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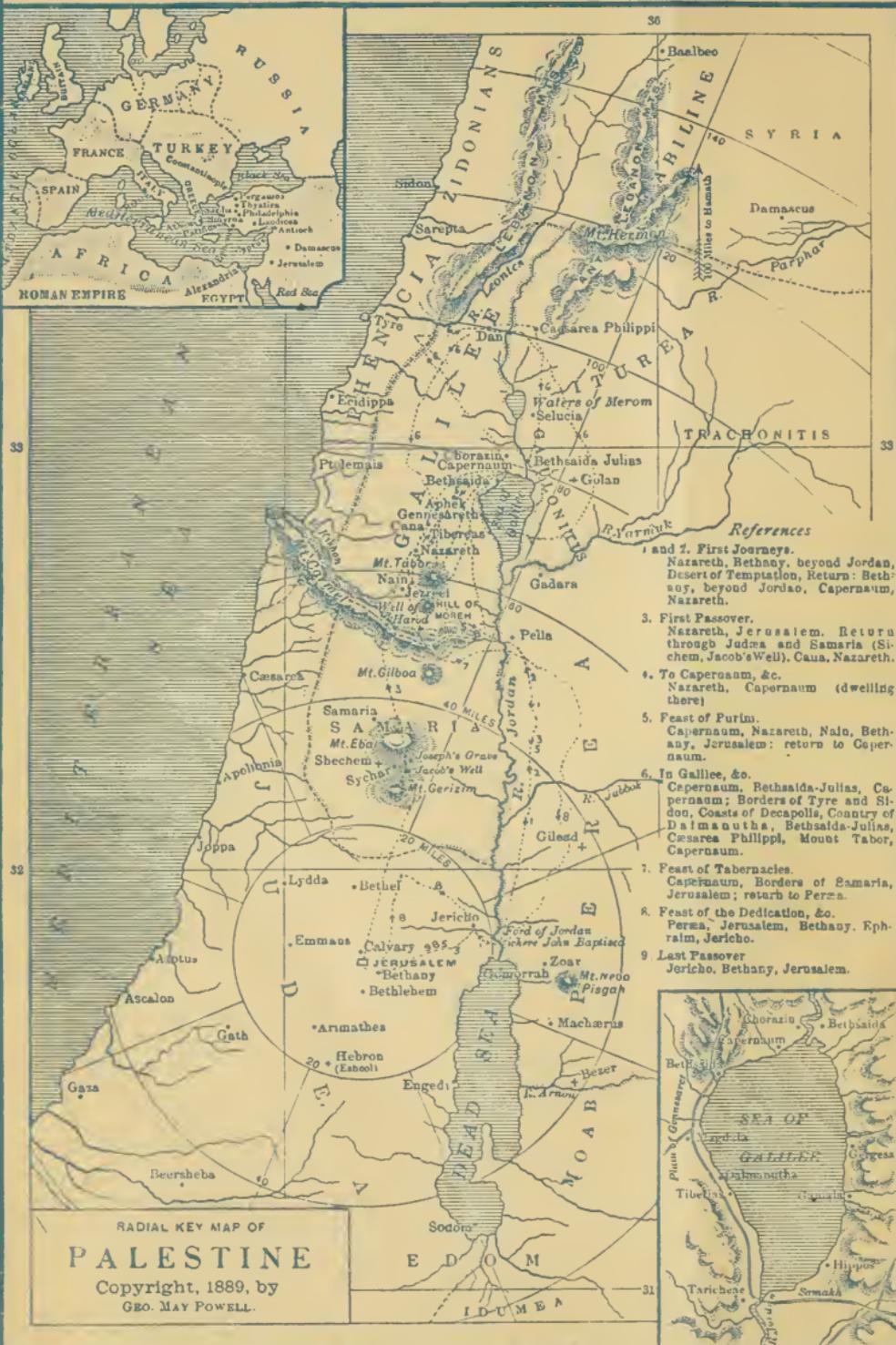












RADIAL KEY MAP OF  
**PALESTINE**  
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- References*
1. and 2. First Journeys.  
 Nazareth, Bethany, beyond Jordan, Desert of Temptation, Return: Bethany, beyond Jordan, Capernaum, Nazareth.
  3. First Passover.  
 Nazareth, Jerusalem. Return through Judaea and Samaria (Sichem, Jacob's Well), Caesarea, Nazareth.
  4. To Capernaum, &c.  
 Nazareth, Capernaum (dwelling there)
  5. Feast of Purim.  
 Capernaum, Nazareth, Nain, Bethany, Jerusalem: return to Capernaum.
  6. In Galilee, &c.  
 Capernaum, Bethsaida-Julias, Capernaum; Borders of Tyre and Sidon, Coasts of Decapolis, Country of Damascus, Bethsaida-Julias, Caesarea Philippi, Mount Tabor, Capernaum.
  7. Feast of Tabernacles.  
 Capernaum, Borders of Samaria, Jerusalem: return to Perea.
  8. Feast of the Dedication, &c.  
 Perea, Jerusalem, Bethany, Ephraim, Jericho.
  9. Last Passover  
 Jericho, Bethany, Jerusalem.



[Green Fund Book, No. 7.]

# PEOPLE'S COMMENTARY

ON THE

## GOSPEL ACCORDING TO LUKE.

CONTAINING THE

COMMON VERSION, 1611, AND THE REVISED VERSION, 1881  
(AMERICAN READINGS AND RENDERINGS),

WITH

CRITICAL, EXEGETICAL AND APPLICATIVE NOTES, AND  
ILLUSTRATIONS DRAWN FROM LIFE AND  
THOUGHT IN THE EAST.

BY

EDWIN W. RICE, D.D.

AUTHOR OF "PEOPLE'S COMMENTARY ON MATTHEW," "PICTORIAL COMMENTARY  
ON MARK," ETC., ETC.

*MAPS AND ORIGINAL ENGRAVINGS.*

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## THE JOHN C. GREEN FUND BOOKS.

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THIS volume has been prepared and issued under the provisions of the John C. Green Income Fund. The fund was founded in 1877, with the cordial concurrence of Mrs. Green, by Robert Lenox Kennedy, on behalf of the residuary legatees of John C. Green. Among other things, it is provided by the deeds of gift and of trust that one sixth of the net interest and income of this fund shall be set aside, and whenever the same shall amount to one thousand dollars, the Board of Officers and Managers of the American Sunday-School Union shall apply the income "for the purpose of aiding them in securing a Sunday-school literature of the highest order of merit." This may be done "either by procuring works upon a given subject germane to the objects of the society, to be written or compiled by authors of established reputation and known ability, . . . or by offering premiums for manuscripts suitable for publication by said Union, in accordance with the purposes and objects of its institution, . . . in such form and manner as the Board of Officers and Managers may determine."

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## PREFACE.

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THE general study of the Gospels is now more wide-spread, and the searching, critical examination of their origin and contents more severe than in any previous period. The original processes of critical investigation are too voluminous and complicated for any but a specialist to master, and too full of technical terms for the ordinary reader. Students and readers require the results of Biblical learning and critical research to be given to them in a concise, clear and trustworthy form.

The marked favor with which my previous commentaries on Matthew and Mark have been received, has been one of the chief encouragements in writing a similar work on Luke.

In the preparation of this, as of the previous volumes, the aim has been :

1. To assist every one to read each of the Gospel narratives as if he were in Galilee or Judæa, and familiar with the scenery, the people, and the habits of life, speech and thought current in Palestine when Jesus was upon the earth.
2. To aid the reader to grasp the meaning of the sacred text, through the Common, the Revised, or, when helpful, through a more literal English version.
3. To present to busy minds the results of critical learning, clearly, concisely and free from technical terms and from skeptical teachings or delusive speculations.

