The statements of the guards satisfied them that there was no need of searching for the body, or investigating the case. They did not think of possible collusion. And now if He had risen, the last point was harder to kick against than the first (ch. 27. 64).—¶ *Unto the soldiers.* Ordinarily the soldiers might have been open to bribe. But in this case, they would expose themselves to the penalty of the Roman law, which was death, if it should appear that they had been asleep at their posts, and with such fatal results. The conduct of the chief priests here,

showed their perfidy—their eagerness to contradict the facts, even after they were convinced—their extreme corruption that would resort to such iniquitous means—and especially their unhappy extremity, that could find no possible escape from the overwhelming proofs, and must bribe the soldiers to lie, against all probability, and in peril of their own life, to get a shadow of pretence against the resurrection. Yet what a gross absurdity was involved in this falsehood. *If the guards were asleep, how could they know of the body's being stolen away by the disciples?* Their very lack of fidelity so confessed, would destroy their testimony.

14. *The governor's ears.* They must give the soldiers this warrant against the fatal consequences of such a confession. The penalty of being asleep would be death—and yet, this pledge is given of influencing Pilate, so that they should escape the law.—¶ *Persuade.* It was well understood that money could operate with Pilate, so that the soldiers need not fear. The governor was evidently known as being open to this kind of persuasion. Philo testifies to this point in his character.

15. *So they took the money and did as they were taught!* What a record of guilt and shame!—¶ *This saying,* referring to vs. 14. The saying of the soldiers.—¶ *Among the Jews.* This became the common Jewish ver-

and this saying is commonly reported among the Jews until this day.

16 Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Je-

l c. 26. 32.

sion of our Lord's disappearance from the sepulchre. This fabrication was most industriously circulated by the Jews in distant countries, as Justin Martyr certifies. (Dialogue with Trypho, p. 202 and 335.) The same story is related in the Jewish Talmudical writings.—¶ *Until this day*, viz., the date of Matthew's gospel. Such an event as Christ's rising from the tomb, was seen to be so confounding an argument for all His claims, that the chief priests took the most precaution against the shadow of any pretence to this effect (ch. 27. 63, 64). They had provided most completely against the very measures which they afterwards declare to have been taken, viz., the *stealing of the body by the disciples*. It was to prevent all possibility of this, that they had a guard of *sixty men* stationed around the tomb. Could all their laborious and abundant precautions have been defeated by these disciples? But the disciples carried spices to the sepulchre to *embalm* the body in death! Besides, could a Roman guard of sixty men have been all so soundly asleep at the same time and throughout such a transaction? This would have been a miracle. Could the disciples have *given life* to the body? It was abundantly testified that He appeared alive, by many infallible proofs (Acts 1. 3). Besides, what motive could His followers have had for

removing His dead body out of so honourable a sepulchre? Did the *chief priests believe* that His body was in possession of the disciples? They would surely have instituted search in the morning, so short a time after the event. The very report of the transaction given by the soldiers, and currently circulated among the Jews, carries its own refutation. And notwithstanding the false witness of the Jews, and their industrious circulation of it, multitudes of Jews and Gentiles believed. And this was no more wonderful an event than many of His miracles had been.

OBSERVE, The resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead must be admitted as the crowning proof of His claims—and the highest token of the acceptance of His work in heaven. It establishes our faith (John 20. 8), and gives believers a pledge of their resurrection and redemption, since He is risen for us (1 Cor. 15. 20-23). I shows that Christ died not as others, but for a specific purpose as covenanted with the Father. And at once upon the accomplishment of this great end of His death, He triumphantly rose again (Heb. 1. 3). This therefore proves the object of His death to have been substantially attained. We are begotten again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead (1 Pet. 1. 3-5).

	Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
§ 166. Our Lord is seen of Peter—then by two Disciples on the way to Emmaus.—FIRST day of the week. <i>Emmaus.</i>	...	16. 12, 13	24. 13-35	
§ 167. Jesus appears in the midst of the Apostles, Thomas being absent.—EVENING following the FIRST day of the week. <i>Jerusalem.</i>	...	16-14-18	24. 36-49	20. 19-23
168. Jesus appears in the midst of the Apostles, Thomas being present.—EVENING following the FIRST day of the subsequent week. <i>Jerusalem.</i>	...	...	...	20. 24-28

sus had appointed them.

17 And when they saw <sup>m</sup> him, they worshipped him : but some doubted.

*m* c.16.28.

18 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All <sup>n</sup> power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

*n* Ps.2.6 ; 89.19 ; 110 1-3. Is.9.6.7. Da.7.14. c.11.27. Lu.1.32. Jno. 17.2. Ro.14.9 Ep.1.20,21. He.2.8. 1Pe 3.22. Re.11.15.

	Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
§ 169. THE APOSTLES GO AWAY INTO GALILEE. JESUS SHOWS HIMSELF TO SEVEN OF THEM AT THE SEA OF TIBERIAS <i>Galilee.</i>	28. 16	.....	.....	21. 1-24
§ 170. JESUS MEETS THE APOSTLES AND ABOVE FIVE HUNDRED BRETHREN ON A MOUNTAIN IN GALILEE.	28.16-20			

16. *Away into Galilee.* Here it is recognized that the apostolic circle was now reduced by the apostacy and death of Judas, so as to number but *eleven*. Referring to John's record, which supplies mainly the deficiencies of the rest, we find those interesting narratives of the fishing, and Christ's appearing after their unsuccessful night, directing them where to cast—the prompt and marvellous success in following His directions—Peter's springing out from the fishers' boat into the sea—their feeding afterward on the fish, where Christ showed His identity and humanity, by eating with them—and His special conversations with Peter, testing his love, and forewarning him of his violent death.—¶ *A mountain where Jesus had appointed.* This appointment is recorded in ch. 26. 32, no mountain is spoken of either there or in His promise (vs.10), or by the angel (vs.4). Our Lord may have designated a mountain, though the apostles make no record of it. Or, the Transfiguration Mount may have been understood as the spot. Many ("above five hundred brethren at once") had assembled there (1 Cor. 15. 6), as was natural enough from the report of such an appointment among Christ's followers, circulating more than eight days before the time, and the lively expectations excited both in Jerusalem and Galilee. He appointed this meeting in GALILEE, because there were but few disciples in Jerusalem (the number of the names being about a hun-

dred and twenty, Acts 1. 15), and Galilee had been the principal sphere of His labours, and was the chief seat of His followers.

17. *When they saw Him.* What a sight! What a glorious confirmation of their faith! John entered within the sepulchre and "*saw and believed*" (ch. 20. 8), not only that Christ had risen, but that His work was stamped with the seal of Divine authority and acceptance, and that He was a Divine Saviour. Now, at the *sight* of their identical Master, and at this fulfilment of His promise to meet them, how could they avoid worshipping Him as their Divine Lord?—¶ *But some doubted.* There were some there doubtless, who had not before beheld Him, nor had palpable proofs of His real appearance. All the natural doubts, therefore, now rose and struggled in their breasts. They doubted the evidence of their senses, that this could be the same Lord and Master risen. How plainly all the narrative implies that it was Christ in His identical flesh, as they had before known Him. The print of the nails and the very open wounds, were shown to Thomas. He ate "the broiled fish and honeycomb" before them (Luke 24. 42), to show them that it was really and personally He, in the same flesh, for "*they believed not yet for joy, and wondered*" (vs. 41).

18. *Then Jesus came and spake unto them*—i. e., the *eleven* (vs. 16), of whom alone Matthew has spoken. The apostolic commission is given by

19 ¶ Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father,

c Mar. 16. 15. 1 Or, make disciples, or Christians, of all nations. p Is. 52. 10. Ro. 10. 13.

Mark at the appearing of Christ to the disciples, in Thomas' absence (16. 15-18). Then, also, John records the *breathing* on them, with the words, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost, &c. Our Lord repeats publicly here, in the presence of all His disciples, the solemn charge which He had already given, in private, to the apostles. This was the great ministerial commission, that looked beyond the apostles' age, and beyond their extraordinary office, to the preaching of the Gospel by the ministers of Christ, *ALWAY even unto the end of the world.*—¶ *All power is given unto me.* This cannot imply any inferiority, for "ALL POWER" is OMNIPOTENCE, which is an incommunicable attribute of God. And that it was "GIVEN" Him, refers only to the exaltation upon which He was just now to enter. As Mediator, He was now to take all power on earth and in heaven—as COVENANTED WITH THE FATHER—for the purpose of gathering in His people—ruling and defending His church—and subduing all His and our enemies. As to His original power over all things, as the second person in the Godhead, and God the Son, see John 1. 1-3. Romans 9. 5. Col. 1. 16, 17. Heb. 1. 3, 8.

19. *Go ye therefore.* This commission given to the Gospel ministry, is on the basis of Christ's all-sufficient power.—¶ *Teach*—literally, "make disciples of."—¶ *All nations.* This gave the widest sphere for the ministerial work.—¶ *Baptizing them.* Thus the people of different and distant lands were to be gathered into a visible church by a formal and creable profession of Christ, the baptism and instruction in Christ's truth being enjoined as requisites of a church. To those of that time, the belief that Jesus of Nazareth was the true Messiah, involved all fundamental points, and was the substance of a

and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

20 Teaching them to observe

q Ac. 2. 42. 1 Cor. 11. 2.

good profession. Now, this Christian baptism as we see from what follows, involves more than the avowal of such a commonly confessed belief. From the Acts of the Apostles we learn, too, that *household baptism* was understood (see 3. 39; 16. 33).—¶ *In the name.* This does not mean, "by the authority." It is "into the name," or *unto*, involving a profession of this Christian religion, in which alone the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, can be made known to men. One so baptized into the name of the Triune God, professes to receive the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, in all the offices in which they act for the government and salvation of men; and engages to walk in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord. In infant baptism, this engagement is made by the believing parent for the child, with the view of the child's assuming the obligation for itself at discretionary years. The baptism is the child's privilege. The after profession is its solemn Christian duty.—¶ *Of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.* Observe, it is in THE NAME of these three persons AS ONE GOD, not in their NAMES as though they were three Gods. The same phraseology is used, when speaking of any *one being*, as 1 Cor. 1. 13, "were ye baptized in the name of Paul?" This language therefore gives the NAME of God—*Three Persons in one Godhead.* How absurd that the Son and the Holy Ghost should be thus named, if they be not persons. How impossible that any inferior being could be ranked thus with the Father, in the sacred form of this perpetual ordinance—or if the Spirit were only an *attribute*, how trifling would be such a formulary! The Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost, must be *equal in power and glory.*

20. *Teaching them, &c.* Christ's

all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am

r c.18.20. Re.1.18.

command: are to be taught in the church. The church is set to be a grand TEACHING institution. Its business is educational. The scriptures are to be taught. There is sufficiency in these, and exclusive authority as a rule of faith. To gather into the church all nations—baptizing them into the Christian faith—to preach the gospel to every creature, and to teach the church Christ's commandments, were the substantial points of the great commission.—¶ *Lo I am with you.* This implies His essential presence and assistance. He had said before, "there am I in the midst of them," promising to be so especially present where two or three of them were gathered together in His name (ch. 18. 20). He here again asserted His Divinity—able to be omnipresent, and upholding all things by the word of His power—sitting down on the right hand of the majesty on High.—¶ *Always.*—literally (*πάντα τὰς ἡμέρας*), ALL THE DAYS. He is with His faithful ministers always. He does not say "all your days," as though speaking

with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

only of the apostles, or of their times, but of all future time.—¶ *End of the world.* The former phrase sufficiently shows that this can have no limited signification, as "end of the age." And even such a construction could prove nothing for the opponents of Christ's Divinity, since to have been ever, where present with them from His ascension to the destruction of Jerusalem—some forty years after—would have required the same Divine attributes. How speedily and signally was this presence given at Pentecost to succeed the preaching of Christ—at the temple gate to cure the lame man, at the word of Peter and John—and in prison, to loose and deliver Paul and Silas—though these last were not of the eleven. And now, eighteen hundred years after the promise, it can be testified that Christ has been and is with His faithful ministers, to cheer, and counsel, and strengthen, and direct, and defend them. And so shall it be to the very end. "And they went forth and preached every where, the Lord working with them."

§ 171. Our Lord is seen of James, then of all the Apostles.—*Jerusalem* (See Acts 1. 3-8, and 1 Cor. 15. 7.)

§ 172. The Ascension. *Bethany*

§ 173. Conclusion of John's Gospel.

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
.....	16. 19, 20	24. 50-53	
.....	.....	.....	20. 30, 31 21. 25

We subjoin Dr. Robinson's Harmony of our Lord's appearances.

1. To the Women returning from the Sepulchre—*Matthew*. See § 162.
2. To Mary Magdalene, at the Sepulchre—*John* and *Mark*. § 164.
3. To Peter, perhaps early in the afternoon—*Luke* and *Paul*. § 166.
4. To the two disciples going to Emmaus, towards evening—*Luke* and *Mark*. § 166.
5. To the apostles (except Thomas), assembled at evening—*Mark*, *Luke*, *John*, and *Paul*. § 167.

N. B. These five appearances all took place at or near Jerusalem, upon the first day of the week, the

same day on which our Lord arose.

6. To the apostles (Thomas being present) eight days afterward, at Jerusalem—*John*. § 163.
  7. To seven of the apostles on the shore of the Lake of Tiberias—*John*. § 169.
  8. To the eleven apostles, and to five hundred brethren besides, on a mountain in Galilee—*Matthew* and *Paul*. § 170.
  9. To James, probably at Jerusalem—*Paul*. § 171.
  10. To the eleven at Jerusalem, immediately before the ascension—*Luke* in the Acts, and *Paul*. § 171.
- Then follows the ASCENSION § 172.

## APPENDIX.

WE have not thought it needful to depart from Dr. Robinson's Harmony in "The Schedule of Days," immediately preceding the crucifixion. Dr. Simon Greenleaf of Harvard University, in his "Testimony of the Evangelists," has adopted the same arrangement. No important points are involved, if we may except the question which might be considered important by some, whether Christ's triumphal entry to Jerusalem was on *Sunday*—hence called "*Palm Sunday*."

We subjoin the Harmony of this portion, which *Mimpriss* (London, 1845) adopts, after Greswell, which is generally conceded now, as the most authorized "Schedule of the Days."

**CLOSE OF THE SEVENTH DAY.**—After the expiration of the Jewish Sabbath (or Saturday), "six days before the Passover," John 12. 1 (meaning, in the Jewish reckoning, *the sixth day before*), Jesus arrives at Bethany.

**FIRST day of the week, SUNDAY.**—The Jews resort to Bethany, to see Jesus and Lazarus.

**SECOND day, MONDAY.**—Jesus goes in procession from Bethany to Jerusalem, to appear in the temple, four days before He suffers. He makes His *public entry*—after which, He goes to Bethany to lodge there.

**THIRD day, TUESDAY.**—Jesus, in the way from Bethany, curses a fig-tree; and on the same day He cleanses the Temple.

**FOURTH day, WEDNESDAY.**—Jesus returns to the city, and the conversation is held with the disciples about the fig-tree now withered. He discourses in the Temple and on Mount Olivet. He foretells His coming to destroy the city, &c.

**FIFTH day, THURSDAY (toward evening).**—The disciples make preparation for the Paschal Supper, which is eaten in the evening, which would be the beginning of Friday, as the day began after sunset.

We need only remark, that the sixth day before the Passover, according to the Jewish phraseology and reckoning, would rather be Sunday, as the sixth day before Friday—for the first and last day of the reckoning would be strictly included. So the other expression, "*after three days*," or "*the third day*" from Friday, confessedly meant *Sunday*—the day when our Lord appointed to rise again. But if the Sunday previous was the day of His arriving at Bethany, His public entry to Jerusalem was "*on the next day*"—*Monday*—(John 12. 12).

### JEWISH MONEY REDUCED TO DOLLARS AND CENTS.

	Dollars.	Cents.
A <i>Shekel</i> , or "piece of silver," which was equal to 2 Pekahs and 20 Gerahs.....	8	50.187
A Gold <i>Shekel</i> .....	8	03.
A <i>Maneh</i> or <i>Mina</i> (called " <i>Pound</i> ," Luke 19. 13).....	25	9.35
A <i>Talent of Silver</i> .....	1,505	62.5
A <i>Talent of Gold</i> .....	24,309	

*Roman money mentioned in the New Testament, reduced to Dollars and Cents.*

A *Mite*, about one-third of a cent.

A *Farthing*, about two-thirds of a cent.

A *denarius*, or *Penny*, about one-eighth of a dollar.

THE GOSPEL OF MARK.

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Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1853, by

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## THE FOUR EVANGELISTS, INSPIRATION, &c.

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THE Gospel history is given to us by four different Evangelists. This was God's plan for communicating such important truth to mankind. It was designed for all classes, and it is given, we may say, by every variety of witnesses. Two were eye-witnesses. Two were ear-witnesses. Two were Jews. Two, perhaps, were Gentiles. Of these two, one was a Greek, and there is some evidence that the other was a Roman; in which case, we have "two Evangelists from the great nations, that were admitted to the fellowship of the Gospel." "How striking," says Da Costa, "that thus from the very first, among the historical witnesses of Jesus Christ, the middle wall of partition is seen to be taken away!" Two were apostles. Two were companions of other apostles. "The testimony of two men is true." Here was to be double the law's requirement, that every word might be doubly established. And a special testimony was thus to be furnished, from Jew and Gentile to all nations—from disciple and apostle to all believers.

And these four were from every variety of occupation and condition. A publican, a citizen, a physician, a fisherman. And the stand-point of these narrators, and their apparent aim, were likewise various. Matthew writing for Jews—Mark, for Gentiles—Luke, as a careful and full historian—and John, as a defender of the faith. One full of the old Jewish institutions—another fully entering into the new—another devoted to historical detail,—another dealing in high abstract truth—these would seem to address every class of mind: and so bring forward, TOGETHER, a complete testimony for the world. "If we have in the Evangelists the Jew resident in Judea, the Roman proselyte, the Hellenist proselyte, and the Jew resident in Patmos, and made familiar with the Grecian schools of philosophy,—so, accordingly, had the Gospel to find acceptance, in the Roman world, with the devout Israelite, the hardy son of Rome, the Areopagite, and the cultivated Alexandrine." (*See Westcott.*) Hence, the Gospel history is to be gathered by a careful collation of the four Evangelists.

The most daring assaults of Infidel criticism, in our day, are upon the Gospels. By one class, the verbal agreements in the narratives are taken as proof that the Evangelists copied one from another, but in a loose, careless manner. By another class, the verbal disagreements are adduced to show an inconsistency and contradiction, to invalidate their testimony. The malice prepenes is manifest. These critics have set out to disprove the Gospel records; so that to them it is with the Evangelists, as it was to the Pharisees with Jesus and John. The one came neither eating nor drinking, and the cry was, "He hath a devil;" the other came doing both, as others did, and the cry was, "Behold a man gluttonous, and a wine-bibber." But in both cases alike, "Wisdom is justified of her children." The theory of a mythical ground for these Gospel narratives, does really, but not willingly, concede a great foundation truth, and only shows a sheer misunderstanding or misconstruction of the reality. It admits a harmony between the Old Testament and the New—shows, on its own concession, the agreement with ancient revelations—and only tries to turn into

fable, what is proved to be historical fact—only tries to make merely poetic, what is really prophetic—tries to pass off for rude mythology, what is true theology and Christology—tries to construe into myth, what is the pith of the Scripture and of all history.

But the Word of God does not force men to believe its record. It allows a possibility of doubt to the unbelieving. And so, it constantly puts religious principle to the test; as the same record may be received or rejected, according to the heart of the believer.

That criticism, which handles the Scripture as any other book, pursuing its investigations *only as a science, and apart from any practical use*, must be bewildered in vain speculations, having no regulator; must make shipwreck of faith, having no pole-star. This is the key to that Infidel criticism, which is “learned” without being “taught of God,” and which seeks to open the treasures of divine truth to men without regard to their great end, men’s salvation. “Where is the wise?” The “wise men” must have an eye to the Star of Bethlehem, and must worship at the Manger, opening at the Infant’s feet their richest treasures. “Then shall ye know, if ye follow on to know the Lord.” “If any man *is willing to do my will*, he shall know of the doctrine.”

But how is the variety in these Gospel narratives to be reconciled with their plenary inspiration? “*All Scripture is given by inspiration of God—and holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.*” The men were inspired, and the Scriptures are inspired, as the result of this peculiar divine agency dictating the Word. It was important that the several narratives should bear the stamp of their respective authors, else what need of *four* testimonies? One statement—engraved by the Divine Finger, as the law at Sinai,—would have sufficed. It was necessary that these writings bear the individual characteristics of their authors, the same as though independently penned by them, in order that the marks of genuineness might be found upon them. This, accordingly, we have: so that modern Infidelity is baffled in all attempts to show that these are not the writings of the authors, as respectively claimed.

Is it not plain, then, that the great problem of inspiration was, to employ human agency in perfect consistency with all the laws of mind: so to dictate the word, as that it should be run in the mould of each mental constitution? This was the prerogative of the Divine Spirit. Men speculate and debate about the mode of this, forgetting that they cannot expect to explore so divine and perfect an operation. And if they know not how their own spirit acts upon the body, except from the results, how else shall they claim to know of God’s wondrous operation, in inspiring men to write his own word? We only know that it is most perfectly God’s, and most perfectly man’s. The two natures are in each personal work, without confusion or collision. And as it is God’s prerogative to work so upon the human heart in his effectual grace, as to regenerate the whole nature without conflict with the free mental operations—and most perfectly to use free agents in all his providence, without destroying their individuality, or their free agency; what is to conflict with this higher use, in the great work of inspiration?

If these four records had shown no such discrepancies as we find, they would have seemed to be copied one from another, and would have lost all the weight of different witnesses. This would have destroyed their interest. God did not please so to dictate the Gospel history as, in employing four narrators, to preserve a verbal uniformity, or in any way to mar the force of independent testimonies. As we have them, they show no differences but such as would naturally occur in the statements of those who viewed the history from such different points—had such different habits of thought, tastes and aims, and such different objects. The Spirit, as was promised, “brought all things to *their remembrance* which Christ had said unto them,” and whatever

else each was to record. And when so recalled, it remained to be *expressed* by each, clothed in his own language, after his own style, and yet perfectly dictated by the Holy Ghost. So we have a *fourfold* Gospel—from God, through men, to mankind.—This will open to view the true idea of a “*Harmony of the Gospels.*” It is well known that the Evangelists have given only a *selection* of facts and discourses in the life of our Lord. It is not known, nor can it be, how far the similar narratives of different Evangelists may refer to the *same* thing. It is only a substantial harmonizing, then, that can be secured. Discrepancies may exist, without impeaching the record. And, doubtless, if we had full light, and could know all the facts and circumstances, a most perfect harmony could be arrived at. With a recent critic, “we are willing to believe that it will be one of our delightful employments, hereafter, to trace the true Harmony of the Holy Gospels, under His teaching of whom they are the record.”

And as God, the Holy Spirit, had an object in thus giving to the world the precious Gospel through four independent witnesses, so, we must suppose, he had an object in the very form, mode, and order, of the respective narratives. Omissions that we notice in any one of the four, are not to be ascribed to their ignorance of the facts, but rather to the divine plan. Verbal agreements which are observed, do not prove that they consulted each other's narratives. The verbal differences abundantly show that they did not. But *if they did*—which cannot be shown—it would be nothing against the plenary inspiration under which they acted. They may even have had recourse to documents, as in the genealogies of our Lord; and yet, it was under the divine inspiration that they were taught what record to use, and what part to omit,—and in this the inspiration was as much needed as in any portion of the narrative.

The verbal agreements of the first three Gospels in many passages, have been explained (as by Alford) on the following theory. That the Apostles were appointed as official witnesses of the life and acts and sayings of our Lord. This was their special commission. Accordingly, they preached abroad such a divinely authorized testimony, which soon circulated in the form of an oral narrative, and became familiar among the people. Many of these narratives actually took a stereotyped form, and were repeated almost word for word. “This common substratum of apostolic teaching” is supposed to account for the verbal agreements of the first three Evangelists, as having been the original source of the common facts therein narrated.—*Proleg.* ch. 1, §iii, 6.

But, the Holy Spirit, in accordance with the view already given, may have used this means as best agreeing with the natural course of things. He may have chosen, to a certain extent, *by this means*, to “call all things to their remembrance.” There is no more objection to his use of this means, than to his use of any means, even of human narrators. But we claim that here, in the use of means, the plenary inspiration was as requisite as elsewhere, and that such an employment of familiar words could no more dispense with inspiration than the narrative of familiar things. Yet, here our modern critics too much let go their hold upon the divine inspiration, and lose themselves in the human work. They leave out of view the inspiration, wherever they can see no special need. Hence the false theories that are afloat. Let it be understood, that though modern infidelity, among critics, has tried to invalidate the Gospel testimony by showing diversities of statement, there is no diversity which cannot be harmonized without violence; while the wonderful agreement, in such a history, of four witnesses who could not have seen each other's narratives, can be explained only by such a unity of source as the Holy Spirit's inspiration would give: and these differences of narration are such as rather confirm than disprove the testimony—because it is plainly the testimony of four witnesses, independent of each other

The present aim of Infidel criticism is not to prove the Bible a forgery, but to undermine its claims; to bring its inspiration down to the level of common pious writings; even to show that it was only an inspiration of the writers, not of the writings, though it is distinctly declared that "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God." Such critics forget the great original need of a revelation from God to man, as a declaration of the divine will, and a revelation of the only and sufficient rule of faith and practice. There is no middle course. If the Bible be at all what it claims to be, it must be an authoritative exposition of God's will to man. Whatever denies to it this special claim, would destroy it altogether, and leave mankind, in this day of false teachings and pretended revelations, without chart or compass, on a dark and stormy sea. Such an Infidel criticism as denies the infallibility of God's word, plays into the hands of that false Church that claims infallibility. The absolute authority of the Bible is alike the foundation and the safety of true religion.

"Every word of God is pure." (Ps. 30: 5). "Add thou not to his words, lest he reprove thee and thou be found a liar." (Prov. 30: 6). "The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his word is in my tongue." (2 Sam. 23: 2). "The Holy Ghost spake by the mouth of David." (Acts 1: 16). "God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began." (Acts 3: 21). "Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." (2 Pet. 1: 21). "Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth." (1 Cor. 2: 13). "Not as the word of man, but, as it is in truth, the word of God." (1 Thess. 2: 13).

Though there is evidence, internal and external, that Mark reported Peter's preaching, and that Luke reported Paul's, and that hence, both these Gospel narratives have apostolical authority—yet, beyond this, we receive them as "*given by inspiration of God,*" through Mark and Luke; in use, however, of such sources as the Holy Ghost hath pleased; dividing to the Evangelists, severally, as He willed. (1 Cor. 12: 11.) In such light, of course we are not (as Alford and others) puzzling ourselves for the reports and human sources whence each narrative was derived; nor querying how single incidents, not personally known to the Apostles, could have been communicated to them. The promise of the Holy Ghost was, to lead them into all truth.

Thus, also, we are to understand the citations in the New Testament from the Old Testament. The Holy Spirit who inspired the New Testament writers, caused *them* to understand the Scriptures of the Old Testament in their spirituality, or so to treat them. "Until the Old Testament life is understood as a whole, penetrated by the same Spirit that prevails in the New Testament,—*by whom the figures fulfilled in the latter, were indited in the former,*—the use of the Old Testament passages in the New Testament will always remain obscure." *Olshausen*, on John 2: 17.

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#### NOTE.

The system of NOTATION adopted in connexion with the Harmony, as introduced into the Notes, has found great favor. The plan of the Chronological New Testament, since issued in England, is not so complete, as it merely numbers the respective sections. In our first volume, on Matthew, we aimed, in a method not before attempted, to keep up the thread of the history, by presenting the harmony to view *with the comment*, where it properly belongs: and in this volume, we retain the Notation, as giving the order of the events and showing the parallel passages in tabular form, throughout; from the "Synopsis" in front of the "Notes on Matthew."

# INTRODUCTION

## TO THE

### GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MARK.

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#### THE AUTHOR, &c.

THAT this Gospel narrative was written by Mark, whose name it bears, has not been called in question, till very lately by certain German critics. The questions raised are so shallow, as only to confirm the truth. One of the doubters (Meyer) has retracted his objections. The proof of Mark's authorship is abundant. There seems, indeed, no other accounting for the fact of its always having been ascribed to him, as he was not otherwise so prominent in the Apostolic Church.

It has been generally held, that he is the same person who is spoken of as "John whose surname is Mark," (see Acts 12: 12, 25. 15: 37). He is also called John, ch. 13: 5, 13, and Mark in ch. 15: 39. This is explained, from the fact that it was customary for the Jews who mingled with the Greeks and Romans to take Roman names. Hence came the name Mark, which soon was more commonly used than the Hebrew, John. See Col. 4: 10. 2 Tim. 4: 11. Phil. 27. So we have Lebbeus, surnamed Thaddeus, and Joses, surnamed Barnabas; but both currently known by the latter, or surname, as Mark.

This Mark was a resident of Jerusalem. His mother's name was Mary. She was sister to the Apostle Barnabas, (Col. 4: 10.) and in her house the disciples were wont to assemble. (Acts 12: 12). We find Peter, on his release from prison, going to this house as though familiar there. And this fact would go to confirm the common belief that John Mark, the son of this Mary, and the relative of Barnabas, was the same spoken of as the companion and friend of Peter.

But since this John Mark was the missionary co-labourer of Paul, it has been judged by some that he was not the same as the associate of Peter, since these Apostles, Peter and Paul, had such different commissions—one to the Jews and the other to the Gentiles. Accordingly, it has been conjectured (see Da Costa) that Mark the Evangelist was a Gentile and a Roman. This is inferred from his remarkable reference to the Roman *watches* (ch. 13: 33-37) into which the night was divided. Da Costa further contends that this Evangelist Mark was a Gentile and not a Jew, from his use of Latin terms, not only such as had a usage enforced by the Romans, but otherwise, as if by established habit. He argues further from the explanation which he gives of Jewish customs, as one who observed them from without. (See ch. 7: 1-5). In the expression, "For the Pharisees and *all the Jews*," (v. 3,) this critic finds evidence that Mark spoke to Gentiles as himself a Gentile, and speaking of another nation.

Mark is spoken of as the son of Peter, (1 Pet. 5: 13,) and the connexion seems to import that it was as a spiritual son, or convert to Christianity, that

he was so called. If he be the same as John Mark, it is not unlikely that after Paul had quitted the scene, Mark should have united himself to Peter, with whom he had been on friendly terms at an early period of his life.

He was associated with Paul and Barnabas on their first missionary journey, as an assistant. (Acts 12: 25. 13: 5. At Pamphylia, Mark left them and returned to Jerusalem, whence they had set out. (Acts 13: 13.) For this reason Paul refused to take him on his second journey (Acts 15: 37); and so Barnabas took him and sailed to Cyprus; Mark being thus the occasion of a breach between Paul and Barnabas. He was, however, subsequently sent for by Paul, as though reconciled, and was with him during his first captivity at Rome. (Col. 4: 10. Phile. 27.) The passage in Colossians intimates that he was about to go a journey for Paul to Colosse. It was after all this that Mark is found with Peter. (1 Pet. 5: 13.)

Ancient testimony agrees that he sustained some special relation to Peter in writing this Gospel narrative. As Mark was not an Apostle, we may understand this as indicating the apostolic testimony, which he specially followed, but which, as we have seen, could be no bar to the plenary inspiration of the narrative, as this could not at all supersede the necessity of inspiration. Though neither Mark nor Luke were Apostles, their Gospel narratives have always been received in the church as of equal authority with the other two. They were written and circulated under the eye of the Apostles, at least of Paul and Peter and John, and with their express approbation: whereas *they* would doubtless have exposed them, if they had had no good claim to inspiration. Mark is spoken of by very early writers as being "the interpreter" of Peter—that is, probably, his secretary, or reporter, as having committed to writing what the Apostle preached and taught of the Gospel history, and as embodying it in another language—the Greek—while Peter preached probably in the Syro-Chaldaic, or language of the country. He was with that Apostle in Babylon when his first epistle was written. (1 Pet. 5: 13.)

The theory of the recent Dutch commentator, Da Costa of Amsterdam, is worthy of consideration. He finds in Mark's writing, the Western and Roman element, in distinction from the Israelitic, Eastern element in Matthew. He finds also, in some of the terms which he uses, and in his general style, the evidence of his military vocation. He conjectures that Mark is the "devout soldier" sent by Cornelius to Peter, to invite the Gospel to the Gentiles (Acts 10: 7)—that he then became a convert, and so was most appropriately called the *son* of Peter, in the faith, as Timothy was the son of Paul—and that thus "*the author of the first Gospel that was addressed to the Gentiles, was himself one of the first among the Gentiles to receive the Holy Ghost.*"

"But," says Calvin, "on this subject, we need not give ourselves much trouble, provided only we believe that he is a properly qualified and divinely appointed witness, who committed nothing to writing but as the Holy Spirit directed him and guided his pen." Vol. 1: p. xxxviii.

### THE TIME AND PLACE.

From the accounts of Irenæus and Clement, we infer that this Gospel narrative was written after the Apostles had left Judea, and towards the close of their ministry. The most probable date is A. D. 64; about the same as the Gospel by Matthew. The strong testimony is that it was written at Rome. There is no proof that Peter was present at the time; the language of John the Presbyter implies that it was in Peter's *absence*, for he is said to have written it "as he remembered." This important witness, who was an immediate disciple of our Lord on earth, says of Mark that "he erred in nothing." Romanists have asserted that this Gospel was written in Latin, but they were

refuted by the learned Simon, one of their own church. They afterwards announced that the Latin original was still preserved in the library of St. Mark's at Venice! But this was found to be a fable.

Early tradition makes Mark to have finished his labors at Alexandria. The Romish Cathedral of St. Mark's at Venice claims to have his bones. The Romish legend is, that his remains were *smuggled* through the Custom House at Alexandria, for the Cathedral, by being covered carefully with *pork*! And over the right door of the Cathedral we saw a representation of this ridiculous story, carved in stone!

### THE OBJECT, METHOD, &c.

This Evangelist, who writes more as a biographer than as a historian, passes at once to the ministry of John the Baptist, omitting all account of the birth and childhood of our Lord, as comprised in the first two chapters of Matthew and Luke, and covered by Part I. of the Harmony. While Matthew sets forth Jesus as the Christ, the promised Messiah, Mark's object is to make him known as the God Man. (See ch. 1: 1.) Hence he dwells chiefly on the events of his official life; while he exhibits him every where also in his human characteristics. His aim is brevity. His statements are concise. His descriptions are vivid. He has followed generally the chronological order of the events, so that his narrative makes a skeleton of the received Harmony, with one or two slight exceptions.

He has usually given the miracles and parables of our Lord, and the prominent events of the history; while he has omitted the Sermon on the Mount and the Mission of the Seventy—which last is given by John only.

While Matthew speaks of our Lord as "the Son of David," Mark introduces him as "the Son of God." Ch. 1: 1. Yet throughout he gives us lively pictures of his humanity. That Mark wrote for *Gentile* converts, is to be inferred from the facts that he omits the genealogies of our Lord, interprets the Hebrew terms, explains the Jewish customs, omits citations from the Old Testament, except in reporting our Lord's discourses commonly, and in these respects differs remarkably from Matthew who wrote for *Jewish* believers. It is to be remembered that Rome was then the great metropolis of the world—the common centre of all civilized nations.

He refers to persons living in Rome, and known to the Roman Christians, as the sons of Simon the Cyrenean. See ch. 15: 21. This shows a consciousness of the truth of his narrative. See Rom. 16: 13. His agreement with Matthew is remarkable. Excepting only in some thirty verses, he has narrated nothing not given by Matthew. This has led some to suppose that he must have copied from that Evangelist. But the verbal variations are such as to forbid this, and to show the abundant marks of an independent narrative.

We have more Gospel narratives than one, because one view of the life and sayings of our blessed Lord would not be sufficient. Such a life as this, such a sacred history, revealing our salvation, was worthy to be given us from these four different points of view. Hence the first Evangelist preaches Jesus Christ as Prophet and King. The second preaches him as the God Man. The third preaches him as Sovereign, Priest, and King. And the fourth preaches him as the only-begotten and equal Son of God, who was God. Here too we have the *words of Christ* given to us by the *Holy Spirit*. And as the Word of God is a *living* word, so it develops itself here. In Matthew, the oral preaching passes into a first written recital. In Mark, it becomes a description. In Luke, it takes the shape of a formal, historical narrative. In John, it becomes a Science—a God-glorifying Theology. See *Da Costa's Four Witnesses*, p. 3-8.

There is also, throughout, the ample proof that the Holy Spirit has given us these records of our Saviour's life with a kind regard to the future necessities of the Church. While this Gospel narrative contains so little that is not found substantially in Matthew and Luke, it is so far from being a barren duplicate of them, that it has, throughout, the freshness of its living source. And the believing student finds it "as precious to him as any of the others—serving an end and filling a void which could not without spiritual detriment be left uncared for." See Alford's Prolegomena, pp. 34, 36.

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"A. D." at the top of the page, indicates the year of our Lord's age, not the year of the Christian era, which dates four years later.



# THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MARK.

## CHAPTER I.

**T**HE beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the<sup>a</sup> Son of God;  
 2 As it is written in the prophets,

<sup>a</sup> He. 1.1,2.

## CHAPTER I.

The object of this Evangelist is, to set forth the Gospel of our Lord in His official Life and Ministry. Accordingly, he begins with such a notice of John the Baptist, as shall introduce the narrative of our Saviour's Baptism.

Sections 1 to 13 of the Gospel history are of "Events connected with the birth and childhood of our Lord;" covering about thirteen and a half years, and forming Part I. of the Harmony. See "Synopsis of the Harmony," in front of "Notes on Matthew."

## PART II.

### Announcement and Introduction of our Lord's Public Ministry.

Time, about one year.

§ 14. THE MINISTRY OF JOHN THE BAPTIST.—*The Desert. Jordan.*

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
3. 1-12.	1. 1-8.	3. 1-18.	

1. *The beginning.* The brevity and fulness of this sentence would give it the appearance of a *title* to the Gospel narrative. Yet in its connexion with v. 2 it may be understood as announcing the Gospel of Christ, and as declaring that its introduction was according to the Old Testament Scripture, by the heralding of John the Baptist. This would then agree with the passage in Luke 16: 16; "The law and the prophets were until John, since that time the kingdom of God is preached."

¶ *The Gospel.* It is *the Gospel*, or message of glad tidings, that Mark announces so pointedly and earnestly, as though he had said, "Behold! I declare to you the glorious Gospel, which

Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee.

3 The<sup>c</sup> voice of one crying in the

<sup>b</sup> Mal. 3.1. <sup>c</sup> Isa. 40.30.

is not mine, nor from me, but the Gospel of *Jesus Christ* as its Author and Subject: and he is *the Son*, not of David only, nor of Joseph chiefly, but of *God!*" God now speaks unto us by his Son (Heb. 1: 1). The Son witnesses of himself, (see v. 14). This name "Gospel," or *evangel* (Greek), is the term applied by Mark to the history which contains the glad tidings of salvation by a Redeemer. ¶ *Jesus Christ the Son of God.* Acts 17: 22. This is the full title of our Lord, and not without design. The Evangelist is about to give his biography, so far as his official life and ministry are concerned. It is the Gospel of this glorious personage, not of himself nor of John. "He was not that light, but was sent to bear witness of that light." He would set forth this adorable Saviour as "the Son of God," and also as perfect Man. "*Jesus*" is the official title for "*Saviour*," (Matt. 1: 21). "*Christ*" is the Greek title for "*Anointed*," as the term *Messiah*, in the Hebrew. And "*the Son of God*" is the title, not only of his Divinity but of his Divine Sonship—the Second Person in the glorious Trinity. This is to be distinguished from the title used by Matthew, "Son of David," and also from the title "Son of Man," as exhibiting his perfect humanity.

2. *As it is written.* This declares John as having come according to the Old Testament Scriptures, and as being the forerunner who was to come. ¶ *The Prophets.* His preparatory work is here given, as in accordance with the prophet Malachi (ch. 3: 1) who is not quoted by Matthew or Luke, and with the prophet Isaiah, ch. 40: 3. See note Matthew 3: 3. John's work is we!

wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.

4 John<sup>a</sup> did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of <sup>o</sup>repentance, for the remission<sup>c</sup> of sins.

<sup>a</sup> Matt. 3:1. Lu. 3:3. Jno. 3:23. <sup>b</sup> or, unto.  
<sup>c</sup> Acts 22:10.

5 And there went out unto him all the land of Judea, and they of Jerusalem, and were all baptized of him in the river of Jordan, confessing<sup>d</sup> their sins.

6 And John was clothed with

<sup>d</sup> Le. 26. 40-42.

expressed in the language of Zacharias the father of John (see Luke 1: 76 &c.), "And he shall be called the Prophet of the Highest." ¶ *My messenger.* This means, that John was the messenger of whom Malachi spoke. It was the office of a messenger to proclaim the decrees of a king to distant provinces. 1 Sam. 11: 7. 2 Chron. 36: 22. Amos 4: 5. Christ is called "the Messenger of the Covenant" (Mal. 3: 1), for he came from Heaven to publish the will of God as to the covenant of grace. John was a herald to make proclamation of Christ and his kingdom. The Greek word here for "Messenger" is "Angel."

3. *The voice.* This is a quotation from Isaiah. The meaning is, that John is he whose voice the prophet overheard (Isa. 40: 3) and described in these words. And John said of himself, "I AM the voice of one," &c. John 1: 23. ¶ *The wilderness.* That is, a rough, wild, and thinly populated district, yet having scattered pastures, (see Matt. 3: 1) referring here to the wilderness of Judea or "the country around Jordan." Luke 3: 3. ¶ *Prepare ye.* This was John's voice, according to his office. He called upon the people to make ready for Christ's coming, after him,—to remove obstacles out of the way—to be ready to receive him—and to abandon their false notions of his kingdom.

4. *Did baptize.* He made use of baptism as it was not unknown to the Jews. Proselytes to the Jewish religion were baptized. Two other rites—circumcision and oblation—were also performed, and the whole families of proselytes, including infants, were baptized. This indeed would naturally be

the case, according to the legal practice, of cleansing after uncleanness. His baptism probably resembled that of proselytes—was an outward mark of profession, a symbol of repentance and forgiveness, though the latter belonged more especially to Christ's baptism. Yet John's baptism was of a deeper meaning than any thing previously in use, and formed an important part of his divinely appointed office.

There were hints of this rite, in the prophets, as belonging to the New Testament. Eze. 36: 25. Zech. 13. Mal. 3. ¶ *The baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.* John's work was the baptism of *repentance*; with reference, however, to the *remission through Christ* which he came to announce. "Repent" was his cry: yet he could present a gospel motive—"for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." His mission was in accordance with the office of the law, by which is the knowledge of sin, (Rom. 3: 20) to bring men, as a schoolmaster, unto Christ. This remission is the very promise of the new covenant, as distinguished from the old. See Heb. 8: 8-13. This remission could be only by the shedding of Christ's blood, "once for all," instead of the continual offerings of the old covenant. Heb. 10: 2. What John baptized unto, Christ died for, as he showed at the institution of the supper, Matt. 26: 28. And of this repentance in view of a plan of grace, this baptism was the outward sign, or visible profession. See notes Matt. 3: 2.

5. *All the land.* The people of the land. ¶ *Confessing.* See notes on Matt. 3: 6.

6. See note on Matt. 3: 4. ¶ *Camel's hair.* That is, raiment woven of camel's hair. We found it used by the

camel's hair, and with a girdle of a skin about his loins; and he did eat locusts<sup>a</sup> and wild honey;

7 And preached, saying, There<sup>b</sup>

<sup>a</sup> *Le. 11.22. Ps. 32.5. Pr. 23.13. 1 Jno. 1.8-10. 3 Matt. 3.11. Jno. 1.27. Acts 13.25.*

wandering Arabs, in the form of a loose shawl thrown over the shoulders. We saw it used also, by the Bedouins, for tent coverings. It is a firm material, and turns the rain. A rough garment became this John, who was the Elijah predicted in Malachi, and it was the prophet's garment. See Zech. 13. ¶ *Girdle of a skin.* That is, of leather. This is still the eastern mode of dress. ¶ *Locusts.* See Levit. 14: 22, and notes on Matthew Strabo and Pliny speak of locusts as eaten in Judea in their time. They are still used for food in the east. We add an account of the mode of cooking and preparing them, in the great Desert of Sahara.