The student will find the following convenient features in the work :

1. The text of the common English version of 1611 ; and, in parallel columns,
2. The text of the Revised Version of 1881, with the readings and renderings preferred by the American Committee incorporated into the text.
3. The text divided into topical portions suitable for Sabbath lessons in the family or in the Sabbath-school.
4. Comments grouped under these topical divisions and also under each verse, to facilitate the ready reference to any verse or clause of a verse in any chapter of the Gospel.

5. Gleanings from the best works of eminent Biblical scholars, from the early Fathers until now, and specially from Talmudic literature, illustrating the text.

6. Suggestive applications, designed to aid in impressing the spiritual lessons.

7. Maps, and engravings, from original sources (photographs, etc.), to illustrate the narrative.

8. A brief introduction presenting historical and Biblical testimony relating to the authority and authorship of the third Gospel, its composition and language.

9. A special examination into the vocabulary of the Synoptic Gospels, as showing their correspondences and variations.

The great multitude of elementary and complex theories concerning the origin, sources, interdependence and independence of the Gospels, which modern criticism has invented, cannot but prove bewildering to the ordinary reader, should he attempt to peruse them in detail. He does not wish to remain ignorant of them, but would prefer to find them sifted, and whatever of practical value may be reached through them briefly presented. This is a part of the work the author has attempted here to do for his readers. The result, he trusts, will be to stir the conscience of the indifferent, remove the uncertainties of the doubting, and confirm the faith of all who hope in the Christ.

Special acknowledgments are due to the Rev. Moseley H. Williams for suggestions during the preparation of this work, and to Mr. Walter Kœnig (of Leipzig) for aid in correcting the proofs, and in verifying references to authors.

EDWIN W. RICE.

*Philadelphia, September, 1889.*

# INTRODUCTION.

## THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO LUKE.

THE AUTHOR.—The writer of the third Gospel does not avow his authorship in it, nor is he expressly named in that, or in the subsequent book of the Acts.\* Since the middle of the second century, however, the uniform testimony of the Christian Church ascribes the third Gospel to Luke. Much of this testimony which is entirely trustworthy has been preserved to our time. Moreover, this evidence further declares that this Gospel was then accepted as authentic, and that Luke was then universally believed to be the author, because a line of trustworthy witnesses reaching from then back to the apostolic period, had declared it to be the uniform historic belief of the early church from the first, that Luke wrote the Gospel to which his name is now prefixed. His name was identified with it at a very early period, and is found in the title to it, in the oldest copies and oldest versions that have been preserved to our times.†

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\*In each of the thirteen Pauline Epistles, Paul declares himself to be the author, as "Paul an apostle, . . . unto the churches of Galatia," etc. So James, Peter and Jude avow their authorship of the letters which bear their respective names. John likewise declares himself to be the author of the Revelation, Rev. 1 : 4, but his Epistles do not contain such a declaration. The four Gospels, the Acts, and the Epistle to the Hebrews contain no declaration respecting their authorship.

†The oldest written copies are : the Vatican, and the Sinaitic MSS. belonging to the Fourth century. The oldest Versions are : 1, an imperfect old Syriac copy of the Gospels of the third century ; 2, the Peshitto (Syriac), in which the title runs : "Gospel of Luke the Evangelist, which he published and preached in Greek in Alexandria the Great;" 3, the *Vetus Itala*, or Old Latin, quoted by Tertullian in the beginning of the third century. Unquestionably this old African Latin Version was current in the second century. See Weiss, *Intro. to N. T.* Vol. 2, p. 414. 4, the Latin Vulgate. Besides the Syrian and Latin groups of Versions, there was also an Egyptian group of Versions, which have not been as thoroughly examined by modern scholars.

The title to the Gospel, "According to Luke," is meant to declare the authorship, and not that it is the Gospel written by another on the plan of Luke. (See Rice on Matthew, p. 17.) The title can be traced at least to A. D. 180, and was uniformly understood by the early Christian Fathers to indicate the authorship.

*Historical Testimony.*—The testimony of the early Christian Church to the authority and authorship of the third Gospel is of a three-fold character: direct, indirect, and circumstantial evidence. Only a small portion of this mass of evidence can be noticed here. Jerome about 340–420 revised the “*Vetus Itala*, or Old Latin Version of the Scriptures,” and made the “*Vulgate Version*” now accepted in the Roman Catholic Church. This ascribes the third Gospel to Luke. And Jerome, in referring to the writers of the canonical books of the New Testament, expressly says: “the first are Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. . . The Acts of the Apostles, another work of Luke the physician, whose praise is in the Gospel, contains the history of the infant church.” Eusebius of Cæsarea, 270–335, wrote a history of the church from the apostolic times to the twentieth year of Constantine’s reign. Book III. chap. 24 of that work entitled “*The Order of the Gospels*,” has this statement: “Matthew having first proclaimed the Gospel in Hebrew, . . . committed it to writing in his native tongue, and thus supplied the want of his presence to them by his writings. After Mark and Luke had already published their Gospels, they say that John, who during all this time was proclaiming the Gospel without writing, at length proceeded to write it on the following occasion.” He then states how John wrote of those teachings and doings of Jesus which the others had omitted. Eusebius and Jerome report it was a current belief in the church that Luke was of Antioch. Cyprian of Carthage, 246–258, mentions the four Gospels by their authors, which he compared to the four rivers of paradise. He refers to the third Gospel, “item in evangelio cata Lucam, etc. ;” “Likewise in the Gospel according to Luke,” *Test. Lib.* 1 c. 8. Dionysius of Alexandria, 247–265, discusses the resurrection of Jesus in a letter to Basilides, in which he cites successively from each of the four Gospels by name. Origen, 185–253, was pre-eminent among the early Christian Fathers. “Unsurpassed in Christian zeal, unrivalled in universal learning, he devoted a long life to the study of the Scripture.”\* Of the four Gospels, Origen says: † “As I have learned by testimony concerning the four Gospels, which alone are received without dispute by the whole church of God under heaven. The first is written according to Matthew, who was once a publican. . . The second is according to Mark, who composed it as Peter explained it to him. . . The third is

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If it is said that this title to the Gospel was affixed as a mere supposition of the early Fathers, and without historical evidence, then it must be explained why they chose a name, comparatively so little known as Luke, rather than Barnabas, Timothy, Silas, or even Titus. That a name little known is at the head, is strong corroborative evidence that it represents the true author.

\* Westcott.

† Eusebius *Hist.* vi. c. 25.

that according to Luke, the Gospel commended by Paul, published for Gentile converts. And last of all the Gospel by John." Origen wrote extended commentaries on all these Gospels, in which they are named Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Tertullian, 160-230, was also distinguished for his learning, being a master of Greek and Latin and of philosophy. He wrote many books, and an able defence of the truth against the heresies of Marcion. He states: "In the first place we lay this down for a certain truth that the evangelic scriptures have for their authors the apostles, to whom the work of publishing the Gospel was committed by the Lord himself. . . And if also apostolical men, not them alone. . . To conclude, among the apostles, John and Matthew teach us the faith; among apostolic men, Luke and Mark refresh it. . . I say then, that not only by them [the churches] founded by the apostles, but by all who have fellowship with them in the same faith, this Gospel of Luke has been received without contradiction from the moment of its publication. He also states that Luke's work is often ascribed to Paul, since indeed, it is easy to take that for the master's which the disciples have published." Adv. Marcion. iv. 2, 5. Clement of Alexandria, 160-220, says of the order of the Gospels,\* "those which contain the genealogies were written first." He cites the third Gospel, "For thus it is written in the Gospel according to Luke, 'Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Cæsar, the word of the Lord came unto John the son of Zacharias.'" 3:1, 2. He cites frequently from the Acts, usually in this way: "As Luke in the Acts of the Apostles records Paul to have said," etc. Irenæus of Lyons, 130-202, was born in Asia Minor, and in his youth was a pupil of Polycarp. In his letter to Florinus, he says, "I can tell the very place where the blessed Polycarp sat and taught, . . the form of his person, and the discourses he made, . . and how he related his conversation with John and others who had seen the Lord." In his famous treatise against heresies, he declares there are four Gospels, "nor can there be more or fewer." Concerning their authorship, Irenæus states: "Matthew then among the Jews wrote a Gospel in their own language. . . Mark also the disciple and interpreter of Peter delivered to us in writing the things that had been preached by Peter, and Luke the companion of Paul put down in a book the Gospel preached by him [Paul]. Afterwards John the disciple of the Lord . . published a Gospel while he dwelt at Ephesus." Irenæus makes about eighty citations from Luke's Gospel. The Muratorian Fragment, about 180, represents the belief of the churches respecting the Gospels, a clause of which reads thus: "Thirdly, the book of the

\* Eus. Hist. vi. 14.