The manner of cooking is by digging a deep hole in the ground, building a fire at the bottom, and filling it up with wood. After it is heated as hot as is possible, the coals and embers are taken out, and they prepare to fill the cavity with the locusts, confined in a large bag. A sufficient number of the natives hold the bag perpendicularly over the hole, the mouth of it being near the surface of the ground. A number stand round the hole with sticks. The mouth of the bag is then opened, and it is shaken with great force, the locusts falling into the hot pit, and the surrounding natives throwing sand upon them to prevent them from flying off. The mouth of the hole is then covered with sand, and another fire built upon the top of it. In this manner they cook all they have on hand, and dig a number of holes sufficient to accomplish it, each containing about five bushels. They remain in the hole until they become sufficiently cooled to be taken out with the hand. They are then picked out and thrown upon tent-cloths or blankets, and remain in the sun to dry, where they must be watched with the utmost care to prevent the live locusts from devour-

ing them, if a flight happens to be passing at the time. When they are perfectly dried, which is not done short of two or three days, they are slightly pounded, and pressed into bags or skins ready for transportation. To prepare them to eat, they are pulverized in mortars, and mixed with water sufficient to make a kind of dry pudding. They are, however, sometimes eaten singly, without pulverizing, by breaking off the head, wings, and legs, and swallowing the remaining part. In whatever manner they are eaten, they are nourishing food.

Locusts are cooked in various ways: roasted, boiled, and fried. Sometimes they are ground up in hand mills, or pounded between two stones, and then mixed with flour, and made into cakes and baked. They are also salted and smoked, and packed away against a time of scarcity. It is said they taste very much like fish, and are particularly light, delicate, and wholesome food. They are carried into many of the towns of Africa by wagon loads, as we bring poultry to our markets. ¶ *Wild honey.* Honey made by wild bees is still to be found in that region. On surfaces exposed to the sun, we have seen thick coatings of the comb, filling crevices and containing the honey.

7. *One mightier.* Thus he announces the Christ. He was the *ο ερχομενος*—“*he that was to come.*” He would come immediately “*after him.*” He was mightier—more prevalent and efficient, who must increase while he decreased. John 3: 30. ¶ *The latchet.* Lightfoot shows, most conclusively, that it was the mark of a slave to loose the master's shoe, or carry the necessary articles for him to the bath. This shoe or sandal was a sole of leather or wood, bound to the foot by strings crossing it, and tied. See Figure and notes on Matt. 3: 11.

8 I indeed have baptized you with water: but he shall baptizē<sup>a</sup> you with the Holy Ghost.

¶ 9 And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized<sup>b</sup> of John in Jordan.

10 And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the hea-

<sup>a</sup> Joel 2.23. Acts 1.5. 2.4. 10.45. 21.15,16. 1 Cor. 12. 13. <sup>b</sup> Matt. 3.13. Lu. 3.21.

3. *With the Holy Ghost.* This baptizing is different from that "with water," as though with another element. Instead of using the water as John did, he shall use the Holy Ghost, which the water signified. As the water is out-poured or sprinkled, so the sprinkling or outpouring of the Spirit was the distinctive work of Christ. Ministers can apply the water to the person, but they cannot apply the Holy Spirit to the soul. We find here an argument for the *mode* of baptism. See notes on Matthew.

This first chapter of Mark is full of various testimonies to Christ, from Heaven, Earth, and Hell.

#### § 15. THE BAPTISM OF JESUS.

##### *The Jordan.*

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
3. 13-17.	1. 9-11.	3. 21-23.	

9. *In those days.* This general phrase intimates that Mark passes over many details, to proceed with the official history of our Lord. ¶ *Nazareth of Galilee.* This distinguishes the place as being in "Galilee of the Gentiles," where the great light was to spring up, amidst the great darkness. See Matthew 4: 15, 16. It was the region lying farthest from Jerusalem and Zion, and nearest to the Gentiles. Nazareth lies about six miles W. N. W. of Mt. Tabor. Though the site is beautiful, we found the houses low, chiefly of two stories, and the streets most filthy. A building is shown as the synagogue in which Christ preached, and another as the shop of Joseph the carpenter. ¶ *Was baptized.* This was a mode of public

vens<sup>1</sup> opened, and the Spirit,<sup>c</sup> like a dove, descending upon him:

11 And there came a voice from heaven, *saying*, Thou art my beloved Son,<sup>d</sup> in whom I am well pleased.

¶ 12 And immediately the Spirit driveth him into the wilderness.

<sup>1</sup> or, *cloven*; or, *rent.* <sup>c</sup> Isa. 42.1. Jer. 1.32. <sup>d</sup> Ps. 2.7.

induction to his Office—not necessary but becoming, (Matt. 3: 15) and in order to fulfil all legal, ceremonial righteousness. And this also served as the occasion for his more public recognition from heaven. vs. 10, 11. Besides, as he kept the Passover, so also he was baptized, viz. as the representative of his people, and as bearing our sins.

11. *Thou art.* This was an open declaration from the Father, whom the Jews worshipped, that Christ was the Messiah predicted, and that in his person and office work he was accepted in Heaven. Here it is addressed to Christ himself: in Matthew, to others, "This is," &c. ¶ *Well pleased.* This agrees with Isaiah's prediction (53: 10), "It pleased the Lord to bruise him." John 10: 17.

#### § 16. THE TEMPTATION.

##### *Desert of Judea.*

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
4. 1-11.	1. 12, 13.	4. 1-13.	

12. *Driveth him.* The Greek word here intimates some urgency, which refers to the necessity of this for his work, and not to any compulsion contrary to his will. In v. 43, the same term is used in the sense of *dismissed*. See notes on Matt. 3: 13-17. Immediately now begins the open conflict between the Prince of Light and the Prince of Darkness.

13. *Satan.* That is, the devil, the great enemy of Christ and his works, whom our Lord was to combat in all his life of perfect obedience, and whom he was to spoil, and lead captive, triumphing over him in his cross.

13 And<sup>a</sup> he was there in the wilderness forty days, tempted of Satan; and was with the wild beasts; and the angels ministered unto him.

¶ 14 Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus<sup>b</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Matt. 4.1, &c. Lu. 4.1, &c. <sup>b</sup> Matt. 4.23.

*With the wild beasts.* This is added by Mark, to describe the wildness of the region where Christ was, and the severity of his sufferings there. As Mark wrote his Gospel at Rome for strangers, this was proper to be mentioned. There is a hint also of the fall and the restoration,—that the second Adam is here with the wild beasts whom sin has put at enmity with us—and that yet, he will turn the wilderness into a paradise, when, as with the first Adam, they shall be at peace with us. Job 5: 22, 23. See Daniel 6: 16. ¶ *Ministered.* The Greek term is literally “*deaconed.*” The angels helped him—gave him such support as his suffering human nature needed. This also shows the severity of his trials, and of the struggle between the kingdoms of light and darkness.

### PART III.

*Our Lord's first Passover, and the subsequent transactions until the second.*

Time, one year.

§ 24. JOHN'S IMPRISONMENT, AND JESUS' DEPARTURE INTO GALILEE.

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
4. 12.	1. 14.	4. 14.	
14. 3-5.	6. 17-20.	3. 19, 20.	4.1-3

Mark omits the marriage at Cana—our Lord's first Passover—his discourse with Nicodemus and John's testimonies of him,—passing promptly to our Lord's public, official ministry.

§ 26. JESUS TEACHES PUBLICLY IN GALILEE.

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
4. 17.	1. 14, 15.	4. 14, 15.	4. 43-45.

14. See notes on Matt. 14 3. Mark

came into Galilee, preaching the gospel<sup>c</sup> of the kingdom of God,

15 And saying, The time<sup>d</sup> is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent<sup>e</sup> ye, and believe<sup>f</sup> the gospel.

<sup>c</sup> Lu. 8.1. <sup>d</sup> Da. 2.44. 9.25. Gal. 4.4. Eph. 1.17. <sup>e</sup> Acta 2.28. <sup>f</sup> Rom. 16.26.

does not fail to note that Christ begins to preach when John ceases.

*Galilee.* The light of his gospel was to spring up upon the borders of Zebulon and Naphtali. See Matt. 4: 13. He would also go out of the jurisdiction of Herod, who had imprisoned John. Galilee was the northern division of Palestine, and was divided into Upper and Lower Galilee—the former called also “Galilee of the Gentiles.” ¶ *Preaching the gospel, &c.* How beautifully Mark here describes our Lord's first preaching, as distinct from John's, which was under the law, and a mere heralding of something better to come. The substance of this discourse was the good tidings of the kingdom having come, as spoken of by Daniel, 2: 44. And this is the very message which Isaiah sees the messenger publishing, as he comes with beautiful (or timely) feet upon the mountains, (Isa. 52: 7) viz. the advent of the kingdom of God. Christ preached the “*good news*” of his kingdom of grace—the new dispensation in which he was to reign. They had other ideas of his kingdom, that it was temporal and consisted in earthly power and show.

15. *The time, &c.* The period mentioned by the prophets when Christ was to appear. The nation had expectations of the Messiah about this time. The seventy weeks of Daniel (or 490 years) were now accomplished. The time and place of our Lord's birth agreed with the interpretations of prophecy common among the Jews. See notes on Matt. 3: 2. ¶ *Repent ye, &c.* John preached repentance. So did Christ, but not without the gospel as the burden of his preaching. He preached repentance and faith

¶ 16 Now <sup>a</sup> as he walked by the sea of Galilee, he saw Simon, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea: (for they were fishers.)

17 And Jesus said unto them, Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men.

18 And straightway they forsook their nets, and followed him.

19 And when he had gone a little further thence, he saw James

<sup>a</sup> Matt. 4.18, &c. Lu. 5.4, &c.

They were commanded to turn from sin and from all their false views, and to embrace the gospel—the news of salvation by Jesus Christ. See notes on Matt. 4: 17.

‡ 29. THE CALL OF PETER, ANDREW, JAMES AND JOHN.—*Near Capernaum.*

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
4. 18-22.	1. 16-20.	5. 1-11.	

Observe the Harmony. The fact of our Lord's first gaining disciples when John first points him out to two of his followers, is recorded in (‡ 19) John 1: 25-35. Simon and Andrew were then first made acquainted with Christ, and this explains their prompt compliance here. After their first call, they had continued in their worldly business. This is the further call to attend upon Christ in his ministry, leaving all and following him wheresoever he went. There is still a further call to the Apostleship, with *ordination*, ch. 3: 14. The accounts in Matthew and Mark are almost in the same words. See notes on Matthew. Luke is more full, and gives us the narrative of a miracle which Christ wrought at this time; which throws light upon Mark's more brief statement here. It is worthy of note, that this miracle, so full of meaning, was twice wrought by our Lord; both now, when he called them to their work, and at the last, when he was about to leave them. Jno. 21: 6. And in both cases, he would show by it how he could and would make their work successful. See Eze. 47: 10. Jer. 13:

the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, who also were in the ship mending their nets.

20 And straightway he called them: and they left their father Zebedee in the ship with the hired servants, and went after him.

¶ 21 And they went into Capernaum: and straightway on the sabbath-day he entered into the synagogue, and taught.

22 And <sup>b</sup> they were astonished at

<sup>b</sup> Matt. 7.28.

16. He who could make them from *fishermen* to become *fishers of men*, could make them catch men in their new work as easily and abundantly as now he could make them catch fish. So our Lord uses the figure of a *net*. Matt. 13: 41.

20. *Hired servants*. This would intimate that they were not of the poorest class.

‡ 30. THE HEALING OF A DEMONIAK IN THE SYNAGOGUE.—*Capernaum.*

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
	1. 21-28.	4. 31-37.	

Miracles are not more a proof of Christianity, than Christianity is now a proof of miracles. The works first testified to the word: but the marvellous words have outlived the works, and will give them an enduring testimony.

21. *Capernaum*. This town was situated on the north west coast of the Sea of Galilee. Near the head of the sea or lake are ruins of some magnificent city, now known as *Tell Hum*, and by many thought to be the site of Capernaum. From Matt. 13: 34, compared with John 6: 1-21, it would appear that that city was in the land of Gennesaret. This is regarded by Robinson as going to prove that a ruin called Khan Minyeh is nearer the site. This we found to be only an immense stone enclosure, with dilapidated walls and some inner compartments. No traces of a city are to be found. But Robinson thinks the

his doctrine: for he taught them as one that had authority, and not as the scribes.

23 And<sup>a</sup> there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit; and he cried out,

24 Saying, Let us alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God.

25 And Jesus rebuked him, say-

<sup>a</sup> Lu. 4.33, &c.

stones may have been carried off to Tiberias. ¶ *Synagogue*. See note on Matthew 4: 23. Christ entered this place of worship and preached his gospel. This he did also at Nazareth (Luke 4: 16) and in their synagogues generally. Luke 4: 15. He went "as his custom was;" that is, to attend religiously during all his previous life. The synagogue worship consisted in the reading and expounding of Scripture, and in prayer, and it was common to invite an address from any of those present. Sometimes they rose of their own accord. Luke 4: 16. This custom gave our Lord an opportunity which he was wont to improve.

22. *Had authority*. This formula occurs entire, at the close of the Sermon on the Mount. See note on Matt. 7: 28, 29. He spoke as himself the law-giver and expounder of the law—not like the Scribes, telling what the Rabbins taught, but as being the authorized teacher himself. This shows us the impression which he made upon the people.

23. This narrative, of the demoniac healed, is not given by Matthew. The man may have been seized with this "unclean spirit" (or "the spirit of an unclean devil," Luke,) while in their synagogue. For an examination of these possessions, see note on Matt. 4: 24.

24. *Let alone*. The word may be rendered as an interjection, "Ah!" The very presence of Christ was like the

ing, Hold thy peace, and come out of him.

26 And when the unclean spirit had torn him, and cried with a loud voice, he came out of him.

27 And they were all amazed, insomuch that they questioned among themselves, saying, What thing is this? what new doctrine is this? for with authority commandeth he even the unclean spirits, and they do obey him.

severest assault to this demon. So is it to all the powers of darkness. It may be that his teaching and disclosure of himself as the predicted Messiah caused this outcry of the demon. This would seem to have been a common cry of the demons. Matt. 8: 29. They had a dread of Christ, as having been "manifested to destroy the works of the devil." ¶ *Jesus of Nazareth*. This epithet is commonly used in contrast with his majesty and glory. See ch. 16: 6. Acts 2: 22-24. 22: 8. See John 19: 19. Here the devils offered their testimony, "Ah! I know thee, Jesus, Son of God,"—to make him seem leagued with Beelzebub, as it did,—chap. 3: 22. "Let us give thee a friendly testimony!" They give him a most familiar title—"Jesus of Nazareth." This title he carried with him to his Cross. John 19: 19. We may believe, says Bengel, that the enemy had attentively observed what Jesus, in his youth, had done at Nazareth. This name of his humiliation was to be glorified by earth and hell and heaven. ch. 16: 6. Acts 2: 22. ¶ *To destroy us*. "For this purpose, we see, the Son of God was manifested." 1 John 3: 8. This demon speaks as representing the unity of the whole Satanic kingdom—"us." ¶ *I know thee*. This shows that their agitation and dread came from their knowledge of him as the Messiah,—as "the Holy One" sent by God—and as God, co-equal with the Father. Acts 19: 15.

28 And immediately his fame spread abroad throughout all the region round about Galilee.

¶ 29 And <sup>a</sup> forthwith, when they were come out of the synagogue, they entered into the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John.

30 But Simon's wife's mother lay sick of a fever; and anon they tell him of her.

31 And he came, and took her by the hand, and lifted her up; and

<sup>a</sup> Matt. 8.14. Lu. 4.38.

25. *Rebuked him.* That is, the *evil spirit*, whom he at once commanded to come out of the man. This shows that these possessions were not diseases, but that these were demon spirits which actually dwelt in the men. It was a peculiar manifestation of Satanic power, in fierce combat with our Lord. But it gave him opportunity to display his superiority to Satan and his hosts. This is no proof that such possessions exist since, or that they would be allowed apart from that occasion or a like one. ¶ *Hold thy peace.* The term is used of *muzzling* oxen. He forbade their testimony, as both unseasonable and *malicious*. He had his own testimony, which he came on earth to give. "Christ will not be named and praised by the devils." *Stier.* So he afterwards forbade them to make him known, though they attempted it. ch. 3 : 11, 12. "Oh! that ministers would so reply, when the devils offer them a flattering testimony!" *Stier.*

26. *Torn him.* Convulsed him. This proves the malignity of evil spirits, and their great power to do mischief. They will do all the harm they can, and only cease when compelled by the command of Christ. How vain are all human prescriptions to conquer a devil in the soul!

27. *Amazed.* That is, at Christ's sovereign power, for by a word he could cast out devils!

immediately the fever left her, and she ministered unto them.

32 And at even, when the sun did set, they brought unto him all that were diseased, and them that were possessed with devils.

33 And all the city was gathered together at the door.

34 And he healed many that were sick of divers diseases, and cast out many devils; and suffered not the devils to speak, <sup>b</sup> because they knew him.

<sup>b</sup> or, to say that they knew him.

¶ *Unclean spirits.* That is, *impure, vile spirits.* These things occurred at Capernaum.

OBSERVE, (1) Christ proves himself to be the Messiah, by his wondrous works in the souls of men! (2) No human plans or boasted remedies can drive out the evil principles from men's hearts. (3) Christ can do this by a word. (4) The kingdom of darkness is under his power.

§ 31. THE HEALING OF PETER'S WIFE'S MOTHER, AND MANY OTHERS. *Capernaum.*

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
8. 14-17.	1. 29-34.	4. 38-41.	

30. *Peter's wife's mother.* Though it is so plain that Peter had a wife, the Church of Rome, who claim that their ministry are the only true successors of Peter, *forbid them to marry*, and thus ordain, against God's ordinance, one of the most fearful sources of corruption in the church and the world. But this is one of the marks of the apostacy. 1 Tim. 4: 3.

34. *He healed many.* In Matt. 8: 16, it is said, "He healed all that were sick."

*Because they knew him.* It has been remarked that these demons had *peculiar* knowledge of Christ; and because he would not yet be proclaimed publicly as the Messiah, nor by them at any rate, he did not allow them to testify.



¶ 35 And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed.

36 And Simon, and they that were with him, followed after him.

37 And when they had found him, they said unto him, All men seek for thee.

38 And he said unto them, Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there also: for therefore<sup>a</sup> came I forth.

39 And he preached in their syn-

<sup>a</sup> Isa. 61.1,2. Jno. 17.8.

¶ 32. JESUS, WITH HIS DISCIPLES, GOES FROM CAPERNAUM THROUGHOUT GALILEE.

Matt. 4. 23-25. | Mark. 1. 35-39. | Luke. 4. 42-44. | John.

35. *And in the morning.* We are here taught the duty of prayer—of secret prayer—of early, secret prayer. ¶ *Rising up.* Literally, *Having risen before the dawn, he went out in the morning.* This agrees well with the language of Luke, which refers to the time of his going out, “*when it was day,*” or *daybreak.* Our Saviour was very man as well as very God. He prayed, and set us an example of prayer—especially of *secret prayer.* So he said in his Sermon on the Mount, “Thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet,” &c. (Matt. 6: 6) assuming that every Christian man has his own closet, as he has his own table or his own bed. *Early morning prayer* will be the best preparation for the day. It is assumed to be a Christian habit in the language of the Lord’s Prayer, “Give us this day our daily bread.”

37. *All men.* Multitudes; as though embracing all. Comp. Luke 4: 42, 43. They informed him of the general interest awakened by his wondrous works.

38. *The next towns.* “Adjacent.” He proposes to go on to the adjoining places and *preach,* for this was his great object, and he must not be confined to

agogues through out all Galilee, and cast out devils.

¶ 40 And<sup>b</sup> there came a leper to him, beseeching him, and kneeling down to him, and saying unto him, If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.

41 And Jesus, moved with compassion, put forth *his* hand, and touched him, and saith unto him, I will; be thou clean.

42 And as soon as he had spoken, immediately<sup>c</sup> the leprosy departed from him, and he was cleansed.

<sup>b</sup> Matt. 8.2. Lu. 5.12. <sup>c</sup> Ps. 93.9. Jno. 15.2.

any one spot. For this purpose he “*came forth*” from Heaven, and for this also he started out on his tour through Galilee. So Luke has it—“Therefore am I sent.”

39. See Matt. 4: 23. The working of miracles was in order to the working of his gospel: not merely to satisfy men’s calls, but to preach *salvation.*

¶ 33. THE HEALING OF A LEPER. Galilee.

Matt. 8. 2-4. | Mark. 1. 40-45. | Luke. 5. 12-16. | John.

40. The narrative is almost precisely the same as in Matthew.

*If thou wilt.* This showed a confidence in Christ’s ability—in his sovereign power. And with this faith, though yet in doubt about his willingness, the leper cast himself upon the mercy of Christ. His coming and casting himself upon the Saviour was evidence of some faith in that willingness. Believing in his prerogative, the leper would test his regard for his own case. No sinner should wait for more faith, but should come to Christ at once, as he is.

41. *Touched him.* The touch of a leper was forbidden, as defiling—and as a standing symbol of sin, that may not be touched or approached. But, how remarkable! CHRIST’S touch is healing!

*I will.* How promptly he meets this

43 And he straddly charged him, and forthwith sent him away;

44 And saith unto him, See thou say nothing to any man: but go thy way, show thyself to the priest, and offer for thy cleansing those things<sup>a</sup> which Moses commanded, for a testimony<sup>b</sup> unto them.

45 But he went out, and began to<sup>c</sup> publish it much, and to blaze abroad the matter, insomuch that Jesus could no more openly enter into the city, but was without in

<sup>a</sup> Le. 14.2-32.    <sup>b</sup> Ro. 15.4.    1 Cor. 10.11.  
<sup>c</sup> Ps. 77.11,12.    Tit. 1.10.

test of his willingness. There can be not a moment's doubt. All his plans and purchase are for this end. "He is ABLE—he is WILLING—doubt no more." He that can heal by his mere sovereign word, must be God.

44, 45. See thou say nothing, &c. Christ would not yet be proclaimed as the wonder-worker, even by the healed, lest it might embarrass his course by the popular agitation, and cause a dread of his claims on the part of the state. ¶ Show thyself, &c. This was the ceremonial law, and Christ would have the man strictly observe it, for it was not yet repealed, and he had not come to destroy, but to fulfil it in himself. ¶ For a testimony. Levit. 14:4, 10. That is to the priest and people—as a testimony to the former that Christ the leper healer had come, and to the latter that the cure was real; which the priest was required to certify upon his examination. See notes on Matt. 8:4. 45. Where men ought to publish Christ, alas! how silent are they. Here, when the great Saviour commanded silence, this man will publish the cure! Thus our Lord's work was hindered. How many from ill-timed zeal prevent much good.

## CHAPTER II.

### §34. THE HEALING OF A PARALYTIC. *Capernaum.*

Matt. 9. 2-8    Mark. 2. 1-12.    Luke. 5. 17-26.    John.

1. *Inte Capernaum.* He had been in

desert places: and<sup>d</sup> they came to him from every quarter.

## CHAPTER II.

¶ AND again he entered into Capernaum after some days; and it was noised that he was in the house.

2 And straightway many were gathered together, insomuch that there was no room to receive them, no, not so much as about the door: and he preached<sup>e</sup> the word unto them.

<sup>d</sup> ch.2.13.    <sup>e</sup> Ps. 40.9.

the desert places in Galilee. ¶ In the house. We may suppose that this was the house in which he had dwelt, as Capernaum was "his own city." See Matt. 9:1. The original expresses the idea that he had gone within doors.

2. *No room to receive them.* The idea of a great crowd is given us in Luke's narrative, but in a different connexion. Luke brings it in more incidentally, while stating the singular manner in which the paralytic was brought into the presence of Christ. "When they could not find by what way they might bring him in, because of the multitude, they went upon the house top and let him down through the tiling," &c. See Luke 5:19. This proves the independence of the narratives. It shows the beautiful harmony of the narratives, yet so incidentally as to confirm the truth of the Evangelists. How beautifully it is here stated, also, that Christ preached the word unto the crowd. He lost no opportunity of discoursing from the Scripture to such a congregation, for "he went about doing good," and that, too, rather for the soul than for the body—and often for the soul through the body. ¶ About the door. The great press or throng of people is thus indicated. The doorway, leading into the court or leading up to the gallery, was filled with people, so that they could not get to him with the couch. Set Matt. 9:2

3 And<sup>a</sup> they come unto him, bringing one sick of the palsy, which was borne of four.

4 And when they could not come nigh unto him for the press, they uncovered the roof where he was: and when they had broken *it* up, they let down the bed wherein the sick of the palsy lay.

5 When Jesus saw their faith,<sup>b</sup> he saith unto the sick of the palsy, Son, thy sins be forgiven thee.

6 But there were certain of the scribes sitting there, and reasoning in their hearts,

7 Why doth this *man* thus speak blasphemies? Who can forgive sins<sup>c</sup> but God only?

8 And immediately, when Jesus perceived in his spirit that they so reasoned within themselves, he said unto them, Why reason ye these things in your hearts?

<sup>a</sup> Matt. 9.1, &c.    <sup>b</sup> Luke. 5.18, &c.    <sup>c</sup> Acts 14.9.    Ep. 2.8.  
<sup>e</sup> Isa. 43.25.    Dan. 9.9.

See the figure of an eastern dwelling, Notes on Matthew, ch. 9.

3. *Borne of four.* That is, the bed was carried by four men.

4. *Broken it up.* This term intimates some labor in making an opening.

5. *Their faith.* This was shown by their perseverance. So the Christian perseveres only by faith in Christ, and his perseverance shows at once the power of his faith and its peculiar excellency, and the strength of the Saviour whom he trusts. "*Their faith,*" includes, perhaps, that of the paralytic.

¶ *Son.* This was an expression of tenderness indicating the favor with which his case was received. Luke has it, "Man." Doubtless our Lord addressed him with tender words, and may have used both these terms.

6. *Scribes.* These were Jewish lawyers, full of cavils and quibbles, taking narrow views of the Old Testament Scriptures, which they professed to be jealous of and to be perfectly acquaint-

9 Whether is it easier to say to the sick of the palsy, *Thy sins be forgiven thee*; or to say, *Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk*?

10 But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power<sup>d</sup> on earth to forgive sins, (he saith to the sick of the palsy,)

11 I say unto thee, *Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house.*

12 And immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went forth before them all; insomuch that they were all amazed, and glorified God, saying, We<sup>e</sup> never saw it on this fashion.

¶ 13 And he went forth again by the sea-side; and all the multitude resorted unto him, and he taught them.

14 And<sup>f</sup> as he passed by, he saw Levi the son of Alphaeus sitting

<sup>d</sup> Acts 5.31.    <sup>e</sup> Jno. 7.31. 9.32.    <sup>f</sup> Matt. 9.9.    Lu. 5.27.

ed with. They took offence at Christ's words, because he seemed to assume the prerogative of the God of the Jews—the Jehovah of the Old Testament. Yet they did not speak out, but only harbored these objections in their hearts.

7. *Blasphemies.* See Matt. 9: 3, notes.

### § 35. THE CALL OF LEVI OR MATTHEW. Capernaum.

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
9. 9.	2. 13, 14.	5. 27, 28.	

13. *By the sea-side.* The sea of Galilee or Tiberias. See Map, Matthew. Capernaum lay on the border of this lake or sea.

14. *Levi.* This publican was the same person doubtless as Matthew. Luke also calls him Levi, which was probably his common name. But as was the custom when a Jew became a Roman citizen, a Roman name was taken. See Preface to Notes on Mat-

at the receipt of custom, and said unto him, Follow me. And he arose and followed him.

¶ 15 And <sup>b</sup> it came to pass, that, as Jesus sat at meat in his house, many publicans <sup>c</sup> and sinners sat also together with Jesus and his disciples: for there were many, and they followed him.

16 And when the scribes and Pharisees saw him eat with publicans and sinners, they said unto his disciples, How is it that he eateth and drinketh with publicans and sinners?

17 When Jesus heard *it*, he saith unto them, They <sup>d</sup> that are whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners <sup>e</sup> to repentance.

18 And the disciples of John and of the Pharisees used to fast: and they come and say unto him, Why do the disciples of John and of the Pharisees fast, but thy disciples fast not?

a or, at the place where the custom was received.  
b Matt. 9.10.&c. c Lu. 15.1-5. d Matt. 9.12,13. Lu. 5.31,32. e Isa. 18.55,7. Matt. 18.11. Lu. 19.10. 1 Cor. 6.9-11. 1 Tim. 1.15.

thew. It is to be observed that Matthew gives himself a name different from the other two Evangelists, taking his new Roman name, and that this is the name in all the lists of the Apostles. Therefore he may have had a religious reason for giving his new name. ¶ *Receipt of custom.* See margin and notes on Matt. 9: 9. This was a toll-booth, or custom house, for collecting tolls or taxes. He served as an officer under the Romans, to whom the Jews were subject.

§ 58. LEVI'S (OR MATTHEW'S) FEAST.  
Capernaum.

Matt. 9.10-17. | Mark. 2.15-22. | Luke. 5.29-39. | .ohn.

19 And Jesus said unto them, Can the children of the bride-chamber fast, while the bridegroom <sup>f</sup> is with them? As long as they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast.

20 But the days will come when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then <sup>g</sup> shall they fast in those days.

21 No man also seweth a piece of <sup>h</sup> new cloth on an old garment: else the new piece that filled it up taketh away from the old, and the rent is made worse.

22 And no man putteth new wine into old bottles; else the new wine doth burst the bottles, and the wine is spilled, and the bottles will be marred: <sup>i</sup> but new wine must be put into new bottles.

¶ 23 And <sup>k</sup> it came to pass, that he went through the corn-fields on the sabbath day; and his disciples began, as they went, to pluck <sup>l</sup> the ears of corn.

24 And the Pharisees said unto him, Behold, why do they on the

f Matt. 25.1. g Acts 13.2. h or, raw, or, unwrought.  
i Job 32.19. Ps. 119.80,83. k Matt. 12.1,&c. Lu. 6.1,&c.

15. *In his house.* That is, the house of Matthew, or Levi, as we learn from the other Evangelists. Christ had been invited to a social entertainment, mainly to introduce him to the friends of Levi, and to make an occasion for publicly professing Christ. See Matt. 9: 10, notes.

16. *Having observed that he ate.* This question was started after the feast. They were not present, as it was in the house of a publican; but they observed that he went for this purpose.

Mark usually pursues the chronological order of the events. But here is a variation, § 58 being brought in at this point, though the *feast* occurred some months after the *call*.

sabbath day that which is not lawful?

25 And he said unto them, Have ye never read what David did,<sup>a</sup> when he had need, and was an hungered, he, and they that were with him?

26 How he went into the house

<sup>a</sup> 1 Sam. 21.6.

of God in the days of Abiathar the high priest, and did eat the shewbread,<sup>b</sup> which is not lawful to eat but for the priest, and gave also to them which were with him?

27 And he said unto them, The sabbath was made for man,<sup>c</sup> and not<sup>d</sup> man for the sabbath:

<sup>b</sup> Ex. 29.32,33. Le. 24.9. <sup>c</sup> Ne. 9.14. Isa. 58.13.  
<sup>d</sup> Eze. 20.12,20. <sup>d</sup> Col. 2.16.

## PART IV.

*Our Lord's second Passover, and the events until the third.*

Time, one year.

§37. THE DISCIPLES PLUCK EARS OF CORN ON THE SABBATH DAY.

*On the way to Galilee?*

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
12. 1-8.	2. 23-28.	6. 1-5.	

23. *Ears of corn.* This does not mean what we call corn, but *wheat* or *barley*. It was ripe at that time. They rubbed it in their hands and ate. On this paragraph, see Matt. 12:1-8, notes. This is a customary way of appeasing hunger in Palestine at this day.

26. *In the days of Abiathar, the high priest.* Though Abimelech, the father of Abiathar, was the acting high priest when this was done, (1 Sam. 21:1,) yet Abiathar was the more noted personage, and his name more associated with that of David. He was the *chief* priest at this time, and probably superintended the tabernacle and its stated affairs. The language in the original phrase is very scanty, and leaves much to be understood. It does not mean in the time of Abiathar's priesthood; but, in the time of Abiathar who is known in history as the high priest—in David's time. There is great confusion in the names about this part of the Old Testament history. The same person is called by different names.

27. *The Sabbath, &c.* See Matthew's narrative, which is more full, ch. 12:5-8, and notes. The Sabbath is a divine ordinance, made for man—for his highest welfare; not for mere slavish observances, but for saving benefits.

It allows, therefore, works of necessity and mercy.

That the Sabbath was made for man, is plain from the facts in all the world. Wherever it is kept holy according to the commandment of God, it blesses society, with the knowledge of God's truth—with peace and order and happiness—and promotes man's highest temporal welfare. This can be abundantly shown in all the world's history. And this divine institution can always be vindicated and pleaded for, on this ground of utility and expediency. It is found that even the beast is more serviceable to man, for the rest that this day affords. Those who have tried to gain more by *working* on this day, have generally lost more than they have gained. And a people without the Sabbath must soon come to be heathens. But this institution does not rest its claim upon its utility and advantage to mankind. It is indeed "for man"—but it "*was made.*" It is God's institution. And one of the ten commandments, with reasons annexed, enjoins its observance, on principles connected with God's creative work. He that opposes or violates the Sabbath, opposes and violates the whole constitution and order of nature. We to those who desecrate the Sabbath to worldly business or to mere amusement! This makes it *no Sabbath*, and so loses all its benefits for man.

¶ *Not man.* See Gen. 1:11. It would be inverting the true order of things, and perverting the proper intent and meaning of this divine institution, to say that man was made for it. We understand its use, only when we see it, coming with all temporal and spiritual

28 Therefore <sup>a</sup> the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath.

CHAPTER III.

¶ **A**ND <sup>b</sup> he entered again into the synagogue; and there was a man there which had a withered hand.

2 And they watched <sup>c</sup> him whether he would heal him on the sabbath-day; that they might accuse him.

3 And he saith unto the man which had the withered hand,<sup>1</sup> Stand forth.

4 And he saith unto them, Is it lawful to do good on the sabbath-

<sup>a</sup> Jno. 9.14. <sup>Ep.</sup> 1.22. <sup>Re.</sup> 1.10. <sup>b</sup> Matt. 12.9.&c. <sup>Lu.</sup> 6.6.&c. <sup>c</sup> Lu. 14.1. <sup>1</sup> or, *Arise, in the midst.*

lessings to man,—bringing rest—speaking peace by Jesus Christ—and giving an earnest of Heaven. And so only can we settle a thousand questions about its observance. The law of the Sabbath is always to be construed in this light, as providing for man's highest welfare.

28 *Therefore.* For this reason. Christ, the second Adam, is Lord of the Sabbath, as he is the author of salvation.

CHAPTER III.

‡38. THE HEALING OF THE WITHERED HAND ON THE SABBATH.—*Galilee.*

Matt. 12. 9-14. | Mark. 3. 1-6. | Luke. 6. 6-11. | John.

On this paragraph, see Matt. 12: 9-14, notes.

2. *They watched him.* That is, insidiously. The Scribes and Pharisees did this, as we learn from Luke 6: 7.

5. *Grieved.* The term implies that it was more grief than wrath. ¶ *Hardness of their hearts.* Mark is most full on this point. They watched him, and charged him, most maliciously, even when he would go about doing good among them. And this hardness of heart, we see, was the very root of their evil conduct. Who could think it excusable? How can any one's deep-seated depravity excuse his wicked conduct? Will the dishonest principles

day, or to do evil? to save life,<sup>2</sup> or to kill? But they held their peace.

5 And when he had looked round about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardness<sup>2</sup> of their hearts, he saith unto the man, Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched *it* out: and his hand was restored whole as the other.

6 And the Pharisees went forth, and straightway took counsel with the <sup>e</sup> Herodians against him, how they might destroy him.

¶ 7 But Jesus withdrew himself with his disciples to the sea: and a great<sup>f</sup> multitude

<sup>d</sup> Hos. 6.6. <sup>2</sup> or, *blindness.* <sup>e</sup> Matt. 22.16. <sup>f</sup> Lu. 6.17.

of the thief excuse his robbery? Will the stony heart of the murderer excuse his shedding blood? ¶ *Restored—whole as the other.* This is the sense of the verb, without the additional clause—"restored to its former condition." The hand thus virtually dead, must have been virtually new-created, before it could be so restored. It was cured in the act of obedience to the divine command. How beautiful and expressive an illustration of Christ's new creating power in the soul.

6. This is the first mention of the Pharisees taking counsel to put him to death. ¶ *The Herodians.* These were politically the severest opponents of the Pharisees, for they favored the claims of Herod Antipas of Galilee, and the Pharisees were bitterly averse to the Roman authority. This shows that, like Herod and Pilate, the worst enemies could make common cause against Christ. The enmity against him swallowed up all other enmities. "The carnal mind is enmity against God."

‡39. JESUS ARRIVES AT THE SEA OF TIBERIAS, AND IS FOLLOWED BY MULTITUDES.

Matt. 12. 15-21. | Mark. 3. 7-12. | Luke. | John.

7. *From Galilee.* Mark is very particular in telling us from what various

from Galilee followed him, and from Judea,

8 And from Jerusalem, and from Idumea, and from beyond Jordan; and they about Tyre and Sidon, a great multitude, when they had heard what great things he did, came unto him.

9 And he spake to his disciples, that a small ship should wait on him because of the multitude, lest they should throng him.

10 For he had healed many; insomuch that they pressed upon him for to touch him, as many as had plagues.

11 And unclean spirits, when they saw him, fell down before him, and cried, saying, Thou art the Son of God.

<sup>a</sup> Matt. 12.15. 14.14. 1 or, rushed. <sup>b</sup> ch. 1.24.  
Matt. 14.33. Lu. 4.41. Ja. 2.19.

quarters this multitude came, and on what account they resorted to him. To this great and promiscuous throng our Lord took opportunity to declare himself in his true character, and to correct their false views of him. See Matt. 12: 17, and map.

10. *Plagues.* This word means more literally *scourges*, and here refers to the various maladies under which they suffered.

11. *Unclean spirits.* Though the persons who had evil spirits fell down, yet their action, here, is attributed to the spirits themselves, for it was by their agency. This agrees with many passages in showing that these evil spirits were real and personal. They spake—they came out of men and entered into them. So, here, they *cried out*, and v. 12, Christ strictly charged them (*the spirits*) that they should not make him known—for the time of his open manifestation as the Messiah had not yet come. "This was not the time, nor were these the heralds." *Bengel.* It was a malicious effort to confuse his plans, by giving a testimony from Sa-

12 And he straitly charged them that they should not make him known.<sup>c</sup>

¶ 13 And he goeth up into a mountain, and calleth unto him whom he would: and they came unto him.

14 And he ordained twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach,

15 And to have power to heal sicknesses, and to cast out devils:

16 And Simon he surnamed Peter;

17 And James the son of Zebedee, and John the brother of James; and he surnamed them Boanerges, which is, The sons of thunder; <sup>g</sup>

18 And Andrew, and Philip, and

<sup>c</sup> ch. 1.25,34. <sup>d</sup> Matt. 10.1. <sup>e</sup> Jno. 15.16. <sup>f</sup> Jno. 1.42.  
<sup>g</sup> Isa. 58.1. Je. 23.29.

tan's hosts. And hence in v. 22, we see the charge of *league with devils* is brought against Christ. See *Stier.*

‡ 40. JESUS WITHDRAWS TO THE MOUNTAIN, AND CHOOSES THE TWELVE. *Multitudes follow him.—Near Capernaum.*

Matt. 10. 2-4. | Mark. 3. 13-19. | Luke. 6. 12-19. | John.

14. *He ordained.* That is appointed, and solemnly and authoritatively set apart these twelve disciples (and afterwards *sent them forth*, ch. 6: 6-13,) as Apostles, and they have no successors, as such. There is no hint given here of any preëminence among the twelve.

17. *Boanerges.* Mark alone mentions that the sons of Zebedee were so called by the Master. This name means, "sons of thunder." "*Son of,*" is a Hebrew mode of expressing a character or attribute of a person. This name is held by some to have been given them as a term of reproach, rebuking their rashness, &c. "*Son of perdition,*" &c. But this is a name of honor, and significant of a divine mis-

Bartholomew, and Matthew, and Thomas, and James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddeus, and Simon the Canaanite,

19 And Judas Iscariot, which also betrayed him: and they went into<sup>1</sup> an house.

¶ 20 And the multitude cometh together again, so that they could not so much as eat bread.

<sup>1</sup> or, home. a ch. 6.31.

sion as fully as the name Peter, with which it is closely connected. It doubtless indicates some qualities either already possessed by them, or to be given to each of them for his work. Hengstenberg thinks that "in this passage we have a key to the frequent mention of thunder in the Revelation—as Bengel remarks, 'a son of thunder is a fit person for hearing voices of thunder;' and that, in the application of this name the Lord described the Apocalypse long before it was written,—so that it may be said to be deprived of its signification when that book is ascribed to another than John." He thinks also that the name implies their vivid sense of the judicial righteousness of God, in respect to those sinners against whom it is directed. This strong feeling in James, which the world would call *roughness*, was probably the cause of his early martyrdom. He was slain by Herod. Acts 12 : 2. John and James, we see, (Luke 9 : 51,) would have had fire called down from heaven on those who would not receive Jesus; acting in the spirit of Elias and of the law. See Hengstenberg on the Revelation, ch. 10 : 3. We observe, that though John was the loving and beloved disciple, he is most terrific in reproof, and uses the hardest names, against sin and sinners, as "liar," "antichrist," "deceiver," "children of the devil." See 1 John. He was an Apostle, Evangelist, and Prophet, (Apocalypse). Fr. Trench notes that the term for "*thunder*," here, is kindred to that in Haggai, "I will shake all ra-

21 And when his<sup>2</sup> friends heard of it, they went out to lay hold on him: for they said, He<sup>3</sup> is beside himself.

22 And the scribes which came down from Jerusalem, said, He<sup>4</sup> hath Beelzebub, and by the prince of the devils casteth he out devils.

23 And he called them *vnto him*, and said unto them in parables, How can Satan cast out Satan?

2 or, kinsmen. 3 Hos. 9.7. Jno. 10.20. c Matt. 9.34. 10.25. 12.24. Lu. 11.15. Jac. 7.20. 8.48,52.

tions,"—alluding to the kingdom of Christ in its overturnings. And this, then, would mean that they should be eminent instruments in accomplishing this change, and should, like thunder or an earthquake, bear down all opposition by their inspired preaching and miraculous powers. (Life and Character of John, p. 22, note.) See Acts.

It may be that certain celebrated prophecies were now specially fulfilled—even those of Moses and Jacob—that Zebulon and Isaachar (Galilean) should call the people to offer sacrifices of righteousness, (Deut. 23 : 18, 19,) and that Naphtali should "give goodly words." Gen. 49 : 21.

#### § 48. THE HEALING OF A DEMONIAC. THE SCRIBES AND PHARISEES BLASPHEMIE.—Galilee.

Matt.	Mark.	Luke	John.
12. 22-37.	3. 19-30.	11. 14, 15, 17-23.	

20. *Eat bread.* The throng was so pressing, that they could not get opportunity for their ordinary meals. The labors of Christ's work, as we have it to do, will often interfere with convenience and comfort of the flesh.

21. *His friends.* His *kinsmen*, and not, of course, the *twelve* whom he had just set apart. They set out to lay hold of him forcibly, and take him away from such fatiguing and self-denying work. He was losing his meals and his rest. They thought of it only as fanatical and crazy. They looked upon his work with no proper views, "for neither did his brethren believe *en*



24 And if a kingdom be divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand.

25 And if a house be divided against itself, that house cannot stand.

26 And if Satan rise up against himself, and be divided, he cannot stand, but hath an end.

27 No<sup>a</sup> man can enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he will first bind the strong man; and then he will spoil his house.

<sup>a</sup> Isa. 49 24, 26. 61.1. Matt. 12.29.

him." John 7: 5. Temptations and opposition even of relatives and friends will often meet the faithful minister. Every devoted Christian may sometimes be so situated. What a reflection for such, is this—that Christ had kinsmen that sought to tear him from his work and labor of love by violent hands, and reproached him with being beside himself, or having *lost his reason*.

22. *The Scribes, &c.* Mark alone mentions that these had *come down from Jerusalem*. They were *leading Scribes*, who acted as jealous and angry spies. The devils' testimony, in v. 11, was thus to confuse his plans. The Pharisees joined in this, says Matthew. See Notes.

It is remarkable, that on a Silver Coin of Aradus (the Arvad of Scripture) we find the accompanying figure, which probably has a reference to this idol.