Gospel according to Luke. This Luke a physician, when Paul after the ascension of Christ, had received him among the followers . . . wrote in his own name and out of his own judgment. Neither had he seen the Lord in the flesh. Carrying his narrative back as far as he had information, he began with the birth of John." Tatian, 140-170 (?) constructed one continuous Gospel narrative by combining the four Gospels, called τὸ διὰ τεσσάρων, "of the four," of which an Arabic copy has been found and a translation lately issued. It proves that Tatian had the four Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Justin the Martyr, 105-165, quotes copiously from the four Gospels, which he says "were written by the apostles and their companions." He speaks of those "who have written the history of all things concerning our Saviour Jesus Christ," Apol. 1. He quotes these as "memoirs" or "memorabilia of the apostles," reminding us of a similar title to the works of Xenophon. Justin mentions the census of Quirinius, the institution of the Lord's supper, the agony in Gethsemane, and that Jesus was sent to Herod, in the forms and terms reported by Luke only.\* Clement of Rome, 30-100 (?), a companion of Peter and Paul, in an epistle, quotes expressions found in Luke's Gospel; and Polycarp, a disciple of the apostle John, quotes from the Acts.

It is now generally conceded that the spurious gospel of Marcion was a perversion chiefly of Luke's Gospel. Marcion was a heretical teacher at Rome, 140-160. But Cerdo came to Rome earlier than Marcion, and had taught a similar heretical system based upon perversions of the Gospels, a system which Marcion adopted.

Similar testimony to the authority and authorship of the Gospel can be drawn from Hegisippus, Basilides, Papias, and others of the first and second centuries, although in the fragments of their works which have come down to us they do not mention Luke by name. But when we consider how small a portion of the writings of the early Fathers have been preserved to our time, and how very fragmentary the preserved portions are, the evidence seems remarkable for its completeness and strength. The chain of testimony is continuous back to the band of disciples, the followers of the apostles, to which Luke belonged. A similar line of evidence might also be adduced to establish the authority and authorship of each of the other Gospels.

*Biblical Facts.*—1. The third Gospel and the Acts are both addressed to Theophilus, Luke 1 : 3 ; Acts 1 : 1. This fact, taken with the marked similarity in the plan, language, and style of the two books, establishes the identity of the author of the Acts with the author of the third

\*Justin, Apol. 1 : 34, 66 : Dial. c. 41, 70, 106.

Gospel. That the same person wrote both these books, is now well-nigh universally admitted. (See Holtzmann, *Einl.* 374.) He was not of the apostolic band, but was one of their disciples. He asserts that the "matters" in his narrative were given "even as they delivered them unto us, who from the beginning were eyewitnesses, and ministers of the word." Luke 1 : 2, Rev. Ver. *Am. Ed.*

2. Historical testimony identifies the author with the companion of Paul, who calls him "the beloved physician ;" "Luke, the beloved physician, and Demas salute you." Col. 4 : 14.

3. He was a personal friend of Paul : "Only Luke is with me." 2 Tim. 4 : 11.

4. He was a fellow-laborer with Paul : "Epaphras, my fellow-prisoner in Christ Jesus saluteth thee ; and so do Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, Luke, my fellow-workers." Philemon 23, 24, Rev. Ver.

5. From the passage in Col. 4 : 10-14, it is inferred that Luke was not a Jew, since he is not named in a group of Christians who were of the circumcision, but in the following group.

6. Furthermore, the writer of the Acts distinctly asserts that he had written a "former treatise" on the life and teachings of Jesus which he had addressed to the same person.

From these facts, several others follow as necessary inferences :

7. As the author belonged to the medical profession, he must have possessed a certain amount of scientific knowledge. For in the time of the Roman Emperors there was at Rome a *Collegium archiattrorum*, a school or commission of control (Godet calls it "a superior college"), which was required to examine those desiring to practice medicine, and it had the power to inquire into their modes of treatment, and to cancel the right of any to act as physicians who were ignorant or incompetent, or who made serious mistakes. Luke, therefore, must have been a man of education.

8. He made journeys with Paul. At Troas he joined the apostle, as the term "us" introduced by the writer (Acts 16 : 10) implies ; went with Paul to Philippi, where he remained, and Paul rejoined him there some years later, Acts 20 : 5. Luke then travelled with Paul to Jerusalem, as the "we" in the narrative implies. See Acts 20 : 6, 13-15 ; 21 : 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, etc. He also sailed with him on Paul's voyage to Rome, and was shipwrecked with the apostle. Acts 27 : 1 ; 28 : 2, 12, 16.

9. From 2 Tim. 4 : 11, and context, it is inferred that Luke was with Paul in Rome shortly before the latter suffered martyrdom.\*

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\* Eusebius and Jerome say Luke was of Antioch. Meyer and De Wette say this came from an erroneous interpretation of Acts 13 : 1. But the Fathers were better scholars than to derive

Of his subsequent life nothing is certainly known. Traditions that he preached the gospel in Gaul, and was nailed to, or hanged on, an olive tree in Greece when eighty years old, are not based on trustworthy historical evidence. There is a general tradition more credible, that he ended his days in Achaia. (See Jerome *De Vir.*, *ill.*, c. 7.)

COMPOSITION OF THE GOSPEL.—*The aim* of the author is clearly stated in his preface. Luke 1 : 1-4. He intends to set forth, in order, the doings and teachings of Jesus as historical facts (“fulfilled among us,” 1 : 2; and compare Acts 1 : 1, 2), and to strengthen the faith of Theophilus. It is needless to seek for some other disguised or hidden purpose to justify its preparation.\* No sufficient reason has been discovered that would lead the writer to conceal his real purpose, and his declared aim is a worthy one, and consistent with the character of the narrative. According to the Clementine Recognitions, x. 71, of about the middle of the second century, Theophilus† was a great man in authority at Antioch, in Syria, and consecrated, in the name of the church, a grand hall in his house. It should be added that this purpose of assuring the credibility of the doctrines in which Theophilus had been instructed, does not exclude, but rather implies, the idea of confirming others in the same truth through him. In that period, as in ours, it was not uncommon for authors to address their literary works to some person of distinction, to introduce them more effectively to the public. So Horace addressed some of his odes to Mæcenæ, Virgil addressed one of his eclogues to Pollio, and Cicero several of his treatises to Brutus. And thus Luke addressed his treatises to Theophilus, probably in order to secure a wider circle of readers thereby.

*The date* of its composition cannot be definitely determined. The Gospel was certainly written before the Acts. A group of critics of the “destructive school” place the time of the composition of the Gospel in the second century : as Baur, 130, or later ; Zeller and Hilgenfeld, 100 to 110 ; Volkmar, 100. Another group of less radical critics place it from 70 to 90 : as Keim, 90 ; Reuss, Meyer, Bleek, Holtzmann and Weiss, 70 to 80. A third group of conservative critics place it between

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Lucas from *Lucius*, rather than from Lucanus (as Silas comes from Silvanus). Besides Acts 13 : 1 declares that “Lucius” was of “Cyrene” in North Africa, and not from Antioch.