23. *Called them unto him.* In the house, or large court of the house, at the East.

27. *The strong man.* By this is meant

28 Verily I say unto you, All<sup>b</sup> sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and blasphemies wherewith soever they shall blaspheme:

29 But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost<sup>c</sup> hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation:

30 Because they said, He hath an unclean spirit.

¶ 31 There<sup>d</sup> came then his brethren and his mother, and, standing without, sent unto him, calling him.

<sup>b</sup> Matt. 12.31. Lu. 12.10. <sup>c</sup> He. 10.29. <sup>d</sup> Matt. 12.46-48. Lu. 8.19-21.

Satan or Beelzebub. He would prove that Christ could not cast out devils, unless he was greater than the Prince of Devils. He must be some one else than he, and some one stronger than he.

29. *Blaspheme against the Holy Ghost.* See notes on Matt. 12: 31. ¶ *Is in danger of, &c.* This term means, that he "is exposed to," or "condemned to," as in Matt. 26: 66. "He is *guilty of death*." So also in 1 Cor. 11: 27, the same word is, "*shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord*." And in Mark 14: 64, "condemned him to be *guilty of death*." James 2: 10. Heb. 2: 15. This language is equivalent to that in Matthew, where "neither in this world nor in the world to come," means *never, never*—"but is condemned to *eternal damnation*."

30. Their charging Christ with acting by Satanic influence, instead of by "the Spirit of God," (see Matt. 12: 28) was such a malicious reviling of the Holy Ghost as was beyond forgiveness. It confounded the source of all holy influence with Satan, the source of all evil.

§ 50. THE TRUE DISCIPLES OF CHRIST HIS NEAREST RELATIVES.—Galilee.

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
12. 46-50.	3. 31-35.	8. 19-21.	

31. *Sent unto him.* Why they sent unto him, is incidentally stated by Luke—"they could not come at him

32 And the multitude sat about him; and they said unto him, Behold, thy mother and thy brethren without seek for thee.

33 And he answered them, saying, Who is my mother, or my brethren?

34 And he looked round about on them which sat about him, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren!

35 For whosoever shall do<sup>a</sup> the will of God, the same is my brother, and my sister, and mother.

<sup>a</sup> Ja. 1.25. Jno. 2.17. <sup>b</sup> Matt. 13.1,&c. Lu. 8.4,&c.

for the press," or the crowd, which was very great.

34. *My brethren!* By this he meant to refer to his disciples there, as his true kinsmen and brethren. His manner is given by two Evangelists. "He looked round about on them," and "stretched forth his hands towards them." Matt.

35. *The will of God.* That is, what God pleases, or claims of us. To do *his will*, is to strive by all means to serve him, and to live daily according to the spirit of the Lord's prayer, "Thy will be done," &c. He has made known to us his will in the Scriptures. We are enabled to do it, only as we obtain his gracious aid. Without the Holy Spirit to renew and constrain us, none can do his commandments, because all are utterly depraved by nature, and disinclined to his service. Those who do his will are thus of course in the closest relation to him. They are his workmanship—united to him by faith—they cleave to him in love—and they have his indwelling, by the Spirit. How wonderful this condescending grace! His true disciples are his nearest relatives! The poorest beggar, like Lazarus, may be his brother—may be near to him as a mother! Nay, instead of *Mary*, his mother in the flesh, being worshipped as having such controlling influence with Christ in Heaven, (which is the mockery of

## CHAPTER IV.

¶ **A**ND<sup>b</sup> he began again to teach by the sea-side: and there was gathered unto him a great multitude, so that he entered into a ship, and sat in the sea; and the whole multitude was by the sea on the land.

2 And he taught them many things by parables,<sup>c</sup> and said unto them in his doctrine,

3 Hearken:<sup>d</sup> Behold, there went out a sower to sow:

<sup>c</sup> Ps. 78.2. ver. 34. <sup>d</sup> ver. 9.23. ch. 1.16.

the Romish church,) any poor faithful disciple stands in the mother's place—can attain to the honor of being his nearest relative! Instead of paying divine honor to the Virgin Mary, as the Romanists do, let each strive to stand in this closest relationship, as his brother, sister, *mother!* Christ came in the flesh mainly for his great spiritual work, and his spiritual relatives are those who are nearest to his heart, here and hereafter. Strange, that in the face of such plain declarations, the Romish church should exalt his mother Mary above all creatures, and even pray to her, and worship her, as above our Lord himself!

## CHAPTER IV.

### §54. PARABLE OF THE SOWER.

*Lake of Galilee—near Capernaum?*

<sup>Matt.</sup>	<sup>Mark.</sup>	<sup>Luke.</sup>	<sup>Joha.</sup>
13. 1-23.	4. 1-25.	8. 4-18.	

2. *Parables.* See notes on Matt. 13: 3.

8. *Fruit that sprang up.* Here the seed was not only fruitful, but brought forth other seed that was so. Our Christian deeds may spring up and bring forth after us forever.

9. *Who hath ears, &c.* See notes on Matt. 13: 9.

10. *Alone.* Mark is thus particular.

11. *The mystery, &c.* See notes on Matt. 13: 11. ¶ *Them that are without.* Luke has it "to others," that is, the

4 And it came to pass, as he sowed, some fell by the way-side, and the<sup>a</sup> fowls of the air came and devoured it up.

5 And some fell on stony<sup>b</sup> ground, where it had not much earth; and immediately it sprang up, because it had no depth of earth:

6 But when the sun was up, it was scorched; and<sup>c</sup> because it had no root, it withered away.

7 And some fell among thorns;<sup>d</sup> and the thorns grew up, and choked it, and it yielded no fruit.

8 And other fell on good<sup>e</sup> ground, and did yield fruit<sup>f</sup> that sprang up and increased, and brought forth, some thirty, and some sixty, and some an hundred.

9 And he said unto them, He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

10 And<sup>g</sup> when he was alone, they that were about him with the twelve asked of him the parable.

11 And he said unto them, Unto<sup>h</sup> you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God: but unto them that are without,<sup>i</sup> all these things are done in parables:

12 That<sup>k</sup> seeing they may see, and not perceive; and hearing they may hear, and not understand; lest

<sup>a</sup> Ge. 15.11. <sup>b</sup> Eze. 11.19. 36.26. <sup>c</sup> Ps. 1.4. Ja. 1.11. <sup>d</sup> Jer. 4.3. <sup>e</sup> He. 6.7,8. <sup>f</sup> Col. 1.6. <sup>g</sup> Mat. 13.10, &c. <sup>h</sup> Ep. 1.9. <sup>i</sup> Col. 4.5. <sup>j</sup> Th. 4.12. <sup>k</sup> 1 Tim. 3.7. <sup>l</sup> Isa. 6.9. 10. Jno. 12.40. Acts 28.26,27. Rom. 11.8.

unrenewed, that are not of the genuine discipleship. This was a phrase applied by the Jews to the heathen, and by the Apostles to unbelievers. 1 Cor. 6: 12, 13. Col. 4: 5.

12. See notes on Matt. 13: 13-15. ¶ *Lest at any time*, &c. This expresses, not the *object* of the divine method, but the *result* of their dull understanding, and of the judicial blindness to which they are given over.

13. *Know ye not*, &c. That is, do ye not understand the application of this

at any time they should be converted, and *their* sins should be forgiven them.

13 And he said unto them, Know ye not this parable? and how then will ye know all parables?

14 The sower<sup>l</sup> soweth the word.

15 And these are they by the way-side, where the word is sown; but when they have heard, Satan cometh<sup>m</sup> immediately, and taketh away<sup>n</sup> the word that was sown in their hearts.

16 And these are they likewise which are sown on stony ground; who, when they have heard the word, immediately receive it with gladness;

17 And have no root<sup>o</sup> in themselves, and so endure but<sup>p</sup> for a time: afterward, when affliction or persecution ariseth for the word's sake, immediately<sup>q</sup> they are offended.

18 And these are they which are sown among thorns; such as hear the word,

19 And the<sup>r</sup> cares of this world, and the deceitfulness<sup>s</sup> of riches, and the<sup>t</sup> lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful.<sup>u</sup>

<sup>l</sup> Isa. 32.20. <sup>m</sup> 1 Pe. 1.25. <sup>n</sup> 1 Pe. 5.8. Rev. 12.9. <sup>o</sup> He. 2.1. <sup>p</sup> Job 19.28. <sup>q</sup> Job 26.10. <sup>r</sup> 2 Tim. 1.15. <sup>s</sup> Lu. 14.18-20. <sup>t</sup> 1 Tim. 6.9,17. <sup>u</sup> 2 Tim. 4.10. <sup>v</sup> Pr. 33.5. <sup>w</sup> 1 Jno. 2.16,17. <sup>x</sup> Isa. 5.2,4.

parable? Observe the tender condescension of our Lord to the weak understanding and dull perception of his disciples—stooping to inquire if they have comprehended his teachings, and following after them to enlighten their minds and explain himself.

17. *Offended*. Takes a dislike—stumbles and turns aside.

19. *Other things*. Some things always remain unpossessed and longed for by the worldling. Only to the Christian there remaineth a rest.

20 And these are they which are sown on good ground; such as hear the word, and receive it, and bring forth fruit,<sup>a</sup> some thirty-fold, some sixty, and some an hundred.

21 And he said unto them, Is a candle brought to be put under a<sup>b</sup> bushel, or under a bed? and not to be set on a candlestick?

22 For<sup>c</sup> there is nothing hid, which shall not be manifested; neither was any thing kept secret, but that it should come abroad.

<sup>a</sup> Rom. 7.4. Col. 1.10. 2 Pe. 1.8. <sup>b</sup> See ou Matt. 5.15. <sup>c</sup> Ec. 12.14. Matt. 10.26. Lu. 12.2. 1 Cor. 4.5.

21, 22. These verses occur in Matthew, but in different connexions, and they are such as would naturally be spoken more than once. See Matt. 5: 15. 10: 26. 11: 15, &c. Here, and in Luke 18: 16, &c., the illustration is brought forward, 1st. To show that he teaches in parables, not to conceal but to explain to them—and that he is ever most ready to give explanation of his doctrines to all who seek it, and to lead them into all truth. He is the *True Light*, &c. And, 2ndly, To set before them their duty especially in the ministerial work—to hold forth the word of life as *light-bearers* in the world, (see Phil. 2: 16,) and to make known what they hear from him. See Luke 8: 18. *Bengel* makes the connexion to be thus: the earth covers the seed for a proper time, but ye ought at once to put forth the word which ye have heard. 22. This passage refers to the fuller manifestations which they were yet to expect as regards his kingdom, and that the mystery of grace hid from ages was intended to come abroad, and to be published to the world. 1 Cor. 4: 5. That, therefore, his *private* instructions to them were for most *public* use. See Col. 2: 3. This formula here employed is found also in other connexions, and with other bearings, (see Matt. 10: 26,) and is just such as would naturally be variously used and applied by our Lord. It is specially spoken against

23 If any man have ears to hear, let him hear.

24 And he saith unto them, Take heed what<sup>d</sup> ye hear: with<sup>e</sup> what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you; and unto you that hear shall more be given.

25 For he that hath, to him shall be given: and he that hath not, from<sup>f</sup> him shall be taken even that which he hath.

¶ 26 And he said, So<sup>g</sup> is the kingdom of God, as

<sup>d</sup> 1 Pe. 2.2. <sup>e</sup> Matt. 7.2. <sup>f</sup> Lu. 8.18. <sup>g</sup> Matt. 13.24.

hypocrisy—the leaven of the Pharisees.

23. *If any man, &c.* These considerations just urged make an additional call for their earnest attention.

24. *What ye hear.* Luke has it, “*how ye hear.*” Both are important, and parts of the idea. We are not to hear every thing from every quarter. We should not run after novelties and errors, like the Athenians. Acts 17: 21. Satan enters in at EAR-GATE. *Bunyan*. And when we hear the truth, we are to ponder it also. See to it what ye hear—discriminate—and give attention to the hearing of God’s truth—treasure it up, and employ it for good also to others. ¶ *With what measure, &c.* According to your improvement of what you receive, shall it be further dispensed to you; and as you shall be disposed to deal it out for good to others, so shall you profit by it yourselves, and get increase of knowledge. Diligence in Christ’s service is a sure method of gain and of growth in grace. This, therefore, is to incite and encourage, as well as to warn and rebuke us in our inquiries. ¶ *Unto you that hear, to wit, attentively.* Or, the meaning may be, More shall be demanded of you who hear—addition shall be made, i. e. of account—shall be “*laid on,*” as the term is. *Alford*.

25. *Which he hath.* Which he sees to have. See Luke.

if a man should cast seed into the ground;

27 And should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should

spring and grow up, he knoweth not how.

28 For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; <sup>a</sup> first <sup>b</sup> the blade,

<sup>a</sup> Ge. 1. 11, 12. <sup>b</sup> Ec. 3. 1, 11.

54½. THE PARABLE OF THE SECRET GROWTH OF THE SEED.

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
	[4. 26-29.]		

In the "Synopsis of the Harmony," (see Notes on Matt.) this parable is placed as parallel with that of "the Tares," Matt. 13: 24-53. But it is plain, upon examination, that it is quite different, and teaches another doctrine with a different illustration of the kingdom. It was probably spoken in the same connexion. This is the only parable peculiar to Mark. Modern objectors would try to prove that this is intended for a report of the parable of the Tares, with the Tares left out by mistake! This shows the spirit of such critics, and how eager they are to seize upon anything which may be turned by them into a reflection upon the Scripture. This parable seems to be spoken mainly for the ministers of Christ who preach the word, or sow the seed. They are to know that the growth is secret, hidden from their view, having a law of development—not coming to fruit at once—therefore they are not to be impatient if they see no immediate result of their labors, but they are to have confidence in God. Instead of working and worrying always at the root—instead of digging always at first principles, or preaching always the mere elements, or the evidences—they are to consider that the seed will spring up as though the earth brought it forth of itself—that it does not live by their constant working at it and watching it. Nay, that this impatient meddling may so disturb the growth as to kill it. They must be content to leave the result with God, and go on at their further work of upbuilding—leaving the principles of the doctrine of Chr'st going on to perfection.

27. *Sleep and rise.* That is, having

sown the seed, he goes about his ordinary course of sleep at night, and rising to labor by day. ¶ *Knoweth not how.* As regeneration is a work of the Spirit, which, like the winds blowing, can not be traced, only in its secret workings, or except from its effects, so here in this secret growth of the seed. See John 3: 8. Stier says—"we know as little of the growing above ground, as of the growing under ground." So also the idea may be *he watcheth not how.*

28. This is the illustration. The earth to all appearance bringeth forth fruit of itself—the seed is cast in by the sower, and secretly it germinates, and while he is about other occupations it springs up. This, we know, does not exclude rain and sunshine, and human care. Nay, without them, the seed would rot and perish. But the growth is not dependent on the man to give life; there is a law of development, first the blade, then the ear, &c. And as the earth seems to bring forth, of herself, out of her own bosom, yet really by such divine influences as the rain and dew and sunshine—so here, in the work of grace, and with the secret development of the incorruptible seed of which we are born. 1 Peter 1: 23. This would direct us to the patient waiting upon God. (James 5 7.) And after the parable of the sower which might seem rather to discourage their effort, they are here taught the law of gracious development under God. They must plant and water, but God giveth the increase. 1 Cor. 3: 6. There are laws in grace as there are in nature, and as the seed grows by gradual processes, so we may expect ordinarily, and as the law of God's gracious kingdom, that good planting will be followed by corresponding fruit, and that without any life-giving power in the man who sows. ¶ *The earth—*

then the ear; after that, the full corn in the ear.

29 But when the fruit is <sup>1</sup>brought forth, immediately he <sup>a</sup>putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come.

¶ 30 And he said, Whereunto shall we liken the kingdom of God? or with what comparison shall we compare it?

31 *It*<sup>b</sup> is like a grain of mustard-seed, which, when it is sown in

<sup>1</sup> or, ripe. Job 5. 26. a Re. 14. 15. b Matt. 13. 31, 32. Lu. 13. 18, 19.

of herself. This means, of course, "the earth" that is sown, since it is folly to look for a harvest without seed. And also it means, the earth—which God has made productive—not the rock, where nothing grows. The term "of itself" excludes the human efficiency, and includes the mighty power of God. "Only when the seed comes forth 'of itself does it spring up,' and only this it is which proves it to be seed." Stier.

29. The fruit which is appropriate may in its time be reaped. He who has trusted his work to God, the life giver, and has worked in the Master's vineyard, looking to him to bring forward the good seed, he will have a work of reaping to do. "He who goeth forth weeping, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bearing his sheaves with him." "But," says Stier, "ye laborers in the kingdom, follow not along with your wagons as soon as you have sown a little, but give the ground time with the seed. Yet if you see the fruit then also *immediately* put in the sickle." The Lord here speaks not of the reapers, as in Matt. 13, for here the husbandmen themselves are the sickle bearers. There needs no angel yet, for it is not the harvest of the last day that is here meant.

¶ 55. PARABLE OF THE MUSTARD SEED, &c.—Near Capernaum.

Mat. 13. 31-53 | Mark. 4. 30-34 | Luke. | John.

30. The Rabbin's commenced a dis-

the earth, is less than all the seeds that be in the earth:

32 But when it is sown, it groweth up, and becometh greater <sup>c</sup> than all herbs, and shooteth out great branches; so that the fowls of the air may lodge under the shadow of it.

33 And with many such parables spake he the word unto them, as <sup>d</sup> they were able to hear it.

34 But without a parable spake

<sup>c</sup> Pr. 4. 18. Is. 11. 9. Da. 2. 44. Mat. 1. 11. <sup>d</sup> Jno. 16. 12.

course by *questioning*, as here and in Luke 13: 18.

31. *Mustard-seed*. We found the tree growing to a great size on the fertile plain of Genesaret along the sea of Galilee.

32. This parable presents the kingdom of heaven in its outward progress, and as it would appear to the eye of man.

33. *The word*. The doctrine of his church, or *gospel kingdom*. ¶ *Able to hear it*. It was but gradually that they could receive the truth which was so opposite to their prejudices. He bore with them, and led them along step by step, as they could go. So the Great Teacher often leads weak disciples out of darkness into God's marvelous light. They have found their views gradually but greatly altered, during a long course of attention to divine things, till, looking back, they can hardly say where the night changed into morning.

34. *Without a parable*. That is, he adopted this method of illustration on this great subject, and by various similitudes he showed them what the kingdom was like. This only displays his forbearance and willingness to instruct. Yet he would be inquired of for all these things to explain them. None can understand savingly the simplest truth without divine power. And this he will give freely to all who seek it. ¶ *And when they were alone*. How beautifully we read here Christ's gentle,

he not unto them: and when they were alone, he expounded all things to his disciples.

¶ 35 And the same day, when even was come, he saith unto them, Let us pass over unto the other side.

36 And when they had sent away the multitude, they took him even as he was in the ship: and there were also with him other little ships.

37 And there arose a great storm of wind, and the waves beat

a Matt. 8. 23. Lu. 9. 22.

faithful teachings, following up illustration by explanation, and in most familiar, confidential ways, bringing the truth home to their retirement. So our Lord follows up the public ministrations of the Sabbath and sanctuary, by his own private and more complete explanations to us, 'when we are alone;' and so he makes the closet of the Christian attractive and blessed. So the minister of Christ should visit his hearers.

¶ 56. JESUS DIRECTS TO CROSS THE LAKE. TEMPEST STILLED.

Lake of Galilee.

Matt. 8. 18-27. | Mark. 4. 35-41. | Luke. 8. 22-25. | John.

35. *The same day.* That is, on which the parables were delivered. This express language fixes the time, though Matt. has the record in another order. ¶ *Even.* That is, at the evening of the day, he proposed to cross to the other side of the lake. Matthew explains (ch. 8: 18, &c.) that it was at seeing great multitudes about him, that he gave this order to cross over; and that this movement brought out a scribe who proposed to accompany him and to cast in his lot with him.

36. *As he was*—without any preparation. ¶ *Ships.* These were not great vessels, such as we call ships, but boats of small size, not very able to navigate this lake, (see vs. 37,) yet these vessels were of different sizes, as

into the ship, so that it was now full.

38 And he was in the hinder part of the ship, asleep on a pillow: and they awake him, and say unto him, Master, carest thou not that we perish?

39 And he arose and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased and there was a great calm.

40 And he said unto them, Why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye have no faith?

b Ps. 10. 1. Is. 40. 27. La. 3. 8. c Ps. 89. 9. La. 3. 31, 32. d Ps. 46. 1, 2. Is. 43. 2.

some are termed "little ships," and seem to have parted company in the gale.

37. This lake of 16 or 18 miles in length by 5 or 6 average breadth, though so beautifully calm when we pitched our tents by its side at Tiberias, and passed along its borders by the plain of Genesaret, is liable to very sudden tempests, that work up its waters to the greatest violence.

38. *A pillow.* Rather the pillow—part of the boat, and probably the sea-used by the rowers at the stern, not a cushion, but of wood. ¶ *Carest thou not.* This expresses the most urgent entreaty. Bengel remarks that God is not angry at the very importunate supplicants. Luke reads "Lord save us—we perish." So Martha earnestly said, "Carest thou not that my sister hath left me to serve alone?" &c. "There is no unmannerliness in our strife for the greatest share in his presence and benediction."—*Bishop Hall.*

39. As to the miracle here, see notes on Matt. 8: 26. ¶ *Peace*—be silent—hush! Our Lord here, addressed the disturbed elements. They have become irregular and angry and warring by the fall. And he here shows how perfect order and harmony and peace even in the natural elements, can be restored by him.

40. *No faith.* None, at least, compared with what they should have had.

41 And they feared <sup>a</sup> exceedingly, and said one to another, What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea <sup>b</sup> obey him?

CHAPTER V.

¶ AND <sup>c</sup> they came over unto the other side of the sea, into the country of the Gadarenes.

<sup>a</sup> Jno 1. 18, 16. <sup>b</sup> Job 38. 11. <sup>c</sup> Matt. 8. 28, &c. Lu. 8. 26, &c.

and none such as was required. "O ye of little faith." *Matt.* A full faith in Christ should have led them to trust him confidently and fully in all danger—whereas they seemed to have doubted him in their alarm. "What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee." Although of little faith in so far as they feared to perish with the slumbering Saviour, yet they were believing, inasmuch as they looked for their deliverance to the Lord. And not to put even this small measure of faith to shame, our Redeemer wrought this miracle, and produced a great calm.

41. *Obey him.* His mandate was, *Peace, be still.* v. 39. This expressed his authority and power, as not another's but his own and of himself; and so the people understood it. "The wind and the sea obey him," is their testimony. Could this be any other than God? His disciples wrought miracles in his name—he, in his own strength.

CHAPTER V.

§57. THE TWO DEMONIACS OF GADARA.  
*S. E. coast of the Lake of Galilee.*

*Matt.* 28-34. | *Mark.* 6. 1-21. | *Luke.* 8. 26-40. | *John.*

1. *The Gadarenes.* Matthew has it "the country of the Gergesenes." These are different names for the same region or district, from the different chief towns, Gergesa and Gadara, after which it might naturally be called. "The country of the Gadarenes" is a very general designation. It was on the east coast of the sea of Tiberias, whose greatest length is only 15 or 18 miles. Josephus speaks of Gada<sup>a</sup> as

2 And when he was come out of the ship, immediately there met him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit,

3 Who had *his* dwelling <sup>d</sup> among the tombs; and no man could bind him, no, not with chains:

4 Because that he had been often bound with fetters and chains, and

<sup>d</sup> Is. 65. 4.

the capital of Perea. It was one of the ten cities of Decapolis. It was about seven miles from Tiberias, which lies at the S. W. corner of the Lake. We need only say that the rugged cliffs which rise abruptly from the eastern shore of the Lake, strongly answer <sup>t</sup> the description of "*a steep place*," v. 13, while the rocks themselves, in all that wild region of country, are yet the abodes of men, sometimes of families, dwelling in the old tombs cut in their sides, like the vaults in the hill-sides of our cemeteries: v. 5—"in the mountains and in the tombs." The Lake lies in a deep basin, walled on the east by such rocky cliffs, and on the west by hills descending with more gradual slope to the shore. We came to it over a beautiful and cultivated mountain, in a short day's travel from Nazareth by Mt. Tabor. The lake, so calm and sacred, on whose borders the multitudes were fed, and on whose shores and bosom the Saviour did so many wonderful works, broke upon us suddenly and with all its charms, as we walked the summit that overhangs Tiberias. Not a boat was to be seen where the fishermen apostles cast their nets—not a ripple disturbed the water. All was peace and stillness, as though the Master had just spoken the divine command, "Peace, be still."

2. *Was come out of the ship.* That is, when he landed. ¶ *With an unclean spirit.* That is, one possessed with a devil. The doctrine everywhere taught in the Scripture of a personal existence called Satan, the Devil, and of other evil spirits, is denied by some; but partly because men are unwilling to



the chains had been plucked asunder by him, and the fetters broken in pieces: neither could any man tame him.

5 And always, night and day, he was in the mountains, and in the tombs, crying, and cutting himself with stones.

6 But when he saw Jesus afar off, he ran and worshipped him.

7 And cried with a loud voice, and said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of the most

a Ps. 72.9.

acknowledge even to themselves how they are under the power of the evil world. These demons were addressed by our Lord as personal existences, and as distinct from the person whom they possessed—were ordered to come out of them, &c. We see special reasons why they should have been allowed such power on earth in the time of our Lord. It was a period of gross wickedness, and the hour and power of darkness was come. The whole world of devils was in battle against our Lord, and he was working a victory, not only for that time, but for all time—not only for himself, but for us. He was not only to spoil principalities and powers, but to *make a show of them openly*. We can not say, but evil spirits may again be allowed to possess men in some remarkable manifestations. Matthew speaks of *two* on this occasion. Mark speaks only of one who was the more prominent, and whose case he intends to record more particularly. ¶ *Tombs*. Throughout the East we saw, especially in rocky districts, such chambers cut in the rock for tombs. We passed them often in the high hill-sides. Some of the tombs in the valley of Jehoshaphat at Jerusalem are such. And our Lord's sepulchre was "hewn out of a rock," in the garden of Joseph. These tombs have often several rooms. An agricultural colony from this country have their dwelling in such tombs at this

high God I adjure thee by God, that thou torment me not.

8 (For he said unto him, Come out of the man, *thou unclean spirit*.)

9 And he asked him, What is thy name? And he answered, saying, My name is Legion: for we are many.

10 And he besought him much, that he would not send them away out of the country.

11 Now there was there, nigh

b Acts 16.18. He. 2.14. 1 Jno. 3.8. c Matt. 12.45.

time, in Wady Farrah or Valley of Joy, 2 hours N. E. of Jerusalem. See notes on Matt. 8: 28. He had his haunts among these caves or vaults. They were sometimes built with porches. These would afford such a fit retreat.

3-5. This sublime history shows us both the fearfulness of Satan's work among men, and the blessedness of Christ's work in man's redemption. The particulars here given by Mark are not found in Matt: but Luke gives them (ch. 8: 29) in a way to intimate that our Lord, out of sympathy with such a distressed creature, commanded the devils to come out. And what wonder? for the language is even like that which describes Christ's own conflict with Satan,—"*he was driven of the devil into the wilderness*." Luke 8: 29. See Fig. ch. 16: 5.

9. *Legion*. This was an acknowledgment obtained for the multitude to show the power of Christ.

10. *Out of the country*. This is probably explained by Luke's record, (ch. 8: 31,) that he would not command them to go out into "*the deep*," or the *abyss*, out of their permitted abode on earth. This is, of course, not the lake or sea that is meant, but their expected perdition, to which they begged not to be sent. Thus they acknowledged him as having power to destroy them; and as their final judge. See Jude 6: 1. Peter 2: 4. This is also explained by the language in Matt. 8: 29 See

unto the mountains, a great herd of swine<sup>a</sup> feeding.

12 And all the devils besought<sup>b</sup> him, saying, Send us into the swine, that we may enter into them.

13 And forthwith Jesus gave<sup>c</sup> them leave. And the unclean spirits went out, and entered into the swine: and the herd ran violently down a steep place into the sea, (they were about two thousand,) and were choked in the sea.

14 And they that fed the swine

<sup>a</sup> Le. 11.7 <sup>b</sup> Ge. 14.8 <sup>c</sup> Job 1.10,12. 2.5,6.  
<sup>c</sup> He. 73.7. 1 Pe. 3.22.

Notes. The personality of the man and of the demons is constantly interchanged.

11. *Herd of swine.* The fact of such a herd being there, when the keeping of swine was contrary to the law of Moses, may be accounted for from the fact that Gadara was a Grecian city, as testified by Josephus. Antiq. xvii. 11, 4.

12. This they asked naturally enough, from their love of uncleanness, as well as to gratify their *destructive* passion. Not unlikely, too, they aimed thus, maliciously, to give occasion for the public rejection of Christ. v. 17. *Observe.* How human nature can be so debased and beastly as to be like that of brutes: so that devils regard the swine's nature as the next best dwelling place to such a heart.

13. Matt. has the simple and sublime reply, *Go!* This leave implies that it was not time for their final judgment. Matt. 8: 19. He would show how the spirits are subject to his word. If he cast them out of a man to go into swine, what grace! Who shall complain that the swine are lost? All such must show how lightly they value the soul, when they make swine to be of more account. Christ would show that two thousand swine are nothing in comparison with one soul. When devils go into swinish natures, they go

flod, and told *it* in the city, and in the country. And they went out to see what it was that was done.

15 And they come to Jesus, and see him that was possessed with the devil, and had<sup>d</sup> the legion, sitting, and clothed, and in his right mind: and they were afraid.<sup>e</sup>

16 And they that saw *it*, told them how it befell to him that was possessed with the devil, and *also* concerning the swine.

17 And they began to pray him to depart<sup>f</sup> out of their coasts.

18 And when he was come into

<sup>d</sup> Isa. 49.25. Col. 1.13. <sup>e</sup> Job. 13.11. Ps. 14.5. 2 Tim. 1.7. <sup>f</sup> Job 21.14. Lu. 5.8. Acts 16.39.

into their own *chosen* place.—God permits sin in the world. He does not originate it, and is not the author of it. ¶ *Ran violently.* Their madness comes from the devils entering into them. Stier remarks that many fly from this history as though the devils had entered into them, and plunged them into the sea of unbelief.

15. *Sitting.* Instead of prowling about and raving. *Peace* had been spoken to his wretched spirit. This is explained by Luke's account—that “he *wore no clothes.*” ¶ *Clothed, &c.* Thus Mark's account implies what Luke records. Religion brings civilization. Luke has it, “*sitting at the feet of Jesus,*” which was in accordance with an oriental custom—pupils sitting at the feet of their masters—as Paul at Gamaliel's, (Acts 22: 3,) indicating reverence and docility. The meaning here is that the demoniac became at once an humble disciple, instead of being a raving madman as before. What supreme power has Christ over men, and over devils!

18. *The devil prayed him.* This was a most conclusive proof of the wondrous transformation. Every soul that is truly delivered from Satan's bondage desires to be with Christ. Phil. 1: 23.

19. *Suffered him not.* Not that Christ would refuse his offer of discipleship, but we can follow Christ without being

the ship, he that had been possessed with the devil prayed him that he might be with him.

19 Howbeit, Jesus suffered him not, but saith unto him, Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee.

20 And he departed, and began to publish in Decapolis how great things Jesus had done for him: and all men did marvel.

21 And when Jesus was passed over again by ship unto the other side, much people gathered unto him: and he was nigh unto the sea.

a Ps. 66.16. Is. 33.19.

with him in the flesh or in glory. He had other work for him to do than to attend him in his journey. We may have our favorite fields and projects, but we should always be willing to go where Christ orders us, and do the work he bids us. ¶ *To thy friends.* His presence among them as a restored man would have a most powerful effect with those who had known him as a possessed demoniac. In these circumstances, the most good was to be done by him at home among his friends. Converts from open, public sin should specially testify among their wicked companions, and show in their own familiar circles at home an example of true conversion: and every christian has a most important duty to do among his own kindred, and before his household. The light is to be set in the candlestick to give light to all that are in the house. Family religion is too often neglected for the out-door work, or for the continued round of public service. Every true convert will proclaim the love of Christ by showing in his conduct, precepts, and life, how great things God hath done for him. Christ commanded the man to tell this, for he was little known in Perea.

20. *Decapolis.* A district East of the Jordan, or mostly so, including ten cities,

¶ 22 And, behold, there cometh one of the rulers of the synagogue, Jairus by name; and when he saw him, he fell at his feet,

23 And besought him greatly, saying, My little daughter lieth at the point of death: *I pray thee, come and lay thy hands on her, that she may be healed; and she shall live.*

24 And Jesus went with him; and much people followed him, and thronged him.

25 And a certain woman, which had an issue of blood twelve years, 26 And had suffered many things

b Matt. 9.18, &c. Lu. 8.41, &c. c Ps. 107.18. d Le. 15.19, &c.

as the name signifies, near the sea of Galilee. Among these was this Gadara.

21. *The other side.* That is, of the Sea of Galilee—he came over to the west side.

¶ 59. RAISING OF JAIRUS' DAUGHTER. WOMAN WITH A BLOODY FLUX. Capernaum.

Matt. 9. 18-26. | Mark. 5. 22-43. | Luke. 8. 41-56. | John.

22. And as he was just landed, and was met by the throng and was yet nigh unto the sea, this "ruler," or ruling elder of the synagogue, mentioned here by name "Jairus," came to him. He may be one of those spoken of in Luke 7: 3. There were several of these rulers or elders in every synagogue. Acts 13: 15.

23. *My little daughter.* We see the tender affection of the father even in these words. Luke tells us that she was an only daughter, 12 years of age. Every parent and child can see how hard it must have been to have this only child, of so interesting an age, lying at the point of death, or dying, and as he thought most likely, dead already.

26. Mark gives these particulars not recorded by Matthew.

of many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was nothing <sup>a</sup> bettered, but rather grew worse,

27 When she had heard of Jesus, came in the press behind, and touched <sup>a</sup> his garment :

28 For she said, If I may touch but his clothes, I shall be whole.

29 And straightway the fountain of her blood was dried up; and she felt in *her* body that she was healed of that plague.

30 And Jesus, immediately knowing in himself that virtue<sup>b</sup> had gone out of him, turned him about in the press, and said, Who touched my clothes?

31 And his disciples said unto

a Job 13.4. Ps. 108.12. Jer. 30.12,13. b 2 Ki. 13.21. Matt. 14.36. Acts 5.15. 19.12.

27. *In the press.* In the crowd. Whoever comes to Christ must come in the press—amidst hindrances. They must make their way through a crowd of cares, temptations, fears, it may be—but in this, their earnestness and perseverance can be shown.

28. *For she said.* This was her conviction. She had long had conviction of her necessity. Now she had a conviction of Christ's sufficiency, and of the way to Christ. What faith is here—that even his garment must have virtue in it. Whoever seeks Christ will not despise his word, his ordinances, or the least of his people.

29. *Straightway.* So prompt was the cure. Our Lord will meet a prompt faith by a prompt deliverance. ¶ *She felt.* How perfectly satisfactory is this sense of healing. What a change, after twelve long years of constant illness, never knowing the sweets of health, to feel a full and instant recovery! Healed!

30. *Virtue.* The word means power, and is the same word that is often translated "mighty work," "miracle," &c. This shows that the miraculous power of healing was inherent in Christ, and not derived from another.

him, Thou seest the multitude thronging thee, and sayest thou, Who touched me?

32 And he looked round about to see her that had done this thing.

33 But the woman, fearing and trembling, knowing what was done in her, came and fell down before him, and told <sup>c</sup> him all the truth.

34 And he said unto her, Daughter, thy faith<sup>d</sup> hath made thee whole: go <sup>e</sup> in peace, and be whole of thy plague.

35 While he yet spake, there came from the ruler of the synagogue's house, certain which said, Thy daughter is dead: <sup>f</sup> why troublest thou the Master any further?

c Lu. 6.19. d Ps. 30.2. e ch. 10.52. Acts 14.9. f Jno. 5.25. 11.25.

The disciples derived their power from him, and wrought miracles in his name. ¶ *Who touched, &c.* The object of this question was, to draw out the timid faith of the woman, and to make the case public enough to show the miracle.

33. *Knowing what was done in her.* A sense of her cure brought her forward, to testify to and for Christ. So always, the sense of pardon and acceptance will lead the trembling believer to full confession and to an open testimony for Christ. It will embolden the timid to speak of the gospel even before crowds. She feared and trembled from that overcoming sense of unworthiness, which Christ at once addressed in such encouraging language. v. 34. Besides, she was afraid of the law—for she had ventured (against the Levitical law) to come near another while she was legally unclean. See Numbers 5: 2, 3.

34. *Thy faith, &c.* Her faith had touched the hem of Christ's garment, and that contact with him had drawn the healing power for her cure. Faith saves, not as the cause, but as the instrument or means. "Ye are saved BY grace—THROUGH faith." By faith, we

36 As soon as Jesus heard the word that was spoken, he saith unto the ruler of the synagogue, Be not afraid, only<sup>a</sup> believe.

37 And he suffered no man to follow him, save<sup>b</sup> Peter, and James, and John the brother of James.

38 And he cometh to the house of the ruler of the synagogue, and seeth the tumult, and them that wept and wailed greatly.

39 And when he was come in, he saith unto them, Why make ye this ado, and weep? the damsel is not dead, but sleepeth.<sup>c</sup>

40 And they laughed him to scorn. But when he had put them all out, he taketh the father and the mother of the damsel, and them that were with him, and entereth in where the damsel was lying.

41 And he took the damsel by

<sup>a</sup> 1 Sam. 1.17. 20.42. 2 Ki. 5.19. <sup>b</sup> Jno. 5.25. 11.25.  
<sup>c</sup> 2 Ch. 20.20. Jno. 11.40.

receive and rest upon Christ alone for salvation as he is offered to us in the gospel.

35-37. Matthew does not mention this message—Luke does.

35. *Trouble not.* The term implies, Weary not the Master with the tedious way.

36. *Only believe.* That is, in Christ's ability and willingness to do this recovering work.

38. Matthew mentions that the "minstrels," or hired mourners, to whom also Mark here refers, were already there for the funeral—a fact which showed that she was admitted to be dead. ¶ *Not dead.* So in the case of Lazarus, (John 11 : 11,) our Lord spoke of the death with reference to his power over it, in bringing life again. He would thus show his redeeming work, "to abolish death." In his hands it was only as a sleep, so easily could he raise her up.

39. See notes on Matt. 9. 24.

the hand, and said unto her, Talitha cumi; which is, being interpreted, Damsel, (I say unto thee,) arise.<sup>d</sup>

42 And straightway the damsel arose, and walked; for she was of the age of twelve years. And they were astonished with a great astonishment.

43 And he charged<sup>e</sup> them straitly that no man should know it; and commanded that something should be given her to eat.

#### CHAPTER VI.

¶ AND he went out from thence, and came into his own country; and his disciples follow him.

2 And<sup>f</sup> when the sabbath-day was come, he began to teach in the synagogue: and many, hearing him, were astonished, saying, From<sup>g</sup> whence hath this man

<sup>d</sup> ch. 9.2. 14.33. <sup>e</sup> Jno. 11.11-13. <sup>f</sup> Acts 9.40. <sup>g</sup> Mat.  
8.4. 12.16-18. ch. 3.12. Lu. 5.14.

41. *Talitha-cumi.* These words are in the Syriac or Syro-Chaldaic language, which was commonly spoken at that time in Palestine. The term is one of endearment.

43. *To give her meat.* This was to show by her eating that she was alive as before, and restored to the natural modes of life.

#### CHAPTER VI.

§ 61. JESUS AGAIN AT NAZARETH—AND AGAIN REJECTED.

Matt. 13. 54-58. | Mark. 6. 1-6. | Luke. | John.

1. *From thence.* That is, from Capernaum, where he had been. ¶ *His own country,*—Nazareth. This was found about a day's journey, or from ten to twelve hours distant.

2. *The synagogue.* We visited the building which passes for this synagogue. A modern wall has been erected along the street. Passing through the gateway of this, we entered a plain

these things? and what wisdom is this which is given unto him, that even such mighty works are wrought by his hands?

3 Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James<sup>a</sup> and Joses, and of Juda, and Simon? and are not his sisters here with us? And they were offended<sup>b</sup> at him.

4 But Jesus said unto them,<sup>c</sup> A prophet is not without honor, but in his own country, and among his own kin, and in his own house.

5 And<sup>d</sup> he could there do no mighty work, save that he laid his

<sup>a</sup> Gal. 1.19. <sup>b</sup> Matt. 11.6. <sup>c</sup> Matt. 13.57. Jno. 4.44. <sup>d</sup> Ge. 19.22. ch. 9.23.

room, 28 by 35 feet, with vaulted roof, and two windows with arched heads on one side. An old greybearded priest was sitting at the door. In the centre, standing at a homely post, the top of which served as a desk, two native boys were jabbering Arabic, alternately, from a prayer-book, at the top of their voice—ending the sentences with a severe inflection. Standing over them, with spectacles in hand, and leaning on the short post or reading desk, was an old Doctor, occasionally muttering as if joining in the service, and looking upon the open MSS. which were in black and red letters. In high chairs against one wall, sat two greybearded priests, and on the other side, near to the altar, sat another, as if engaged also in the service. Presently they commenced chanting, with responses in which the boys and doctors took part. ¶ *The sabbath-day.* That is, the seventh day, or Jewish sabbath, on which occasion they were to be found in their synagogues.

3. *Carpenter*—as having actually worked at the trade. We visited a small empty building which is pointed out as the workshop of Joseph. A rude shrine indicates that it is used

hand upon a few sick folk, and healed *them*.

¶ 6 And he marvelled<sup>e</sup> because of their unbelief. And<sup>f</sup> he went round about the villages, teaching.

7 And<sup>g</sup> he called *unto him* the twelve, and began to send them forth by two and two, and gave them power over unclean spirits;

8 And commanded them that they should take nothing for *their* journey, save a staff only; no scrip no bread, no<sup>h</sup> money in *their* purse.

9 But *be shod*<sup>h</sup> with sandals; and not put on two coats.

<sup>e</sup> Isa. 59.16. Jer. 2.11. <sup>f</sup> Matt. 9.35. Lu. 13.22. Acts 10.38. <sup>g</sup> Matt. 10.1, &c. ch. 3.13, &c. Lu. 9.1, &c. 10.3, &c. <sup>h</sup> 1 The word signifies a piece of brass money, in value somewhat less than a farthing, Matt. 10.9, but here it is taken in general for money: Lu. 9.3. & Ep. 6.15. <sup>i</sup> Acts 12.8.

at the present time for a chapel. It would seem that Joseph was dead, and that Jesus was working at the trade for the support of his widowed mother. We have few hints of his private life at Nazareth, but everything shows that he was a regular member of the synagogue and a faithful son of Mary.

4. *A prophet, &c.* This was a common proverb, that Christ applied to his case; showing that he was rejected on these natural principles: not because they had not evidence in his works, but because they had prejudice against his lowly origin among men.

5. See notes on Matt. 13: 58. ¶ *No mighty work, &c.* For the reason hinted at in v. 4—their unbelief.

#### § 62. THIRD CIRCUIT IN GALILEE.— THE TWELVE INSTRUCTED AND SENT FORTH.

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
9. 35-38.	6. 6-13.	9. 1-6.	
10. 1-42.			
11. 1.			

The Twelve had been chosen before (§ 40) and set apart. Here they are sent forth.

7. *Gave them power.* This showed his divinity, and that he had power in

10 And he said unto them, In what place soever ye enter into an house, there abide till ye depart from that place.

11 And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear you, when ye depart thence, shake<sup>a</sup> off the dust under your feet for a testimony against them. Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Sodom<sup>1</sup> and Gomorrah in the day of judgment, than for that city.

12 And they went out, and preached that men should repent.<sup>b</sup>

13 And they cast out many<sup>c</sup> devils, and anointed with oil<sup>d</sup> many that were sick, and healed them.

<sup>a</sup> Ne. 5.13. Acts 13.51. <sup>1</sup> or. <sup>b</sup> Lu. 24.47. Acts 2.38. 3.19. <sup>c</sup> Lu. 10.17. <sup>d</sup> Ja. 5.14.

himself to give to others. He could not have been merely a commissioned servant of God. He must have been God himself.

8. *No scrip, &c.* This was a knapsack for provision. They were thus restricted to a suit of clothing and provision for short use—because they were not to make a long journey—nor were they to seek independence, but to look for support to those among whom they went.

9. *Sandals.* This agrees with Matt. They were to wear them, but not to carry any extra. See Fig. Lu. 3: 16.