\*Some conjecture that the writer’s real aim was to defend the character and preaching of Paul ; others, to harmonize the views of Judæan and Pauline Christians. These and various other theories urged by Zeller, Reuss, Overbeck, Volkmar, and others of like critical schools, contradict or oppose one another, so as to leave the reader and the subject in a quagmire of shifting opinions.

†The title “most excellent” is applied to Felix, and to Festus. Acts 23 : 26 ; 24 : 3 ; 26 : 25, Revised Version. Luke applies it to Theophilus in his Gospel, but in the Acts omits it, and addresses him, “O Theophilus.”

56 and 70. Historic testimony and internal evidence render the first view untenable, and make the second one improbable. The Gospel bears internal evidence of having been written before the destruction of Jerusalem, A. D. 70. Most of the critics who place it after that event also assume that the reference to the fall of Jerusalem in the Gospel is not prophetic, but that this portion of the Gospel was remolded into apparent prophecy after the fall. But the reference to the fall as in the future is plain (see Luke 21 : 5-36), and the Gospel writers were surely truthful and honest. Moreover, if the Acts was not written until after the death of Paul (say 63-67), it is very difficult to see why the writer omitted to mention that apostle's death. Since the Gospel was written *before* the Acts, it must have been before A. D. 67. Clement, of Alexandria, says that "the ancient presbyter" related that "the Gospels containing the genealogies were written first."\* The date of Luke's Gospel then can be approximately fixed between A. D. 58 and 67.

*The place* of its composition is even more uncertain than the time. Jerome says (*De Vir., ill., c. 7*): "Luke, a physician, who composed his work in the countries of Achaia and Bœotia." But the title to the Syriac version runs: "Gospel of Luke, the Evangelist, which he published and preached in Greek in Alexandria." This may mean that he preached it in Alexandria in Greek, though he may have published and written it elsewhere. Or, it may mean that, after writing it in Achaia, he published it at the book-centre of the world, and preached it there in Greek. Some critics have held that it was written at Ephesus, or in Asia Minor, as Köstlin and Overbeck; some at Rome, as Hug, Ewald, Davidson, Keim and Holtzmann; others at Cæsarea, as Michaelis, Thiersch, Schaff and Dods. The latter place has strong points in its favor, but it is not certain that Luke remained with Paul during his two years' detention at Cæsarea, and this early date might place its composition earlier than Matthew's Gospel. Yet Schaff declares it to be almost the unanimous testimony of the early church that Matthew was written first. Weiss concludes (*Intro. Vol. II., 314*) "all conjectures as to the place of its composition are quite visionary." We may, however, accept Achaia, the traditional place, provisionally in our studies, and wait for further light.

*The Language and Style.*—Luke's Gospel was written in Greek. While his prologue, 1 : 1-4, is in classic Greek, † of elegant diction, and the practised Greek author is seen throughout the Gospel in his use of

\* Eusebius, *Eccl. Hist.*, VI. 14. The supposed statement of Irenæus that Luke wrote after the death (or departure from Rome) of Peter and Paul is an error, based on a wrong reading of Irenæus' language.

† See Weiss, *Introduction, Vol. II.*, 298, 299.

particles and in his peculiar grammatical forms, as in his use of a generally pure, vigorous Greek, the work abounds in Aramaic forms and expressions. And these Hebraisms appear in Luke, where they are sometimes wanting in the parallel passages found in Matthew and Mark. His style is well suited to the historical method. His precision and accuracy of statement have stood the test of the severest criticism. His numerous chronological data have been minutely examined, and "finally vindicated as historically accurate."\* He was not an eye-witness, nor did he get his information from one apostle only; but he gathered it, as he tells us, from several who were "eye-witnesses and ministers" "from the beginning." He must also have known the character of the works of the "many" who had written narratives of "those matters which have been fulfilled," and upon which the Christian faith was founded. These oral and written sources, which modified somewhat the purity of his Greek, may now be considered.

*The Sources of the Gospel.*—While the Gospel is a part of divine revelation by inspiration of the Holy Spirit, it is also a revelation made to man through men—that is, through human language and agencies. It is not improper reverently to consider these human elements in the Gospel. How and from whence did the Evangelist Luke obtain the historic materials for his Gospel? Were they directly and miraculously made known to him by the Holy Spirit without the use of means? Beyond question, God could have thus revealed them. But does he usually multiply miracles to do for man, what man has been given power to do for himself? Human power could not raise Lazarus from the dead, but it could roll away the stone; the stone it is required to roll away. Moreover Luke does not claim to have received his narrative in that miraculous manner, but does say that he had his material from apostolic persons, and that he had "traced the course of all things accurately from the first." 1: 3, Revised Version. Prof. Gardiner aptly says: "So far as the human elements of his work were concerned, he (Luke) was in a similar position with ourselves; he examined, compared and sifted the testimony before him, and recorded for our instruction that which, guided by the Spirit, he found to be true."†

Of the character of the narratives which "many" had attempted "to draw up" before Luke wrote, nothing definite is known. From the similarities of the first three Gospels, some suppose that Luke used the Gospels by Matthew and Mark in his work. But neither of the evangelists make any reference to the work of either of the others. And Luke cannot have referred to Matthew's Gospel; for he says the "many" were those

\* Prof. F. Gardiner, in *S. S. World*, June, 1889.

† *S. S. World*, June, 1889.

to whom the "eye-witnesses" had "delivered" the facts; but Matthew was an apostle and eye-witness himself. It becomes necessary therefore, to examine the relation of the Synoptic Gospels (the first three) to each other.

### THE SYNOPTIC GOSPELS.

The first three Gospels, Matthew, Mark and Luke, have been somewhat inaccurately called synoptic (from two Greek words, *σύν*, together, and *ὄψις*, sight or view), because they give a similar view of the events and teachings in the life of Christ. The relation of these three Gospels to one another has been discussed since the days of Augustine. Within the past hundred years, much ingenuity and study have been spent in the invention of theories respecting the origin of these Gospels, which would at once account for their agreements and variations.

The theories may primarily be classed in three groups. I. The first three Gospels came from one, and are dependent on one another. II. They are based upon one or more earlier documents. III. They are based on an oral Gospel.

The theories in the first group have been various, *e. g.*: 1. Matthew wrote first, Mark used Matthew, and then Luke used both the others; so Grotius, Mill, Wetstein, Bengel, and Hug. 2. Matthew first, then Luke, and lastly Mark; so Griesbach, De Wette, Bleek, Delitzsch, and nearly, Köstlin and Keim. 3. Mark first, then Luke and Matthew; so Weisse and Hitzig. 4. Mark first, then Matthew and Luke; so Ritschl and Lachmann. 5. Luke first, then Mark, and lastly Matthew; and 6. Luke first, next Matthew, and lastly Mark.\* It will be seen that these views must be largely destructive of one another.

The second group has been even more productive of various theories than the first group: 1. The earliest Gospel was a written Aramaic one (not Matthew's), so Lessing. 2. It was in Greek, so Eichhorn. 3. "Logia" were first, *i. e.*, discourses of our Lord in fragments. 4. "Logia" and events, *i. e.*, an earlier Mark. 5. "Logia" and some added outline of the life of Jesus. That from these, 6, our Matthew was first written. 7. Our Mark was first written. 8. That Luke was first. It will be seen that the theories of this group are likewise mutually self-destructive.

The most prominent theories now in this field may be thus stated: 1. Our Mark came from an earlier Mark now lost, and our Matthew and Luke from the earlier Mark and "Logia," *i. e.*, an earlier Matthew, with certain additions from other oral and written sources; urged prom-

\*It should be added that several who hold that the synoptics are thus dependent, would say, however, that the dependence is upon some form of the Gospel earlier than those now extant, and hence combine the principle of the first with that of the second group of theories.

inently by Holtzmann,\* who holds that this is the order in which our Gospels were written, Mark, Matthew and Luke.

2. Matthew's Logia with which he combined incidents, preceded our Gospels. This original may have been Hebrew, but must have been translated into Greek before our Gospels were written. Luke wrote from a mass of material partly from the apostolic source (earlier Matthew), from Mark, and partly from other documents, "a new and independent work." The entire substance of Mark is in the first and third Gospels; Luke, as we have it, having been the last one written of our three Gospels. This is stoutly urged by Weiss.†

3. The third group of theories is not as large as either of the others. With much learning it has been urged that an oral Gospel would become more or less fixed in form, and be thus handed down from the apostles, and that such a Gospel best accounts for the correspondences and variations in our Synoptic Gospels; so Westcott and others hold. The difficulties urged against this theory are, that it is unnatural to suppose the apostles would have a stereotyped form of narrative in their preaching, and if they had, the order of the narrative would become fixed also, but this fixed order does not appear in our Canonical Gospels.

It is obvious that along these lines of speculation, a complete agreement among scholars respecting the origin of the first three Gospels is at present well-nigh hopeless.

On the other hand there is substantial agreement upon two points. All, agree, 1, that an oral Gospel preceded our Canonical Gospels.‡ 2. That written documents more or less fragmentary concerning the life and teachings of our Lord were in existence before Luke wrote.

Proceeding from these two settled facts, it seems natural that as the apostolic labors extended in ever widening circles, and disciples and helpers were multiplied in widely separated fields, the necessity for authoritative written narratives would arise. It would be equally natural for an apostle as Matthew, and for apostolic helpers as Mark and Luke in their several fields of labor, and quite independently of each other, to supply this need of a written Gospel. In writing each would gather and use all the material, oral and written, at command, and disciples like

\* *Einkl., N. T.*

† *Intro. N. T. 2 Vols., 1886.* Cf. *Dods. Intro. N. T. 1888, p. 7-15,* and *Salmon, Intro. N. T. 1886, p. 139 ff.*

‡ Holtzmann declares, "It is now-a-days an accepted position that the oral tradition must be considered the ultimate basis of the entire Gospel literature." *Syn. Evang. p. 52.* And again, "At bottom all Gospels rest on the oral tradition." *Einkl., N. T. p. 340.* And "all things considered, the double source hypothesis offers the most probable solution of the synoptic problem." Weiss likewise holds to the independence of the first and third Gospels, and that an oral Gospel was first, followed by one or more documents, from which our Canonical Gospels came. See *Manual Intro. N. T. 1886, Vol. II. pp. 219-263 ff.*

Mark and Luke would likewise naturally gain all the information possible from the apostles whose companions they were or had been, and construct from this mass of material a Gospel suited to the wants of the people among whom they respectively labored.

Leaving this uncertain sea of speculation, it will be more profitable to examine some of the facts respecting the construction of the Synoptic Gospels.

VOCABULARY OF THE SYNOPTIC WRITERS.—The purity and extent of the stock of words used by any person may be taken as fairly indicative of his culture. The vocabulary of a common peasant, or of an illiterate backwoodsman, for example, will be found to be very limited and coarse, compared with the stock of words at the command of a well-informed person in good society. In this respect the vocabulary of the Synoptic writers, though not very remarkable for its extent, is marvelously chaste, forceful, and well fitted to express moral and religious truth.

1. The total stock of Greek words used by the Synoptic writers, exclusive of proper names, is about 2400. Of this number Mark uses about 1200 different words; Matthew about 1500; and Luke nearly 1800 different words.\*

For treatises as brief as the first three Gospels, and upon one theme, and in the Greek language, which is less copious than the English, this vocabulary proves that the writers were by no means ignorant or uncultured persons. The comparative brevity of the Gospels is apparent to any reader, yet it may be worth stating, that the Gospel of Matthew in Greek (Revised Text, Oxford, 1881) contains 18,370 words; of Mark 10,981, and of Luke 19,496 words; or a total of 48,847 Greek words in the three Synoptic Gospels.

2. Again, the number of different Greek words used by Matthew but not found in Mark or Luke is 243; the number used by Mark but not found in Matthew or Luke is 174; while the number used by Luke but not found in Matthew or Mark is 614. This also indicates the fulness of the vocabulary of Luke, which is particularly seen in a greater number of words from the classic Greek. The number of different Greek words common to Matthew and Mark only is 188; to Matthew and Luke only is 321; to Mark and Luke only is 111; while the number used in common by all the three Synoptics is 737.

3. While the Aramaic (Hebrew) phrases and forms are frequent in

\* It may be interesting for the English reader to be reminded, that an uneducated peasant is said to have a command of scarcely more than 300 different words; a voluminous and learned writer like Milton used about 8,000 words, while the greatest master of English, Shakespeare, had a vocabulary of about 15,000 words.

Luke, only fifteen Hebrew *words*, exclusive of proper names, can be found in his Gospel, three only being peculiar to it. Yet about sixty words borrowed from the Hebrew are used by the New Testament writers.\* Again, Luke sometimes uses Aramaic expressions or phrases affected by them, when in the parallel passages of Matthew those Aramaic forms are often wanting. As Matthew is believed to have written originally in Aramaic, or certainly to have understood that language, the presence of these expressions in Luke sometimes when not found in Matthew, is one strong proof of the independence of Luke as a writer. The Greek scholar may compare Luke 5 : 1 with Matt. 4 : 18 ; Luke 5 : 12, 17, 18 with Matt. 8 : 1 ; 9 : 1, 2 ; 12 : 9 ; Luke 8 : 22 with Matt. 8 : 18, and Luke 20 : 21 with Matt. 22 : 16, for examples of these Aramaic expressions peculiar to Luke.

The independence of the Synoptic writers is further shown by the unlikeness of their plans, the variations in the form and order of narrating the same events, and in each mainly preserving phrases and expressions peculiar to himself in presenting truth and fact common to one or more of the other narratives. So Weiss declares against the inter-dependence, and in favor of the independence of the first and third Gospels as beyond all doubt. *Intro. N. T.* Vol. II. p. 219 ff.

*Peculiarities and Agreements of the Synoptics.*—While every reader of the first three Gospels must have noticed the matter in common to them, he may not have considered their peculiarities.

1. There are 2900 verses in the Synoptic Gospels.† Thus the matter in Matthew's Gospel is about six-seventeenths of the whole matter in the Synoptic Gospels ; the matter in Mark's is about four-seventeenths of the whole ; and the matter in Luke's is about seven-seventeenths of the whole matter in the Synoptic Gospels.

Or, if the computation be based upon the whole number of Greek words in the Gospels instead of upon the number of verses, then the matter in Matthew is found to be about eighteen-forty-ninths of the whole matter in the three Synoptic Gospels ; that in Mark about eleven-forty-ninths of the whole ; and that in Luke about twenty-forty-ninths of the whole Synoptics.

2. Again, about five-elevenths of Matthew's Gospel is peculiar to it ; about one-eleventh of Mark's Gospel is peculiar to Mark ; and about eight-elevenths of Luke's Gospel is peculiar to Luke.‡

\* See Thayer's Grimm's Lexicon, p. 663.

† Matthew has 1071 ; Mark, 678 ; Luke, 1151 verses. John has 879 verses. While the verses are of unequal lengths in the same Gospel, yet 500 or 1000 consecutive verses in one Gospel will average about the same amount of matter as the same number of verses in either of the other Gospels

‡ This computation is mainly based on Robinson's Harmonies (Greek and English). Stated in

For further statements respecting the peculiar and coincident passages in the Synoptics, see my Commentary on Matthew, p. 20.

*Peculiarities of Luke.*—Besides the peculiarities already stated, it may be added in respect to the peculiarities of Luke's Gospel :

1. The narratives given by Luke alone include several important events : as the announcement to Zacharias, to Mary, Mary's visit to Elisabeth, birth of John, visit of the shepherds, the presentation in the temple, Jesus with the doctors in the temple, the mission of the seventy, Jesus at the home of Mary and Martha, the details of our Lord's ministry in Peræa (chaps. 10-18), and of the walk to Emmaus.