11. See notes on Matthew 10: 14.

13. *Anointed with oil, &c.* Calvin understands this anointing as a visible token of spiritual grace, by which the healing that was administered by them was declared to proceed from the secret power of God: as, under the law, oil was used to represent the grace of the Spirit. The absurdity of attempting to make this a perpetual ordinance in the church, appears from the fact, that the gift of healing was not given as a perpetual grant, nor the Apostolic order as perpetual—but both for the temporary purpose of founding the gospel church. For instances of such symbolic use of outward applica-

¶ 14 And<sup>e</sup> king Herod heard of him; (for his name was spread abroad;) and he said, That John the Baptist was risen from the dead, and therefore mighty works do show forth themselves in him.

15 Others<sup>f</sup> said, That it is Elias. And others said, That it is a prophet, or as one of the prophets.

16 But when Herod heard thereof, he said, It is John, whom I beheaded: he is risen from the dead.

¶ 17 For Herod himself had sent forth, and laid hold upon John, and bound him in prison, for Herodias' sake, his

<sup>e</sup> Matt. 14.1, & Lu. 9.7, &c. <sup>f</sup> Matt. 16.14. ch. 8.28.

tions, see 2 Kings 5: 14. Mark 8: 23. John 9: 6, &c. In James 5: 14, the elders of the church were directed to pray and anoint the sick with oil in the name of the Lord, to show that the healing could come from God alone. Bengel, however, thinks that the oil is named as a common means of cure, for it was much used at the East for the sick, as by the Good Samaritan. This is nothing like the Popish practice of "extreme unction," for that is the superstitious anointing of a dying person—where it is meant as a sacrament, and not as a cure. There is no warrant in God's word for any such practice, nor is there any hint of such a sacrament. It is an awful imposture of a false church.

§ 63. HEROD HOLDS JESUS TO BE JOHN THE BAPTIST—(§ 24—vss. 17–21.)—Galilee? Perea.

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
14. 1–12.	6. 14–29.	9. 7–9.	

14. *King.* He was tetrarch—here called, king. ¶ *Mighty works.* Rather, "the mighty works," of which he had heard—that is, the miracles, the powers, are exerted in him.

15. *As one of the prophets.* That is, resembling one of the prophets of for-

brother Philip's wife: for he had married her.

18 For John had said unto Herod, It is not lawful<sup>a</sup> for thee to have thy brother's wife.

19 Therefore Herodias had<sup>1</sup> a quarrel against him, and would have killed him; but she could not.

20 For Herod feared<sup>b</sup> John, knowing that he was a just man and an holy, and observed<sup>2</sup> him; and when he heard him, he did

<sup>a</sup> Le. 18.16. 1 or, an inward grudge. <sup>b</sup> Ex. 11.3. Eze. 2.5-7. 2 or, kept him, or saved him.

mer times. It should read, "that he is a prophet as one of the prophets"—not greater.

16. It is supposed that Herod was a Sadducee, and thus a disbeliever in the resurrection. If so, his conscience prevailed above his theories. This alarm was no superstition, nor system of doctrine, but the scorpion sting of his own soul. His sin found him out, and exposed his guilt by these very strugglings of remorse. Men may well be afraid of this punishment, which so foreruns the torture of the undying worm in hell.

18. Herodias was niece to Herod, and to his brother Philip. These brothers had the same father, but different mothers. To accomplish the wicked object of Herod, he divorced his own wife, and Herodias divorced her husband, which last was especially scandalous in the eye of the Jews. Besides, Herod then married his living brother's wife, which was *adultery*: and she was also his own sister-in-law and niece, which was *incest*.

19. See notes on Matthew 14:8. ¶ *Therefore*. Because John had so pronounced. ¶ *Had a quarrel*. Or rather, as the term is, had a grudge against him.

20. *Observed him*. Herod observed John. The term means, respected him—held him in consideration. Some read, Saved him, i. e. from Herodias. ¶ *Did many things*. This describes his outward courtesy. He did many things

many things, and heard him gladly.

¶ 21 And when a convenient day was come, that Herod on his birthday made a supper to his lords, high captains, and chief *estates* of Galilee;

22 And when the daughter of the said Herodias came in, and danced, and pleased Herod and them that sat with him, the king said unto the damsel, Ask of me whatsoever

<sup>c</sup> Ge. 40.20. <sup>d</sup> Isa. 3.16.

—only not the great thing. He did not break off his sinful conduct. Men will often treat the truth and its ministers with civility, up to the point where they are reproved by it, and feel that it addresses themselves as guilty men. But the great defect, as with Herod, is that they receive it only so far as it does not aim at themselves nor seem to condemn their conduct.

21. *Convenient day*. Opportune, for her purpose—as though contrived by her. ¶ *Lords*. Magnates, chief men, or noblemen. ¶ *High captains*. Principal military officers. ¶ *Chief estates*. That is, men of chief consequence for wealth or station.

22. The Jews disliked such celebrations, and this was one of the heathen customs which the Herodian family had adopted from the Romans. *Dancing girls* are a class who are accustomed to entertain persons at the East. Our ladies were invited to see one perform in Cairo. She was decked with silks and velvets, the long hair ornamented with jewelry, and the dance was a strange wriggling of the body, with singing through the nose, and with thumb pieces for a tinkling music. She was a married woman, and the fee was \$5.00. No gentlemen are allowed to witness these performances, since the reforms brought in by Mohammed Ali.

23. This shows the reckless and profane character of Herod. He was notoriously vile, and was at length



thou wilt, and I will give *it* thee.

23 And he sware unto her, Whatsoever<sup>a</sup> thou shalt ask of me, I will give *it* thee, unto the half of my kingdom.

24 And she went forth, and said unto her mother, What shall I ask? And she said, the head of John the Baptist.

25 And she came in straightway with haste unto the king, and asked, saying, I will that thou give me, by and by, in a charger, the head<sup>b</sup> of John the Baptist.

26 And the king was exceeding

<sup>a</sup> Est. 5.3,6. 7.2. <sup>b</sup> Ps. 37.12,14.

banished by Caligula to Spain, and died in exile. ¶ *Unto the half, &c.* A form of oath, expressing the length to which he would go.

25. *By and by.* This does not mean shortly, or soon, but *forthwith, now, immediately.* This daughter's name was Salome.

26. *The king was very sorry.* That is, to find the result of his rash oath, and the serious way in which he had entangled himself: and he was troubled lest, putting John to death on so slight a ground, he might not satisfy the people. So surely, sin brings misery. His rash, proud word, committed him to foulest deeds, and these brought remorse of conscience. *One word of wickedness may involve a man in misery for this life and the next.* How the perjured man may sorrow over his falsity, through long years of punishment. And how often rash promises lead to deeds of darkness and woe, that a life-long agony of mind cannot expiate or relieve.

27. "When lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin; and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." James 1:15. ¶ *An executioner.* The term is *speculator*—a Latin word, signifying a sentinel, or a soldier of the guard. Mark wrote at Rome. How it is that such a military officer was sent, does

sorry; *yet* for his oath's sake, and for their sakes which sat with him, he would not reject her.

27 And immediately the king sent an<sup>1</sup> executioner, and commanded his head to be brought; and he went, and beheaded him in the prison,

28 And brought his head in a charger, and gave it to the damsel: and the damsel gave it to her mother.

29 And when his disciples heard of it, they<sup>c</sup> came and took up his corpse, and laid it in a tomb.

<sup>1</sup> or, one of his guard. <sup>c</sup> Acts 8.2.

not appear from Mark's narrative, but is fully explained by Josephus. In his account of the death of John the Baptist, he tells us that Herod was on his march to invade the territory of Aretas, when he imprisoned John in the fortress of Machaerus, adjoining the country of Aretas, and also when he ordered his death. This Aretas was king of Arabia Petrea. Herod had married his daughter, but she, from ill-treatment, had fled to her father. This undesigned coincidence between Mark's narrative and the fuller account of Josephus, goes to establish its truth. At Samaria, in a crypt of a ruined church, the degraded people pretended to show us the tomb of John the Baptist.

29. *His disciples.* That is, John's. See Notes on Matthew (Observations) for the lessons here taught. (1) How depraved is human nature, if even the gentler sex, even woman, even a girl, can be so wicked. (2) How frolicsome companies will lead to rash promises and deeds. (3) How revenge will prompt to violence. (4) How false honor will lead to bloody murder! (5) Conscience will torment the sinner in this life. (6) How ministerial faithfulness may expect to suffer from the debased and vile—as all ages have proved and exemplified.

¶ 30 And <sup>a</sup> the apostles gathered themselves together unto Jesus, and told him all things, both what they had done, and what they had taught.

31 And he said unto them, Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest awhile: for there were many coming and going, and they had no leisure so much as to eat.

32 And they departed into a desert place by ship privately.

33 And the people saw them departing, and many knew him, and ran afoot thither out of all cities, and outwent them, and came together unto him.

34 And Jesus, when he came out,

<sup>a</sup> Lu. 9.10.

saw much people, and was moved with compassion toward them, because <sup>b</sup> they were as sheep not having a shepherd: and he began to teach them many things.

35 And <sup>c</sup> when the day was now far spent, his disciples came unto him, and said, This is a desert place, and now the time *is* far passed:

36 Send them away, that they may go into the country round about, and into the villages, and buy themselves bread: for they have nothing to eat.

37 He answered and said unto them, Give ye them to eat. And they say unto him, Shall <sup>d</sup> we go and buy two hundred <sup>1</sup> pennyworth of bread, and give them to eat?

<sup>b</sup> 1 Ki. 22.17. <sup>c</sup> Matt. 14.15, &c. Lu. 9.12, &c. Jno. 6.5, &c. <sup>d</sup> Nu. 11.13, 22. 2 Ki. 4.43. <sup>1</sup> See on Matt. 18.28.

‡ 64. THE TWELVE RETURN, AND JESUS RETIRES WITH THEM ACROSS THE LAKE. FIVE THOUSAND FED.—*Capernaum—E. coast.*

Matt. 14. 13-21. | Mark. 6. 30-44. | Luke. 9. 10-17. | John. 6. 1-14.

31. *Many coming and going.* John's narrative incidentally accounts to us for this great throng of travelers, coming and departing; for he states that "the passover was nigh at hand." 6: 4. This also shows us how our Lord's withdrawing for awhile would relieve him of the crowd, as they would naturally go on towards Jerusalem. These undesigned coincidences show the truth of the narratives—and the independent character of the testimonies which the Evangelists give. See *Blunt, on the Veracity*, sect. 1: 13. As we were in the neighborhood of Jerusalem on the week preceding the Passover, we saw groups of people flocking up to the holy city for the feasts. Though these were chiefly of the Greek and Romish church, going up to keep Passion Week and Easter, we saw the mode of traveling illustrated. People were in bands of one or two hundred, some on mules, some on foot, often with banners, and

children so small as to be fastened to the backs of the animals, and carrying provisions for the way in their sacks. We saw these bands stop at holy places, as at Bethlehem, perform some religious service, and pass on: and so they were coming and going, as one band would follow another, and press forward.

33. *Afoot.* Rather, by land, as distinguished from v. 32, "by ship."

34. *Came out.* Either from his private retirement, whither he went (32), or from the boat. If the latter, it would be, "when he disembarked." John intimates that he had reached his place of retirement before the multitudes came up. 6: 3-7. But Mark declares that the crowd *out-went* the ship's company. They may have traveled more rapidly, but as they "follow," not knowing where our Lord would land, he saw them *come up*, afterwards. So Luke says, "he received them."

35. *And now, much of the day having past.* Matthew has it, "It being evening." Luke reads, "When the day began to decline."

37. *Two hundred pennyworth* This

38 He saith unto them, How many loaves have ye? go and see. And when they knew, they say, Five, and two fishes.

39 And<sup>a</sup> he commanded them to make all sit down by companies upon the green grass.

40 And they sat down in ranks, by hundreds, and by fifties.

41 And when he had taken the five loaves and the two fishes, he looked up to heaven, and blessed,<sup>b</sup> and brake the loaves, and gave them to his disciples to set before them; and the two fishes divided he among them all.

42 And<sup>c</sup> they did all eat, and were filled.

<sup>a</sup>Matt. 15.35. ch.8.5. <sup>b</sup>1 Sam.9.13. Matt. 26.26. Lu. 24.30. <sup>c</sup>De. 8.3.

was a quantity proposed by them. But Philip declared (John 6:7) that this would not be sufficient. The term translated *penny* is the Roman *denarius*, equal to about a shilling, which would make the amount \$25.00.

40. *Ranks*. The term means, originally, square plots, like garden beds. ¶ *By hundreds and fifties*. In groups, platoons, or squares. The terms would indicate several detached companies in bands of a hundred and of fifty, for convenient distribution of the meal. Luke has it, "by fifties," one hundred in front and fifty deep.

41. *To set before them*. "That they might distribute to them."

43. There remained more than twelve times the amount which they had at first.

44. See the concluding observations on Matt. 14: 13-21. This miracle, like the most of our Lord's, was a *redemptive* act. It displayed his power not only, out his power and grace in a certain direction, viz. restoring the ruins of his redeeming office-work, and of the great results. *Want* is a fruit of the fall. His work aims at a restoration of the original plenty, and a redemption from

43 And they took up twelve baskets full of the fragments, and of the fishes.

44 And they that did eat of the loaves were about five thousand men.

¶ 45 And<sup>d</sup> straightway he constrained his disciples to get into the ship, and to go to the other side before unto<sup>1</sup> Bethsaida, while he sent away the people.

46 And when he had sent them away, he<sup>e</sup> departed into a mountain to pray.

47 And when even was come, the ship was in the midst of the sea, and he alone on the land.

<sup>d</sup>Matt. 14.22,&c. Jno. 6.17,&c. 1 or, *over against Bethsaida*. <sup>e</sup>Matt. 6.6. ch. 1.35. Lu. 6.12.

all the fruits of the church, in his kingdom. Elisha had wrought such a miracle on a smaller scale. 2 Kings 4: 42-44. Though the Jews often carried provisions on such journeys, they would naturally have been through with it by this detention. The actual necessity was confessed.

¶ 65. JESUS WALKS UPON THE WATER  
*Lake of Galilee. Gennesaret.*

Matt. 14. 22-36. [Mark. 6. 45-56.] Luke. [John. 6. 15-21.]

45. *Bethsaida*. See Map. The city of Andrew and Peter, James and John, on the west of the Lake. The miracle just narrated, was performed at Bethsaida, (Julias,) on the east side of the Lake. No traces of this Bethsaida, which was denounced by our Lord with Chorazin, can now be found. The shore is wholly desolate.

46. Having bid them farewell—as the term is. ¶ *To pray*. Christ was a real man, as well as real God. He needed to pray, because he was a man and had trials, and knew that he was going forward to death. Besides, in prayer he communed with his father, and poured forth his desires. This teaches us to pray, and to practice *secret* prayer.

48 And he saw them toiling<sup>a</sup> in rowing; for the wind was contrary unto them: and about the fourth watch of the night he cometh unto them, walking upon the sea, and would have passed<sup>b</sup> by them.

49 But when they saw him<sup>c</sup> walking upon the sea, they<sup>d</sup> supposed it had been a spirit, and cried out:

50 (For they all saw him, and were troubled.) And immediately he talked with them, and saith unto them, Be of good cheer: it<sup>e</sup> is I; be not afraid.

51 And he went up unto them into the ship; and<sup>f</sup> the wind ceased; and they were sore amazed in themselves beyond measure, and wondered.

<sup>a</sup> Jno. 1.13. <sup>b</sup> Lu. 24.28. <sup>c</sup> Job 8.9. <sup>d</sup> Lu. 24.37. <sup>e</sup> Isa. 43.2. <sup>f</sup> Ps. 98.3,4.

48. *In rowing.* The term means rather in tossing, or driving. ¶ *Walked upon the sea.* By the laws of nature, he would have sunk in this attempt to walk upon the water. Thus he proved himself the Lord of nature. ¶ *He would have passed by them.* Was about passing beyond them, the better to show himself to them. Compare Luke 24: 28.

50. After his salutation, Matt. records the zealous attempt of Peter to walk out to the Master on the water. It is omitted by Mark, perhaps indicating that he wrote his Gospel narrative from Peter's report or preaching, and on this account omitted to record an incident in which Peter was so conspicuous. ¶ *It is I.* Literally, I am I.

52. It is here charged upon them that they did not consider that exertion of omnipotence which had just before provided them with food: nor did they conclude that this same power could provide in this new difficulty. They asked, as Israel of old, "Can God fur-

52 For they considered not *the miracle* of the loaves: for their heart<sup>g</sup> was hardened.

53 And<sup>h</sup> when they had passed over, they came into the land of Gennesaret, and drew to the shore.

54 And when they were come out of the ship, straightway they knew him,

55 And<sup>i</sup> ran through the whole region round about, and began to carry about in beds those that were sick, where they heard he was.

56 And whithersoever he entered, into villages, or cities, or country, they laid the sick in the streets, and besought him that they might touch,<sup>k</sup> if it were but the border<sup>l</sup> of his garment: and as many as touched<sup>l</sup> him were made whole.

<sup>g</sup> Isa. 63.17. <sup>h</sup> Matt. 14.34. <sup>i</sup> Matt. 4.24. ch. 2.1-3. <sup>k</sup> Matt. 9.20. ch. 5.27,28. Acts 19.12. <sup>l</sup> Nu. 15.38,39. 1 or, it.

nish a table in the wilderness. We are so slow to take the full benefit of God's gracious dealings. We do not rely upon him for all things. "Trust in him at all times." ¶ *They considered not.* That is, in its evidence of his power over the natural world. ¶ *Their heart was hardened.* Hence they were dull of perception. The darkness of the understanding belongs to our fallen estate. Eph. 1: 18. "The natural man discerneth not the things of the spirit of God."

53. *Into.* Rather to that part of the Lake "off Gennesaret," as they had not yet landed.

54. They knew him for he had been there before.

55. *Carry about.* This implies that occasionally they could not be sure of the place where he was, and had to carry the sick in pursuit of him.

56. "That they might even touch." ¶ *The border of his garment.* Only his divine power could give healing virtue to the touch of his apparel. So the

## CHAPTER VII.

¶ **T**HEN<sup>a</sup> came together unto him the Pharisees, and certain of the scribes, which came from Jerusalem.

2 And when they saw some of his disciples eat bread with<sup>1</sup> defiled (that is to say, unwashed) hands, they found fault.

3 For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, except they wash their hands<sup>2</sup> oft, eat not, holding the tradition<sup>b</sup> of the elders.

4 And when they come from the market, except they wash,<sup>c</sup> they eat not. And many other things there be, which they have received to hold, as the washing of

<sup>a</sup> Matt. 15.1, &c. 1 or, common. 2 or, diligently: Gr. with the fist—up to the elbow: Theophylact. <sup>b</sup> Gal. 1.14. Col. 2.8, 22, 23. <sup>c</sup> Job 9.30 31.

diseased woman (Matt. 9: 20, Mark 5: 27) touched the hem of his garment in the confidence of being made whole. It was the touch of faith, and not the garment itself that secured the effect. See notes on Matt. 10: 20. This healing virtue imparted to Christ's raiment has been perverted by the superstitious, in attributing healing or saving properties to pretended relics; as the coat of our Lord, which papists have pretended to show for miraculous uses! mainly to get money from the credulous, or to work upon the superstitious for church power.

## PART V.

From our Lord's third Passover until his final departure from Galilee, at the Festival of Tabernacles.

Time, six months.

## CHAPTER VII.

¶ 67. OUR LORD JUSTIFIES HIS DISCIPLES FOR EATING WITH UNWASHED HANDS.—Capernaum.

Matt. 15. 4-20. | Mark. 7. 1-23. | Luke. | John.

It would seem that our Lord did not

cup, and<sup>3</sup> pots, brazen vessels, and of<sup>4</sup> tables.

5 Then the Pharisees and scribes asked him, Why walk not thy disciples according to the tradition of the elders, but eat bread with unwashed hands?

6 He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias<sup>d</sup> prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoreth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me.

7 Howbeit, in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.

8 For<sup>e</sup> laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing

<sup>3</sup> Sextarius is about a pint and a half. <sup>4</sup> or, beds. <sup>d</sup> Isa. 29.12. <sup>e</sup> Isa. 1.12.

go up to Jerusalem at this Passover; and not until the feast of Tabernacles, because the Jews sought to kill him, and would have done so.

2. *Defiled.* Literally, common or unclean, i. e. ritually, though otherwise clean.

3. *All the Jews.* This language is like that of one not a Jew. Mark certainly wrote for Gentiles, and some think he was himself a Gentile—a Roman. See Introduction. ¶ *Oft.* The term means fist—doubled fist—and so, by a free rendering, zealously or diligently. And almost all the translations of this term amount to this idea.

¶ *Holding.* Holding fast.

4. *Wash.* If they are not washed, i. e. in this way, ceremonially, and as to the hands. ¶ *Tables.* This is the term for the couches (triclinia) on which they reclined at meals. The baptising here could not have been by immersion, and we infer that there was a lawful baptism in some other mode. The sprinkling or pouring or washing, was baptism. The vessels used were the water pots spoken of in John 2: 6.

8. *First* they subordinated God's com

of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do.

9 And he said unto them, Full well<sup>1</sup> ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition.

10 For Moses said, Honour<sup>a</sup> thy father and thy mother; and, Who-so<sup>b</sup> curseth father or mother, let him die the death.

11 But ye say, If a man shall say to his father or mother, *It is Corban*,<sup>c</sup> that is to say, a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; *he shall be free.*

12 And ye suffer him no more to do ought for his father or his mother;

13 Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered: and many such things do ye.

14 And when he had called all the people *unto him*, he said unto them, Hearken unto me every one *of you*, and understand:<sup>d</sup>

15 There is nothing from without a man that, entering into him,

1 or, frustrate: v. 13. a Ex. 20.12. De. 5.16. b Ex. 21.17. Le. 20.9. Pr. 20.20. c Matt. 15.9. 23.18. d Fr. 8.5. Isa. 6.9. Acts 8.30.

mand to human tradition. Then, they rejected the commandment in order to keep those traditions. v. 9. So the Romanists have come to put their own traditions above God's word, and then, to forbid God's word to the people—even sometimes on pain of death.

9. *Full well.* This may mean either *truly* (v. 6) or *refinedly*—that is *by their glosses*, smoothing it over.

11. *Corban.* See Notes on Matthew.

12. *And ye suffer him.* This is the consequence of their false constructions of duty. They prevent all keeping of God's law. The fifth commandment, "which is the first commandment with promise," is the foundation of all good society. And whatever hinders chil-

can defile him: but the things which come out of him, those are they that defile the man.

16 If<sup>e</sup> any man have ears to hear, let him hear.

17 And<sup>f</sup> when he was entered into the house from the people, his disciples asked him concerning the parable.

18 And he saith unto them, Are ye so without understanding also? Do ye not perceive, that whatsoever thing from without entereth into the man, *it* can not defile him;

19 Because it entereth not into his heart, but<sup>g</sup> into the belly, and goeth out into the draught, purging all meats?

20 And he said, That which cometh out of the man, that defileth the man.

21 For<sup>h</sup> from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders,

22 Thefts, covetousness,<sup>2</sup> wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness:

e Matt. 11.15. f Matt. 15.15.&c. g 1 Cor. 6.13. h Ge. 6.5. Ps. 14.1,3,53. 1.3. Jer. 17.9. 2 covetousnesses, wickednesses.

dren from being kind and obedient to their parents does indeed violate and set aside God's law, and breaks up the whole structure of society. Family order is at the bottom of all good order in the world: and all such theories as would tend to disregard the family relation, are to be opposed as destructive to the best interests of mankind.

19. *Because.* The eating is a *bodily* thing, and does not go to the *soul*, but into the *belly*. Hence outward bodily rites can not cure the soul. ¶ *Purging.* This is physically true, the portion carried off being, by its removal, the purger of the meat—as in passing, the nourishment is separated, and the *rest* is cast out.

23 All these things come from within, and defile the man.

¶ 24 And<sup>a</sup> from thence he arose, and went into the borders of Tyre and Sidon, and entered into an house, and would have no man know *it*: but <sup>b</sup>he could not be hid.

25 For a *certain* woman, whose young daughter had an unclean spirit, heard of him, and came and fell at his feet:

26 The woman was a<sup>1</sup> Greek, a Syrophenician by nation: and she besought him that he would cast forth the devil out of her daughter.

27 But Jesus said unto her, Let the children first be filled: for<sup>c</sup> it is not meet to take the children's

<sup>a</sup> Matt. 15. 21, &c. <sup>b</sup> ch. 2. 1. <sup>1</sup> or, *Gentile*: Isa. 49. 12. <sup>c</sup> Matt. 7. 6. 10. 5, 6.

23. The whole teaching of this passage is plain—that men are depraved by nature, and that all manner of sin comes *from within*. Matt. “*forth from the heart*.” The unrenewed heart is a fountain of corruption. And if so, there is no help but in the renewal of man's moral nature, and divine power is needed for this. Outward purifyings are therefore a vain reliance.

¶ 68. THE DAUGHTER OF A SYROPHENICIAN WOMAN IS HEALED.—*Region of Tyre and Sidon.*

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
15. 21–28.	7. 24–30.		

See full explanation in Notes on Matthew.

24. *Ibid.* He would avoid the Pharisees.

26. *Syrophenician.* These were distinguished from other Phenicians, as the Carthagenians. This country lay between Syria and Phenicia. Mark designates the woman by the country where she dwelt. Mark calls her “a woman of Canaan,” because of the people to whom she belonged. This indicates the heathen nativity. Mark also calls her “a Greek,” that is, a Gentile or pagan. The heathens had for a long

bread and to cast *it* unto the dogs.

28 And she answered and said unto him, Yes, Lord: yet<sup>d</sup> the dogs under the table eat of the children's crumbs.

29 And he said unto her, For<sup>e</sup> this saying go thy way; the devil is gone out of thy daughter.

30 And when she was come to her house, she found the devil gone<sup>f</sup> out, and her daughter laid upon the bed.

¶ 31 And<sup>g</sup> again departing from the coasts of Tyre and Sidon, he came unto the sea of Galilee, through the midst of the coast of Decapolis.

32 And they bring him unto one that was deaf, and had an imped-

<sup>d</sup> Rom. 15. 8. <sup>e</sup> Ed. 4. Az-14. <sup>f</sup> Isa. 66. 2. <sup>g</sup> 1 Jno. 3. 8. <sup>g</sup> Matt. 15. 29, &c.

time been called Greek, because the heathen with whom the Jews came in contact were mostly such, or used the Greek language.

27. *First.* The Jews were first to have the offer, yet this was not to exclude any true suppliant, as here. ¶ *Dogs.* Little dogs.

28. *Truth, Lord; or grant that it is so,* for even the dogs, &c.

30. *Laid.* i. e. instead of being tossed or torn with the demon.

¶ 69. A DEAF AND DUMB MAN HEALED. AND FOUR THOUSAND FED.

*The Decapolis.*

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
15. 29–39.	7. 31–37.		
	8. 1–9.		

31. *From the coasts.* It does not appear that our Lord actually crossed the border into the heathen country, but was in the vicinity, or region. And now from these coasts or confines he departed through the midst of the region of Decapolis. ¶ *Decapolis.* Probably he crossed the Jordan and came round to the Lake.

32. *One that was deaf.* This case is given by Mark in detail. Matthew has

iment in his speech; and they beseech him to put his hand upon him.

33 And he took him aside from the multitude, and put his fingers into his ears, and<sup>a</sup> he spit, and touched his tongue;

34 And<sup>b</sup> looking up to heaven,<sup>c</sup> he sighed, and saith unto him, Ephphatha, that is, Be opened.

35 And<sup>d</sup> straightway his ears were opened, and the string of his tongue was loosed, and he spake plain.

36 And he charged them that they should tell no man: but the

a ch. 8.23. Jno. 9.6. b ch. 6.41. Jno. 11.41. 17.1. c Jno. 11.33,38. d Isa. 35.5,6. Matt. 11.5.

gives a more general account of his miraculous works here, without singling out any one instance. ¶ *An impediment*, &c. This phrase is the rendering of a single word, which means speaking with difficulty, tongue-tied. v. 35. ¶ *To put his hand upon him*. He had been known to use this method, though no such external act was requisite. Christ would commonly honor the plan of working by means even when he evidently exerted miraculous power. Yet he would show that the power resided in himself, and as *incarnate in our flesh*. The Romish Church has mocked our Lord by using the *spittle* in certain religious ceremonies. He takes nothing from any one else, but with the moisture of his own mouth upon his finger, touches the man's tongue.

34. *Sighed*. Or, groaned in sympathy and earnest emotion. "He took our infirmities and bare our sicknesses, both in life and death." ¶ *Ephphatha*. This word is in the Syro-Chaldaic language which our Lord used in addressing the man, and Mark gives the word as he spake it.

35 *The string of his tongue*. The ligament: cord. This expresses the nature of the impediment, and instead of resorting, as man would do, to a surgical operation, he spits and touches

more he charged them, so much the more a great deal they published it;

37 And were beyond measure astonished, e saying, He hath done all things well: he maketh f both the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak.

#### CHAPTER VIII.

¶ IN those days, the multitude being very great, and having nothing to eat, Jesus called his disciples unto him, and saith unto them,

2 I have compassion h on the

e Ps. 139.14. Acts 14.11. f Ex. 4.10,11. g Matt. 15.32. h Ps. 145. 8.15. He. 5.2.

the tongue! Another mighty miracle of its kind, yet as distinct from the one of demoniacal possession. ¶ *Spake plain*. That is, *distinctly*, which shows that the man was not dumb, but had such an obstruction or impediment as is described. The spiritual meaning that lies in this miracle is clear to all.

37. Their exclamation is rather from common astonishment than from living, saving faith. They were amazed at his wondrous works. The work was likened to that of the original creation. Gen. 1: 31. Luther remarks, that our loving Lord has seen what damage and mischief is done through tongues and ears. Stier says that the charge to them, in v. 36, to tell no man, must have included the healed man himself, that he should not publish it abroad, as he would be so likely to do. Observe that "scarcely is the power of speech given to him, but he is ordered to be silent: in order that he might learn, or at least, we through him, that the right hearing consists in obeying—that the right use of the unbound tongue shall consist only in a free-will binding of the same to obedience."

#### CHAPTER VIII.

1-10. For an explanation of this feeding the Four Thousand, see Matt. 15: 32-38. notes.



multitude, because they have now been with me three days, and have nothing to eat:

3 And if I send them away fasting to their own houses, they will faint by the way: for divers of them came from far.

4 And his disciples answered him, From<sup>a</sup> whence can a man satisfy these *men* with bread here in the wilderness?

5 And he asked them, How many loaves have ye? And they said, Seven.

6 And he commanded the people to sit down on the ground: and he took the seven loaves, and gave thanks, and brake, and gave to his disciples to set before *them*; and they did set *them* before the people.

<sup>a</sup> ch. 6.36,37,&c.

8. *That was left, seven baskets.* We see that, as in the previous miracle of this kind, there must have been an actual addition to the amount of food. They had only seven loaves at the outset. They have *seven baskets* of fragments left, after the four thousand were fed.

9. *Four thousand.* Matthew adds, "besides women and children." There is every evidence that Mark could not have copied from Matthew. He varies in *word*, constantly, but not in *meaning*.

§70. THE PHARISEES AND SADDUCEES AGAIN REQUIRE A SIGN.—*Near Magdala.*

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
16. 1-4.	8. 10-12.		

10. *The parts of Dalmanutha.* Matthew has it "*the coasts of Magdala*," which is the same; for these towns were in the same district, and he came into the *parts* or *coasts*, that is, the confines or vicinity of these places. Compare note ch. 5: 1. Magdala is about three miles from Tiberias, on the edge of Gennesaret. It is a small cluster of

7 And they had a few small fishes: and he<sup>b</sup> blessed and commanded to set them also before *them*.

8 So they did eat, and<sup>c</sup> were filled: and<sup>d</sup> they took up of the broken *meat* that was left, seven baskets.

9 And they that had eaten were about four thousand: and he sent them away.

¶ 10 And straightway<sup>e</sup> he entered into a ship with his disciples, and came into the parts of Dalmanutha.

11 And<sup>f</sup> the Pharisees came forth, and began to question with him, seeking of him a sign from heaven, tempting him.

12 And he sighed deeply in his spirit, and saith, Why doth this generation seek after a sign? Ver-

<sup>b</sup> Matt. 14.19. <sup>c</sup> Ps. 107.5.6. 145.16. <sup>d</sup> 1 Kl. 17.14-16. <sup>e</sup> 2 Kl. 4.2-7. 42-44. <sup>f</sup> Matt. 15.39. <sup>g</sup> Matt. 12.38. 16.1, &c. Jno. 6.30.

huts on the W. shore, and is now called Majdel. We saw but here and there a living being in the town of Mary of Magdala, or 'Magdalene.' That it was on the W. coast, is plain from his taking ship to pass from Decapolis on the East to these quarters.

11. *Tempting.* Putting him to the test.

12. *Sighed deeply in his spirit.* This expresses his intense emotion. He was so affected at their hardness and wickedness. ¶ *A sign.* Some visible attestation of his claims. He had given them sufficient proofs. They would not be persuaded though one rose from the dead. ¶ *No sign.* Literally: "*If there shall be given.*" A form of strong abjuration from the Hebrew, as "If they shall enter into my rest." Heb. 3: 11.

§71. THE DISCIPLES CAUTIONED AGAINST THE LEAVEN OF THE PHARISEES.—*N. E. Coast of the Lake.*

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
16. 5-12.	8. 13-21.		

13. *The other side.* That is, of the

ily I say unto you, There shall no sign be given unto this generation.

¶ 13 And he left them, and, entering into the ship again, departed to the other side.

14 Now *the disciples* had forgotten to take bread, neither had they in the ship with them more than one loaf.

15 And he charged them, saying, Take heed, beware <sup>a</sup> of the leaven<sup>b</sup> of the Pharisees, and of the leaven of Herod.

16 And they reasoned among themselves, saying, *It is* because we have no bread.

17 And when Jesus knew *it*, he said<sup>c</sup> unto them, Why reason ye, because ye have no bread? perceive <sup>c</sup> ye not yet, neither understand?

<sup>a</sup> Pr. 19. 27. Lu. 12. 1. <sup>b</sup> Ex 12. 20. Le. 2. 11. 1 Cor. 5. 6-8. <sup>c</sup> ch. 6. 52.

Lake; recrossing now to the parts from which he had just come, on the N. E. coast.

14. *One loaf.* Mark adds this important clause which Matthew has not given us, showing that they had neglected to make any special provision, and that they were quite without any supply.

15. *The leaven.* The insidious errors of the Pharisees, &c. of which the *beginnings* should be avoided. ¶ *The leaven of Herod.* Matthew has it "*of the Sadducees.*" But it is inferred from several passages that Herod was a Sadducee in doctrine. Besides his political creed and pretensions were opposed to Christ, and his court was irreligious. This was meant to caution them against all these forms of error and sin. Besides, *hypocrisy* was included: as they tempted him and insincerely asked a sign. Herod, too, was "that fox." Luke 13: 31.

17, 18. Matthew has it, "O ye of little faith," which is quite equivalent.

19. *Whe. I brake, &c.* Matthew gives the same idea a construction which explains the sense. "Do ye not

have ye your<sup>d</sup> heart yet hardened? 18 Having<sup>e</sup> eyes, see ye not? and having ears, hear ye not? and do ye not<sup>f</sup> remember?

19 When I brake the five<sup>g</sup> loaves among five thousand, how many baskets full of fragments took ye up? They say unto him, Twelve.

20 And when the seven<sup>h</sup> among four thousand, how many baskets full of fragments took ye up? And they said, Seven.

21 And he said unto them, How is it that ye do not understand?

¶ 22 And he cometh to Bethsaida; and they bring a blind man unto him, and besought him to touch<sup>i</sup> him.

23 And he took the blind man by the hand, and led him out of

<sup>d</sup> ch. 3. 5. 16. 14. <sup>e</sup> Isa. 44. 18. <sup>f</sup> 2 Pe. 1. 12. <sup>g</sup> ch. 6. 38, 44. <sup>h</sup> Matt. 14. 17-21. Lu. 9. 12-17. Jno. 6. 5-13. <sup>i</sup> v. 1-9. Matt. 34-38. <sup>i</sup> Matt. 8, 3, 15.

understand, neither remember?" He called these miracles to their mind, because they had so plainly and recently exhibited to them his almighty power, as able to provide for their wants. Yet for thinking of their having no supply of bread, they could not understand his teachings about doctrine and duty. ¶ *Baskets full.* "The fullness of how many baskets took ye up?" The term "basket" in vs. 19 and 20 is different in the Greek. The latter is such an one as Paul was let down in at Damascus, Acts 9: 25. Greswell supposes that it was a kind of crib, used also to sleep in during a stay in the desert. The name is from a word meaning *woven*.

¶ 22. A BLIND MAN HEALED.—*Bethsaida, (Julias.)* vs. 22-26 only.

This is one of the three or four passages not found in Matthew at all.

22. *Bethsaida.* This was the Bethsaida on the N. East side of the lake, called *Julias* for distinction. See Map. This was not the Bethsaida where most of his mighty works were done.

the town: and when he had spit <sup>a</sup> on his eyes, and put his hands upon him, he asked him if he saw aught.

24 And he looked up, and said, <sup>b</sup> I see men, as trees, walking.

25 After that, he put *his* hands again upon his eyes, and made him lock up: and he was restored, and saw <sup>c</sup> every man clearly.

26 And he sent him away to his house, saying, Neither go into the

<sup>a</sup> ch. 7.33. <sup>b</sup> Ju. 9.36. Isa. 29.18. 1 Cor. 13.11,12. <sup>c</sup> Pr. 4.18. Isa. 32.3. 1 Pe. 2.9.

\* 23. *Led him out of the town.* This was partly to be aside from the crowd, and no doubt to avoid any public agitation (see v. 26); partly, perhaps, because the people had already seen his miracles and disbelieved, and partly to exercise the blind man in this formality of being led, as teaching, *by an outward sign*, both Christ's superiority and the need of humility and docility. He would separate him also to his own method of cure, so that they who brought him should be convinced of the miracle, and should have no praise. Stier says, that it was also to give him his first sight under the clear, open sky of heaven. ¶ *Spit on his eyes.* Christ chose again to employ an external sign, partly to do honor to the use of means, though it was no help to him, partly to encourage this man's faith by the sense of *touch*, as he could not *see*, and partly to express by a symbol his prerogative of working how, where, and whereby he pleaseth. Here, also, it is something from himself that he employs: and his divinity shines through the veil of his flesh.

24. Christ chose to make the cure gradual in this case, so that, at first, the blind man saw men so indistinctly that they seemed to him like trees, only that they moved. This indicates that he had not been blind from his birth, as he knew the *appearance* of trees.

25. That our Lord so gradually led the man into full light, shows us the

town, nor tell *it* to any in the town.

¶ 27 And <sup>d</sup> Jesus went out, and his disciples, into the towns of Cesarea Philippi: and by the way he asked his disciples, saying unto them, Whom do men say that I am?

28 And they answered, John <sup>e</sup> the Baptist: but some *say*, Elias; and others, One of the prophets.

29 And he saith unto them, But

<sup>d</sup> Matt. 16.13,&c. Lu. 9.18,&c. <sup>e</sup> Matt. 14.2.

waiting wisdom and condescension with which he will thus treat the spiritually blind. When, therefore, he puts to us the question, if *we see aught*, let us not proudly or precipitately answer with the broad *Yes*, but like this man, let us *look up!* *Stier.* ¶ *Made him look up.* The terms here, as the connexion shows, mean rather he made him to *see again*.

26. *To his house, &c.* Naturally, he might have gone blazing the cure abroad. But our Lord, for several reasons, would have him *go home*, and make it known. So with the demoniac from among the tombs. Every converted man has a great work to do in his own domestic circle. There religion begins. *Religion in families* is a most eminent means of spreading the gospel. The Church of Christ has been perpetuated by a godly house.

§73. PETER AND THE OTHERS AGAIN PROFESS THEIR FAITH IN CHRIST.

*Cesarea Philippi.*

fatt. | Mark. | Luke. | John.  
1b. 13-20. | 8. 27-30. | 9. 18-21. |

This town had its name as *Philip's Cesarea*, from the tetrarch Herod-Philip, (not the husband of Herodias,) in whose territory it lay. It is thus distinguished from Cesarea on the coast near Joppa. It is a retired spot, encircled by the mountains of Lebanon.

27. *By the way.* Matthew has it, "When he came into the *coasts*," or vicinity of the place. Luke further tells us that it was "as he was alone praying," or praying in private, his

whom say ye that I am? And Peter answereth and saith unto him, Thou art the Christ.

30 And he charged them that they should tell no man of him.

¶ 31 And he began to teach them, that the Son of man must suffer many things; and be rejected of the elders, and of the chief priests and scribes, and be killed; and after three days rise again.

32 And he spake that saying openly. And Peter took him and began to rebuke him.

33 But when he had turned about, and looked on his disciples, he rebuked b Peter, saying, Get thee behind me, c Satan; for thou sa-

a Jno. 1.41-49. 6.69. 11.27. Acts 8.37. 1 Jno. 5.1. b Re. 3.19. c 1 Cor. 5.5.

disciples came to him, and he asked them.

29. *Thou art the Christ.* Matthew adds to this, "the Son of the living God," while Luke gives it summarily, "the Christ of God."

30. See especially notes on Matt. 16: 20. Matthew gives also our Lord's reply and promise, which Mark omits.

¶ 74. OUR LORD FORETELLS HIS OWN DEATH AND RESURRECTION.

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
16. 21-28.	8. 31-38.	9. 22-27.	
	9. 1.		

See notes on Matt. 16: 21-28. See also on Luke 9: 22-27.

31. *Rejected.* The word means, *contemptuously rejected.* ¶ *After three days.* Matthew has it "the third day," which explains, since parts of the first and third days were reckoned for *two* days. Compare Deut. 14: 23 with 26: 12, and 1 Sam. 20: 12 with 5: 19, and Matt. 26: 2 with 27: 63, 64. It was the practice among the Jews in their reckoning, to count a part of the day as though it had been the whole. 1 Kings 20: 29. Esther 4: 16.

32. *Openly* That is, *positively* and

vourest not the things that be of God, but the things that be of men.

34 And when he had called the people *unto him*, with his disciples also, he said unto them, Whosoever d will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.

35 For e whosoever will save his life, shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it.

36 For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?

37 Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?

38 Whosoever, f therefore, shall be ashamed of me, and of my

d Matt. 10.38. 16.24. Lu. 9.23. 14.27. Tit. 2.12. e Est. 4.14. Matt. 10.39. 16.25. Lu. 9.24. 17.33. Jno. 12.25. 2 Ti. 2.11. 4.6.8. Re. 2.10. 7.14-18. f Lu. 12.9. 2 Ti. 1.8.

plainly to the disciples. ¶ Matthew's narrative gives us some insight of Peter's impulse in this matter. "Lord, this shall not be unto thee." So one Evangelist supplies, confirms, and elucidates another.

33. *Savour'est.* Thou mindest.

34. *Called the people unto him with his disciples.* Matthew speaks only of the disciples, but our Lord would publish this rule of his kingdom to all, and Mark adds this record, that he called the *people* also. Yet some modern critics would make this to be a contradiction between the Evangelists! ¶ *Will come.* The Greek reads, *whosoever wishes*, or is *willing* to come. So in v. 35.

35-37. These words are found almost the same in Matthew 16: 25, 26— which see (notes.) ¶ *Shall save it* This explains the language of Matt *Shall find it.*

38. This verse is not found in Matthew's narrative but in Luke's, (see ch. 9: 26) though it is abundantly implied. ¶ *Ashamed of me.* That is, reluctant to acknowledge me before men. Elsewhere this same sentiment is expressed. "Whoso shall confess me

words, in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father, with the holy angels.

## CHAPTER IX.

AND he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, that there be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death,

a Matt. 16. 28. Lu. 9. 27. b Jo. 8. 52. He. 2. 9.

before men," &c. Luke 12-8. Reference is made chiefly to his lowly circumstances and to the opposition of chief men, which so much discouraged an acknowledgment of him as the Christ, the Son of God. "Flesh and blood" would always incline to deny his Divine claims because of his lowly origin as a man. See Matt. 16: 17. ¶ *And of my words.* That is, of my doctrines and claims. ¶ *This adulterous and sinful generation.* The term *adulterous* was commonly used by the prophets to denote the crime of Israel in departing from their covenant God. See Malachi 2: 11, &c. It was in this sense especially that the Jewish nation was here called adulterous—that they had broken covenant with their God. So the phrase, "an evil and adulterous generation." Matt. 12: 39. ¶ *Cometh in the glory of his Father.* See notes on Matt. 26: 54. The reference is here to his final coming in judgment. Christ will then be ashamed of, or refuse to confess, such as have here refused to confess or profess him before men. In the day of "the manifestation of the sons of God," (Rom. 8,) he will not own them as his adopted ones.