2. Of our Lord's parables sixteen are recorded by Luke alone :

- |                                    |                               |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. The two debtors.                | 2. The good Samaritan.        |
| 3. The friend at midnight.         | 4. The rich fool.             |
| 5. The watching servants.          | 6. The wise steward.          |
| 7. The barren fig-tree.            | 8. The great supper.          |
| 9. The lost silver.                | 10. The prodigal son.         |
| 11. The unjust steward             | 12. The rich man and Lazarus. |
| 13. The unprofitable servant.      | 14. The unjust judge.         |
| 15. The Pharisee and the publican. | 16. The ten pounds (minæ).    |

3. Of our Lord's miracles six are narrated by Luke alone, not counting the escape at Nazareth :

- |                                             |                                                     |
|---------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| 1. The draught of fishes, Luke 5 :<br>1-11. | 2. Raising the widow's son at<br>Nain.              |
| 3. Healing an infirm woman.                 | 4. Healing a man of the dropsy.                     |
| 5. Healing the lepers.                      | 6. Healing the ear of the high<br>priest's servant. |

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verses it is thus : In Matthew, 399 out of 1071 verses are peculiar ; in Mark, 63 only out of 678 verses are peculiar ; but in Luke, 655 out of 1151 verses are peculiar. Clark's Harmony shows a still greater number of verses peculiar to Matthew and Luke.

Reuss, however, reckons 350 verses peculiar to Matthew, 68 to Mark, and 541 to Luke. His calculation is evidently based on German Harmonies that find more common matter in the first and third Gospels than the later American and English harmonists do, upon which my computation is based.

## CONTENTS OF LUKE'S GOSPEL.

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The contents of the third Gospel may be divided into four sections :

I. PREPARATION for CHRIST'S MINISTRY.—The angel's message to Zacharias, to Mary, visit of Mary to Elisabeth, birth of John, song of Zacharias, chap. 1 ; birth of Jesus, visit of the shepherds, presentation in the temple, the Passover, Jesus among the doctors, chap. 2 ; preaching of John, baptism and genealogy of Jesus, chap. 3.

II. THE GALILÆAN MINISTRY.—The temptation, preaching at Nazareth, at Capernaum and in the towns of Galilee, chap. 4 ; teaching, calling disciples and working miracles in Galilee, chaps. 5, 6 ; healing the centurion's servant, raising the widow's son at Nain, messengers come from John, dines with Simon, a Pharisee, chap. 7 ; circuit in Galilee, journey to Gerasa, return to Capernaum, raising Jairus' daughter, chap. 8 ; mission of the twelve, perplexity of Herod, feeding 5000, Peter's great confession, the transfiguration, healing the epileptic boy, teaching humility, toleration and cost of discipleship, chap. 9 ; mission of the seventy, woes upon Bethsaida, Chorazin and Capernaum, the good Samaritan, at the home of Martha and Mary, chap. 10.

III. THE PERÆAN MINISTRY.—Lessons on prayer, rebuking the Pharisees, teaching in a Pharisee's house, chap. 11 ; lessons to his disciples to avoid hypocrisy, on God's care, on covetousness, watchfulness and persecution, chap. 12 ; on repentance, on entering the kingdom, lament over Jerusalem, chap. 13 ; the great Supper, cost of discipleship, chap. 14 ; the lost sheep, lost silver, lost son, chap. 15 ; the shrewd steward, covetous Pharisees, the rich man and Lazarus, chap. 16 ; lessons on offices and faith, the ten lepers, on the coming of the kingdom of God, and the unexpected coming of the Son of man, chap. 17 ; the unjust judge and widow, the Pharisee and the publican, receiving the young, reward of discipleship, healing the blind man, chap. 18.

IV. THE CLOSING EVENTS OF CHRIST'S MINISTRY.—Call of Zacchæus, the ten pounds (*minæ*), the triumphal entry, second lament over Jerusalem, chap. 19 ; teaching in the temple, John's baptism, the husbandmen, tribute to Cæsar, the Sadducees, David's son, chap. 20 ; the poor widow's mite, the destruction of Jerusalem foretold, a lesson on watchfulness, chap. 21 ; the conspiracy, the Passover, the Lord's Supper instituted, in Gethsemane, the betrayal and arrest, Peter's denials, the Jewish trial, chap. 22 ; trial before Pilate, sent to Herod, Pilate condemns Jesus, the crucifixion, chap. 23 ; the resurrection, visit of the women, of Peter, walk to Emmaus, return to Jerusalem, appearance to the apostles, the ascension, chap. 24.

# ORDER OF EVENTS

## IN THE FOUR GOSPELS.

Annunciation to Zacharias.....	Oct.,	6	B. O.
Elisabeth conceives a son, and lives in retirement.....	Oct.-March,	6-5	"
Annunciation to Mary.....	April,	5	"
Mary visits Elisabeth, and remains three months.....	April-June,	5	"
Birth of John the Baptist.....	June,	5	"
Joseph and Mary go to Bethlehem to be taxed.....	Dec.,	5	"
Jesus born at Bethlehem.....	Dec.,	5	"
The angel and the shepherds.....	Dec.,	5	"
Circumcision of Jesus.....	Jan.,	4	"
Presentation of Jesus.....	Feb.,	4	"
Coming of the Magi.....	Feb.,	4	"
Flight of Jesus into Egypt.....	Feb.,	4	"
Return to Nazareth, and sojourn there.....	May,	4	"
Jesus, at twelve years of age, attends the passover.....	April,	8	A. D.
John the Baptist begins his labors.....	Summer,	26	"
Baptism of Jesus.....	Jan.,	27	"
Jesus tempted in the wilderness.....	Jan.-Feb.,	27	"
Deputation of Priests and Levites to the Baptist.....	Feb.,	27	"
Jesus returns to Galilee.....	Feb.,	27	"
Wedding at Cana of Galilee.....	Feb.,	27	"
First Passover of Jesus' ministry; cleansing of temple.....	April,	27	"
Jesus and His disciples begin to baptize.....	May,	27	"
Jesus departs into Galilee, through Samaria.....	Dec.,	27	"
A few weeks spent by Jesus in retirement.....	Jan.-April,	28	"
The Baptist imprisoned.....	March,	28	"
Second Passover; healing of impotent man.....	April,	28	"
Jesus begins His ministry in Galilee.....	April-May,	28	"
Calling of four disciples, and healings at Capernaum.....	April-May,	28	"
First circuit in Galilee; healing of the leper.....	May,	28	"
Return to Capernaum, and healing of the paralytic.....	Summer,	28	"
Plucking the corn, and healing the withered hand.....	Summer,	28	"
Choice of apostles, and Sermon on the Mount.....	Summer,	28	"
Healing of centurion's servant at Capernaum.....	Summer,	28	"
Journey to Nain, and raising of the widow's son.....	Summer,	28	"
Message to Jesus of the Baptist.....	Summer,	28	"
Jesus anointed by the woman; a sinner.....	Autumn,	28	"
Healing at Capernaum of the blind and dumb possessed; charge of the Pharisees that He casts out devils by Beelzebub.....	Autumn,	28	"
Teaching in parables; and stilling of the tempest.....	Autumn,	28	"
Healing of demoniacs in Gergesa, and return to Capernaum.....	Autumn,	28	"
Matthew's feast; healing of woman with issue of blood and raising of Jairus' daughter.....	Autumn,	28	"
Healing of two blind men, and a dumb possessed; Pharisees blaspheme.....	Autumn,	28	"
Second visit to Nazareth; sending of the twelve.....	Winter,	29	"
Death of Baptist; Jesus returns to Capernaum.....	Winter,	29	"
Crossing of the sea, and feeding of the 5000; return to Capernaum.....	Spring,	29	"
Discourse at Capernaum respecting the bread of life.....	April,	29	"
Jesus visits the coasts of Tyre and Sidon; heals the daughter of Syro-Phœnician woman; visits the region of Decapolis; heals one with an impediment in his speech; feeds the 4000.....	Summer,	29	"
Jesus returns to Capernaum: is tempted by the Pharisees; reproves their hypocrisy; again crosses the sea; heals blind man at Bethsaida.....	Summer,	29	"
Peter's confession that He is the Christ; He announces His death and resurrection; the transfiguration.....	Summer,	29	"
Healing of lunatic child.....	Summer,	29	"
Jesus journeys through Galilee, teaching the disciples; at Capernaum pays the tribute money, goes up to feast of Tabernacles.....	Autumn,	29	"