## CHAPTER IX.

1. *The kingdom of God.* Matthew has it, "The Son of man coming in his kingdom." This seems to refer particularly to the Transfiguration of Christ, which was just about to take place, in which he should be displayed to their view in something of his true spiritual dignity and heavenly glory, and this should show to them the

till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power.

¶ 2 And after six days, Jesus taketh with him Peter, and James, and John, and leadeth them up into an high mountain, apart by themselves: and he was transfigured before them.

3 And his raiment became shining, exceeding white as snow; so

c Matt. 17. 1, &c. Lu. 9. 28, &c. d Dan. 7. 9. Matt. 28. 3.

nature of his kingdom, and in this event, by the Divine attestation which he should have, this kingdom could be said to "come with power." So we find Peter referring to this scene, as so important to their faith. 2 Pet. 1: 16, 17. He calls it his majesty, his honor and glory, of which they were eye witnesses.

275. THE TRANSFIGURATION. OUR LORD'S SUBSEQUENT DISCOURSE WITH THE THREE DISCIPLES.

*Region of Cesarea Philippi.*

Matt. 17. 1-13. Mark. 9. 2-13. Luke. 9. 28-36. John.

This account of the Transfiguration is found fully explained in the notes on Matthew 17: 1-13. See also notes on Luke 9: 28-36. The mountain to which they had come may have been any one of those around the sea of Tiberias, as that where he fed the multitudes. Most have thought it to be Mt. Tabor, which is less than two days distance from Cesarea Philippi.

2. *After six days.* That is, after six whole days had elapsed,—but including the parts of two days (one at each end of the reckoning) would make "about an eight days," as Luke has it. For example, between Monday and Monday, would be six whole days—yet with both these Mondays reckoned or parts of the two it would be "about an eight days." See notes on Matthew 16: 28.

4. *Talking with Jesus.* Luke tells us what they conversed about. "His decease (or *exodus*, literally) he should accomplish at Jerusalem." ch. 9: 31

as no fuller on earth can white them.

4 And there appeared unto them Elias, with Moses; and they were talking with Jesus.

5 And Peter answered and said to Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here: <sup>a</sup> and let us make three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias.

6 For he wist not <sup>b</sup> what to say; for they were sore afraid.

7 And there was a cloud that overshadowed them: and a voice came out of the cloud, saying, This <sup>c</sup> is my beloved Son; hear <sup>d</sup> him.

8 And suddenly, when they had looked round about, they saw no man any more, save Jesus only with themselves.

9 And as they came down from the mountain, he charged them that they should tell no man what things they had seen, till the Son of man were risen from the dead.

<sup>a</sup> Ps. 93.2. 84.10. <sup>b</sup> Dan. 10.15. Rev. 1.17. <sup>c</sup> Ps. 2.7. Matt. 3.17. 2Pe. 1.17. <sup>d</sup> De. 18.15.

They were the heads of the law and the prophets, testifying to Christ.

5. Luke adds that this was after the disciples had waked from sleep and as Moses and Elias departed. ch. 9: 32, 33.

7. *Hear him.* He was now pointed out before Moses and Elias, as greater than all. They were but his servants, and all were to hear him, above all, as the one to whom they all gave witness.

9, 10. He would here hint to them of his own resurrection as about to be opened and confirmed to them by this event. They knew not, as yet, what the rising from the dead should mean. But when he should have risen, then they would the better understand the doctrine of the resurrection and more fully believe in his rising. Calvin holds that in the Transfiguration, our Lord meant to show that he had power

10 And they kept that saying with themselves, questioning one with another what the rising from the dead should mean.<sup>e</sup>

11 And they asked him, saying, Why say the scribes that Elias <sup>f</sup> must first come?

12 And he answered and told them, Elias verily cometh first, and restoreth all things; and how it is written <sup>g</sup> of the Son of man, that he must suffer many things, and be <sup>h</sup> set at nought.

13 But I say unto you, That <sup>i</sup> Elias is indeed come, and they have done unto him whatsoever they listed, as it is written of him.

¶ 14 And when he came to *his* disciples, he saw a great multitude about them, and the scribes questioning with them.

15 And straightway all the people, when they beheld him, were greatly amazed; and running to *him*, saluted him.

<sup>e</sup> Acts 17.18. <sup>f</sup> Mal. 4.2. <sup>g</sup> Ps. 22. Isa. 53. Dan. 9.26. Zec. 15.7. <sup>h</sup> Ps. 74.22. Lu. 23.11. Ph. 2.7. <sup>i</sup> Matt. 11.14. Lu. 1.17.

in himself to take his glory, had he willed it, and that, hence, he gave himself *willingly* to suffer.

§ 76. THE HEALING OF A DEMONIAK, &c. *Region of Cesarea Philippi.*

	Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
17.	14-21.	9. 14-29.	9. 37-43.	

This account of the dumb demoniak healed in the region of Cesarea Philippi, is found more briefly in Matthew and Luke. See notes.

14. The Scribes were probably now charging the Master with the same inability as the disciples: and they had set upon these more severely, while the Lord and the three chosen ones were absent.

15. *Greatly amazed.* From the strong term here used, expressing the profoundest awe, it has been inferred that his face yet shone, in part, with the

16 And he asked the scribes, What question ye<sup>1</sup> with them?

17 And one of the multitude answered and said, Master, I have brought unto thee my son, which hath a dumb<sup>a</sup> spirit:

18 And wheresoever he take<sup>h</sup> him, he teareth<sup>2</sup> him; and he foameth,<sup>b</sup> and gnasheth with his teeth, and pineth away: and I spake to thy disciples, that they should cast him out; and they could not.

19 He answereth him, and saith, O faithless<sup>c</sup> generation! how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? Bring him unto me.

<sup>1</sup> or, among yourselves. <sup>a</sup> Matt. 12.22. Lu. 11.14. <sup>2</sup> or, dasheth him. <sup>b</sup> Job 13. <sup>c</sup> De. 13.20. Ps. 78.8. He. 2.19.

glory which had just sat upon him. See Ex. 34: 29, 30. 2 Cor. 3: 17, 18. That glory of Moses' face terrified, this of Christ attracted.

17. It was not until the day after the transfiguration, that they came down from the Mount. See Luke 9: 37. ¶ *Master.* Matthew has it *Lord.* The term *Master* would intimate, perhaps, that this man was a disciple.

18. What a contrast between the open heaven, with the glorified visitants, on the Mount, and the misery, strife, and unbelief below! ¶ *My son.* Luke tells us that it was an *only son.*

19. The first word of our Lord, here, is that of rebuke: *How long?* The second is that of mercy: *Bring him!* "In wrath remember mercy." The rebuke applied to the scribes and the multitude. The father also, and the disciples, were involved.

20-25. Mark here gives a particular account of the Saviour's interview with the father, and of the father's faith.

20. *Straightway.* Satan's power is set at work by Christ's appearance. He has great wrath, for his time is short. *Trench.*

21. *Of a child.* From infancy, or very early life. This question will make the cure more confessed.

20 And they brought him unto him: and when he saw him, straight way the spirit tare him; and he fell on the ground, and wallowed, foaming.

21 And he asked his father, How long is it ago since this came unto him? And he said, Of a child:<sup>d</sup>

22 And oft-times it hath cast him into the fire, and into the waters, to destroy him: but if thou canst do anything, have compassion on us, and help us.

23 Jesus said unto him, If<sup>e</sup> thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth.

¶ Job 5.7. Ps. 51.5. <sup>e</sup> 2 Ch. 20.20. Matt. 17.20. ch 11.23. Lu. 17.6. Jno. 11.40. He. 11.6.

22. *If thou canst.* This would seem a very low grade of faith. But his coming to Christ with the poor, wretched son, whose case he makes his own, shows some confidence, or some hope. That faith will prevail, however weak, which brings us to Christ for salvation, even though at first we can only say, "Lord, I believe, help thou mine unbelief." v. 24.

23. *Said unto him,* (*that, Gr.*) that ordinary saying of his. ¶ *If thou canst believe.* This seems to refer to the father's challenge (v. 22,) and throws the challenge back upon his faith. It means to call for *faith* before the act, and on the promise. It means to say that he will not work a cure to answer the challenge, but to answer the faith, however weak. The father felt this to the very heart, and answered with tears. The father's faith is tested, and upon this the child is to be healed. So the baptismal ordinance regards the child in and through the parent, and so we are included in the first Adam, and in the second by the great salvation for believers. ¶ *All things are possible,* &c. That is, the promises are abundant to the believer, and *all sufficient.* Besides, the *faith of miracles,* or the *faith requisite for the miracu-*

24 And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, <sup>a</sup> Lord, I believe, help <sup>b</sup> thou mine unbelief.

25 When Jesus saw that the people came running together, he rebuked the foul spirit, saying unto him, *Thou dumb and deaf spirit, I charge thee, Come out of him, and enter no more into him.*

26 And *the spirit* cried, and rent him sore, and came out of him: and he was as one dead; insomuch that many said, He is dead.

27 But Jesus took him by the <sup>d</sup> hand, and lifted him up; and he arose.

<sup>a</sup> Ps. 126.5. <sup>b</sup> He. 12.2. <sup>c</sup> Re. 12.12. <sup>d</sup> Isa. 41.13.

lous interposition of Christ, could appropriate his omnipotence.

24. *Help*, &c. This acknowledged the weakness of his faith. He had a degree of belief, yet he felt conscious of its scantiness and feebleness. So every beginner in divine things is sensible of not feeling right, of not having conviction *enough*, or faith *enough*, and some think they must wait till they get better. They struggle and delay to hope in Christ, until they can have more acceptable feelings. He had some faith. He felt that he had not enough. He wished for more. But instead of waiting for it, and keeping away from Christ until he should get it elsewhere, he comes forward to the only true helper, and *prays for more faith*, "Lord I believe, *help thou mine unbelief*."

25. *I charge thee*. He would show his own power in contrast with the impotency of the disciples. See notes on Matthew. ¶ *Enter no more*. This is the greatest mercy, not only to *drive out*, but to *keep out* Satan.

29. *This kind*. This implies that there are different *kinds* of evil spirits, (see Matt. 12:45,) of which this was among the worst. And this remark of our Lord was rather for their *after* direction than for the present, as they could not fast while he was with them.

28 And when he was come into the house, his disciples asked him privately, Why could not we cast him out?

29 And he said unto them, This kind can come forth by nothing but <sup>e</sup> by prayer and fasting. <sup>e</sup>

¶ 30 And they departed thence, and passed through Galilee; and he would not that any man should know it.

31 For he taught his disciples, and said unto them, The Son of man is delivered into the hands of men, and they shall kill him; and after that he is killed, he shall rise the third day.

<sup>e</sup> Ep. 6.18. <sup>f</sup> 1 Cor. 9.27.

ch. 2:19. *Alford*. While we can fast and pray, God will command for us, and Satan cannot prevail against us. *Bp. Hall*.

277. JESUS AGAIN FORETELLS HIS OWN DEATH AND RESURRECTION.—Galilee. See 274.

Matt. 17. 22-23. | Mark. 9. 30-32. | Luke. 9. 43-45. | John.

He so repeatedly and expressly foretells his death, that when it should come to pass, they might not think it was unexpected to him, or against his plan. John 13:19.

30. *Departed*. Passed along, that is, by the lake and the Jordan. ¶ *Galilee*. See map in notes on Matthew. ¶ *He would not*, &c. This was in keeping with his general plan to avoid noise and special publication of his pretensions, as yet.

31. *Is delivered*. Is to be delivered.

32. *Were afraid to ask him*. Matthew adds, "they were exceeding sorry."

279. THE DISCIPLES CONTEND WHO SHALL BE GREATEST.—Capernaum.

Matt. 18. 1-35. | Mark. 9. 33-50. | Luke. 9. 46-50. | John.

33. It was at this coming to Capernaum that the payment of the temple tax was due. See Matt. 17:24-27. **B**



32 But they understood not that saying, and were afraid to ask him.

¶ 33 And<sup>b</sup> he came to Capernaum: and being in the house, he asked them, What was it that ye disputed among yourselves by the way?

34 But they held their peace: for by the way they had disputed among themselves who *should be* the greatest.

35 And he sat down, and called the twelve, and saith unto them,

a Jno. 16. 19. b Matt. 18. 1, &c. Lu. 9. 46, &c. 22. 34, &c.

was half a shekel, or about two shillings and sixpence. It was not the same as the tribute to Cæsar, ch. 12: 14. Here the term is the *didrachma*, or

If<sup>c</sup> any man desire to be first, *the same* shall be last of all, and servant of all.

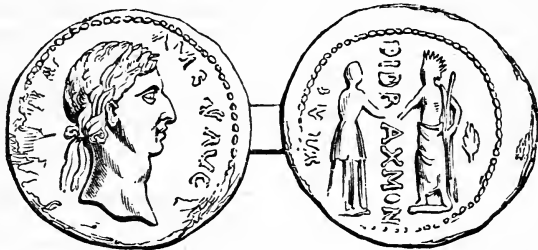
36 And he took a child, and set him in the midst of them: and when he had taken him in his arms, he said unto them,

37 Whosoever<sup>d</sup> shall receive one of such children in my name, receiveth me: and whosoever shall receive me, receiveth not me, but him that sent me.

38 And John answered him, saying, Master, we saw<sup>e</sup> one casting

c Matt. 20. 26, 27. ch. 10. 43. d Lu. 9. 48. e Nu. 11. 26-28.

double drachm, which was the Græco-Roman coin in which the tax was paid in our Lord's time. Yet the coin could not go into the treasury, but had to be



changed for Jewish money, on account of the heads and figures on it, which were deemed idolatrous. This was the business of the "money changers" in the temple: ch. 11: 15. No one was forced to pay this tax; but he who neglected or refused it, was considered an unfaithful Jew, or one not religious. The coin which Peter took from the fish's mouth was a "*stater*,"—equal to *four drachmas*.

34-37. If our Lord had any such thought as to make Peter the greatest of the Apostles; or if the doctrine of the Papacy is true, that there was to be an infallible head of the church on earth, and that Peter was such, and that the Pope is such as the successor of Peter; why did not our Lord so declare at this time, and thus settle the

dispute? How certainly, when they "contended which of them should be the greatest," would he have declared to them this doctrine of Peter's primacy, if he had any such doctrine to teach. But he denies it, by his answer.

38. *One.* A certain one. This man was possibly a disciple of John the Baptist, who had not yet outwardly joined himself to Jesus, but wrought in his name. ¶ *Because, &c.* The idea is, If the receiving of any one, even of a little child, in thy name, be the receiving of thee, were we doing right when we forbade one who used thy name, but did not follow us? (*Alford and Stier.*) "Let them note this, who tie down all grace to a canonical succession." *Bengel.* This man actually did what the very Apostles themselves

out devils in thy name, and he followeth not us: and we forbid him, because he followeth not us.

39 But Jesus said, Forbid him not: for there <sup>a</sup> is no man which shall do a miracle in my name, that can lightly speak evil of me.

40 For <sup>b</sup> he that is not against us, is on our part.

41 For <sup>c</sup> whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink in my name, because ye belong to Christ, verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his reward.

<sup>a</sup> 1 Cor. 12.3. <sup>b</sup> Matt. 12.30. <sup>c</sup> Matt. 10.42. 25.40.

were specially appointed to do: and he did even more than the Apostles here, (v. 28,) and the Lord, so far from prohibiting, encourages him. See Numbers 11: 26-29. ¶ *Lightly*. Readily, easily. He will not easily find it in him to speak evil of me, (1 Cor. 12: 3): for example, to ascribe my work to Beelzebub. This is the strong probability, and this therefore is to be presumed in your judgment of such—that he will not abuse the name which he has so used; and hence, till you see something wrong, you are to judge favorably. This verse and the next convey a great doctrine of Christian toleration and charity. It is a caution to men, how they presume to limit the work of the Spirit of God to any sect, or succession, or outward form of the church. See Phil. 1: 16-18. *Alford*.

40. This refers to outward conformity, and is not inconsistent with Matt. 12: 30, which relates to inward unity of purpose. All those who, notwithstanding outward differences of communion and government, believe in and preach Jesus Christ, without bitterly and uncharitably opposing each other, are hereby declared to be helpers forward of each other's work. "O, that all Christians would remember this." *Alford*.

41. "Even the *smallest* service done in my name shall not be unrewarded—

42 And whosoever shall offend <sup>d</sup> one of *these* little ones that believe in me, it is better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were cast into the sea.

43 And <sup>e</sup> if thy hand offend <sup>f</sup> thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than, having two hands, to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched;

44 Where <sup>g</sup> their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.

45 And if thy foot offend <sup>h</sup> thee,

<sup>d</sup> Matt. 18.6. Lu. 17.1.2. <sup>e</sup> De. 13.6. Matt. 5.29. 1 or, *cause thee to offend*: and so vs. 45 and 47. <sup>f</sup> Isa. 66.24. Re. 14.11. <sup>g</sup> See ver. 43.

much more, so great an one as that of casting out devils should not be prohibited." How pointedly, for all time, our Lord here rebukes that boast of apostolicity—apostolical church—apostolical succession—which cuts men off from hope because they are not in their pale—"because they follow not us." How directly this language of our Lord condemns the Pope, who talks of "us," and claims that out of his Romish church there is no salvation! "By their fruits ye shall know them," &c. "Where a devil is cast out, there is the Spirit of God." Matt. 12: 27, 28. Our Saviour declares the true doctrine, (John 10: 16,) that he has sheep which are of different *folds*, which he will bring in, "and THERE SHALL BE ONE FLOCK ποιμνη: (not 'one fold,' which would be another thing,) and ONE SHEPHERD."

42. *Shall offend one*, &c. The manner in which our Lord passed from speaking of little children, to speak of the disciples, is here narrated by Mark—throwing light thus upon the other Evangelists. ¶ *Little ones that believe in me*. This seems to refer to the disciples who are such as the little child. The receiving, or taking into fellowship, seems to refer to such; though if such a child be honored in any way for *Christ's sake*, the act shall not lose its reward, nor shall even the gift of

cut it off: it is better for thee to enter halt into life, than, having two feet, to be cast into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched.

46 Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.

47 And if thine eye<sup>1</sup> offend thee, pluck it out: it is better for thee

<sup>1</sup> See ver. 43.

to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes, to be cast into hell-fire;

48 Where their worm dieth not, and the fire<sup>a</sup> is not quenched.

49 For every one shall be salted with fire, and every sacrifice<sup>b</sup> shall be salted with salt.

<sup>a</sup> ver. 44.46. Lu. 16.24. <sup>b</sup> Le. 2.13. Eze. 43.24.

cup of cold water to a disciple be passed by. This discourse on Christian fellowship would seem to have been called forth, by their rebuking the man who wrought miracles but was not of their company. The fruit of his labor and this divine attestation of his work, entitled him to respect. No man so honored, and empowered as a worker of miracles, could easily be found taking stand against Christ. v. 39. This passage does not favor a schismatic disposition in any, but it teaches us, that where we find, in any visible pale, those who honor Christ and are honored by him in their work, we are to receive them in our hearts as Christians.

44. *Their worm dieth not.* This language would readily be understood by the Jews as very expressive. *Gehenna*, or the Valley of Hinnom, with all its offcast carcasses, eaten of worms, and burnt with fire, was the familiar figure for eternal punishment. And nothing so awful on earth for the comparison. There is an allusion to Isa. 66:24. An undying worm gnawing upon all that remains of a man, and the burning fire, quenchless as eternity, will always express with all the power of language, the infinite torture of the lost, forever. This phrase is *thrice repeated here*, and it is itself a double expression of the awful idea. How can it be denied, then, or doubted. Suppose these tortures literal or not, no one will pretend to conceive the reality. And if in such like terms, the endless punishment of the wicked be not taught, neither is the endless happiness of the righteous, nor the endless existence of

God. "Everlasting," "forever," "unquenchable,"—these are the terms.

49. Considering the main scope of the passage, which is to enjoin denials of the flesh and spirit, and considering the use of the terms in the following verse, we must think that this refers chiefly to the tribulation to be encountered, and the trials to be undergone, by Christians who had just been enjoined to part with a hand, or an eye, rather than sin and be lost. The passage in its general sense may be like that in 1 Cor. 3:13. "The fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is." So the word is a fire (Jer. 23:29,) and so also is the Holy Ghost. Matt. 3:11. But every Christian may expect special "fiery trials," as opposition of men, difficult circumstances for religious living, severe temptations of Satan, discouragement in his work, sore affliction, searching tests of principles: to part with hand or eye. And this trial shall *salt*, or season every Christian. Heb. 12:6-3. The trial of their faith shall be more worth while than the trial of perishing gold. For it shall be found unto praise and honor and glory. 1 Pe. 1:7. Tribulations shall be sprinkled upon Christians as a *preservative*. Rev. 7:13, 14, &c. This sense is confirmed by the ritual sense of *salt*. Mather says "it signified at once the perpetuity of the covenant of grace, and the wholesome conversation required of his people in an ungodly world. And thus by the whole material of the offering, we are taught that our meat offerings, our works of faith and love, being anointed by the spir<sup>it</sup> and perfumed by the

50 Salt is good : but if the salt <sup>a</sup> have lost his saltness, wherewith will ye season it? Have <sup>b</sup> salt in yourselves, and have <sup>c</sup> peace one with another.

## CHAPTER X.

¶ **A**ND <sup>a</sup> he arose from thence, and cometh into the coasts of Ju-

<sup>a</sup> Matt. 5.13. Lu. 14.34. <sup>b</sup> Col. 4.6. <sup>c</sup> Ps. 34.14. 2 Cor. 13.11. He. 12.14. <sup>d</sup> Matt. 19.1, &c. Jno. 10.40.

incense of Christ's mediation, are accepted of God in a *covenant of salt.*" Mather on the Types, p. 197. The truth is that tribulations are visited upon God's people as a preservative from self confidence, from habitual neglect of God, from wandering into sins. And according to the ritual sense of the salt in the sacrifice, they show God's *faithfulness*, who treats with us in "a covenant of salt;" and they are in order to our wholesome conversation. So every Christian is *salted with fire*. Wo to them that choose iniquity rather than affliction! Job 36: 21. The *double work* of Christ is here hinted at, as respects the righteous and the wicked. A fiery work is for the righteous here, which shall end in their purification and conversion. A fiery work remains for the wicked hereafter, which is not to purify, but to punish, and this, like their sin, will last forever. See Matt. 3: 2,3. Therefore Christians should think it not strange concerning the fiery trial, which is to try them, as though some strange thing happened unto them, &c. 1 Peter 4: 12. ¶ *And every sacrifice.* This is to be understood as a quotation, or at least, a direct reference to the passage in Leviticus 2: 13. Granville Penn, (new translation) supplies the words "As it is said" every sacrifice, &c.

50. *Salt is good.* This use of the term seems to explain the use of it in the preceding verse,—“It is better for thee to cut off,” &c. for it is part of the salting of thee, (the living sacrifice, Rom. 12: 1,) that every scandal and offence must be burnt out of thee before entering into life. Alford makes

dea, by the farther side of Jordan: and the people resort unto him again; and, as he was wont, he taught them again.

¶ 2 And the Pharisees came to him, and asked him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife? tempting him.

3 And he answered and said un-

the sense to be thus: and so on, as follows: “If this fire, which is to purify and act as a preserving salt to you, have, from the nullity of the grace of the covenant in you, *no such power*, it can only consume—the salt has lost its savor, the covenant is void: you will be cast out, as it is elsewhere added, and the fire will be no longer the fire of purification, but of wrath eternal.” So Stier—“Have this grace of God, this spirit of adoption, this pledge of the covenant in yourselves.” The *salt* and the *salting* are to be understood in a good sense, as was the ritual meaning in the sacrifices. “Ye are *the salt* of the earth.” Matt. 5: 13. Christians are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, and fiery trials often try them. And all this is according to a *covenant*. This seems to be the drift of the whole passage. Our trials, if we are God's, come to us in covenant faithfulness and love, and are as the salt to the sacrifice. ¶ *But if the salt*, &c. A case is here supposed, that instead of the self denial and mortification here enjoined, there should be such carnal indulgence, as would lose the true savor of piety and sound doctrine, the element of Christian fidelity, what then can be done? See note, Matt. 5: 13, &c. ¶ *Have salt*, &c. This element of a sound and faithful and uniform piety we are enjoined to have; the purifying Christian hope and doctrine and principle. ¶ *Have peace* This whole exhortation had grown out of their ambitious striving who should be the greatest. Hence the conclusion urges holiness and peace. “Follow *peace* with all men, and *holiness*,

to them, What did Moses command you?

4 And they said, Moses<sup>a</sup> suffered to write a bill of divorcement, and to put *her* away.

5 And Jesus answered and said unto them, For the hardness of your heart he wrote you this precept:

6 But from the beginning of the creation God made<sup>b</sup> them male and female.

7 For<sup>c</sup> this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife:

8 And they twain shall be one<sup>d</sup> flesh: so then they are no more twain, but one flesh.

9 What therefore God hath join-

<sup>a</sup> De. 24.1. <sup>b</sup> Matt. 5.31. <sup>c</sup> 5 Ge. 1.27. 5.2. Mal. 2.15. <sup>d</sup> Ge. 2.24. <sup>e</sup> 1 Cor. 6.16. Ep. 5.31.

without which no man shall see the Lord." Child-like humility is not more essential to personal holiness than to peace, one with another.

PART VI.

*The Festival of Tabernacles, &c. until our Lord's arrival at Bethany, six days before the Passover.*

Time, six months, less one week.

CHAPTER X.

§ 94 and 104. PRECEPTS CONCERNING DIVORCE.—*Perea.*

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
19. 3-12.	10. 1-12.		

See notes on Matthew for full explanation.

10. *In the house.* The Pharisees, perhaps, would have provoked the hostility of the Herodians against him, if this had been uttered publicly; and his hour was not yet come.

12. *Shall put away her husband.* This practice unwarranted by the Jewish law (Deut. 24: 1,) had been introduced, says Josephus, by Salome, sister of Herod the Great, who sent a bill of di-

ed together; let not man put asunder.

10 And in the house his disciples asked him again of the same matter.

11 And he saith unto them, <sup>e</sup> Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery against her.

12 And if a woman shall put away her husband, and be married to another, she committeth adultery.

¶ 13 And<sup>f</sup> they brought young children to him, that he should touch them; and his disciples rebuked those that brought them.

14 But when Jesus saw it, he

<sup>e</sup> Matt. 5.32. 19.9. Lu. 16.18. Ro. 7.3. 1 Cor. 7.10,11. <sup>f</sup> Matt. 19.13. Lu. 18.15.

orce to her husband, Costobarus, which had example was afterwards followed by Herodias and others. Antiq. XV: 7-10. In this they were probably instructed by the Roman women, who, in this age, carried the practice to a most scandalous extent. See *Juv.* Sat. 6: 22, and compare 1 Samuel 25: 44 with 1 Cor. 7: 13. Mark wrote from Rome, for Gentiles. It is clear from this that polygamy is unlawful, for the adultery is found in the marriage with another, during the legal existence of the first. "This natural allusion to an existing illegal practice, is in perfect harmony with the whole history, as having the character of truth, and as utterly unlike forgery." *Judge Greenleaf.*

§ 105. JESUS RECEIVES AND BLESSES LITTLE CHILDREN.—*Perea.*

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
19. 13-15.	10. 13-16.	18. 15-17.	

This narrative is given by Matthew, and explained in the notes, which see. See also on Luke.

13. *They brought, &c.* This shows that the great idea of their children's interest in the covenant had not been

was much<sup>a</sup> displease<sup>d</sup>, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such<sup>b</sup> is the kingdom of God.

15 Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein.

16 And he took them up in his arms, put *his* hands upon them, and blessed them.

¶ 17 And<sup>c</sup> when he was gone forth into the way, there came one running, and kneeled to him, and asked him, Good Master,

<sup>a</sup> Ep. 4.26. <sup>b</sup> Matt. 18.10. 1 Cor. 14.20. 1 Pe. 2.2. Re. 14.5. <sup>c</sup> Matt. 19.16, &c. Lu. 18.18, &c.

what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?

18 And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? *There is none good but one, that is, God.*

19 Thou knowest the<sup>e</sup> commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Defraud not, Honor thy father and mother.

20 And he answered and said unto him, Master, all<sup>f</sup> these have I observed from my youth.

21 Then Jesus beholding him, loved him, and said unto him.

<sup>d</sup> Ps. 86.5. 119.68. <sup>e</sup> Ex. 20. Ro. 13.9. <sup>f</sup> Isa. 58.2 Eze. 33.31,32. Mal. 3.8. Ro. 7.9. Ph. 3.6.

given up, though so little is spoken of it. Parents brought their children for all the blessings of the New Covenant, as they had been authorized to do under the Old. The New was not more restricted, but more enlarged in its benefits. And parents came of course. They came, not for the old ordinance, but for the blessing which it signified. If Christ's touch would suffice, the sprinkling of baptismal water would surely be enough for the New Testament ordinance. Christ's presence was the great need, and could dispense altogether with the water.

14. *For of such.* This is explained by the next verse, and goes to reprove the spirit of the disciples which called for the removing of these children.

15. This verse is not given by Matthew, but by Luke. The new birth is necessary for entrance into his kingdom. See John 3:3, &c. and this makes men *little children*.

16. Mark alone gives us this beautiful fact, that our Lord took them up in his arms. So he takes into his loving and fond embrace, all his true disciples, and especially the children who seek him early—the lambs of his flock.

¶ 106. THE RICH YOUNG MAN. PARABLE OF THE LABORER IN THE VINEYARD.

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
19. 16-30.	10. 17-31.	18. 18-30.	
20. 1-16.			

For an explanation of this paragraph, see notes on Matthew and Luke.

17. *Gone forth.* Rather, as he was departing on his way. ¶ *What shall I do.* Matthew reads "what good thing." He seems to have come, admiring our Lord's personal virtues and boasting his own, yet seeking how he might merit eternal life. Our Lord shows him that his whole view of him is mistaken—that he cannot help him to any such way of salvation.

18. This reply, so far from disclaiming divinity, only shows that this was his wrong view of Christ as only a good master, or "teacher," as the term is. So Nicodemus thought falsely of him at first. John 3:2. All must be *born again*. They who think Christ to be only a great teacher, deny his Godhead.

19. Our Lord here quotes the commandments to draw out his self-righteous spirit, and so names the second table of the decalogue, in which the man chiefly boasted. ¶ *Defraud not* Referring to the tenth commandment, as coveting is at the root of fraud.

21. *Loved him.* The whole phrase is to be read together, as meaning to say that our Lord addressed him lovingly,

One <sup>a</sup> thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure <sup>b</sup> in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me.

22 And he was sad at that saying, and went away grieved; for he had great possessions.

23 And Jesus looked round about, and saith unto his disciples, How hardly shall they that have

<sup>a</sup> Ja. 2.10. <sup>b</sup> Matt. 6.19,20. Lu. 12.33. 16.9.

smiling upon him with tender regard, and charging him with his essential defect. 2 Chron. 18:2. Ps. 78:36. It was true love to his soul that told him of what he vitally lacked. Mark's language is expressive. "Take up the cross." See John 3:16.

24. *Children.* How infinitely tender is this explanation of Christ, as given by Mark alone. How necessary for an understanding of the doctrine. Though they who have great riches are prone to trust in them, yet not all. Our Lord

riches enter into the kingdom of God!

24 And the disciples were astonished at his words. But Jesus answereth again, and saith unto them, Children, how hard is it for them that trust <sup>c</sup> in riches to enter into the kingdom of God!

25 It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.

<sup>c</sup> Job 31.24. Ps. 51.7. 62.10. Hab. 2.9. 1 Ti. 6.17. Re. 3.17.

discriminates where men do not. He has no ill-will toward the rich as a class, nor would he encourage it. It is only such an abuse of riches as makes a god of them, and foolishly trusts them to save instead of the only Saviour.

25. *The eye of a needle.* In the East, the small side gate for foot passengers is called "the eye of a needle." See notes on Matt. 19:24. The camel, with his immense load, cannot pass through this, but must go through the



road gate. The figure here given is that of a *Gate of Hercules*, which illustrates the meaning. The Persians have a proverb, that "the needle's eye is wide enough for two friends; the whole world is too narrow for two foes."

26. *Who then?* Observe—it was no alarm at the bearing of this doctrine upon themselves, as they were all poor. It was concern for the salvation of

others, that here breaks out in their language. This should be our great question. How far was their feeling from a bitter prejudice of the poor against the rich!

27. *Not with God.* This is emphatic with Mark. How encouraging to sincere inquirers, opening the only hope to any soul!

30. *Houses and brethren.* Not that

26 And they were astonished out of measure, saying among themselves, Who then can be saved?

27 And Jesus looking upon them, saith, With men *it is* impossible, but not with God: for <sup>a</sup> with God all things are possible.

28 Then Peter began to say unto him, Lo, we have left all, and have followed thee.

29 And Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you, there is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's,

30 But he shall receive an hundred-fold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life.

31 But <sup>b</sup> many *that are* first, shall be last; and the last, first.

<sup>a</sup> Ge. 18.14. Job 42.5. Jer. 32.17. Lu. 1.37. <sup>b</sup> Matt. 20.16. Lu. 13.30.

there shall be a literal compensation in houses and temporal goods, necessarily. But that there shall be a real and full compensation. As the value of a house can be paid in money, so it can be paid in divine gifts. ¶ *With persecutions.* Mark alone records this important clause. Temporal quiet and worldly ease are not promised, because oppositions and trials may often be a greater blessing. Matt. 5:5.

¶ 107. JESUS A THIRD TIME FORETELLS HIS DEATH AND RESURRECTION. See ¶¶ 74 and 77.—*Perea.*

<sup>Matt.</sup> 20.17-19. | <sup>Mark.</sup> 10.32-34. | <sup>Luke.</sup> 18.31-34. | <sup>John.</sup>

32. *Went before them.* That is, fearlessly leading the way, though he was going up to death. ¶ *Were amazed.* Rather, were awed. Things were constantly settling in their minds the most serious apprehensions; and already twice he had foretold his death. Yet he was going before them, to the midst

¶ 32 And <sup>c</sup> they were in the way going up to Jerusalem; and Jesus went before them: and they were amazed; and as they followed, they were afraid. And he took again the twelve, and began to tell them what things should happen unto him,

33 *Saying,* Behold, we <sup>d</sup> go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be delivered unto the chief priests, and unto the scribes; and they shall condemn him to death, and shall deliver him to the Gentiles;

34 And <sup>e</sup> they shall mock him, and shall scourge him, and shall spit upon him, and shall kill him; and the third day he shall rise again.

¶ 35 And James and John, the sons of Zebedee, come unto him, saying, Master, we would that thou shouldst do

<sup>c</sup> Matt. 20.17, &c. Lu. 18.13, &c. <sup>d</sup> Acts 20.22. <sup>e</sup> Ps. 22.6, 7, 13.

of his deadly enemies. They were amazed, on *his* account. See John 11:16. ¶ *Afraid.* They were afraid on *their own* account—and so they followed, yet fearfully. *Bengel.* Yet, James and John cling to some worldly hopes.

¶ 108. JAMES AND JOHN PREFER THEIR AMBITIOUS REQUEST.—*Perea.*

<sup>Matt.</sup> 20.20-28. | <sup>Mark.</sup> 10.35-45. | <sup>Luke.</sup> | <sup>John.</sup>

This narrative is found in Matthew, in almost the same words. See notes.

35. Matthew speaks of the petition having been presented by their mother, who came with the sons. They were understood as the parties in the case, so that our Lord is mentioned by Mark as addressing them. Yet that they employed their mother to plead for them, at their age of manhood, shows what high esteem they entertained for her. Many a wicked and foolish boy thinks himself too large to ask his mother's advice or to be led and guided



for us whatsoever we shall desire.

36 And he said unto them, What would ye that I should do for you?

37 They said unto him, Grant unto us that we may sit, one on thy right hand, and the other on thy left hand, in thy glory.

38 But Jesus said unto them, Ye <sup>a</sup> know not what ye ask. Can ye drink of the cup that I drink of? and be baptized with the baptism <sup>b</sup> that I am baptized with?

39 And they say unto him, We can. And Jesus said unto them, Ye <sup>c</sup> shall indeed drink of the cup <sup>d</sup> that I drink of; and with the baptism that I am baptized withal, shall ye be baptized:

40 But to sit on my right hand and on my left hand, is not mine

<sup>a</sup> Ja. 4.2. <sup>b</sup> Lu. 12.50. <sup>c</sup> Matt. 10.25. <sup>d</sup> Jno. 17.14.  
<sup>d</sup> ch. 14.36.

by her, in life. How different the conduct of these young men who were chosen by Christ for apostles. Matthew calls her, "*the mother of Zebedee's children.*" Bishop Hall says, "the greatest honor she ever had, or could have, was to have two such sons as James and John. These give a title to both their parents. How handsome is it when parents are best known by their excellent children. Salome might be a good wife, a good housewife, a good woman, a good neighbor: all these cannot ennoble her so much as to be called 'the mother of Zebedee's children.'" <sup>e</sup>

38. To show them how they mistook his kingdom and the nature of their share in its dignities, he answers them by speaking of his bitter cup and baptism unto death. Suffering must come to him and to them before exaltation. I have a baptism to be baptized with, he said; but his hour had not yet come.

39-40. Christ's wonderful mildness here appears. He does not punish their error, but encourages their good

to give; but *it shall be given to them* for whom it is prepared.<sup>e</sup>

41 And when the ten heard *it*, they began to be much displeased with James and John.

42 But Jesus called them *to him*, and saith unto them, Ye <sup>f</sup> know that they which are <sup>1</sup> accounted to rule over the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and their great ones exercise authority upon them.

43 But so shall it not be among you: but <sup>g</sup> whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister:

44 And whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all.

45 For even the Son of man

<sup>e</sup> Matt. 25.34. He. 11.16. <sup>f</sup> Lu. 22.25. <sup>1</sup> or, *think good.*  
<sup>g</sup> Matt. 20.26,28. ch. 9.35. Lu. 9.48.

intention. Observe, he is as merciful in what he denies us, as in what he grants us.

39. *We can.* In their eager desire for the honor, they hastily get over this test question. But alas! when it came to suffering with Christ they both ran away; though John alone of all the twelve, is mentioned as standing by the cross.

§ 109. THE HEALING OF TWO BLIND MEN NEAR JERICHO.

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
20. 29-34.	10. 46-52.	18. 35-43.	

See this miracle explained in notes on Matthew. Our Lord had crossed the Jordan, taking the route of the pilgrims, which avoided the country of the Samaritans. He went round by the other side Jordan, or Perea. Jericho, formerly known as the city of palm trees, lying in a rich valley, is most desolate and filthy. A few huts and some twenty or thirty families are all that can be found of it. Not a palm tree is to be seen. We went down from Jerusalem by the road where the man fell among thieves. We had an

came not to be ministered unto, but <sup>a</sup> to minister, and to <sup>b</sup> give his life a ransom for many.

¶ 46 And <sup>c</sup> they came to Jericho: and as he went out of Jericho, with his disciples, and a great number of people, blind Bartimeus, the son of Timeus, sat by the highway side, begging.

47 And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out, and say, Jesus, *thou* son of David, have mercy on me.

48 And many charged him that

a Jno. 13.14. Ph. 2.7. b Isa. 53.11,12. Da. 9.26. 2 Co. 5.21. Ga. 3.13. 1 Ti. 2.6. Tit. 2.14. c Matt. 20.29,&c. Lu. 18.35,&c.

escort of two Jordan Sheikhs and several men all armed to protect us—though there was no occasion for their service, unless their presence kept off some of their own tribes.

46. *Went out.* Matthew and Mark agree in placing this miracle at his departure from Jericho. And Luke may be understood as simply stating that it was when he was nigh (near) to the city: not necessarily as he approached, which is not the meaning of the term. In this case the statement (Lu. 19: 1) that 'Jesus entered and passed through Jericho' would be general and without reference to the order of time. This kind of incidental variety so far from conflicting, confirms the record. See notes on Matt. 20: 29. ¶ *Blind Bartimeus.*—The term *Bar*, means *Son* in their language, and Mark here interprets the name, "Son of Timeus." How distressing for a father to have a blind son! He would naturally be known by his father's name. Matthew speaks of *two* blind men, and our Lord had doubtless cured more than this one. But Mark speaks of this one whose name he gives. He may have been the only one who cried out thus. He was likely the more notable person, probably better known by name or by his father's, as it is given. Mark's

he should hold his peace: but he cried the more <sup>d</sup> a great deal, *Thou* son of David, have mercy <sup>e</sup> on me.

49 And Jesus stood still, and commanded him to be called. And they called the blind man, saying unto him, Be of good comfort, rise; he <sup>f</sup> calleth thee.

50 And he, casting <sup>g</sup> away his garment, rose, and came to Jesus.

51 And Jesus answered and said unto him, What wilt thou that I should do unto thee? The blind man said unto him, Lord, that I might receive my sight.

d Je. 29.13. e Ps. 62.12. f Jno. 11.28. g Ph. 3.7-9.

object is to give the particulars of this case. So, with the demoniacs (ch. 5: 4) and the malefactors, Luke 25: 39.

49. How sweet the tidings to a poor blind sinner, that Jesus is now calling him; in his word, his ordinances, his providences! "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest." To such as cry after Jesus in any distress, we are authorized to say, "Be of good comfort, rise, he calleth thee."

50. *His garment.* This was his cloak or mantle; which is often used by the poor at night for a covering, and which the law of Moses gave them a special claim to, that it should not be kept from them over night, when it was given as a pledge. See Figure, Matt. 5: 40. This, however, the thankful beggar, cast away for joy and in haste, at Christ's call. How little value it had to him, now, that he hoped to get his eye-sight! How little do our worldly possessions or comforts seem worth, when we are roused to go to Christ in hope of the soul's salvation! How eagerly will one cast away his cloak of pride and self-righteousness when he hears Jesus call him to be saved!

51. *Rabboni.* My master. This is the highest title in the Jewish schools,

52 And Jesus said unto him, Go thy way: thy faith hath made thee whole. And immediately he received his sight, and followed Jesus in the way.

## CHAPTER XI.

¶ AND when they came nigh to Jerusalem, unto Bethphage, and Bethany, at the Mount of Olives, he sendeth forth two of his disciples,

a Matt. 9.22. ch. 5.34. 1 or, saved thee. b Matt. 21. 1, &c. Lu. 19.29, &c. Jno. 12.14, &c

and is given to seven of the Great Rabbis, all of the school of Hillel.

## PART VII.

*Our Lord's Public Entry into Jerusalem, and the subsequent transactions before the fourth Passover.*

Time, five days.

§ 112. OUR LORD'S PUBLIC ENTRY INTO JERUSALEM.—*Bethany. Jerusalem.*

First day of the week.

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
21.1-11, 14-17.	11.1-11.	19.29-44.	12.12-19.

1. See notes on Matthew and Luke. ¶ *Bethpage and Bethany.* These towns are mentioned together by Mark and Luke; while Matthew mentions only Bethpage. It is plain from comparison of the three accounts, that these villages were very near each other and both in the suburbs of Jerusalem. Of Bethpage there is no trace found. Between Bethany and Jerusalem we saw no vestige of a village. "Bethpage and Bethany" then, probably indicate the same vicinity as "Bethpage bordering on Bethany." John tells us that our Lord passed the night at Bethany, ch. 12: 12. It was the Jewish Sabbath, and he seems to have come thither with his disciples apart from the crowd that were going to the feast. He had come, perhaps, only from Bethpage: say a Sabbath day's journey. It may be that before his

2 And saith unto them, Go your way into the village over against you; and as soon as ye be entered into it, ye shall find a colt tied, whereon never man sat; loose him, and bring him.

3 And if any man say unto you, Why do ye this? say ye that the Lord hath need of him; and straightway he will send him thither.

4 And they went their way, and

c Acts 17.25.

arrival at Bethany, he sent forward to the village at the forks of the road, for the colt, so as to have it ready for the morrow, and so as to attract some attention to himself by the demand: for the crowd was asking for him (John 11: 55, 56) and inquiring whether he would be at the feast. It soon became noised abroad that he was there, and the report went to Jerusalem. "On the next day" (John 12: 12) he started out, accompanied by the crowd who had thronged there to see the dead Lazarus alive, and to see him who had raised him from the dead. Another throng also came out to meet him from Jerusalem, John 12: 13, 18. The colt was in charge of his disciples. And now he sat on the colt, for his public entry into Jerusalem.

2. *Ye shall find a colt tied.* Matthew speaks of the *she-ass and the colt*, together, to show that it was a colt which yet went with its mother—so fulfilling the scripture, that it was one 'upon which never man sat.' Matthew even speaks of the two together, as though the garments were put on both, and as though Christ rode upon both—which is not the meaning, only that they were as one. Christ sat only on the colt, while naturally enough the ass accompanied it into Jerusalem. This may indeed account for the young animal being mounted and going off so tamely. Christ could know all these minute particulars only by being omniscient and divine. Beasts never yet worked

found the colt tied by the door without, in a place where two ways met; and they loose him.

5 And certain of them that stood there, said unto them, What do ye loosing the colt?

6 And they said unto them even as Jesus had commanded: and they let them go.

7 And they brought the colt to Jesus, and cast their garments on him; and <sup>a</sup> he sat upon him.

8 And many spread their garments in the way; and others cut down branches off the trees, and strewed *them* in the way.

9 And they that went before, and they that followed, cried, say-

<sup>a</sup> Zech. 9.9.

were used for sacred purposes. Num. 19: 2. Deu. 21: 3. 1 Sam. 6: 7.

3. This verse shows also the omnipotence of Christ. He claimed the property of men where he had need of it, and he could provide for their yielding it up. "Straightway he will send it."

4. *Where two ways met.* Just on the border of the two villages, where the roads came together.

10. *The kingdom.* See Luke 1: 32. They welcomed Christ as the promised Messiah—the Son of David who was to sit perpetually on his throne—and they rejoiced in the coming of his promised kingdom. Literally, it reads, "The kingdom that cometh in the name of the Lord of our father David."

11. *And into the temple.* See Malachi 3: 1. Mark gives us this account of his entering the temple, before going to Bethany, that is, on his first arrival at Jerusalem. This is natural. It is recorded, however, as merely preliminary to the work of cleansing he should do there the next day. See v. 15, and see Matt. 21: 12. He entered now, and only "looked round about upon all things." Our Lord being of the tribe of Judah, entered no further than any common Israelite. The tem-

ing, Hosanna; Blessed <sup>b</sup> is he that cometh in the name of the Lord

10 Blessed be the kingdom <sup>c</sup> of our father David, that cometh in the name of the Lord: Hosanna in the highest.<sup>d</sup>

11 And Jesus entered into Jerusalem, and into the temple: and <sup>e</sup> when he had looked round about upon all things, and now the eventide was come, he went out unto Bethany with the twelve.

¶ 12 And <sup>f</sup> on the morrow, when they were come from Bethany, he was hungry:

13 And seeing a fig tree afar off, having leaves, he came, if haply he might find any thing thereon:

<sup>b</sup> Ps. 118.26. <sup>c</sup> Isa. 9.7. <sup>d</sup> Je. 33.15 <sup>e</sup> Ps. 148.1. <sup>f</sup> Zep. 1.12. <sup>e</sup> Eze. 8.9. <sup>f</sup> Matt. 21.18, &c.

ple proper—the sanctuary—stood within the *Court of Israel*, beyond which our Lord did not go. See Matt. 21: 12. ¶ *Unto Bethany.* Matthew tells us that "he lodged there." This was his custom, to retire for the night to that town, where he had personal friends in the family of Lazarus. See John, ch. 11. Mark here tells us that the twelve accompanied him. An ancient path to Bethany by Gethsemane, winding over Mt. Olivet, yet remains.

§ 113. THE BARREN FIG TREE. THE CLEANSING OF THE TEMPLE.—*Bethany. Jerusalem.*

Second day of the week.

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
21. 12, 13,	11. 12-19.	19. 45-48.	
18, 19.		21. 37-38.	

12. *Hungry.* The breakfast hour in that region was as late as nine to ten o'clock. It could not properly be before the morning sacrifice, which was at nine. As our Lord had but little time remaining on earth, and much to do, he started to Jerusalem before breakfast.

13. *If haply.* ~If perhaps. We are not by this to suppose that our Lord was in suspense, or that he expected to find fruit on this tree: but only that

and when he came to it he found nothing <sup>c</sup> but leaves ; for the time of figs was not yet.

14 And Jesus answered and said

<sup>a</sup> Isa. 5.7.

the tree, at this time, warranted the expectation. It is as much as to say, that he came to see if it was what it pretended to be. He availed himself too, of this, to teach a great truth respecting the barrenness of the Jewish church, notwithstanding all their showy pretensions. This miracle was wholly typical and parabolical. ¶ *For the time of figs.* The season of figs, or fig-harvest, which was in June, while now it was April. This clause was added by Mark, not only for the information of his Gentile readers, who would not know that the fig-harvest was not yet come, but also to show the ground of

unto it, No man eat fruit of thee hereafter forever. And his disciples heard it.

15 And <sup>d</sup> they come to Jeru

<sup>b</sup> Matt. 21.12,&c. Lu. 19.45,&c. Jno. 2.14,&c.

reasonable expectation in regard to fruit. The fig tree in Palestine begins to put forth leaves about the end of March. Hence this leafing of the fig tree was acknowledged as a sign that summer was near, ch. 13:28. It is well known, that with this tree the fruit appears before the leaves. Sol. Song 2:10-13. To see a tree in leaf, therefore, in April, and before the time for gathering the fruit, which was in June, gave every promise of finding figs upon it. Leaves without the fruit would be a contradiction, as the time for gathering had not come. And as the tree is very fruitful in Palestine,



and one kind bears three times in the year, some of the winter crop may generally be found with the early crop of summer. *Kitto* suggests that it was one of this kind that our Lord saw—and that this clause gives the reason why he did not expect to find figs on the common fig trees, but did expect to find them on this. This incident

occurred in connexion with our Lord's cleansing the temple, (see Harmony,) and the instruction now given to the disciples was naturally on the subject of Israel's falsity, and the coming destruction of their polity. Hence, we may suppose, they would be given to understand this miracle in this light. It was not wrought in anger, nor mere-

saalem: and Jesus went into the temple, and began to cast out them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the money-changers, <sup>a</sup> and the seats of them that sold doves;

<sup>a</sup> De. 14.25,26.

ly at disappointment for not finding fruit in his hunger. He who fed the five thousand, could easily have commanded figs on the tree. He who turned the water into wine, could have turned the leaves into figs. But it was wrought for instruction and warning. Our Lord here preached repentance, and that "the axe was laid at the root of the tree." It was therefore not for destruction, but for instruction. And those who would find here an objection to our Lord, as though he vented his wrath upon a poor dumb tree, do not consider that a dumb tree could be no sufferer, and do not see the truth that lies under the surface. Our Lord's inference from the miracle is, *Have faith in God*. Peter, in his remark, understood, perhaps, the deeper meaning of Israel's withering under the word of Christ—dried up from the roots.

16. This fact is given by Mark alone. It is a further description of our Lord's jealousy for the sacredness of the Temple; his own temple, his own house. This prohibition showed how strictly he would enforce a reverence for the place. This high regard for the Temple was important as teaching the people, (1) How jealous God is for his worship. (2) How he will demand purity in his Church. And (3) How the zeal of God's house is the consuming desire of Christ in his official work. ¶ *Any vessel*. Any utensil or implement. See Le. 19:30. Deut. 12:5. None were allowed by the law to go into the Court with staff, shoes, or purse, or with dust upon his feet, or to make it a thoroughfare. This was the Court of the Gentiles, which, since the Captivity, was used as a thoroughfare, and for exchange of the money of foreigners coming up to Jerusalem, and this desecration he forbade. See Ex. 30:13.

16 And would not suffer that any man should carry *any* vessel through the temple.

17 And he taught, saying unto them, Is it not written, <sup>b</sup> My house shall be called<sup>1</sup> of all nations the

<sup>b</sup> Isa. 56.7. 1 or, *an house of prayer for all nations*.

The Gentile interests were not to be profaned. He is a Saviour for all nations, and his house is for all. This can be realized only by destroying this much profaned temple. Besides, these money changers who sat here for traffic, were not allowed to make money in that way. It was against the spirit of the law. Deut. 23:20,21. So he drove them out. This was not the first time this class had been driven out. He began his ministry by this cleansing of his house, which now he will repeat at the close. John 2:13-25. Places appropriated to divine worship ought to be held sacred out of common respect to their peculiar and holy use. Indifference or avarice will sometimes apply the house of God to a secular purpose. But this is contrary to a proper devotional feeling. Yet many have a superstitious sentiment on this subject, as though holiness could dwell in stones and aisles. It is not any rite of consecration that can make the house of God holy, but the presence of God can hallow the place, and out of respect for his presence and his residence there, we ought not to treat it irreverently. 'Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God, and be more ready to hear than to give the sacrifice of fools.' Ec. 5:1. See the Second Commandment, and what is required and forbidden, with the reasons annexed.—Westminster Catechism.

17. *Called of all nations*. The Wickliff version reads, "The house of preying to all folkeis," and Isa. 56:7, "An house of prayer for all people." This is the sense—A house of prayer for all is not to be at all profaned. Here is a hint also, that his profaned temple must needs be destroyed to have the worship universal. ¶ *Den of thieves*. The money changers who changed

house of prayer? but ye have made it a den<sup>a</sup> of thieves.

18 And the scribes and chief priests heard it, and sought how they might destroy him: for they feared him, because all the people was astonished<sup>b</sup> at his doctrine.

19 And when even was come, he went out of the city.

¶ 20 And in the morning, as they passed by, they saw the fig tree dried up from the roots.

21 And Peter, calling to remem-

<sup>a</sup> Je. 7.11. <sup>b</sup> Matt. 7.28. ch. 1.22. Lu. 4.32.

common money into that which was current, for the temple tax, did it for gain. So did they who sold doves and animals for sacrifice. And to make money in this way was contrary to the spirit of the Jewish law. They who make money by masses, indulgences, confessions, &c. make God's house "a den of thieves."

18. The scribes and priests were offended at him because he thus opposed their schemes and interfered with their gains, and at the same time had such growing influence with the people, as to peril their authority. ¶ *For they feared.* This is given as the reason, both for seeking to destroy him, and for the difficulty they found in devising the means for so doing.

§ 114. THE BARREN FIG TREE WITHERS AWAY.—*Between Bethany and Jerusalem.*

Third day of the week.

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
21. 20-22	11. 20-26.		

See notes on Matthew.

21. *And Peter.* Matthew mentions the disciples generally, as exclaiming thus. Mark states that Peter was prominent in this, and it is altogether in keeping with his character.

22. *Have faith.* This exertion of Christ's power showed his divine prerogative, and would be a proper motive for having faith in God. God's grace appeals to our confidence, be-

brance, saith unto him, Master, behold, the fig tree which thou cursedst is withered away.

22 And Jesus answering, saith unto them,<sup>1</sup> Have faith in God.

23 For verily I say unto you, That whosoever<sup>c</sup> shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith.

24 Therefore I say unto you,

1 or, have the faith of God. <sup>c</sup> Matt. 17.20. Lu. 17.6.

cause it is almighty. "Let us, therefore, come boldly unto the throne of grace." At that day, also, the disciples were enabled to work miracles in the name of Christ, by putting their special faith in him. This is the subject of the next verse, the faith of miracles, a faith for the miraculous work proposed to be done. The sentiment is, that they should be enabled to do such wondrous things and greater, if they would put a proper faith in him. Compare Matt. 21:21. Observe, they were approaching Jerusalem over the Mount of Olives. Possibly, our Lord, as he looked down upon Zion, the holy mountain, so intimately connected with all these teachings about Israel's withering away, may have pointed to it, as he says, "*this mountain,*" (not *a mountain,*) and so may have taught that by faith they might command the removing of that Zion, the seat of God's presence with his Church, and it should be planted in the sea, for the nations to approach, no longer exclusive and national, but public and universal. Matthew adds that they should be able to do that which was done to the fig tree. They should indeed, by their publishing of the gospel, pronounce a withering doom upon the false pretensions of the Jewish Church. "Ye shall leave your name *for a curse* unto my chosen," &c. Isa. 65:15. See the passage.

What<sup>a</sup> things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive *them*, and ye shall have *them*.

25 And when ye stand praying, forgive,<sup>b</sup> if ye have aught against any; that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses.

26 But<sup>c</sup> if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses.

¶ 27 And they come again to Jerusalem: and<sup>d</sup> as he

<sup>a</sup> Matt. 7.7. Lu. 11.9. 18.1. Jno. 14.13. 15.7. 16.24. Ja. 1.5.6. <sup>b</sup> Matt. 6.14. Col. 3.13. <sup>c</sup> Matt. 18.35. <sup>d</sup> Matt. 21.23, &c. Lu. 20.1, &c.

24. The subject is here extended. In prayer our faith is to be implicit. We are not to distrust, but rather to count on the result with certainty, and God will not disappoint the humble trust.

25. Here is a restriction; we are not to seek power for judicial acts against the evil, as Christ had just done. We are to forgive. ¶ *When ye stand praying.* This standing posture is brought in, seemingly, to refer more particularly to public prayer. Standing would appear to be the scriptural attitude for public worship, as most reverential for the solemn assembly. See 2 Chron. 6: 13. Dan. 6: 10. See Matt. 6: 5, notes. For private devotion it has seemed most natural to be prostrate, or to kneel as alone before God. ¶ *Forgive.* This passage is given by Mark alone. The great gospel duty of christian forgiveness is enjoined here, as on every proper occasion. It is urged as a requisite to the divine forgiveness, and so it corresponds with the sentiment in the petition of the Lord's Prayer.

26. This same declaration, almost in the same words, is found in Matt. 6: 15. See also the parable (§79), Matt. 18, 23-35.

¶ 115. CHRIST'S AUTHORITY IS QUESTIONED. PARABLE OF THE TWO SONS.—*Jerusalem.*

Third day of the week.

Matt. Mark. Luke. John.  
21 23-32. | 11. 27-33. | 20. 1-8. |

was walking in the temple, there come to him the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders,

28 And say unto him, By<sup>e</sup> what authority doest thou these things? and who gave thee this authority to do these things?

29 And Jesus answered and said unto them, I will also ask of you one<sup>1</sup> question, and answer me, and I will tell you by what authority I do these things.

30 The baptism of John, was<sup>f</sup>

<sup>e</sup> Num. 16.3. <sup>1</sup> or, thing.

Here commences that series of parables and discourses of the Lord to his enemies, exposing his hatred of their hypocrisy, &c. So they are stirred up to compass his death. For full explanation, see notes on Matt. where almost the same language is given. See also Luke.

27. We see why he was so often in the temple-courts, for Matthew adds, "as he was teaching." He resorted thither to instruct the Jews in the Gospel doctrines, and to meet the objections of their religious teachers, as here. Luke has it—"As he taught the people in the temple and preached the Gospel." ¶ *Come to him.* This was a message from the Sanhedrim, sent to draw from him a declaration of his divine authority, that so they might take legal action and condemn him.

30. *The Baptism.* That is, the whole ministry of John. As they had received John, after having sent a deputation to him for similar inquiry, (John 19,) they must also have acknowledged that higher ministry of Christ, which John proclaimed, and of which he testified as sealed by the descent of the Holy Spirit. So he challenged them in regard to Moses. And all the people counted John a prophet indeed. John 1: 33, 34. "If ye had believed Moses, ye would have believed me, for he wrote of me." See note on Luke, 20: 4. And in this case they had allowed John to



from heaven, or of men? Answer me.

31 And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; he will say, Why then did ye not believe him?

32 But if we shall say, Of men, they feared the people; for<sup>a</sup> all men counted John, that he was a prophet indeed.

33 And they answered and said unto Jesus, We<sup>b</sup> cannot tell. And Jesus answering, saith unto them, Neither do I<sup>c</sup> tell you by what authority I do these things.

## CHAPTER XII.

¶ AND he began to speak unto them by parables. A<sup>d</sup> certain man planted a vineyard, and set an hedge about it, and digged a place for the wine-fat, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country.

2 And at the season he sent to

<sup>a</sup> Matt. 3.5.6. 14.5. ch. 6.20. <sup>b</sup> Isa. 1.3. 29.14. Je. 8.7. Hos. 4.6. <sup>c</sup> Lu. 10.21.22. <sup>d</sup> Matt. 21.33. Lu. 20.9,&c.

the husbandmen a servant, that he might receive from the husbandmen of the<sup>e</sup> fruit of the vineyard.

3 And they caught him, and beat him, and sent him away empty.

4 And again he sent unto them another servant; and at him they cast stones,<sup>f</sup> and wounded him in the head, and sent him away shamefully handled.

5 And again he sent another; and him they killed: and<sup>g</sup> many others, beating some, and killing<sup>h</sup> some.

6 Having yet therefore one son, his well-beloved, he<sup>i</sup> sent him also last unto them, saying, They will reverence my son.

7 But those husbandmen said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and the inheritance shall be ours.

8 And they took him, and killed him, and cast him out<sup>k</sup> of the vineyard.

<sup>e</sup> Ca. 8.11. Mi. 7.1. Lu. 12.48. Jno. 15.1-8. <sup>f</sup> He. 11.37. <sup>g</sup> Ne. 9.30. Je. 7.25,&c. <sup>h</sup> Matt. 23.37. <sup>i</sup> He. 1.1,2. <sup>k</sup> He. 13.12.

pass for a prophet, and now they could not draw back from that concession, which they made, insincerely, to the popular feeling, in John's behalf. ¶ *We cannot tell.* Literally, we do not know. This was the only reply which, in their embarrassment, they could give him. They were confounded and silenced. We see from this, (1) How completely Christ knows the human heart and the root of all its objections to the Gospel. (2) How fully his divine authority proved itself by his divine acts, and stood firm, beyond the utmost opposition of enemies. He was always ready to reveal himself to humble inquirers—but he would not, by any means, satisfy the malicious and profane. Matthew adds here the parable of the two sons, being the first in a series of<sup>a</sup> judicial parables.

‡ 116. PARABLE OF THE WICKED HUSBANDMEN.—*Jerusalem.*

Third day of the week.

Matt. 1. 33-46. Mark. 12. 1-12. Luke. 20. 9-19. John.

## CHAPTER XII.

Mark and Luke mention only one parable; yet Mark here intimates that he delivered more at this time. Accordingly we find two others narrated by Matthew. For explanation of this parable of the Vineyard, see note on Matt. and on Luke.

4. Matthew speaks of other servants being sent. Mark is more particular, and describes them, mentioning also a third—v. 5.

6. *One Son, his well-beloved.* This is the proper answer to their question in verse 23, and shows his authority, if they will receive it.

9 What shall therefore the lord of the vineyard do? He will come and<sup>a</sup> destroy the husbandmen, and will<sup>b</sup> give the vineyard unto others.

10 And have ye not read this scripture? The<sup>c</sup> stone which the builders rejected is become the head of the corner:

11 This was the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes?

12 And<sup>d</sup> they sought to lay hold on him, but feared the people; for they knew that he had spoken the parable against them: and they left him, and went their way.

¶ 13 And<sup>e</sup> they send unto him certain of the Pharisees, and of the Herodians, to catch him in *his* words.

14 And when they were come, they say unto him, Master, we

<sup>a</sup> Pr. 1:24-31. <sup>b</sup> Isa. 5:5-7. <sup>c</sup> Da. 9:26. <sup>d</sup> Je. 17:3. <sup>e</sup> Ps. 118:22. <sup>f</sup> ch. 11:18. <sup>g</sup> Jno. 7:30. <sup>h</sup> Matt. 22:15, &c. <sup>i</sup> Lu. 20:20, &c.

9. This is given more particularly by Matthew, as the judgment first drawn from the Pharisees and people, (see Luke,) they having missed, or pretended to miss, the point of it. So the last form of God's warning to sinners is that in which they are made to speak of the very things they are about to do, in terms of condemnation.

10. *Head of the corner*—or corner-stone which binds together both walls of a building. So Christ binds Jews and Gentiles together in himself, and "in him all the building, fitly framed together, groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord." See Ps. 118:22. The Jews sing, "the Lord build, the Lord build—speedily, speedily!" But this is the temple which he builds, not that at Jerusalem.

Matthew here adds the parable of the marriage of the King's son. ch. 22: 1-14.

¶ 118. INSIDIOUS QUESTIONS OF THE PHARISEES.—TRIBUTE TO CÆSAR.—*Jerusalem.*

Third day of the week.

know that thou art true, and carest for no man; for thou regardest not the person of men, but teachest the way of God in truth: Is it lawful to give tribute to Cæsar, or not?

15 Shall we give, or shall we not give? But he, knowing their hypocrisy, said unto them, Why tempt ye me? Bring me a<sup>1</sup> penny, that I may see *it*.

16 And they brought *it*. And he saith unto them, Whose *is* this image and superscription? And they said unto him, Cæsar's.

17 And Jesus, answering, said unto them, Render to Cæsar<sup>f</sup> the things that are Cæsar's, and to God<sup>g</sup> the things that are God's. And they marvelled at him.

¶ 18 Then<sup>h</sup> come

<sup>1</sup> Valuing of our money seven pence halfpenny, as Matt. 22:19. <sup>f</sup> Matt. 17:25-27. <sup>g</sup> Ro. 13:7. <sup>h</sup> 1 Pe. 2:17. <sup>i</sup> Ec. 5:4,5. <sup>j</sup> Mal. 1:6. <sup>k</sup> Matt. 22:23. <sup>l</sup> Lu. 20:27, &c.

Mat. 22. 15-22 | Mark. 12. 13-17. | Luke. 20. 20-26. | John.

13. *Herodians.* See ch. 16: 6.

14. A sect of the Pharisees called Galileans, bitterly opposed this tax about this time. See Luke 13: 1, notes.

17. These words do not separate, but unite the religious and political duties of Christians. Jer. 27: 4-18. Rom. 13: 1. 1 Pe. 2: 13, 14. John 19: 11. The second comprehends the first and gives it its true foundation. The obedience to Cæsar is but the application of the general principle of obedience to God, from whom is all power. So, also, as man is the coinage and bears the image of God (not wholly lost by the fall), we owe ourselves to God. We are his property. Further, they were under subjection to Cæsar, because they had rejected God's authority. 1 Chron. 12: 8.

¶ 119. INSIDIOUS QUESTIONS OF THE SADDUCEES ABOUT THE RESURRECTION.—*Jerusalem.*

Third day of the week.

Mat. 22. 23-33. | Mark. 12. 18-27. | Luke. 20. 27-40. | John.

unto him the Sadducæes, which say<sup>a</sup> there is no resurrection; and they asked him, saying,

19 Master, Moses wrote<sup>b</sup> unto us, If a man's brother die, and leave his wife behind him, and leave no children, that his brother<sup>c</sup> should take his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother.

20 Now there were seven brethren: and the first took a wife, and dying left no seed.

21 And the second took her, and died; neither left he any seed: and the third likewise.

22 And the seven had her, and left no seed: last of all the woman died also.

23 In the resurrection therefore, when they shall rise, whose wife shall she be of them? for the seven had her to wife.

24 And Jesus answering, said unto them, Do ye not therefore err, because ye know not the scriptures, neither the power of God?

<sup>a</sup> Acts 23.8. <sup>b</sup> De. 25.5. <sup>c</sup> Ru. 1.11,13.

25 For when they shall rise from the dead, they neither marry nor are given in marriage; but<sup>d</sup> are as the angels which are in heaven.

26 And as touching the dead, that they rise; have ye not read in the book of Moses, how in the bush God spake unto him, saying,<sup>e</sup> I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob?

27 He is not the God of the dead, but the God of the living: ye<sup>f</sup> therefore do greatly err.

¶ 28 And<sup>g</sup> one of the scribes came, and having heard them reasoning together, and perceiving that he had answered them well, asked him, Which is the first commandment of all?

29 And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is,<sup>h</sup> Hear, O Israel; the Lord our God is one Lord:

30 And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and

<sup>d</sup> 1 Cor. 15.42-53. <sup>e</sup> Ex. 3.6. <sup>f</sup> ver. 24. <sup>g</sup> Matt. 22.35. <sup>h</sup> De. 6.4,5. Lu. 10.27.

19. The first born son of such a marriage as is named, (v. 21) was reckoned and registered as the son of the deceased brother. Mich. Mos. R. II. 98.

20-25. See notes on Matthew and Luke.

26. *In the bush.* The preposition here (ἐν) is rendered by Winer "on (in connexion with) the bush, i. e. (concisely) at (in) the passage where the bush is treated of."

27. Stier suggests that this passage is also an argument against the so-called sleep of the soul during an intermediate state.

§ 120. A LAWYER QUESTIONS JESUS. THE TWO GREAT COMMANDMENTS. —Jerusa'em.

Third day of the week.

Matt.	Mark.	Luk <sup>e</sup> .	Joh <sup>n</sup> .
22. 34-40.	12. 28-34.		

It might seem from Matthew's clause ("tempting him," ch. 22: 35,) that this man came up, rather to put to our Lord a puzzling question, than to gain information, and was convicted by the answer, vs. 30, 31.

28. *Perceiving that he had answered them well.* The Pharisees were satisfied with his reply on this subject, for they differed from the Sadducees on this point. Matthew has it "When the Pharisees heard that he had put the Sadducees to silence."

30. This love is to be comprehensive and thorough, though it be not here below perfect. It is to be with the inward spirit and the outward life, "faith working by love," or a sacrifice of the life. Rom. 12: 1.

31. *Is like.* As both are laws of love, and as "these two" stand together, the

with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength. This is the first commandment.

31 And the second is like, namely, this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these.

32 And the scribe said unto him, Well, Master, thou hast said the truth: for there is one God; and there is none other but he:

33 And to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love his neighbor as himself, is more than all whole burnt-offerings and sacrifices.

34 And when Jesus saw that he

a Le. 19.18. Matt. 22.39. Ro. 13.9. b De. 4.39. Isa. 45.5,6,14. 46.9. c 1 Sam. 15.22. Hos. 6.6. Mi. 6.6-8.

answered discreetly, he said unto him, Thou art not far from the kingdom of God. And no man after that durst ask him any question.

¶ 35 And Jesus answered and said, while he taught in the temple, How say the scribes that Christ is the son of David?

36 For David himself said by the Holy Ghost, The Lord said to my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool.

37 David therefore himself calleth him Lord; and whence is he then his son? And the common people heard him gladly.

d Matt. 22.46. e Matt. 22.41. Lu. 20.41,&c. f 2 Sam. 23.2. 2 Ti. 3.16. g Ps. 110.1.

staple on which the law and the prophets hang.

32. *Well, Master.* Mark here gives the scribe's response, which is omitted by Matthew. He expresses his view of love to God, that it is better than all the Jewish sacrifices. And this was going very far for a Jew. He had gotten into the gospel light to this extent. And he was almost prepared to go farther, and receive the doctrine of Christ as the promised Son of David. It sometimes occurs, as here, that persons who come up to cavil with the truth, are convinced by it, and brought to salvation.

33. He had got so near to the obedience of faith as to seize the principle and spirit of the divine requirement. And so, he was nearer the true kingdom than empty formalists. The substance of these two commands, embodying, indeed, the two tables of the Law, was in striking contrast with the state of things then existing in the Jewish church.

¶ 121. HOW IS CHRIST THE SON OF DAVID?—*Jerusalem.*

Third day of the week

Matt. 22. 41-46. | Mark. 12. 35-37. | Luke. 20. 41-44. | John.

Our Lord having silenced their questioning, goes on to ask them, and silences also their answering, as Matthew has it, 22: 46.

35. *The Son of David.* This title meant much. It was "an abstract of divinity" in the mouth of the Syrophenician woman. The Messiah of the Jewish prophecies was to be the Son, or descendant of David, (see Matt. 1: 1, notes and 22: 42,) and to be also the Lord Jehovah: as in this Psalm here quoted, 110: 1. Hence they were familiar with these terms and titles of the Messiah. But they were perplexed by the mystery of his two natures in one person forever. We answer these questions by referring to the plain language of Scripture. Nor are we bound to explain to proud and weak reason, how these natures co-exist. Many take those passages which teach the real humanity of Christ as disproving his real divinity. But there are as many passages which teach this also, and they are both true. He is "both God and man in two persons."

¶ 38 And he said unto them <sup>a</sup> in his doctrine, Beware <sup>b</sup> of the scribes, which love to go in long clothing, and love salutations in the market-places,  
39 And <sup>c</sup> the chief seats in the

<sup>a</sup> ch. 4.2. <sup>b</sup> Matt. 23.1. Lu. 20.46, &c. <sup>c</sup> Lu. 11.43.

distinct natures as if one person forever.”

37. *And the common people.* Literally, *the great multitude*, the mass of the people. Some were always exceptions. Christ's gospel was intended for the people. It was made suitable to the common wants of the multitude. The few learned were often critics and scoffers. Many who affect greater learning than the multitude, proudly reject this gospel now. But *the mass* can understand what Scribes and Pharisees cavil at. Those scribes and doctors who make the criticism of Scripture a business, apart from its *practical uses*, misunderstand and deny. The glory of Christ's religion and of Christ himself, is that the poor have the gospel preached unto them.

¶ 122. WARNINGS AGAINST THE EVIL EXAMPLE OF THE SCRIBES AND PHARISEES.—*Jerusalem.*

Third day of the week.

Matt. 23. 1-12 | Mark. 12. 33, 39 | Luke. 20. 45, 46 | John.

Matthew is much more full in his narration of this discourse. From this, we learn that the sense of his teaching was not merely, as here, a caution, but a direction also—“That so far as the Pharisees and Scribes enforced the law and the precepts of Moses they should obey them, but not imitate their conduct.” A love of promotion and of dignities in religious teachers, was rebuked. It should not be so among *christian* teachers. (See notes on Matt.)

¶ 123. WOES AGAINST THE SCRIBES AND PHARISEES. — LAMENTATION OVER JERUSALEM.—*Jerusalem.*

Third day of the week.

Matt. 23. 13-39 | Mark. 12. 40 | Luke. 20. 47 | John.

This paragraph is chiefly to be found in Matthew's narration.

synagogues, and the uppermost rooms at feasts;

¶ 40 Which devour widows' <sup>d</sup> houses, and for a pretence make long prayers: these shall receive greater damnation.

<sup>d</sup> 2 Ti. 3.6.

40. “*They devoured widow's houses,*” “snatching away from poor widows all that they had, under pretence of religious objects.” The Romish priests often do likewise. So far they are their priestly successors.

¶ 124. THE WIDOW'S MITE.—*Jerusalem.*

Third day of the week.

Matt. | Mark. | Luke. | John.  
| 12. 41-44 | 21. 1-4 |

This narrative of the poor widow, is to be taken in its connexion with the discourse to the Pharisees just given. It places their hypocrisy and avarice in the most glaring light. They were religious for a pretence—*she*, in whole hearted sincerity. *They*, for gain—*she*, with consecration of all she had to her Lord. In the midst of their profanations of his temple, by avarice, he notices this pious act of a *widow such as they robbed!*

41. *The Treasury.* This may be merely a general term; referring, however, to the money-chests in “the court of the women.” There were thirteen of these. They were brazen vessels, shaped like trumpets or cornucopias. Though Josephus tells us of a building by this name to which the contributions were transferred from the chests. Ant. xix. 6, 1. Or, as these chests stood near each other, they may be referred to, in a general term, as a treasury or coffer. In John 8: 20, this word denotes the place or quarter of the temple.

42. *Poor widow.* Such as these Pharisees were wont to deprive of all their substance upon a religious pretence. ¶ *Two mites. Two lepta.* This is the name of the smallest Greek money now used. Ten lepta is a copper piece as large as our cent, and we found it in common currency at Athens. Bengel remarks that *two* are mentioned

¶ 41 And <sup>a</sup> Jesus sat over against the treasury, and beheld how the people cast money <sup>1</sup> into the treasury: and many that were rich cast in much.

42 And there came a certain poor widow, and she threw in two mites, <sup>2</sup> which make a farthing

43 And he called *unto him* his disciples, and saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, that this

<sup>a</sup> Lu. 21.1, &c. <sup>1</sup> A piece of brass money: see Matt. 10.9. <sup>2</sup> 7th part of that piece of brass money.

as *one* of these might easily have been kept back. ¶ *Which make.* Mark makes this explanation of the value in Roman money, for his gentile readers. ¶ *A farthing.* *One quadrans*—or one-eighth of an *as*. Observe, that our Lord represents this offering as a gift to the Divine service, though these treasures of the temple were really the property of this selfish priesthood. The Master counted it no less given to God, because it failed of its intent, and was really perverted to feed the avarice of these hypocrites. So it is the motive of the giver which our Lord regards. We are bound to give, *as to God*, and not to men. We should not make a plea of *possible perversion* excuse us from casting into his treasury. We shall not fail of our proper reward even though our contribution should fail of its proper end.

43. He would have his disciples remark this case, as a living practical exemplification of the true piety, and of the true principle of giving and of judging. Not the quantity but the quality of the gift is what our Lord considers. As a small bit of gold may be more in our valuation than handsfull of coppers, so a *copper* may, in God's valuation, be more than a purse of gold. ¶ *This poor widow.* We may suppose her to have been specially stirred to this liberality, begging herself for God's service, with no earthly support or resource. *Stier* says—"Observe Christ, here, so earnestly regarding this religious act in that temple of his, which was so soon

<sup>b</sup> poor widow hath cast more in than all they which have cast into the treasury:

44 For all *they* did cast in of their abundance; <sup>c</sup> but she of her want did cast in all that she had, *even* <sup>d</sup> all her living.

#### CHAPTER XIII.

AND <sup>e</sup> as he went *out* of the temple, one of his disciples saith unto

<sup>b</sup> 2 Cor. 8.2,12. <sup>c</sup> 1 Ch. 29.3,17. <sup>2</sup> Ch. 24.10. <sup>d</sup> De. 24.6. <sup>e</sup> Matt. 24.1, &c. Lu. 21.5, &c.

to be destroyed for its profanations. Thus he shows how he will so earnestly regard the smallest service of any of his people." He will find it out amidst grossest corruptions.

44. So much depended on what they had to give, and what was left, and how far they deprived themselves of any comfort or denied themselves of worldly ease for God. Therefore this was most important in a fair estimate of their liberality. It is not so much for the rich to give *thousands* as for the poor to give *tens*. How much do men give in proportion to their means and their ability? They were rich and did not feel it—she was poor and felt it all. They had enough left—she had just nothing left. They gave out of their abundance—she, out of her poverty. They were rich after they had given. She was poor before she gave, and poorer after—yet she gave, and gave not the least she might have done—but *two mites* instead of *one*. They encroached *nothing* upon their living. She gave all her living. Men often ask how *little* they can give and get rid of an application, creditably before men, or comfortably to themselves. She asked *how much* she could give to God. Female benevolence is honored in the Scriptures. This widow—Mary with the ointment—and the Marys at the sepulchre with spices. And the money chests of the Temple were in the "court of the women."

John adds here the Greeks' inquiry, and Christ's reflections upon *the* Jews.

him, Master, see what manner of stones and what buildings *are here!*

2 And Jesus, answering, said unto

him, Seest thou these great buildings? <sup>a</sup> there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.

<sup>a</sup> Lu. 19.44.

### CHAPTER XIII.

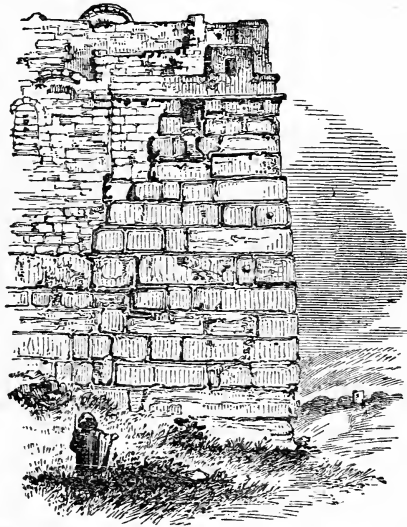
§ 127. JESUS, ON TAKING LEAVE OF THE TEMPLE, FORTHELLS ITS DESTRUCTION. *Jerusalem. Mt. of Olives.*

Third day of the week.

Mat.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
24. 1-14.	13. 1-13.	21. 5-19.	

It is perfectly in accordance with the true view of prophecy, as involving oft-

en a series of fulfillments, that our Lord should here couple his coming, in the destruction of Jerusalem, with his greater coming at the end of the world. It is not the mistake of the Evangelists that they so commonly represent the advent as near. Certain modern critics charge them with this. But it is quite in keeping with all the tenor of



the New Testament. See 1 Cor. 10: 11. Phil. 4: 5. 2 Thess. 2: 7. 1 Pet. 4: 7. 1 John 2: 18. Jas. 5: 8. Rev. 1: 1, 3. 3: 11. 22: 7, 10, 12, 20; from which it is plain that the Apostles expected Christ's return at least suddenly, and at unawares. This prophetic discourse plainly associates two distinct comings. (the first at the destruction of Jerusalem—the second at the end of the world.)—the former a type of the latter—and an inferior fulfillment of the prophecy, which yet waits a greater and more com-

plete fulfillment; the former encouraging the expectation of the latter, by verifying the prophetic word, and yet leaving a greater event to be looked for, as in further and more complete accomplishment of "all these things." The Apostles here asked in regard to the destruction of the people and city. as connected immediately and in point of time, with the final coming. Against this he sufficiently warns them in verses 7 and 10, and in the first two parables of Matthew, chapter 25. The two

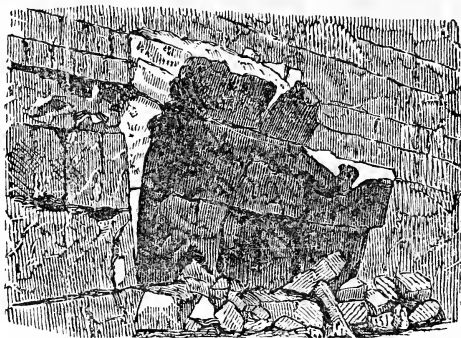
3 And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, over against the temple,

Peter and James and John and Andrew asked him privately,

parallel interpretations may be traced as far as verse 24—the destruction of Jerusalem and the end of the world being both involved in the words, but the former kept most prominent. From verse 24 the greater event takes the lead, (with hints, perhaps, thrown back at the nearer and more immediate event,) till, in the latter part of the chapter, and the whole of the next in Matthew, the second advent and final judgment are kept in view. See notes on Matthew and Luke.

1. *What manner of stones.* There are still remaining, great stones in the wall of the temple area, at the S. E. corner, which, most likely, are a specimen of these. We climbed up from the deep

ravine of Jehoshaphat, (a steep of about 130 feet,) by the aid of steps, to examine this corner. The manner of stones is to be remarked. They are hewn in a way which shows them to be of most ancient date, being *bevelled*, that is, faced or cut only at the edge, in a small border, the rest being left rough. The appearance of the wall seemed to us as though these stones, after being cast down, had been piled up again. The corner of the wall, instead of being *even*, is rough and jagged. We measured some of these huge blocks, which we found  $19\frac{1}{2}$  long by  $3\frac{1}{2}$  feet high. At the S. W. corner are the great stones which, doubtless, belong to the great arch of the temple bridge, stretching



across the Tyropeon to Zion. These are also bevelled. Three large, grey rocks, curved on the lower surface, rest on immense layers of stone-work, and stand out from the wall as if endwise, and broken off. On a line with these is a huge yellow stone, of the same arch, and this we observed is set into the adjoining stone of the wall by a joint of 8 or 10 inches, much concealed by the defacing of the elements. This would prove that the stones stand in their original position. We observed, also, that the immense foundation stones on which the arch rests, are arched at the top to fit; and that the face of them

is also arched slightly, agreeing with the curve of the bridge work. In the stones adjoining these, also, we remarked a deep groove along the upper edge as if for others to fit in: and set back to rest on. One of these stones of the lower course, seeming as if one block, and most closely joined, we measured. One part was 27 feet, and the other 26 long, by 7 high. Josephus speaks of some stones of the temple that were 50 feet long, 24 broad, and 16 thick.

3. *Over against.* The Mount of Olives rises so abruptly, with only the deep ravine of Jehoshaphat between it and the city, on the temple side, that, by



4 Tell us, when shall these things be? and what *shall be* the sign when all these things shall be fulfilled?

5 And Jesus, answering them, began to say, Take <sup>a</sup> heed lest any man deceive you:

6 For many shall come <sup>b</sup> in my name, saying, I am *Christ*; and shall deceive many.

7 And when ye shall hear of

a Je. 29.8. Ep. 5.6. 2 Th. 2.3. Re. 20.7,8. b Acts 5. 26-29. 1 Jno. 4.1.

ascending it, you get a survey of the whole, and especially of the temple area which slopes towards the Mount.—See frontispiece: Notes on Matthew.

4 *All these things.* (See v. 30.) Especially the things which were to occur in connexion with the destruction of the temple and city, and in the course of that generation, i. e. before all who were then living should have passed away.

6. This was the first warning against many who should claim to be Christ. Not that they were in danger of being drawn away from Christ, but of mistaking these false pretenders for Christ himself. Though fifteen false Messiahs are recorded as having appeared among the Jews since the time of Christ, there is, perhaps, no record of any appearing distinctly as such *before* the destruction of the city. Theudas, (Acts 5: 36,) and the Egyptian, (Acts 21: 38,) represented themselves as prophets. But this would only show that all the signs (they asked but for one,) were not applicable to the immediate event, but were to indicate a further reference. And this was fit, as they asked for the sign when "all these things" should be fulfilled, or rather, as Matthew has it, "of the coming, and of the end of the world;" but of course without any clear distinction, whatever.

7. *Wars, &c.* Those which they should hear of, were such as those which were threatened against the Jews by the Roman Emperors, Caligula, Claudius and Nero. (Josephus, Ant.

wars and rumours of wars, be <sup>c</sup> ye not troubled; for *such things* must needs be; but the end *shall not be* yet.

8 For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; and there shall be earthquakes in divers places, and there shall be famines and troubles: these *are* the beginnings of <sup>1</sup> sorrows.

c Ps. 27.3. 46.1,2. Pr. 3.25. Jno. 14.1,27. 1 The word in the original importeth the pains of a woman in travail.

xix. 1, 2.) The Jews were persecuted at Alexandria. (A. D. 38.) At Seleucia at about the same time, more than 50,000 of them were killed.

8-9. *The end.* This refers to their question in verse 4, where the term translated "be fulfilled," is akin to this. Matthew has the same in the phrase "the end of the world." The *end*, or *fulfillment* about which they ask, is *not yet*. ¶ *Famines and troubles.* Matthew has it 'famines and pestilences,' which usually go together. The famine prophesied of in Acts (11: 28) was in A. D. 49. Also, in Judea in the third year of Nero. Josephus records, also, many national tumults. (B. I. ii. 2, 17, 10. xviii. 1-8.) ¶ *In the synagogues.* Luke 21: 12. ¶ *For my sake.* This was the distinctive principle. Not that they should suffer merely, but should suffer for Christ. True discipleship comes in severe contact with the world and the enemies of Christ, and we must suffer with him to reign with him. ¶ *Rulers.* Rather Governors, as the Roman proconsuls. ¶ *Kings.* The tetrarchs, called kings. See Acts 12: 1. 26: 2.

10. The gospel had been published through the Roman world as then known, and every nation had received its testimony before the destruction of Jerusalem. See Col. 1: 6, 23. 2. Tim. 4: 17. This was necessary not only for the Gentiles but for the Jews, who were scattered abroad, to give them a testimony and an opportunity. But further—the gospel has yet to be

9 But take heed to yourselves: for they shall deliver you up to councils; and in the synagogues ye shall be beaten; and ye shall be brought before rulers and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them.

10 And the gospel must first be published among all nations.

11 But when they shall lead you, and deliver you up, take no thought beforehand what ye shall speak, neither do ye premeditate; but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye: for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost.

12 Now the brother shall betray the brother to death, and the father the son: and children shall rise up against their parents, and shall cause them to be put to death.

<sup>a</sup> Matt. 10.17. &c. Re. 2.10. <sup>b</sup> Matt. 28.19. Re. 14.6. <sup>c</sup> Acts 2.4. 4.8,31. 6.10. <sup>d</sup> Mt. 7.6.

preached universally for a testimony. And the universal diffusion of it by modern christian missions is now a leading sign of the end.