He teaches in the temple; efforts to arrest him.....	Oct.,	29	A.D.
An adulteress is brought before him; attempt to stone him; healing of a man blind from birth; return to Galilee.....	Oct.,	29	"
Final departure from Galilee; is rejected at Samaria; sending of the Seventy, whom he follows.....	Nov.,	29	"
Jesus is attended by great multitudes; parable of the good Samaritan; He gives a form of prayer.....	Nov.,	29	"
Healing of a dumb possessed man; renewed blasphemy of the Pharisees; dining with a Pharisee; Jesus rebukes hypocrisy; parable of the rich fool.....	Nov.-Dec.,	29	"
Jesus is told of the murder of the Galileans by Pilate; parable of the fig tree; healing of a woman 18 years sick; is warned against Herod....	Nov.-Dec.,	29	"
Feast of Dedication, visit to Mary and Martha; the Jews at Jerusalem attempt to stone Him; He goes beyond Jordan.....	Dec.,	29	"
Jesus dines with a Pharisee, and heals a man with dropsy; parables of the great supper, of the lost sheep, of the lost piece of silver, of the unjust steward, of the rich man and Lazarus.....	Dec.,	29	"
Resurrection of Lazarus; counsel of the Jews to put Him to death; He retires to Ephraim.....	Jan.-Feb.,	30	"
Sojourn in Ephraim till Passover at hand; journeys on the border of Samaria and Galilee; healing of ten lepers; parable of the unjust judge, and of Pharisee and publican; teaching respecting divorce; blessing of children; the young ruler, and parable of laborers in the vineyard.....	Feb.-March,	30	"
Jesus again announces His death; ambition of James and John.....	March,	30	"
Healing of blind men at Jericho; Zaccheus; parable of the pounds; departure to Bethany.....	March,	30	"
Supper at Bethany, and anointing of Jesus by Mary.....	Sat., April 1,	30	"
Entry into Jerusalem; visit to the temple, and return to Bethany.....	Sunday, April 2,	30	"
Cursing of the fig tree; second purification of the temple; return to Bethany.....	Monday, April 3,	30	"
Teaching in the temple; parable of the two sons, of the wicked husbandmen, of the king's son; attempts of his enemies to entangle Him; the poor widow; the Greeks who desire to see Him; a voice heard from Heaven; departure from the temple to the Mount of Olives; discourse respecting the end of the world; return to Bethany; agreement of Judas with the priests to betray Him.....	Tuesday, April 4,	30	"
Jesus seeks retirement at Bethany.....	Wednesday, April 5,	30	"
Sending of Peter and John to prepare the Passover; the paschal supper.....	Thursday, April 6,	30	"
Events at paschal supper.....	Thursday eve., April 6,	30	"
After supper Jesus foretells the denials of Peter; speaks of the coming of the Comforter, and ends with prayer.....	Thursday eve., April 6,	30	"
Jesus in the garden of Gethsemane.....	Thursday eve., April 6,	30	"
Jesus is given into the hands of Judas.....	Thursday, midnight, April 6,	30	"
Jesus is led to the house of Annas, and thence to the palace of Caiaphas; is condemned for blasphemy.....	Friday, 1-5 A.M., April 7,	30	"
Mockeries of His enemies; He is brought the second time before the council, and thence taken before Pilate.....	Friday, 5-6 A.M., April 7,	30	"
Charge of sedition; Pilate finds no fault with Him, and attempts to release Him, but is forced to scourge Him, and gives Him up to be crucified.....	Friday, 6-9 A.M., April 7,	30	"
Jesus is crucified at Golgotha.....	Friday, 9-12 A.M., April 7,	30	"
Upon the cross is reviled by his enemies; commends His mother to John; darkness covers the land; He dies; the earth shakes, and rocks are rent.....	Friday, 12 A.M.-3 P.M., April 7,	30	"
His body taken down and given to Joseph, and laid in his sepulchre.....	Friday, 3-6 P.M., April 7,	30	"
Resurrection of Jesus, and appearance to Mary Magdalene.....	Sunday, A. M., April 9,	30	"
Appearance to the two disciples at Emmaus; to Peter and to the eleven at Jerusalem.....	Sunday, P.M., April 9,	30	"
Appearance to the apostles and Thomas.....	Sunday, April 16,	30	"
Appearance to seven disciples at sea of Tiberias, and to 500 at mountain in Galilee.....	April-May,	30	"
Final appearance to the disciples at Jerusalem, and ascension to heaven.....	Thursday, May 18,	30	"

# PEOPLE'S COMMENTARY

ON

## THE GOSPEL OF LUKE.

CHAP. I. PREFACE; PARENTS OF JOHN. vs. 1-10.

JERUSALEM, B. C. 6.

THE PREFACE, vs. 1-4. The preface of Luke is concise, clear, dignified, and a model introduction. It is in purer Greek than the body of the Gospel, which itself is the purest Greek and in the most polished literary style of all the Gospels. Classical writers like Thucydides and Livy were accustomed to prepare the opening sentences of their important works with special literary care. Luke modestly and candidly states his diligent investigation into the facts, his patient care in arranging them, and his authority for his narrative, and his purpose in writing this Gospel.

**1. many have taken in hand]** Inasmuch as many have attempted to draw up a narrative of the matters upon which the Christian faith is founded, Luke is encouraged to make the attempt also. This does not imply that the others were erroneous, or unsatisfactory, but only that there was room for another narrative. Whether the "many" include Matthew and Mark is an unsettled question. Of course it could not refer to John's Gospel, as Luke wrote before John. Whether Matthew and Mark wrote earlier or later than Luke is not certainly known. If they wrote earlier, the allusion of Luke in no way implies any discredit of their work, but rather the reverse; for the attempts of "many" appear to have encouraged Luke to write. It is quite clear that "many" must refer to more than two writers, but to how many and to whom is likewise unknown. Only this may be fairly inferred: (1) That there were several narratives of gospel facts current in apostolic times, which have been lost. (2) That these lost works were not accepted by the early Christians as final authority, and hence (3) that they were not of such value to Christians as the four Gospel narratives which we have and which were accepted as of apostolic authority. (4) The "many" could not have included the apocryphal gospels now extant, like that of the Hebrews, and of Nicodemus, of Thomas, and other similar ancient writings, since they were written some time after Luke wrote.

COMMON VERSION.

CHAP. I.—Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us,

REVISED VERSION.

I FORASMUCH as many have taken in hand to draw up a narrative concerning those matters which have been <sup>1</sup>fulfilled

<sup>1</sup> Or, fully established

**to set forth in order]** or, better, "to draw up a narrative concerning those matters," as the Revised Version reads. The Greek word rendered "to set forth" in the Common Version primarily meant "to draw up in file" as soldiers. And the thing described as "drawn up" here, is not so much a "declaration" as a "discourse" or "narrative" of the "matters," including both the historic facts and the teachings upon which the new "way" or religion was grounded and the matters which had already been fully established and settled among the Christians at that early day. See Revised Version.