11. This would be taken up by God himself as his cause, and would be pleaded by his Spirit in them. They were charged, therefore, not to summon their mere natural resources as though they were cast upon them, but to look to God in that hour. This opening to them of the source of help was not to induce indolence, but confidence, and prayer. How far such fearful persecutions of true believers will be repeated, as the coming of Christ draws nigh, has yet to be seen. Witness the French Revolution and the Romish Inquisition, which have stained history with blood, and a revival of which is again threatened, both by Infidelity and Popery.

12. This persecution would even be carried on in families, and would set

13 And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.

¶ 14 But when ye shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing where it ought not, (let him that readeth understand,) then let them that be in Judea flee to the mountains:

15 And let him that is on the house-top not go down into the house, neither enter therein, to take any thing out of his house:

16 And let him that is in the field not turn back again for to take up his garment.

17 But woe to them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days!

18 And pray ye that your flight be not in the winter.

<sup>e</sup> Lu. 6.22. <sup>f</sup> Jno. 17.14. <sup>g</sup> Da. 12.12. Re. 2.10. <sup>g</sup> Da. 9.27.

dearest friends in severest hostility to each other.

13. This shows them the universal opposition and hostility which their discipleship was to involve. But they are to remember that this should come to them as a sign of that coming in which their salvation is promised, as a certain consequence of their endurance in the faith to the end.

§ 128. THE SIGNS OF CHRIST'S COMING AT THE DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM AND AT THE END OF THE WORLD.—*Mt. of Olivet.*

Third day of the week.

Matt.	Mark,	Luke.	John.
24. 15-42.	13. 14-37.	21. 20-36.	

14. Our Lord's reference, here, to the prophecy of Daniel, shows that the discourse has a reference to the end of all things, which Daniel prophesies: and that the destruction of Jerusalem is to be understood as an immediate fulfilment of that which is

19 For<sup>a</sup> in those days shall be affliction, such as was not from the beginning of the creation which God created, unto this time, neither shall be.

20 And except that the Lord had shortened those days, no flesh should be saved: but for the elect's sake, whom he hath chosen, he hath shortened the days.

21 And then if any man shall say to you, Lo,<sup>b</sup> here is Christ;

<sup>a</sup> Da. 12.1. Joel 2.2. <sup>b</sup> Lu. 17.23.

yet future in its final accomplishment.

19. Josephus uses very similar language, in giving the history. "All the distresses which ever happened from the beginning," he says, "seem to me to be small in comparison of these which happened to the Jews."

20. *Those days.* That is, of affliction, v. 19. ¶ *No flesh.* That is none of the nation. These days were shortened in the Divine counsels, and by the Providential circumstances. The Jews were divided into factions which prevented their preparing for the siege. The magazines of corn and provisions were burnt before Titus arrived: and his sudden arrival led the Jews to abandon part of the fortifications. Titus confessed that such fortifications could have withstood all human power, and that God must have fought with him, or he could not have conquered them. We are to expect some such providential shortening of the days before the great final coming.

24. See the use of these terms to denote troubles, disturbances and disasters in society: Isa. 5: 30. 13: 10. 34: 4. Jer. 4: 28. Eze. 32: 7, 8.—Amos 8: 9, 10. Mi. 3: 6. See also Joel 3: 4, and Hag. 2: 6, 21, compared with Acts 2: 19, Heb. 12: 26, 27. These figures denote here the dissolution of the Jewish state, which should typify also and foreshadow the destruction of the world. See notes on Luke 21: 25, 26.

24. All the three Evangelists who record these signs of Christ's coming,

or, lo, *he is* there; believe *him* not:

22 For false Christs and false prophets shall rise, and shall shew signs and wonders, to seduce, if it *were* possible, even the elect.

23 But<sup>c</sup> take ye heed: behold, I have foretold you all things.

24 But in those days, after that tribulation,<sup>d</sup> the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light;

<sup>c</sup> 2 Pe. 3.17. <sup>d</sup> Da. 12.1. Zep. 1.15-17.

agree in beginning a new paragraph at this point. Matthew reads, "Immediately (or suddenly) after the tribulation of those days;" and Mark, "But in those days after that tribulation"—the phrase 'in those days' showing the general designation of the time, which Luke notes by the phrase "the times of the Gentiles." They agree, also, in placing here the signs in sun, moon, and stars, which express a dissolution of civil states and of worldly institutions—"those things which are seen, as of those which are made"—(human) Heb. 12: 27. This corresponds with the dissolution of the Jewish state, and of that existing order of things, civil and religious, which was identified by Peter in the Acts (2: 19) as being that which Joel describes, under these very peculiar images. Observe, these overturnings are thus shown to be in connexion with the outpouring of the Spirit. "*This is that.*" Acts 2: 17.—The three Evangelists agree in placing here a coming of the Son of man. And the connexion favors the understanding of this brief paragraph as a general reference to the last days, and as in parenthesis (v. 30) looking back to the event before discoursed of. Meanwhile the language does not forbid a reference in these verses to a powerful and glorious coming, (not in visible person, but by the Spirit and with power, as at Pentecost, Acts 2: 19) which was thus a type of this greater event. This would be our Lord's *premillennial*

25 And <sup>a</sup> the stars of heaven shall fall, and the powers that are in heaven shall be shaken.

26 And <sup>b</sup> then shall they see the Son of man coming in the clouds, with great power and glory.

27 And then shall he send his angels, and shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from the uttermost part of the earth to the uttermost part of heaven.

28 Now learn a parable of the fig-tree; When her branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is near:

29 So ye in like manner, when

<sup>a</sup> Isa. 13.10. 24.20,23. Jer. 4.23. 2Pe. 3.10,12. Rev. 6.12-14. 20.11. <sup>b</sup> Da. 7.9-14. Matt. 16.27. 24.30. ch. 14.62. Acts 1.11. 1 Th. 4.16. 2 Th. 1.7,10. Rev. 1.7.

coming to establish his millennial kingdom—not in person any more than at Jerusalem's destruction, but with power. But his final and personal coming is pointed to in plain terms, and more fully given by Matthew. See chapter 25. His coming in power to establish his millennial kingdom will be attended with sore judgments, and awful manifestations, to which we cannot be indifferent. And then when these things begin to come to pass, believers may lift up their heads, for their redemption draweth nigh. His final coming to Judgment must be regarded as the great ultimate reference, that exhausts the prediction.

26, &c. See notes on Matthew and Luke.

28. The fig tree begins to leaf about the time of Passover.

30. *This generation.* Some refer this to the *nation*—that they should be kept remarkably in existence as such, till the end. But it seems rather to refer to the impending destruction and to have them look for it, before all who were then living should have passed away. This does not hinder a further reference, for as yet he had spoken prominently of the things belonging to this one event which was so near.—*After this he enlarges upon the greater*

ye shall see these things come to pass, know that it is nigh, *even* at the doors.

30 Verily I say unto you, that this generation shall not pass, till all these things be done.

31 Heaven and earth shall pass away: <sup>c</sup> but my words shall not pass away.

32 But of that day and *that* hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father.

33 Take <sup>d</sup> ye heed, watch and pray; for ye know not when the time is.

<sup>c</sup> Isa. 40.8. <sup>d</sup> Matt. 24.42. 25.13. Lu. 12.40. 21.34. Ro. 13.11,12, 1 Th. 5.6. Rev. 16.15.

coming which is yet future. See Matt. 25. Though verses 26 and 27 are a brief winding up of Mark's record, including the general reference to the last times, this verse 30 evidently looks back to the chief topic of the preceding discourse, as though these verses were in parenthesis. They are merely a brief application of the prophecy to the great event yet future—while "all these things" refer to the event more at hand. This is still more plain from v. 32 which follows at once. "But of *that day*," in direct contrast with "*these things*"—the *latter* known and near—the *former* so remarkably unknown. The term 'that day' is so used 2 Tim. 4: 8.

32. *Neither the Son.* The manner of introducing this clause shows that it was to be understood only in a certain sense. As though he had said, in the way of climax—"Nay, *there is a sense* in which even *the Son* does not know the time." Bengel remarks that the apostle was able both to know and not to know in regard to his death; Phil. 1: 25: and the Lord Jesus did not know of this in his commission so as to make it known. Olshausen observes, that as Christ himself is set for the fall and rising *o* many, so also is his second coming. Ignorance of the time forms to unbo-

34 *For the Son of man* is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch.

35 Watch ye therefore; for ye know not when the master of the

house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cock-crowing, or in the morning;

36 Lest coming suddenly, he find you sleeping. <sup>a</sup>

37 And what I say unto you, I say unto all, Watch. <sup>b</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Matt. 25.5. <sup>b</sup> ver. 33,35.

believers a ground for carnal security—but to believers a motive for watchfulness.—The same is implied in the language of Matthew, ‘my Father only,’ ch. 24: 36. Yet it comports more with Mark’s gospel to state this. (See Introduction.) The passage agrees with those which recognize the Father as he to whom the Son “is subject” in his mediatorial office—to whom “he will deliver up the kingdom,” &c. 1 Cor. 15: 24, 28. This, therefore, is one of “the times and the seasons which the Father hath put in his own power.” See Acts 1: 7. This belonged to his state of humiliation, and to the human point of view. Yet he is particular here to speak of himself as “THE SON.” And so, commonly, in the New Testament, where the humanity of Christ is set forth, it is in connexion with a name that speaks his Divinity. 1 Cor. 2: 8. Acts 3: 15. “He, who, as respects his Godhead, is the Son—yet in his state of humiliation and of himself, he knew nothing of the day and hour.” pp. 131, 442, *Da Costa*. As a man he increased in wisdom, (Luke 2: 52) learned obedience (Heb. 5: 8) prayed to the Father (Luke 6: 12.) Alford thinks that this disclaimer of knowledge as to the day and the hour should be borne in mind in explaining the prophecy. But the whole discourse was intended, first, to keep before them the constant possibility of his coming; secondly, to show the impossibility of fixing upon a precise period.

34. This short parable is probably only the substance of the discourse which our Lord spoke in regard to watching, of which also Matthew gives some further ideas. The italics might

have been “It is as if a man,” that is, the whole transaction is such. ¶ *Taking a far journey*. The term means *going abroad, away from home*, and here it conveys the impression of our Lord’s absence being such as to make his return a matter of course, and to be expected. ¶ *Who left*. This and the following verb are participles, and construed directly with the closing verb, showing the whole as included in the householder’s arrangement, and all connected with his command to the porter, as he departed. ¶ *Gave authority*. See Matt. 24: 45. This authority, (a great power, says Bengel,) was given to his servants collectively, as is evident from the next clause, where the work of each is assigned severally. ¶ *The porter*. This is the *door-porter*, whose office it would be to look out for approaching travelers. This would seem to be an instance of the particular work assigned to each. To the one who was appointed as porter, it was commanded to watch, viz: to keep a look out for the benefit of the household. Ministers of the Word are *watchmen* for God’s church. Eze., 33: 35.

35. Yet *all* were to watch, and not the porter alone. Though it is made the minister’s duty to watch for souls, as having to give account, each man is as much commanded to watch for himself. ¶ *At even*. Luke refers to three watches, according to the division of time among the Jews. Mark here remarkably adopts the Roman enumeration, such as would be employed by Roman soldiers. This is used as an argument for Mark’s Roman origin. See Introduction, “*Author*.” *Da Costa* finds in this, some reason for thinking that Mark had a military training.

## CHAPTER XIV.

¶ **A**FTER two days the Passover, and of unleavened bread: and the chief priests and the scribes sought how they might take him by craft, and put *him* to death.

2 But they said, Not on the feast-day, lest there be an uproar of the people.

3 And <sup>a</sup> being in Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper, as he sat at meat, there came a woman having an alabaster-box of ointment

<sup>a</sup> Matt. 26.6, &c. Lu. 7.37. Jno. 12.1, &c.

36. *Sleeping.* This is the careless self security and indolence which is opposed to watching: not only *not watching*, but *sleeping!*

## CHAPTER XIV.

¶ 131. THE RULERS CONSPIRE. THE SUPPER AT BETHANY—JUDAS.—*Jerusalem. Bethany.*

Fourth day of the week.

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
26. 1-16.	14. 1-11.	22. 1-6.	12. 2-8.

1. *After two days.* This was Wednesday, and there were yet two days, in part, or the whole of Wednesday and Thursday, before the Passover. John mentions that he came to Bethany six days before the Passover, but does not say that the feast was made at once on his arrival. From Luke 19: 29, we learn that he was at Bethany on his way to Jerusalem, where he entered the first day of the week. And there, i. e. at Bethany, where Lazarus lived, but not necessarily in his house, the feast was made. ¶ *The Passover and.* These are put together, because the feast of unleavened bread began at the time of the Passover meal. These observances were distinct, yet, as unfermented or unleavened bread was to be eaten with the Passover lamb, the ordinances received a common name, as one and the same.

4. *Some.* John gives the fuller account, and brings to view the fact that

of <sup>1</sup> spikenard, very precious; and she brake the box, and poured it on his head<sup>1</sup>

4 And there were some that had indignation within themselves, and said, Why was this waste of the ointment made?

5 For it might have been sold for more than three hundred <sup>2</sup> pence, and have been given to the poor. And they murmured against her.

6 And Jesus said, Let her alone, why trouble ye her? she hath wrought a good work on me.

7 For <sup>b</sup> ye have the poor with

<sup>1</sup> or, *pure nard*; or, *liquid nard.* <sup>2</sup> See Matt. 18.28. <sup>b</sup> De. 15.11.

Judas Iscariot was the leader in this avaricious opposition, and *that* on pretence of caring for the poor. See John 12: 4. ¶ *Waste.* Literally, *perdition.* Bengel remarks, "*But thou, Judas, art the son of perdition!*"

5. *Three hundred pence*, or *denarii* in Roman money, equal to about forty dollars of ours. See notes and Fig. Matt. 26: 8. He who considered the value of three hundred pence as wasted on his Lord, was ready, soon after, to sell him for thirty pieces of silver, not half the amount! Judas will show himself beforehand, a mean hearted soul in the face of Christian charity.

6. The expression is stronger in the original, "a noble work."

7. This verse, with the preceding, though addressed to more than one, was meant chiefly for Judas, and perhaps, referred with proper reproach, to his office, as being this, of giving to the poor. Let those who *talk much* about the poor, see to it that they *do much*, also. And this they can do always, whensoever they will. And if any are murmured against, or reviled for noble acts of charity to the poor, for gathering the poor under the gospel, for giving to their temporal or spiritual elevation, the Master will vindicate such, and bless them with his favor, which is a great reward. For it is done to him, if done in his name. Matt. 25. 40.

you always, and whensoever ye will ye may do them good: but me ye have not always.

8 She hath done what she could: she is come aforehand to anoint my body to the burying.

9 Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, *this* also that she hath done shall be spoken of, for a memorial of her.

10 And<sup>a</sup> Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve, went unto the chief priests, to betray<sup>b</sup> him unto them.

11 And when they heard *it*, they

<sup>a</sup> Matt. 26.14, &c. Lu. 22.3, &c. <sup>b</sup> Juo. 13.2.

We may anoint his head and feet, by pouring the oil of gladness upon his suffering members. The Church is his *body*, on earth, Ep. 1:23.

8. *What she could.* This praise is more precious than the ointment, coming from such an one as Christ. It is like that which he passed upon the poor widow. "She hath cast in all that she had." Blessed are they of whom the Master will say, They have done what they could! But how different is the spirit of those who, instead of doing what they can, are always complaining of inability, and finding fault with God. Have they, who make their inability an excuse for impenitence, done what they could? Have they sought the Saviour in his word, in his ordinances, at the mercy seat, and cheerfully devoted themselves to do what they can in his service? How loving a Master would they find, and how ready to cheer and welcome them, saying, as to Mary, "They have done what they could," and pouring his blessing on their souls.

¶ *To anoint.* Literally, *to myrrh*, or to prepare with myrrh, as for embalming. ¶ *To the burying.* The Jewish custom was to wash the corpse immediately after death, with a warm infusion of camomile and rose, the object being to restore life if suspended, and to make the perfumes enter the pores more easily. Women were the persons former-

were glad, and promised to give him<sup>c</sup> money. And he sought how he might conveniently betray him.

¶ 12 And the first day of<sup>d</sup> unleavened bread, when they killed<sup>1</sup> the passover, his disciples said unto him, Where wilt thou that we go and prepare, that thou mayest eat the passover?

13 And he sendeth forth two of his disciples, and saith unto them, Go<sup>e</sup> ye into the city, and there shall meet you a man bearing a pitcher of water: follow him.

<sup>c</sup> 1 Ki. 21.20. Pr. 1.10-16. <sup>d</sup> Ex. 12.8, &c. 1 or sacrificed. <sup>e</sup> ch. 11.2.3. He. 4.13.

ly employed in that office. The two Marys went to the sepulchre with spices, ch. 16:1. This may have been only a way in which our Lord would remind them of his approaching death, without meaning to say that she came with this view, only, that it should serve such a purpose. Yet as our Lord had often announced his death as near, she may have had a firm persuasion of *this*.

9. This may be regarded as a distinct prophetic intimation of the universal circulation of the Gospel narratives by means of the *written word*. In this way it is every where published, far as the Gospel is preached; and in this way, alone, could this be strictly fulfilled.

‡ 132. PREPARATION FOR THE PASSOVER.—*Jerusalem, Bethany.*

Fifth day of the week.

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
26. 17-19.	14. 12-16.	22. 7-13.	

12. See note on v. 1. For harmonizing this with John's more scattered remarks about the paschal feast, see notes on Matt. 26:19. All difficulty is cleared away by observing that John, (who does not detail the ceremonies of the Paschal meal, nor give any account of the Passover or Lord's Supper, as the rest had done,) uses the term Passover to signify the Paschal feast as a whole, and not the Paschal meal. The

14 And wheresoever he shall go in, say ye to the good man of the house, The Master<sup>a</sup> saith, Where is the guest-chamber, where I shall eat<sup>b</sup> the passover with my disciples?

15 And he will shew you a large upper room, furnished *and* prepared: there make ready for us.

16 And his disciples went forth, and came into the city, and found<sup>c</sup> as he had said unto them: and they made ready the passover.

¶ 17 And in the evening he cometh with the twelve.

¶ 18 And as they sat and did eat, Jesus said, Verily I say unto you, One of you which eateth<sup>d</sup> with me shall betray me.

<sup>a</sup> Jno. 11.28. 13.13. <sup>b</sup> Re. 3.20. <sup>c</sup> Jno. 16.4.  
<sup>d</sup> Ps. 41.9. 55.13,14.

feast lasted from the 14th to the 21st of Abib or Nisan.

### PART VIII.

*The Fourth Passover. The circumstances, &c. until the end of the Jewish Sabbath.*

Time, two days.

‡ 133. THE PASSOVER MEAL. CONTENTION AMONG THE TWELVE.—*Jerusalem.*

Evening, introducing the sixth day of the week.

Matt. 26. 20. | Mark. 14. 17. | Luke. 22. 14-18, 24-30. | John.

This section is given more at length in Luke's narrative. See notes. After this we have in John, an account of the washing of the disciples' feet by our Lord. Ch. 16: 1.

17. *In the evening.* "When the hour was come," appointed by the law. Lu. 22: 14. That was at evening, between the 14th and 15th of the month—the common point of both days and about sunset.

‡ 135. JESUS POINTS OUT THE TRAITOR. JUDAS WITHDRAWS.

Matt. 26. 21-25 | Mark. 14. 18-21 | Luke. 22. 21-23 | John. 13. 21-35

18. The company consisted of our

19 And they began to be sorrowful, and to say unto him one by one, *Is it I?* and another *said, Is it I?*

20 And he answered and said unto them, *It is one of the twelve, that dippeth with me in the dish.*

21 The Son of man indeed goeth, as it is written of him: but woe to that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! good<sup>e</sup> were it for that man if he had never been born.

¶ 22 And<sup>f</sup> as they did eat, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and brake *it*, and gave to them, and said, Take,<sup>g</sup> eat; this is my body.

23 And he took the cup; and

<sup>e</sup> Matt. 18.6,7. <sup>f</sup> Matt. 26.26.&c. Lu. 22.19 1 Cor. 11.23.&c. <sup>g</sup> Jno. 6.48-58.

Lord and the twelve. The usual Paschal company and the fewest allowed, was ten, and there could not be over twenty present. These would use all the lamb.

20. *In the dish.* The Figure shows the mode of eating. See Fig. Matt. 23: 7.



‡ 137. THE LORD'S SUPPER.

Evening, introducing the sixth day of the week.

Matt. 26. 26-29. | Mark. 14. 22-25. | Luke. 22. 19-20. | John.

22. *As they did eat.* That is, while they were eating the ordinary Pascha meal, our Lord instituted the Sacramental Supper, as an ordinance for the New Testament church, to take the place of the Passover. See Paul's account of the institution of the Supper 1 Cor. 11: 23-25. ¶ *This is my body.* All who are familiar with the Greek



when he had given thanks, he gave *it* to them: and they all drank of it.

24 And he said unto them, This *is* my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many.

25 Verily I say unto you, I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine, until that day that I drink *it* new in the kingdom of God.

¶ 26 And when they had sung an *h*ymn, they went out into the mount of Olives.

¶ 27 And Jesus saith unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night; for it is written, *c* I will smite the

*a* 1 Cor. 10.16. *Jno.* 6.53. *b* Joel 3.18. *Amos* 9.13,14. *or, psalm.* *c* Zec. 13.7.

will observe how impossible it is that these words should mean that the bread is his body. The pronoun is not in the same gender as the term for *bread*, and hence cannot refer to that. But it is in the neuter gender, meaning "this thing" here represented, is my body.

25. *New.* The high priest, when he came out from the Holy of Holies, kept a feast of joy with his friends, for his coming out safe was a mark of his acceptance. Else he would have perished there. At that feast they drank *new wine*. Our Lord may here allude to this custom, meaning that he should not sink in his work, in the great offering which he should make as our Great High Priest—and then, when his acceptance was shown by the acceptance and in-gathering of all his people, he would feast with them together in his Father's kingdom. See Showers, Sac. Dis. old book.

26. See Harmony, ¶142.

¶ 136. JESUS FORETELLS THE FALL OF PETER, AND THE DISPERSION OF THE TWELVE.—*Jerusalem.*

Evening, introducing the sixth day of the week.

Matt. 26.31-35 | Mark. 14.27-31 | Luke. 22.31-38 | John. 13.36-38

27. According to our Harmony, Ju-

Shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered.

28 But *d* after that I am risen, I will go before you into Galilee.

29 But *e* Peter said unto him, Although all shall be offended, yet *will* not I.

30 And Jesus saith unto him, Verily I say unto thee, That this day, *even* in this night, before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice.

31 But he spake the mor. vehemently, If I should die with thee, I will not deny thee in any wise. Likewise also said they all.

¶ 32 And *f* they

*d* ch. 16.7. *e* Matt. 26.33,34. *Lu.* 22.33,34. *Jno.* 13.37, 38. *f* Matt. 26.36,&c. *Lu.* 22.39,&c. *Jno.* 18.1,&c.

das has now gone out, and this is addressed in earnestness to the rest.

28. This is, perhaps, the substance of Zechariah's last clause in the prophecy, (ch. 13: 7,) quoted above, viz: "I will turn my hand (with care) upon the little ones." His promise is to *go before them*, (like a shepherd—the good shepherd, see John 10: 4,) into Galilee, whither they would naturally return. See Matt. 28: 7, 10: 16.

29. To this self-confident boast, our Lord refers, when, after the repentance of Peter, and after his own resurrection, he asks him thrice, as often as he had denied him, "Lovest thou me more than these?" John 21: 15, &c.

30. *Crow twice.* The other Evangelists only speak generally "before the cock crows." But it is well known that there was a watch of the night called the "cock-crowing," which was very early in the morning, before day, at about three o'clock. Yet there was also a cock-crowing at midnight, which, however, few would commonly hear, but which is here included expressly. When only the cock-crowing is spoken of, that at, or about 3 o'clock, A. M. is meant. It must be remembered that the Jewish day commenced with the evening. Peter stands here as a rep-

came to a place which was named Gethsemane; and he saith to his disciples, Sit ye here, while I shall pray.

33 And he taketh with him Peter and James and John, and began to be sore amazed, and to be very heavy;

34 And saith unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful unto death: tarry ye here, and watch.

35 And he went forward a little, and fell on the ground, and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him.

a Jno. 12. 27. b He. 5. 7.

36 And he said, Abba, Father, all things are possible unto thee; take away this cup from me; nevertheless not what I will, but what thou wilt.

37 And he cometh, and findeth them sleeping, and saith unto Peter, Simon, sleepest thou? couldest not thou watch one hour?

38 Watch ye, and pray, lest ye enter into temptation: The spirit truly is ready, but the flesh is weak.

39. And again he went away, and prayed and spake the same words.

40 And when he returned, he

c Ro. 8. 15. Ga. 4. 6. d Ps. 40. 8. Jno. 4. 34. 5. 30. 6. 38, 39. 18. 11. Ph. 2. 8. e Ro. 7. 18-25. Ga. 5. 17.

representative of all disciples who deny or forget Christ—and the watchful bird that cries in the night is that warning voice which speaketh once, yea, twice, to call them to repentance. Rom. 13: 11, 12.—*Alford.*

#### § 142. THE AGONY IN GETHSEMANE.— *Mount of Olives.*

Evening, introducing the sixth day of the week.

Matt. 26. 30, 36-46 | Mark. 14. 26, 32-42 | Luke. 22. 39-46 | John.

32. *Gethsemane.* This place, so named, lies along the path that ascends the Mount of Olives, just beyond the small foot bridge that crosses the brook Kedron. We found it walled in by a high and heavy stone wall, poorly stuccoed, which had been built in 1849 by the Latin monks. We were allowed to enter by a narrow gateway, as workmen were engaged in the enclosure at some stone work around a well in the N. W. corner. The ground was stripped of every natural appearance, the sod was entirely removed, nothing remaining to designate it but the eight old olive trees. The ground had been freshly dug up, and rose bushes set out, one of which bore a solitary rose. I asked a monk for what purpose this was done. He replied, "for the Mother of God." This rose was for the altar of the chapel of the Virgin, near at hand. Every thing is made to minister to their

Romish superstitions. Even the twigs from the olive trees they are accustomed to sell to pilgrims. We found the garden wall, on measurement, to be 168 feet on the N. side, and 180 feet on the W. side, and 12 feet high. The olive trees are gnarled and irregular, bearing every appearance of great antiquity. One of the trunks we found to be 23 feet in the midst, and 36 feet at the base. ¶ *Sit ye here, &c.* So Abraham, Gen. 22: 5.

33. *Peter, James and John.* These were the three favored disciples of the chosen twelve. Their very different characters show a kind of type of the varieties in the church, which are consistent with its essential unity: not all Johns, nor all Peters, but all Christians, so far as they follow Christ. ¶ *Began.* As never before.

34, 35. Gethsemane lies at the foot of the Mount of Olives, very gradually sloping from the brook Kedron. Here, says Stier, our Lord unites as Priest and victim the faith of Abraham and the patience of Isaac. ¶ *A little.* In that retired spot, in the deep ravine, are these four persons, and one in deepest agony, under cover of the evening.

36. *Not what I will.* Here is the awful struggle and submission of his human will, that will which, in his people, is often so resisting and obdurate. Oh for a part in this perfect obedience and be it the pattern also of our own

found them asleep again (for their eyes were heavy,) neither wist they what to answer him.

41 And he cometh the third time, and saith unto them, Sleep on now, and take *your* rest: it is enough, the <sup>a</sup> hour is come: behold, the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners.

<sup>a</sup> Jno. 7.30. 8.20. 13.1.

¶ 142. THE AGONY IN GETHSEMANE.—  
*Mount of Olives.*

Evening, introducing the sixth day of the week.

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
26.30,36-46	14.26,32-42	22.39-46	

37. *Simon.* Our Lord calls him *Simon*, says Stier, "*for here he was no Peter,*" no rock. The Scripture surely never meant to be understood that the Church was built upon this man, who so often showed himself to be no rock, and above all, not the rock on which the Church should stand, and resist the powers of Hell.

38. *The spirit.* Here he explains how this shrinking was due to his human nature.

41. *The third time.* After he had made a *third* prayer. See Matt. 26: 44, in the same words. ¶ *Sinners.* The contact with sin was the great agony, as our Lord bore the load of sin.

¶ 143. JESUS BETRAYED AND MADE PRISONER.—*Mount of Olives.*

Evening, introducing the sixth day of the week.

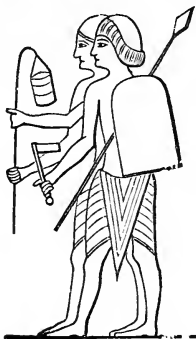
Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
26.47-56	14.43-52	22.47-53	18.2-12

43. *A great multitude.* These were "Captains of the temple," (Luke 22: 52,) and a detachment of the Roman cohort, which was stationed in the tower of Antonia, during the feast, in case of tumult, (John 18: 3,) besides servants of the High Priest. Luke 22: 51. John describes them as having lanterns and torches and weapons. The figure here given shows the kind of hand lanterns carried in the East. Commonly, persons are not allowed to go through the streets at night without lanterns. The torches were usually of pitch, or wax or resinous wood. The lanterns

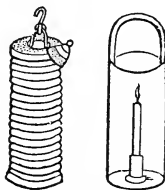
42 Rise up, let us go; lo, he that betrayeth me is at hand.

¶ 43 And <sup>b</sup> immediately, while he yet spake, cometh Judas, one of the twelve, and with him a great multitude <sup>c</sup> with swords and staves, from the chief priests <sup>d</sup> and the scribes and the elders.

<sup>b</sup> Matt. 26.47. Lu. 22.47, &c. Jno. 18.3, &c. <sup>c</sup> Ps. 71, 2. <sup>d</sup> Ps. 2.2.



now made are various. Some we used like the left hand figure below, of this



white muslin on a wire frame, which can be stretched out, or pressed into a small compass. Oil, wax, or pitch can be burnt in them.

44. *A token*—*συσσημουν*. The term here is quite different from that in Matthew rendered "*sign*." It is a military sign, a watchword used to distinguish friends from enemies in war. *Weistein's Annotations.*

44-50. See notes on Matt. 26: 49-50.

51. *A certain young man.* *Townson,*

44 And he that betrayed him had given them a token, saying, Whomsoever I shall kiss, <sup>a</sup> that same is he: take him, and lead *him* away safely.

45 And as soon as he was come, he goeth straightway to him, and saith, Master, <sup>b</sup> Master; and kissed him.

46 And they laid their hands on him, and took him.

47 And one of them that stood by drew a sword, and smote a servant of the high priest, and cut off his ear.

48 And Jesus answered and said unto them, Are ye come out, as against a thief, with swords and *with* staves to take me?

49 I was daily with you in the temple, teaching, and ye took me not: but the scriptures <sup>c</sup> must be fulfilled.

50 And <sup>d</sup> they all forsook him and fled.

51 And there followed him a certain young man, having a linen

<sup>a</sup> 2 Sa. 20.9. Ps. 55.21. Pr. 27.6. <sup>b</sup> Lu. 6.46. <sup>c</sup> Ps. 22. Isa. 53. Lu. 24.44. <sup>d</sup> Ps. 88.8. Isa. 63.3. ver. 27.

Davidson and others, suppose this to have been Mark himself, as there seems to be no other reason for this incident being here introduced into the narrative; and in such case, the withholding of the name would seem to be out of modesty and humility, as with the Evangelist John. If the young man was indeed the Evangelist Mark, an eye-witness of what he here relates, and himself in danger with the Saviour from having been mistaken for a disciple, afterwards converted to Christ and finally this writer himself—we see every reason for its being introduced here, but not otherwise. This, also, would explain its being narrated by Mark only. And the manner of speaking—“a certain young man”—is like that of John, ‘that other disciple.’

cloth cast about *his* naked *body*, and the young men laid hold on him:

52 And he left <sup>e</sup> the linen cloth, and fled from them naked.

¶ 53 And <sup>f</sup> they led Jesus away to the high priest: and with him were assembled all the chief priests and the elders and the scribes.

54 And Peter followed him afar off, even into the palace of the high priest: and he sat with the servants, and warmed himself at the fire.

55 And the chief priests and all the council sought for witness against Jesus to put him to death; and found none.

56 For <sup>g</sup> many bare false witness against him, but their witness agreed not together.

57 And there arose certain, and bare false witness against him, saying,

58 We heard him say, I will <sup>h</sup> destroy this temple that is made

<sup>e</sup> ch. 13.6. <sup>f</sup> Matt. 26.57, & c. Lu. 22.54, & c. Jno. 18. 13, & c. <sup>g</sup> Ps. 35.11. <sup>h</sup> ch. 15.29. Jno. 2.19.

¶ 144 & 145. JESUS BEFORE CAIAPHAS. HE DECLARES HIMSELF TO BE THE CHRIST. PETER'S DENIALS.—*Jerusalem.*

Midnight and dawn, introducing the sixth day of the week.

Matt. 26. 57-75 | Mark. 14. 53-72 | Luke. 22. 54-71 | John. 18. 13-27

53. *To the High Priest.* This was in the house of Caiaphas. John tells us that he first questioned our Lord. Then he retired, leaving Christ alone with the officers, who took the opportunity to strike and insult him. Some think that our Lord was, after that, summoned to appear before the Council, who had met in another room, and that, as he was led thither, he passed by the place where Peter was, and *looked on him*. See Luke, 22: 61.

with hands, and within three days I will build another made without hands.

59 But neither so did their witness agree together.

60 And the high priest stood up in the midst, and asked Jesus, saying, Answerest thou nothing? What is it which these witness against thee? <sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Matt. 26.62, &c.

56. *Agreed not.* Were not corresponding or consistent with each other. Matt. has it, "though many false witnesses came, yet found they none." That is, they found none suitable and available for their purpose, because of their conflicting evidence. So it is found that falsehood contradicts itself, and so it is also found true, "Be sure your sins will find you out."

57. *Certain.* Matthew says there were two. Buxtorf, a Jewish scholar, in his Talmudic Lexicon, cites the following Rabbinical testimony, admitting the subornation of false witnesses against Christ, for his crucifixion, and vindicating it by law. "Against none of those guilty of death by the law are snares to be laid, except against one who has endeavored to pervert another to idolatry and strange worship. And then it is done thus: They light a candle in an inner room, and place the witness in an outer, so that they may see him and hear his voice, without his seeing them. And so they did to the son of Satda (Mary). They placed men privately in the next room, to witness against him in Jud (Jud or Judea), and hanged him upon the cross, on the evening of the Passover."—*Hales' Analysis of Chronology V. III. page 299.* So the Romanists argue that falsehood, perjury and murder are allowable in serving the Romish Church! What better evidence can there be of their apostacy?

58. The false witness here consisted in their knowingly giving a false sense to his words. Matt. (ch. 26: 61,) has it in different terms, and perhaps their

61 But <sup>b</sup> he held his peace, and answered nothing. Again the high priest asked him, and said unto him, Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?

62 And Jesus said, I am: <sup>c</sup> and ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.

<sup>b</sup> Ps. 39.9. Isa. 53.7. 1 Pe. 2.23. <sup>c</sup> Da. 7.13. Matt. 24.30. 26.64. Lu. 22.69. Re. 1.7.

language also differed in this way. At any rate, the difference makes a great change in the sense—as it makes him an enemy of the temple.

59. In this testimony they were not consistent with each other, and so, in these repeated attempts, they denied themselves, and showed their malicious purpose. He had only used the terms in their highest sense. The Temple was the sanctuary for the dwelling of God among men. But now his body was the true sanctuary, and he was Immanuel, God with us. In that saying, therefore, he spoke of the real temple, his own body, which was then before them, and which was "THIS temple," in distinction from that other temple on Moriah. He needed not to indicate this by a gesture, as some suppose.

60. The High Priest complained of his silence. He wished further evidence which would justify his condemnation before the people. He had thought there would have been some denial, or attempt to explain. John declares the saying of Christ to be true; only that he spake of the temple of his body. John 2: 19-22.

61. Our Lord was silent, because he did not feel compelled to answer these malicious charges. Besides, he would not now explain these mysterious words that were so full of meaning. The events, so near, would soon make them clear. ¶ *The Blessed.* This was a name familiar to the Jews in their worship as applying to Jehovah.

62. Our Lord would answer no further than to declare himself the Judge

63 Then the high priest rent<sup>a</sup> his clothes, and saith, What need we any further witnesses?

64 Ye have heard the blasphemy: what think ye? And they all condemned him to be guilty of death.

65 And some began to spit<sup>b</sup> on him and to cover his face, and to buffet him, and to say unto him, Prophecy: and the servants did strike him with the palms of their hands.

66 And<sup>c</sup> as Peter was beneath in the palace, there

<sup>a</sup> Isa. 37.1. <sup>b</sup> Isa. 50.6. ch. 15.19. <sup>c</sup> Matt. 26.69,&c. Lu. 22.55.&c. Jno. 18.16,&c.

who would vindicate his claims, and would hold all to account. Besides, Christ began to be glorified, already from the time of his betrayal. John 13: 31. His 'coming,' which all should see, would give the most fearful and conclusive proof, of his being the Christ, the Son of God. He should come, not as now in weakness, but on the right hand of power—'sitting'—as they sat—to judge.

63-4. "The council having judged that Jesus, the Son of Joseph, born at Bethlehem, had profaned the name of God by usurping it to himself, a mere citizen, applied to him the law of blasphemy and the law in Deut. 13: and 18: 20, according to which, every prophet, even he who works miracles, must be punished when he speaks of a God unknown to the Jews and their fathers." *Greenleaf's Testimony*. ¶ *Rent his clothes*. This was judicially and solemnly done by the members of the Sanhedrim, rising from their seats, when the crime was testified to. Only one witness was permitted to repeat the words—the others simply stating that they heard the same which he had related. *Mishna, Part 4. Tract de Syned*, ch. 7: 25. See 2 Kings, 18: 37. See Matt. 27: 26, note ¶ *Condemned him*. This was their eager haste, and as it was against law

cometh one of the maids of the high priest.

67 And when she saw Peter warming himself, she looked upon him, and said, And thou also wast with Jesus of Nazareth.

68 But he denied, <sup>d</sup> saying, I know not, neither understand I what thou sayest. And he went out into the porch; and the cock crew.

69 And a maid saw him again and began to say to them that stood by, This is *one* of them.

70 And he denied it again. And

<sup>d</sup> 2 Ti. 2.12,13.

for the Sanhedrim to pass sentence thus, in the night, they may have confirmed their acts in the morning. We read that they at least counselled further in the morning (ch. 15: 1. Matt. 27: 1. Luke 22: 66-71) to carry out their plan, by leading him to Pilate, who alone had power to put him to death.

65. Luke tells us that these indignities were done not by the council, but by 'the men who held Jesus,' (Luke 22: 63) and here it is added, 'the servants did strike him,' &c. The rending of the High Priest's garment so openly proclaimed the charge of blasphemy, that it was calculated to affect the beholders also who were outside the judgment hall, and so to turn the tide of popular indignation against him. ¶ *Prophecy*. Luke's account throws light upon this; for he tells us that, it was when they had blindfolded him they so cried.

66. This verse connects with v. 54, and continues the narrative in regard to Peter—which see. Matthew and Mark have related first in order, the trial before Caiaphas: though Peter's denials were going on in another spot (the lower hall, *beneath*.) See 'Synopsis of the Harmony' and notes on Matthew and Luke. ¶ *In the palace*. The word is the same which in Luke

a little after, they that stood by said again to Peter, Surely thou art *one* of them; for thou art a Galilean, <sup>a</sup> and thy speech agreeth *thereto*.

71 But he began to curse and to swear, *saying*, I know not this man of whom ye speak.

72 And the second time the cock crew. And Peter called to mind the word that Jesus said unto him, Before the cock crow twice thou shalt deny me thrice. And when <sup>1</sup> he thought thereon he wept. <sup>b</sup>

## CHAPTER XV.

¶ **A**ND straight-way in the morning the chief priests held a consultation <sup>c</sup> with the elders and

<sup>a</sup> Acts 2.7. 1 or, he wept abundantly: or, he began to weep. <sup>b</sup> 2 Cor. 7.10. <sup>c</sup> Ps. 2.2. Matt. 27.1, &c. Lu. 23. 1, &c. Jno. 18.25, &c. Acts 3.13. 4.26.

is translated *the hall*—meaning the open court—yet beneath the raised platform of the room where the council sat. How Peter came within the enclosure is narrated by John, ch. 18: 16.

72. *The cock crew.* This shows to us the time. The cock-crowing was the third watch of the night—between midnight and the third hour, or day-break. Matthew and Mark relate the trial before the denials of Peter; though they were going on, more or less, at the same time—the trial continuing afterward. Some suppose that after Christ was brought to the High Priest's palace, Caiaphas sent out to summon the Sanhedrim to an early meeting, and that, supposing they were in bed, some time would be necessary for them to assemble. But was not the excitement such—especially of these chief priests, elders and scribes, who formed that chief council of the Jews—and were they not so waiting upon Judas' plot of betrayal, as to be most likely all awake, and ready to assemble instantly and even tumultuously?

scribes and the whole council, and bound Jesus, and carried *him* away, and delivered *him* to Pilate.

2 And Pilate asked him, Art thou the King of the Jews? And he, answering, said unto him, Thou sayest it.

3 And the chief priests accused him of many things; but he answered nothing.

4 And Pilate asked him again, saying, Answerest thou nothing? behold how many things they witness against thee.

5 But <sup>d</sup> Jesus answered nothing; so that Pilate marvelled.

¶ 6 Now <sup>e</sup> at that feast he released unto them one prisoner, whomsoever they desired.

<sup>d</sup> Isa. 53.7. Jno. 19.9. <sup>e</sup> Matt. 27.15. Lu. 23.17. Jno. 18.39.

## CHAPTER XV.

§ 146. THE SANHEDRIM LEAD JESUS AWAY TO PILATE.—*Jerusalem.*

Sixth day of the week.

<sup>Matt.</sup> 27.1, 2, 11-14. | <sup>Mark.</sup> 15.1-5. | <sup>Luke.</sup> 23.1-5. | <sup>John.</sup> 18.28-38.

1. *A consultation.* The object of this was, as Matthew informs us, to devise means for putting Jesus to death, as they had determined. Matt. 27: 1. They planned now to take him before Pilate, as they had not the power to execute sentence of death.

2. *And Pilate asked him.* Pilate had already gone out to the people who were outside the judgment hall, and inquired what accusation they brought against him. John 18: 29. The question, therefore, which he here asks of Jesus, shows us that this was the substance of the charge which was brought against him, viz. that he said he was the Christ, a King. ¶ *Thou sayest it.* See Matt. 26: 64. This is still the reply in Syria, where one means to say to a challenge, *It is true*, and yet does not intend to answer directly. The

7 And there was *one* named Barabbas, *which lay* bound with them that had made insurrection with him, who had committed murder in the insurrection.

8 And the multitude, crying aloud, began to desire *him to do* as he had ever done unto them.

9 But Pilate answered them, saying, Will ye that I release unto you the King of the Jews?

10 (For he knew that the chief priests had delivered him for envy,<sup>a</sup>)

<sup>a</sup> Fr. 27.4. Ec. 4.4. Acts 13.45. Tit. 3.3.

sense is, It is just as thou sayest; thou sayest it as it is. But John tells us what else he said that staggered Pilate. John 18: 34-38.

3. *Many things.* The charges are given in Luke 23: 5, that he stirred up the people to sedition, even from Galilee to Jerusalem.

¶ 148. PILATE SEEKS TO RELEASE JESUS. THE JEWS DEMAND BARABBAS. —Jerusalem.

Sixth day of the week.

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
27. 15-26.	15. 6-15.	23. 13-25.	18. 39-40.

6. See notes on Matt. 27: 15. ¶ *He released.* That is, it was his custom. Luke says "For of necessity he must," &c. ch. 23: 17. Matthew has it, "he was wont." This remarkable practice which had come to belong to the pass-over, was an addition of their own, from tradition; yet it was ordered in providence as a striking illustration of what the Paschal redemption should accomplish, viz. to set the sinner free. It was an *elect* sinner: "whomsoever they desired." The vilest of the vile, even this leader of robbers and insurgents, was here released. And it was on Christ's account: that is, just for Christ taking his place—standing in his stead—bearing the dreadful penalty of his crime, though he was Himself so innocent. Barabbas, we may suppose, could scarcely credit such an amazing, unexpected interposition, and

11 But the chief priests moved the people, that he should rather release <sup>b</sup> Barabbas unto them.

12 And Pilate answered, and said again unto them, What will ye then that I shall do *unto him* whom ye call the King <sup>c</sup> of the Jews?

13 And they cried out again, Crucify him.

14 Then Pilate said unto them, Why, what evil <sup>d</sup> hath he done? And they cried out the more exceedingly, Crucify him.

<sup>b</sup> Acts 3.14. <sup>c</sup> Ps. 2.6. Je. 23.5. Acts 5.31. <sup>d</sup> Isa. 53.9.

though Christ was condemned to this death, we know that he foresaw it and undertook it willingly!

8. This demand for the release of one, so far as the people were concerned, seems not to have been out of desire for Barabbas' release, but only to settle the question against Christ, and shut him off from this only provision. So in Luke we have it, "Away with this man, to release unto us Barabbas." The choosing of the world is a rejection of Christ. "He that is not with me is against me." In Matt. 27: 17, Pilate seems to have suggested Barabbas, perhaps in hope that between such a wretch and Christ, there would be no question but Christ would be released. And in vs. 11, we find that the priests had persuaded the people to call for the release of Barabbas.

10. We see Pilate's persuasion in favor of Christ, and that he knew something of his character and of the injustice of the charges against him. From Matthew we learn also that Pilate's wife had pleaded against his having anything to do with the condemnation, as she had had a fearful dream about him. She calls him "that just man."

11. The chief priests had moved the people to this end, and they acted under this influence.

13. *Crucify him.* They choose crucifixion as the usual Roman punish



15 And so Pilate, willing to content the people, released Barabbas unto them, ¶ and delivered Jesus, when he had scourged *him*, to be crucified.

¶ 16 And a th. soldiers led him away into the hall called Pretorium; and they call together the whole band.

17 And they clothed him with purple, and platted a crown of thorns, and put it about his *head*;

a Matt. 27.27. Jno. 18.28,33. 19.9.

ment for sedition, and because of their bitter enmity against Christ. It was the most cruel of deaths.

15. Before this decision to yield to the people, Pilate (as Matthew tells us) took water and washed his hands before them, wishing to have nothing to do with the condemnation. He had not firmness enough to follow his conviction of duty, and now he wished to shift the responsibility upon others. Men blame their circumstances, the evil influence of others, and excuse themselves for not serving God. But they cannot get rid of their responsibility by a wish or an act, "For every one of us must give an account of himself to God." (Rom. 14: 12.)

‡ 149. PILATE DELIVERS JESUS UP TO DEATH. HE IS SCOURGED AND MOCKED.—*Jerusalem.*

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
27.26-30.	15.15-19.	19.1-3	19.1-3

15. *Scourged him.* According to the Roman custom, the hands were bound to a column and the back was laid bare. The scourge was made of several thongs with a handle; the thongs were made rough with bits of iron or bone, for tearing the flesh, and thus fitted, it was called a *scorpion*. "The ploughers ploughed upon his back, they made long their furrows," was the prophecy so exactly fulfilled. (Ps. 129: 3.) Yet "by his stripes we are healed." (Isa. 53: 5. 1 Pet. 2: 24.) The Jews were limited to forty stripes,

18 And began to salute him, Hail, King of the Jews!

19 And they smote him on the head with a reed, and did spit <sup>d</sup> upon him, and bowing *their* knees, worshipped him.

¶ 20 And when they had mocked him, they took off the purple from him, and put his own clothes on him, and led him out to crucify him.

21 And they compel one Simon,

b ch. 13.65. c Job 13.9. Ps. 35.16. Matt. 20.19. ch. 10. 34. Lu. 22.63. 23.11.36.

but the Romans inflicted as many strokes as they pleased.

17. *Purple.* This term is used indefinitely, to signify different shades of red. ¶ *Thorns.* This shrub is common in Palestine.



19. This not only mocked Christ, but *mocked themselves*: for "every knee shall bow to him and every tongue confess." Rom. 15: 11.

Here John gives an account of another and last attempt of Pilate to gain the release of Jesus. See ‡ 150, John 14: 9-16. He brought him forth fresh from the scourging, with the

a Cyrenian, who passed by, coming out of the country, the father of Alexander and Rufus, to bear his cross.

22 And<sup>a</sup> they bring him unto the place Golgotha, which is, being interpreted, The place of a skull.

23 And they gave him to drink

<sup>a</sup> Matt. 27.33,&c. Lu. 23.33,&c. Jno. 19.17,&c.

hope of moving their sympathy.—“Behold the man.”

§ 151, given by Matthew alone, is the account of Judas' repentance and suicide.

§ 152. JESUS IS LED AWAY TO BE CRUCIFIED.—*Jerusalem.*

Sixth day of the week

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	Jona.
27. 31-34	15. 20-23	23. 26-33	19. 16-17

20. *Led him out.* The Jewish law required *three days* and the Roman law *ten days*, between the sentence and the execution. Here it was carried through with all possible haste.

21. *Alexander and Rufus.* Mark alone tells us of these sons of Simon. But Mark wrote this Gospel history at Rome, and in Romans 16: 13, we find mention made of a disciple named Rufus, of some note, who resided there. This is a coincidence in the writings of Mark and Paul, that could not have been designed: and hence it confirms the testimony. And Mark here refers to this Rufus who lived in the same city where he wrote, and must have known the particulars of the crucifixion from his father, who bore such a part in that event. See Blunt's Veracity, Sec. 1: 14. An Alexander is also mentioned, Acts 19: 33. Another in 1 Tim. 1: 20. Whether this is the same with either, or different from both, we cannot ascertain.

22, 23. See notes on Matthew.

§ 153. THE CRUCIFIXION.—*Jerusalem.*

Sixth day of the week.

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
27.35-38	15.24-28	23.33.34-38	19.18-24

25. *The third hour.* This note of the

wine mingled with myrrh: but he received it not.

¶ 24 And when they had crucified him, they<sup>b</sup> parted his garments, casting lots upon them, what every man should take.

25 And it was the third hour, and they crucified him

<sup>b</sup> Ps. 22 18

time when Christ was crucified, agrees with the other hours given in the rest of the history, and with the other Evangelists; excepting that John (ch. 19: 14,) says it was “about the sixth hour” when Christ was yet before Pilate. Many conjectures have been raised as to the mode of reconciling this one passage of John with all the particulars of the history. We cannot suppose this to be a mistake of the record as originally given. There is some evidence that it is an error in the Manuscript—since the Greek letter which is used for the figure 6, is easily mistaken for the figure 3. Some copies have the letter for 3 in John's narrative, the same as here. Others suppose that John's reckoning of time was different from that of the others, viz: the modern, instead of the Jewish, which would agree with all the facts, and make the sixth hour six o'clock in the morning, as the time when Christ was yet before Pilate. Others suppose it is best explained thus: The Jewish division of time made four parts in the day—3d, 6th, 9th and 12th hours. So that the 3d hour included the time to the 6th, and as they did not aim at giving the exact time, John says it was about the sixth hour, (past the third,) and Mark says the third including to the sixth. So that the whole is spoken generally as about that part of the day from nine o'clock till twelve. But it should be observed that Mark's object is to give the hour of the day, as in v. 33 he continues to report the time of the events—at the sixth and ninth hour. Whereas John's object is different, and he makes no other note of time than that of Christ's

26 And the superscription of his accusation was written over, **THE KING OF THE JEWS.**

27 And with him they crucify two thieves; the one on his right hand, and the other on his left.

28 And the scripture<sup>a</sup> was fulfilled, which saith, And he was numbered with the transgressors.

¶ 29 And<sup>b</sup> they that passed by railed on him, wagging their heads, and saying, Ah, thou<sup>c</sup> that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days,

30 Save thyself, and come down from the cross.

31 Likewise also the chief priests,

<sup>a</sup> Isa. 53.12. <sup>b</sup> Ps. 22.7. <sup>c</sup> ch. 14.58. Jno. 2.19.

being before Pilate, and states that in most general terms, "It was *about* the sixth hour." Without supposing any mistake in the copies of John's narrative, this seeming discrepancy is perfectly consistent with historical truth. A later explanation is given by Da Costa, that John's habit is to *reckon back* from the great event, speaking of the time as *so long before it*. John means here to show that Pilate was pressed by the need for a decision, as the time of the Jews' preparation was drawing on, and this too, a specially solemn preparation, as it occurred on the Passover day. John's meaning then, is, that Pilate, seeing there were only six hours for the whole transaction of sentence and execution before the holy time began, spoke now most decidedly. It was this solemn Passover preparation of the Sabbath, and about the sixth hour before the time. This would be nine o'clock in the morning—six hours before three P. M.—which agrees with Mark's time. A still better explanation is, that the clause in John is a parenthesis and means "For the preparation of the (Sabbath, on this) Passover (day) was, (or began) about the sixth hour"—that is, twelve o'clock. This would give the strong reason for

mocking, said among themselves with the scribes, He saved others; himself he cannot save.

32 Let Christ the King of Israel descend now from the cross, that we may see<sup>d</sup> and believe. And they that were crucified with him reviled him.

¶ 33 And<sup>e</sup> when the sixth hour was come, there was darkness over the whole land, until the ninth hour.

34 And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, <sup>f</sup>Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani? which is, being interpreted, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?<sup>g</sup>

<sup>d</sup> Ro. 3.3. 2 Ti. 2.13. <sup>e</sup> Matt. 27.45. Lu. 23.44. <sup>f</sup> Ps. 22.1. <sup>g</sup> Ps. 42.9. 71.11. La. 1.12.

Pilate's hastening the decision. And this is shown to agree with the fact that the Jews began preparation time about noon.—*Kitto's Journal*, VI. p.94, §23. See notes, v. 42.

§ 154. THE JEWS MOCK JESUS ON THE CROSS. HE COMMENDS HIS MOTHER TO JOHN.—*Jerusalem*.

Sixth day.

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
27.39-44	15.29-32	23.35-37, 39-43	

30-32. Compare this with the taunt of Satan in the wilderness. Matt. 4:6.

§ 155. DARKNESS PREVAILS. CHRIST EXPIRES ON THE CROSS.—*Calvary*.

Sixth day of the week.

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
27.45-50	15.33-37	23.44-46	

33. It is plain that Mark here aims at being particular in noting the time.

34. See notes on Matthew ¶ *Forsaken me*. This moment of dreadful agony on the cross, the summit of suffering, was a moment of the Father's hiding his face from the Son, who stood in sinners' place. Men are often offended at any idea of that strict justice which would require the penalty of sin to be met, even by such a glorious substitute. They complain of such a doctrine as giving harsh views of God,

35 And some of them that stood by, when they heard *it*, said, Behold, he calleth Elias.

36 And one ran and filled a sponge full of vinegar, and put *it* on a reed, and gave him to drink,

a Ps. 69.21.

as showing God to be severe, and not a God of love. But justice is part of his perfection, no less than love. And further, the penal infliction is demanded not more by the constitution of God's nature, than by *the constitution of our own nature*. God could not give peace without demanding that the penalty be met. But neither could we have peace in our consciences, without seeing the penalty met. God could not be satisfied unless justice is satisfied, for justice is a perfection of God's nature. But neither can our conscience be satisfied otherwise. Therefore, instead of this demand being severity in God, it is mercy. It is not only to satisfy himself, but also to satisfy us, that the penalty was to be suffered by Christ! It was, that the sinner seeing the desert of his sin visited upon the Saviour, might believe in him and be saved.

36. *With vinegar*. John throws light upon this, by telling us that he cried out, "*I thirst.*" ¶ *Elias*. Some misunderstanding the term *Eli*, meaning "My God," for the name "Elias," or purposely turning it into *jest*, said, "He calleth Elias."

37. Our blessed Lord expired about the ninth hour, v. 33. This was about three o'clock in the afternoon, the hour of prayer, and of the evening sacrifice. Acts 3:1. Thus, Christ died on Calvary about the same hour of the day that the Paschal lamb was offered in the temple, so that the substance and the shadow correspond, and meet in that wonderful hour when Christ cried "It is finished."

§ 156. THE VAIL OF THE TEMPLE RENT. THE GRAVES OPENED. THE WOMEN AT THE CROSS.

Sixth day of the week.

Mat. 27.51-56 | Mark. 15.38-41 | Luke. 23.45-47-49 | John

saying, Let alone; let us see whether Elias will come to take him down.

37 And <sup>b</sup> Jesus cried with a loud voice, and gave up the ghost.

¶ 38 And the vail

b Matt. 27.50. Lu. 23.46. Jno. 19.30.

38. See full explanation in notes on Matt. 27:51. The vail was rent after or immediately at the death of Christ, as a proper result of this. Infidels ask how this rending of the vail would become known, as none but the priests could have witnessed it, and they would not likely have disclosed the fact. But many priests were converted to the faith. And to those who believe the record to have been dictated by the Holy Ghost, there is no difficulty. He revealed it to the Evangelists. And though the event may seem trivial to a skeptic, or to one ignorant of the Scripture, it symbolized a most important reality. That vail had been the sacred screen of the Holy of Holies, forbidding the people to enter into this typical presence of God. But now this entrance was secured for them. And what was ceremonially gained by all the sacrifices, viz. that through the high priest, their representative, they could enter on the great day of atonement, is accomplished through the one Great High Priest, and "a way opened into the Holiest of all. Heb. 9:8. 10:20. This is for us. In his Epistle to the Hebrews, Paul makes distinct reference to this event, and to its most important meaning. ¶ *From the top*. This is added, and is full of meaning, as showing how thoroughly the way was opened and how utterly the Old Testament screen had been rent. And as the Apostle explains it (Heb. 10:19-20) that it signifies the *rent flesh* of our Lord, by which "the way is opened into the holiest—a new and living way"—we may draw boldness from this complete rending of the vail—that it is so entirely rent from top to bottom, that we may not merely *see into* the holiest, but *enter* into it. It is not merely an *opening* that was made, but

of the temple was rent in twain, from the top to the bottom.

39 And 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.

40 There were also women looking on afar <sup>a</sup> off; ; among whom was Mary Magdalene, and Mary

<sup>a</sup> Ps. 38.11.

a *passage way*. Matthew uses the same word for the rending of the rocks as for the rending of the vail. They were torn asunder with violence and rent indeed, like the vail. Fleming (Christology) mentions the testimony of an infidel who examined the rocks in the region of Calvary. He says, "I am sure this was never done by any earthquake, for then the clefts would have been according to the veins of the rock. But here it is quite otherwise, for the rocks are split across the veins in a most strange and preternatural manner. I thank God, he says, for a sight of this divine testimony to the Godhead of Christ." Such a rock was shown to us on the spot now called Calvary. It has a rent in the top, but as the base is covered by the flooring of the Holy Sepulchre, and as some doubt exists about the locality, we cannot be sure that this deserves such notice.

39. *Centurion*. Mark uses here a term from the Latin, and different from the other Evangelists. (See Introduction.) This officer was the commander of a regiment, consisting often of a hundred footmen, from which is the name "Centurion." ¶ *Over against him*. The Holy Spirit has thought this circumstance important enough to be recorded. The Centurion stood where he could see the Saviour fully. Matthew says, "watching Jesus," and though that Evangelist refers his impressions to "the earthquake, and those things that were done" (generally); Mark speaks particularly of the

the mother of James the less, and of Joses, and Salome;

41 (Who also, when he was in Galilee, followed him, and ministered <sup>b</sup> unto him; ) and many other women which came up with him unto Jerusalem.

¶ 42 And now when the even was come, because it was the preparation, that is, the day before the sabbath,

<sup>b</sup> Lu. 8.2,3.

outcry and expiring of our Lord as having moved him. ¶ *Cried out*. Literally, that *so crying out*, he expired. It was the manner of his outcry and death. We shall better understand this by referring to Luke's account of his dying outcry, viz. that "with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." ch. 23: 46. This address to the Father was doubtless convincing, and helped to satisfy this disbeliever of the peculiar relation which Christ sustained to the Father, as he claimed. ¶ *The Son of God*. This of course refers to the disputed claim of our Lord. This is the convincing power of Christ's death. Luke has it, "he glorified God." He testifies, though a Gentile. He is a representative of the Gentile world.

40. *Afar off*. See Notes on Matthew, 27: 55-56. The mother of Christ is not here mentioned: either as the object of the Evangelist was to name only such as followed him from Galilee, and ministered, (v. 41) or, as some think, because John had led away the mother of Christ at once to his home. ¶ *Among whom*. The same names are given here as in Matthew. Both omit Mary the mother of Jesus. Hence some suppose that John had at once taken her from the scene, after she had so been committed to his care by our Lord, (John 19: 26): that literally "from that hour" he took her to his own home. But at any rate she could not have been named with these, as having followed him from Galilee, ministering to him, &c.

43 Joseph of Arimathea, an honourable counsellor, which also waited<sup>a</sup> for the kingdom of God, came,

<sup>a</sup> Lu. 2.23,33.

and went in boldly unto Pilate, and craved the body of Jesus.

44 And Pilate marvelled if he

‡ 157. THE TAKING DOWN FROM THE CROSS. THE BURIAL.

Matt. 27. 57-61. | Mark. 15. 42-47. | Luke. 23. 50-56. | John.

42. *The Even.* That is, it was now towards the evening of the sixth day, and at sunset the Sabbath would commence, and then it would be unlawful to take down the body. John adds—"that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the Sabbath day." ¶ *Because.* The reason was that it was special holy time. ¶ *The preparation.* This is here defined by a term which means the *fore-sabbath*—not the day before the Sabbath, but the time immediately preceding the Sabbath, which the Jews naturally devoted to preparation for that sacred day. It was the custom to stop their work at three o'clock. See ch. 15: 25, notes. Josephus mentions a decree of the Emperor Augustus, which exempted the Jews from appearing in law courts, not only on the Sabbath, but also during the *preparation* before that day, from the ninth hour, or three o'clock. The Jews, however, seem to have begun the preparation time on a feast day (as here the Passover) at *noon*.

43. *Arimathea.* This was, probably, the modern Ramleh, near Joppa, and on the road to Lydda and Jerusalem, from which last we found it about a common day's ride. The country near Joppa is rich in orange groves and olives. Passing through the plain of Surafend, near the place of David's battle with Samson, we saw the natives ploughing very actively: six pairs of oxen in one field at work. There are five mosques and one Greek church in the town. ¶ *Honorable.* Of high station. ¶ *Counsellor.* One of the Sanhedrim, as we infer. See Luke 23: 51. ¶ *Wait-ed*—was waiting. Like Simeon and Anna, he was looking for the promised kingdom, and was ready to believe in Christ as the promised Messiah. The

Holy Spirit records by Luke that Joseph was 'a good man and a just,' and had not consented to the counsel and deed of the Sanhedrim. ¶ *Boldly.* This is full of meaning, though seeming quite incidentally mentioned. From John's record we see that Joseph was "a disciple of Christ," but secretly, for fear of the Jews. John 19: 38. And that Evangelist has stated this fact in this very connexion, to show how much meaning this boldness had in his case, as he had always shrunk, hitherto, from any open declaration or act in behalf of Christ. Oh! it is only when we are moved by the death of our Lord, that our backwardness is put to shame, and our *boldness* (like that of Peter and John—Acts,) is apparent and impressive. Hope maketh not ashamed. Mark alone mentions this manner of his application. It refers, probably, to the courageous and fearless effort that he made, where many would have been deterred by fear of failure. In the Spirit's record, the *boldness* is closely associated with the *faith*, and so is it always in christian character. The Church is now Christ's body upon earth; and they who really are waiting for the kingdom, go forward boldly, begging to serve and preserve the church and kingdom of our Lord. Observe, the Jews had just now applied to Pilate that the legs might be broken and the bodies removed; and the commencement of this work, probably, drove Joseph in bold and earnest haste to Pilate, to beg for himself that body which was so dear to him. As the bodies of the crucified were usually exposed to birds of prey, and a guard was stationed to prevent their being buried by friends, this favor could not be obtained without leave of Pilate. Though this fact is not here mentioned, it is implied, and confirms the narrative.

44. *Marvelled.* This implies that our Lord had expired sooner than was usu-

were already dead: and calling *unto him* the centurion, he asked him whether he had been any while dead.

45 And when he knew *it* of the centurion, he gave the body to Joseph.

46 And he bought fine linen, and took him down, and wrapped him in the linen, and laid him in a

al From John we learn that the soldiers brake the legs of the first because he was not yet dead—and finding that *Jesus was dead already*, they did not break his legs.



a cold corpse in their arms—when they laid *him* in the sepulchre of Joseph whom they had hoped to see on the throne of David!—Such sepulchres, hewn out of the rocky slopes about Jerusalem, are still seen. A row of these still remains in the deep valley of Jehoshaphat—some of them ornamented since, but all cut out of the rock. The tomb of Jehoshaphat, the tomb of James, the tomb of Zechariah and the tomb of Absalom, are the chief. The last is about 15 feet high and 25 broad. This burial in Joseph's tomb remarkably fulfills the prediction in Isa. 53:9. "He made his grave with the wicked and with the rich (man) in his death." The term 'rich' is not plural in the Hebrew, though the term "wicked" is, which shows that the reference is in the singular, to an individual. And so Matthew has expressly mentioned of Joseph that he was "a rich man"—*πλούσιος* ch. 27: 57. The passage in Isaiah correctly reads, His grave was appointed to him with the wicked, (thieves) and with the rich man, in his death. Meaning that, according to custom, he was to have had only the infamous lot of the thieves, to be exposed, unburied, to

sepulchre which was hewn out of a rock, and rolled a stone unto the door of the sepulchre.

47 And Mary Magdalene and Mary *the mother* of Josès beheld where he was laid.

#### CHAPTER XVI.

AND<sup>b</sup> when the sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary

a ch. 16.3,4. b Matt. 28.1,&c. Lu. 24.1,&c. Jno. 20.1.&c.

45. *When he knew it.* That is, that he had been some time dead.

46. Who can imagine their feelings when they saw him, who, as they thought, would have redeemed Israel,

birds of prey. But there was another appointment—he was to be buried with the rich man in his actual death.

47. *Mary Magdalene.* A small cluster of huts near Tiberias, on the sea of Galilee, at the edge of the plain of Genesaret, called Majdil, is all that remains of the town of this Mary. We found only about 60 inhabitants, and those in the most degraded state.

#### PART IX.

*Our Lord's Resurrection. His subsequent Appearings and his Ascension.*

Time, forty days.

§ 159. THE MORNING OF THE RESURRECTION.—*Jerusalem.*

First day of the week.

#### CHAPTER XVI.

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
28. 2-4.	16. 1.		

See the Harmony—and Matthew, who relates the particulars. There was under the law, a foreshadowing of the Christian Sabbath, in the ordinance of the first fruits, or wave offering, Lev. 23: 10-14. A day that was not the seventh day Sabbath, was called

the *mother* of James, and Salome, had bought sweet spices,<sup>a</sup> that they might come and anoint him.

¶ 2 And very early in the morning, the first *day* of the week, they came unto the sepulchre at the rising of the sun.

<sup>a</sup> Lu. 23, 56.

the Sabbath. The first day of the feast of unleavened bread was called "*the Sabbath.*" See Luke 6: 1, notes. "On the morrow after this Sabbath," the priest was to wave the sheaf of the first fruits of the gathered harvest. Christ is called by the apostle (1 Cor. 15: 23) "the first fruits," with reference to his resurrection, which occurred *on the morning after the (Jewish) Sabbath.* This was on the finishing of his work, which was properly indicated by his rising from the dead; when, his work of expiation having been finished, he was released from the grave. And then, he had the new rest to consecrate—by the Christian holyday—and the new Sabbath was begun. He lay in the grave during the whole of the Jewish Sabbath, and that day, as part of the old ceremonial, was buried with him.

1. *The Sabbath.* The Jewish Sabbath corresponded with our seventh day of the week. The day after became the Christian Sabbath. ¶ *Had bought.* That is, as we may suppose, on the afternoon of the *preparation-day* or *Friday.* Luke has it, "bringing the spices which they had prepared." An account of this preparing of spices is given in Luke 23: 55. See notes. ¶ *Anoint.* That is, to *finish the embalming* which was begun at the burial. John 19: 40. This was not lawful on the Sabbath day.

¶ 160. VISIT OF THE WOMEN TO THE SEPULCHRE. MARY MAGDALENE RETURNS.

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
28. 1.	16. 2-4.	24. 1-3.	20. 1-2.

2. *At the rising of the sun.* Granville Penn (Annotations) reads—"long before the sun had risen." West (on

3 And they said among themselves, Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulchre?

4 (And when they looked, they saw that the stone was rolled away,) for it was very great

the Resurrection) thinks that they set out very early "while it was yet dark" (John) and reached there by sun rise. This would fully explain the narratives. They started at very early twilight—about the same time that *Christ arose*—and they reached there shortly after the event. I should rather think that Matthew, Luke and John, speak of the Marys who were to embalm the corpse (bringing the spices) and that Mark speaks of these in v. 1 as having bought the spices for this work of embalming which they were to perform; but that in v. 2 he has his eye rather upon some others of the disciples who say, (as is mentioned of none of the rest) "Who shall roll us away the stone," &c. These were more dilatory perhaps because more doubtful. The Syriac reads, "As the sun arose."

3. *The stone.* This was a huge stone placed against the mouth of the sepulchre, and sealed. See Figure and notes. Matt. 27. 60-66. Their only solicitude was about this, for they knew not of the guard and the seal ordered by Pilate. Matt. 27: 62-66.

4. *For.* &c. This clause belongs to v. 3—the former clause being in parenthesis. We see from these verses, that the stone was rolled away for the disciples, and not for Christ. It was not *that he might get out, but that they might get in.* He could have risen, and *did* rise perhaps, without any moving of the stone. The angel was a messenger to the disciples—a *ministering spirit to those heirs of salvation.* Heb. 1: 14. As they approached, they had been casting in their minds, by what means they should get inside the sepulchre to finish the embalming and anointing. As they arrived they found to their great surprise that the stone was



¶ 5 And entering into the sepulchre, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, clothed in a long white garment; and they were affrighted.

6 And he saith unto them, Be

not affrighted: Ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified: he is risen; he is not here: behold the place where they laid him.

7 But go your way, tell his disciples and Peter that he goeth

a Ps. 71.20.

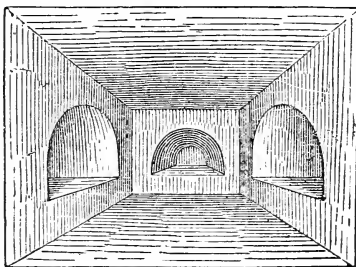
already rolled away, or "rolled aside, for it was very great."

¶ 161. VISION OF ANGELS IN THE SEPULCHRE.—*Jerusalem.*

	First day of the week.			
Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.	
28. 5-7.	16. 5-7.	24. 4-8.		

5. *And entering.* It is plain from the Harmony, that Mary Magdalene had returned to the city at once, on seeing the marvellous sight of the open sepulchre. See John 20: 1, 2. The *other women entered.* It was a chamber above ground, hewn out of a rock,

and they ventured in the porch way, and could look into the chamber where the body had lain. The figure here given shows a Tomb in Tyre, hewn in a rock, with niches. Some had only one chamber. The women entered into the outer enclosure. See notes on Matt. 28: 5. ¶ *A young man.* This was his form and appearance. This vision of an angel (Luke speaks of two) had different circumstances about it which are given by the different Evangelists. The angel or angels had already appeared to the dismay of the



keepers. See Matt. 28: 4. Mark speaks only of this one who sat on the right side of the entrance and who spake to the women.

6. *Behold the place.* Mark has nearly the same language as Matthew, in this address of the angel. They are pointed to the *place*, but rather to the *fact*, so indisputable, of his having risen. Behold the place where he lay now vacated.

7. *And Peter.* Christ would have the disciples informed at once, for the strengthening of their faith. And Peter, who had denied him thrice, is here mentioned by the angel messen-

ger with *emphasis*. Thus it would come to Peter in the form of a *special message* from Christ, leading him to reflect how full and gracious was Christ's pardon—how true were his predictions both of that disciple's fall, and of the Master's resurrection—establishing his personal faith, and showing him what a Master he had, the most unworthy to be *denied*, or "*followed afar off.*" Christ's message must be received as addressed to ourselves personally—for our strong faith in his pardon. Observe, here Peter's *pre-eminence* is not as chief of the apostles, but as the *denier* of his Lord. ¶ *At*

before you into Galilee: there shall ye see him, as he said unto you.

¶8 And they went out quickly, and fled from the sepulchre; for they trembled and were amazed: neither said they

*he said unto you.* The angel refers them to his predictions, and promises, and especially to his appointment to meet them in a given place. Christ repeats the same to the women, when he met them. Matt. 28: 10. He has appointed to meet all his disciples at the throne of grace—in his house—in the closet—at the family devotions—and wherever we pray. Luke adds, that “*they remembered his words.*” This promise was made to the twelve at the Paschal Supper. Matt. 26: 32.

‡162. THE WOMEN RETURN TO THE CITY. JESUS MEETS THEM.—*Jerusalem.*

First day of the week.

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
28. 8-10.	16. 8.	24. 9-11.	

8. “*Trembling and ecstasy possessed them.*” ¶ Neither said they anything, &c. This, of course, has reference to such persons as they may have passed on the way. Luke says that they told all these things to the eleven and to the rest. See also Matt. 28: 9. Matthew records the fact, that as they were going to the city our Lord met them, and gave them the same message to deliver, as the angel had done. What a confirmation of their faith—double, treble—by angels and by Christ! In regard to the remainder of this gospel narrative, see Davidson’s Introduction, and Alford’s Comm.

‡164. OUR LORD IS SEEN BY MARY MAGDALENE AT THE SEPULCHRE.—*Jerusalem.*

First day of the week.

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
	16. 9-11.		20. 11-18.

9. Mark’s object now, before closing his narrative, is to give a partial summary of our Lord’s appearances, for a special purpose. So that, this verse,

anything to any *man*; for they were afraid.

¶9 Now when *Jesus* was risen early the first *day* of the week, he appeared first to *Mary Magdalene*, out of whom he had cast seven devils.

which begins the recapitulation, seems disconnected from the foregoing. • He aims, evidently, to show the repeated condescensions of our Lord to the weakness and unbelief of the disciples, and the extreme hesitancy with which they received the truth of his resurrection. The object is not to give all the instances, but enough to set forth this fact, so important in the narrative. This proves that the disciples were not credulous, and did not believe until they could not resist the “many infallible proofs.” Acts 1. There is evidence from John’s account, (20: 1,) and also from Matthew’s, (28: 11,) that *Mary Magdalene*, (perhaps also the other *Mary*,) was earliest at the sepulchre. As soon as she saw the tomb open, she hurried to the city with this report. Immediately, of course, she hastened back to learn what had become of her Lord. All this was within a very brief interval, as it was in the greatest haste. Meanwhile the other women had been at the sepulchre, and seen the vision of angels, which *Mary* had not seen. On *Mary*’s return she also saw the angels, and *our Lord appeared to her*. This was the *first* appearing. Mark 16: 9. But immediately afterwards and before the other women reached the city, he appeared to them also. These events were almost simultaneous; though in the narrative and with the different narrations, they appear consecutive. All occurred in a very brief interval, about the dawn of day. There was a hurrying to and fro by different companies, and by different streets. *Mary* hastened to tell of Christ’s appearing to her—while the other women had a like message, and these together, or near y so, (Luke 24: 10,) poured out their glad tidings into the ear of the rest. From John’s account (20: 2, 3,)

10 And she went and told them that had been with him, as they mourned and wept.

11 And they, when they had heard that he was alive, and had been seen of her, believed not.

¶ 12 After that he appeared in another form unto two of them, as they walked, and went into the country.

a Lu. 24.13.

it would seem that Peter and John went to the sepulchre, at Mary's first report. This then, was probably before the vision of angels, and they were on their way, to and fro, whilst Christ was appearing to Mary and the women, when soon the more astounding news came of Christ's having been seen alive. It should be observed that John's aim is to give particulars about Mary. Mark also expressly names Mary as she to whom Christ first appeared. The other accounts are more general as regards the persons, aiming only at a comprehensive statement. Luke 24: 10-12.

10. *And she went and told.* Naturally enough, Mary would hasten to the disciples with this new and startling intelligence of angels and of Christ, not knowing, of course, that the angels and Christ appeared also to the other women. John says that she told the disciples that she had seen the Lord, and that he had spoken these things unto her. The sight of angels was nothing to that of her Lord.

11. This verse informs us of the disciples' incredulity. Already, (verse 10) she found them, as they mourned and wept, in a state of deepest despondency. All their views and feelings, therefore, were such as to require the strictest evidence of his resurrection.

¶ 166. OUR LORD IS SEEN OF PETER—  
TWO BY TWO DISCIPLES.—*Emmaus.*

	First day of the week.		
Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
	16. 12-13.	24. 13-35.	

¶ 12 *In another form.* This incidental clause helps us to account for the two disciples not knowing him. Luke 24:

13 And they went and told *i*, unto the residue; neither believed they them.

¶ 14 Afterward he appeared unto the eleven as they sat<sup>1</sup> at meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief<sup>c</sup> and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen.

b Lu. 24.36. 1 Cor. 15.5. 1 or, together. c Lu. 24.25.

18. "Their eyes were holden"—he assumed a different appearance. ¶ *Went into the country.* "To a village called Emmaus." Luke.

13. *The residue.* The rest of their number, at Jerusalem.

¶ 167. JESUS APPEARS IN THE MIDST OF THE APOSTLES IN THOMAS' ABSENCE. *Jerusalem.*

Evening, following the first day of the week.

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
	16. 14-18.	24. 36-49.	20. 19-23.

14. *Unto the eleven.* See Luke 14: 36-49, and John 20: 19-23. This appearing was at evening of the same day—the resurrection day. Thomas was absent from that gathering. The company of the Apostles is called "the eleven," though Judas was gone and Thomas was missing. ¶ *Upbraided them.* Rebuked them for not believing the women. Luke tells us that Christ gave them the most sensible proofs, there, of his being really their risen Lord. It was "as they sat at meat," and he took "a piece of broiled fish and honey-comb, and did eat before them," to show that it was not a spirit, but his real body, raised from the dead. OBSERVE, *The resurrection of the body* is secured to us, by Christ's rising in the flesh. Where 'the resurrection of the dead' is spoken of, in Scripture, the term means the dead body.

15. *Go ye into all the world.* This Apostolic commission was doubtless here given to the Apostles, and afterwards more publicly given on the mountain in Galilee. Matt. 28: 18. Matthew reads, "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations"—Gentile as well as Jew and

15 And he said unto them, <sup>a</sup>Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.<sup>b</sup>

16 He<sup>c</sup> that believeth, and is

<sup>a</sup> Matt. 28.19. Jno. 20.21. <sup>b</sup> Ro. 10.18. Col. 1.23. <sup>c</sup> Jno. 3.18,36. Acts 16.31-33. Ro. 10.9. 1 Pe. 3.21.

baptized, shall be saved; but<sup>d</sup> he that believeth not, shall be damned.

17 And these signs shall follow

<sup>d</sup> Jno. 12.48. 2 Th. 2.12.

every creature. ¶ *Preach.* Publish, proclaim. ¶ *The Gospel.* The good tidings now so abundantly confirmed—the news of a Saviour, a crucified and risen Saviour. ¶ *To every creature.* To all, without distinction; to Gentile as well as Jew; and to all without exception they were to preach the Gospel. This breaking down the walls of partition between the Jewish people and other nations, in the offer of the Gospel to all mankind, was against all the fixed and deep prejudices of the Apostles. And Peter afterward needed it revealed to him in vision, before he could go to the Gentiles. The Gospel must be published now, to all mankind. Acts 10. And the free offer to *all*, to every one that thirsteth—to all the ends of the earth, is that very form of invitation under which the inquirer finds peace. And so, the very terms of the offer to ourselves bind us to its widest circulation, and make us feel that it should go to *all nations—to every creature.*

16. *He that believeth.* Here is stated the awful alternative—of believing or unbelieving—of being saved or of being damned. Here the force of the language is plain—that to believe in Christ is to believe in the *whole* of his work, first and last, and to receive him in all his offices. It is to receive Christ as a risen Saviour, no less than as a crucified one. To take him as our prophet and our priest and our king, and so to sit under his teachings, to embrace his expiation and his intercession, and to submit to his rule and direction. This is *believing*, as is most plain from the connexion here. It is to join with Thomas—“My Lord and my God.” ¶ *Is baptized.* God requires the outward ordinance, and it is as important as is the visible church on earth. Because he will have a church in the world, he will require of every disciple a connexion with the church.

Baptism was to them the outward ordinance for that purpose. As they had been circumcised in their connexion with the Jewish church, therefore, to be baptized in the name of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, (see Matt. 28: 19,) as well as of the Father, was, of course, openly to espouse christianity. And at first, of course, the appeal was to parents and grown persons to be baptized, as none of them could have been baptized in their infancy, i. e. before the Gospel came. But when a parent was baptized, (as the Jailor,) his family was admitted to the privilege—“he and all his were baptized straightway.” Acts 16: 33. ¶ *Shall be saved.* That is, as Christ is offered in the Gospel—to save his people from their sins, (Matt. 1: 21,) and from hell, (John 3: 36,) the abiding wrath of God, and to bring them to heaven. John 5: 29. 17: 2-24. ¶ *Shall be damned.* This, of course, means whatever is opposite to salvation. It means condemnation instead of pardon—everlasting destruction and perdition instead of everlasting life. See Matt. 25: 46, where it is termed “everlasting punishment” in distinction from life eternal. This could be vindicated, for “how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation.” Heb. 2: 3. But it is enough that this is God’s word. And “he that believeth not” shall prove it in his own awful eternal experience.

17. *And these signs.* That is, these tokens or evidences of their divine mission (see v. 20) by which the Lord here promises to confirm his word. ¶ *Them that believe.* As far as it should seem necessary—not to all believers, but to so many as should need this confirmation of their work, for the success of the cause. This would be found needful in the early advancement of christianity; and Christ here gives them to expect this as encourag-

them that believe: In <sup>a</sup> my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak <sup>b</sup> with new tongues;

18 They shall take up <sup>c</sup> serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they <sup>d</sup> shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.

¶ 19 So then <sup>e</sup> after

<sup>a</sup> Lu. 10.17. Acts 5.16 8.7. 16.18. 19.12. <sup>b</sup> Acts 2.4. 10.46. 1 Cor. 12.10.28. <sup>c</sup> Lu. 10.19. Acts 28.5. <sup>d</sup> Acts 5.15,16. 28.8. Ja. 5.14,15. <sup>e</sup> Acts 1.2,3. Lu. 24.51.

the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat <sup>f</sup> on the right hand of God.

20 And they went forth, and preached every where, the <sup>g</sup> Lord working with *them*, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen.

<sup>f</sup> Ps. 110.1. 1 Pe. 3.22. Rev. 3.21. <sup>g</sup> Acts 5.12. 14.3 He. 2.4.

ing them now, and all along strengthening them with such predictions and palpable proofs of his presence. "A sign in the New Testament language," says Trench, "is a token and indication of the near presence and working of God." ¶ *Cast out devils.* That this was done by the name of Christ we have ample historical testimony. We find early writers appealing to infidels themselves for the truth of these miraculous works. See Acts 16: 16-18. ¶ *Shall speak with new tongues.* This is a prediction of what so wonderfully took place on the day of Pentecost, and it is frequently spoken of in the New Testament. It was found requisite for the speedy propagation of the Gospel. See Acts 2: 3. 10: 46. 19: 6. 1 Cor. 12: 10-30. 13: 1. 14: 2-26, &c. 2 Cor. 1: 5, &c. ¶ *Shall follow.* Shall attend upon them, as disciples and apostles of Christ, (v. 20,) especially following their testimony for Christ. This is not needful now.

18. *They shall take up serpents.* One instance of this is given us in the New Testament, where Paul had the viper upon his hand, and received no injury. Acts 28: 5-6. From this instance, too, we see the design and effect of such a miraculous power. This was regarded in that time as a decisive test of supernatural protection. ¶ *Any deadly thing.* This would be necessary (as Doddridge observes) because, at that time, the art of poisoning was brought to such a refinement. It was even applied as a capital punishment, and hence this promise must have been most important. It is worthy of remark that Mo-

hammed, who styled himself the Apostle of God, lost his life by poison, which would prove his imposture, in the light of this promise. ¶ *Lay hands on the sick.* This was common. See Acts 3: 6-7. 5: 15. 1 Cor. 12: 19-30. James 5: 14-15. Epiphanius relates that soon after the destruction of Jerusalem, the Christians returned from Pella, "working mighty signs of healing."

¶ 172. THE ASCENSION.—*Bethany.*

Matt.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
	16. 19-20.	24. 50-53.	

See also, on the Ascension of our Lord, Luke 24: 50-53.

19. *He was received up.* See Acts 1: 9. "A cloud received him." He ascended from the Mount of Olives. Matthew and John give no account of the Ascension. But it was predicted by our Lord, and its fulfilment was repeatedly asserted by Peter and Paul. Compare Acts 2: 32. Eph. 4: 10. 6: 9. Col. 4: 1. 1 Tim. 3: 16. Heb. 6: 19. 8: 1. 9: 12-21. ¶ *The right hand of God.* The reference is here to Psalm 110: 1, which is prophetic of the Messiah. As, in the language of men, to sit on the right hand of a king, is the highest royal honor, indicative of most exalted favor and authority—so, here the meaning is that Christ was exalted to the highest honor and power. See Matt. 28: 18.

20. *Preached everywhere.* The Apostles labored first in Judea, and then in other different parts of the world—Greece, Rome, &c. See the Acts and the Epistles. ¶ *The Lord working with*

them. That is according to the promise found in Matthew 28: 20, "Lo, I am with you alway." Christ commissioned the Apostles to go forth on the ground of his almighty and universal power in heaven and on earth, and the promise implied that this power should be exerted for their aid—defending and sustaining them, giving to their preaching success. Mark, in this gospel narrative, adds here the testimony that this did so occur. This passage would go to prove that he did not write as early as some have supposed. The Apostles cannot be said to have preached *every where*, until after their scattering abroad out of Judea. ¶ *Confirming the word.* That is, showing the gospel which they preached, to be the word of God. This also showed the power of the Apostles to be all derived from God, while Christ wrought miracles in his own name and by his own power. Matt. 8: 26. John 11. He had promised to confirm their testimony by his miraculous gifts. This was done by *signs following*. It was most necessary in their weakness, and amid the strength of their enemies, to have the word divinely attested, as from God himself. The "*signs following*" were such as he had promised in v. 17. Skeptics must be driven to confess that this simple historical statement of the Evangelist gives the only reasonable clue to the triumphs of early Christianity. How God "confirms the word with signs following," we may judge from the plain allusions in five of Paul's epistles and in the two of Peter. These great apostles of the circumcision and of the uncircumcision, held up this divine seal to their Gospel document, and to their own commission. Paul, to the Hebrews, (ch. 2: 3, 4,) lays great stress on this fact, which must therefore have been well known among the people. He says—The great salvation, which at first was spoken by the Lord, was *confirmed* toward those of that after time by such as heard Christ themselves. "God also bearing witness, (i. e. to the truth of their testimony,) both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles

and gifts of the Holy Ghost." These Hebrews, too, were familiar with the sense of these terms, as they were common in their Greek translation of the Old Testament. Ex. 3: 20. 4: 9, 21, 28. 7: 3. "Signs and wonders in the land of Egypt." Ex. 10: 2. Num. 14. 11. Deut. 4: 44. 6: 22. 7: 19. 34: 11, where the very same terms are used. So in the Psalms and prophets. And hence these signs were appealed to by the apostle, as the same sort of attestation given by God to the gospel message, as he had given to Moses and the prophets.—Paul claims himself to have wrought these miraculous works, and now boldly appeals to the facts, in writing to Rome, the world's metropolis, that he had made an extensive circuit from Jerusalem to Illyricum, and every where "Christ had wrought by him to make the Gentiles obedient; both by word and deed, (by preaching and miracles,) *through mighty signs and wonders*, by the power of the spirit of God." And the facts were most notorious over that whole region. Rom. 15: 18, 19.—But, further. In the Epistle to the Galatians, (3: 5,) Paul appeals to the actual working of miracles among them at that very time. "He (the teacher,) who now ministers to you the gifts of the Spirit, and *worketh miracles among you*," is he not a gospel teacher?—Further still. In his second Epistle to the Corinthians, (12: 12,) he appeals to the miracles wrought by himself during his stay at Corinth, in their own city. "The signs of an apostle were wrought among you, in all patience, in signs and wonders and mighty deeds." And in the first Epistle he speaks freely of miraculous gifts as existing among themselves. 1 Cor. 13 ch. Here, then, we have that which is necessary to account to us for the plain facts of the early progress of Christianity. It did spread by the aid of miracles, as God had promised, and the Christian religion was every where proved to be the *Work of God!* ¶ *Amen.* This word is a solemn closing of the record. It means prayerfully, *Be it so!* and is meant also as a solemn declaration of the truth of the record.