**2. delivered them unto us]** This implies that the facts and matters had been "handed down" or delivered as sacred oral traditions from the eye-witnesses, and that as many had attempted to arrange and write down these orally preserved facts, Luke also thought it good to undertake a like work. He does not say that "many" who attempted it were eye-witnesses, but the matters had been delivered to him and them alike, a fact which the Common Version does not clearly bring out.

**eye-witnesses and ministers]** These were the twelve and their associates with Christ. The word rendered "ministers" means primarily in Greek "an under-rower" (or sailor), and so one who waited upon or "served" in the "word:" the word is the gospel or good news of the kingdom of heaven.

**3. perfect understanding of all things]** or "having traced the course of all things accurately from the first," as in the Revised Version. In the Greek the word is a strong and peculiar one. Greek writers use it to signify one who goes along side by side with another person or thing, like an explorer following up the course of a stream until he comes to its source. Luke teaches us that inspiration did not preclude the most diligent care in searching out the facts from accessible sources. He had investigated the facts from "the first," in Greek a peculiar phrase, meaning literally, "from above," a possible hint of their true origin, or of Luke's inspiration. This Gospel states some important facts about the earlier events that ushered in the birth of Christ which are not found in other Gospels.

**write . . . in order]** This does not necessarily imply a strict chronological order, but rather an orderly grouping of the events and teachings so as clearly to inform the reader of them. It is opposed rather to a confused and unmethodical narrative.

**most excellent Theophilus]** A common name meaning "friend of God," and referring to some Gentile Christian of whom nothing certain is known. It is a curious fact that this clause is omitted in the Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions. Some think that Theophilus was a Roman governor,

## COMMON VERSION.

2 Even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eyewitnesses, and ministers of the word;

3 It seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus,

## REVISED VERSION.

2 among us, even as they delivered them unto us, who from the beginning were eye-

3 witnesses and ministers of the word, it seemed good to me also, having traced the course of all things accurately from the first, to write unto thee in order, most ex-

like Sergius Paulus: others that he was a person of rank at Antioch. The book of Acts, Luke dedicated also to Theophilus.

**certainty . . . wherein thou wast instructed]** Luke states his purpose in writing—that Theophilus might know the certainty (literally “know without trembling” or “waving”) of the matters in which thou wert instructed. The Greek word *κατηχήθης*, from which comes our word “catechise,” means “thou wast orally taught,” or by word of mouth. This carefully written narrative was intended to assure the reader of the truths which were orally taught to Christian disciples.

**5. in the days of Herod]** This was Herod the Great, an Idumæan by birth: he was made tetrarch of Judæa by Antony B. C. 40; became sole king of Judæa about 10 years later, and died B. C. 4. Of his ten wives and fourteen children, four sons are mentioned in the New Testament: Archelaus, Herod Antipas, Philip, and Herod Philip. His grandson Herod Agrippa I., and his great-grandson Herod Agrippa II., are also named by Luke in the book of



COIN OF HEROD THE GREAT.

Acts. Herod the Great had a flourishing and even brilliant temporal reign; rebuilding and extending cities and fortresses; but he was shrewd, hard, cruel, and guilty of great barbarities, and died a miserable, unlamented death at Jericho.

**priest named Zacharias]** Zacharias means, “remembered by Jehovah.” It was a common Jewish name. 2 Chron. 24 : 20; Zech. 1 : 1. He was of the course of Abia or Abijah, which in 1 Chron. 24 : 10, is the eighth of the 24 courses into which David divided the priests of the families of Eleazar and Ithamar. See Neh. 10 : 7; 12 : 4, 17. Josephus claimed descent from the first of the 24 courses of priests. (Life 1.) Only 4 of these 24 courses, each numbering about 1000 members, returned from Babylon, and from these the old 24 courses were organized.

**wife . . . of the daughters of Aaron]** The wife of Zacharias was Elisabeth, meaning “God her oath,” that is, one vowed to God. She was of a priestly family, although she was cousin or kinswoman to Mary the mother of Jesus. This would indicate that some near relative of Mary, of the tribe of Judah, had married into the priestly family. A priest was permitted to marry a wife from any of the tribes of Israel, under certain conditions. Lev. 21 : 13, 14. The marriage of Elisabeth’s father, being a priest, with the sister of Mary’s father or mother would make Elisabeth of the daughters of Aaron, and also own cousin to Mary.

COMMON VERSION.

4 That thou mightest know the certainty of those things, wherein thou hast been instructed.

5 ¶ **T**HERE was in the days of Herod, the king of Judea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the course of Abia: and his wife was of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elisabeth.

REVISED VERSION.

4 cellent Theophilus; that thou mightest know the certainty concerning the <sup>1</sup> things <sup>2</sup> wherein thou wast instructed.

5 There was in the days of Herod, king of Judæa, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the course of Abijah: and he had a wife of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was

<sup>1</sup> Gr. words    <sup>2</sup> Or, which thou wast taught by word of mouth

**6. were both righteous]** They obeyed the commands of God given in the Old Testament conscientiously in faith, and God counted them righteous. So "faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness;" Rom. 4: 9. They observed all of God's requirements, "commandments and ordinances" both being generic words, meant to cover all that God had directed his people to do. The limitation of the first to the moral law, and of the "ordinances" to the ceremonial precepts must be regarded as rather an arbitrary distinction, not warranted by the ordinary meaning of the two Greek words which they represent. Yet some foundation for it is found in Rom. 7: 8-13 and Heb. 9: 1. They were also "blameless" before men in their godly walk.

**7. they had no child]** To be childless was regarded as one of the greatest afflictions in a Jewish home. These people were godly, and both of priestly families, yet they were not without trouble and sorrow. It was commonly held that a family without children was suffering punishment for some sin. Zacharias and Elisabeth were well advanced in their years. The Koran, perhaps reflecting some tradition, states that Zacharias was 99 and Elisabeth 89 years of age.

**8. executed the priest's office]** Although well advanced in years, he still ministered in the priest's office in his turn. The Levites usually continued in service until they were 50 years of age, but the priests appear to have officiated after they were of that age. According to Josephus and the Talmud there were 20,000 priests or more, in the time of Christ. If so the same priest might only rarely be called to offer incense. The offerings and sacrifices were placed under the care of each of the 24 courses in rotation. Each course served for a week of six days and the Sabbath. 2 Kings 11: 9; 2 Chron. 23: 8.

**9. his lot]** The particular priest of a course was chosen by lot to offer the sacrifice. According to the Mishna, there were four lots (there) to be drawn: the first lot was for those who were to cleanse the altar: the second for those to slay the sacrifice, sprinkle the blood, remove the ashes, cleanse the candlestick, etc.: and the third for those to offer the incense, and cast lots, and the fourth for those to bring up the sacrifices to the altar. *Yoma*. 2: 3. 4. Maimonides also gives a long account of how each priest was selected by lot for each day's service. This lot to burn incense fell to Zacharias. In his white priestly robes, with bare feet, he entered the temple, or rather the

## COMMON VERSION.

6 And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless.

7 And they had no child, because that Elisabeth was barren; and they both were *now* well stricken in years.

8 And it came to pass, that, while he executed the priest's office before God in the order of his course,

9 According to the custom of the priest's office, his lot was to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord.

## REVISED VERSION.

6 Elisabeth. And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless.

7 And they had no child, because that Elisabeth was barren, and they both were *now* <sup>1</sup> well stricken in years.

8 Now it came to pass, while he executed the priest's office before God in the order of his

9 course, according to the custom of the priest's office, his lot was to enter into the <sup>2</sup> temple

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *advanced in their days*.

<sup>2</sup> Or, *sanctuary*

inner sanctuary, called the Holy Place and within the temple, to burn incense. The most Holy Place was beyond him, and closed by a heavy, costly veil behind which stood the ark of the covenant that was the symbol of the awful presence of Jehovah. Only the high priest could enter this.

**10. the people were praying without]** The people were without the Holy Place, but inside the temple courts. As incense was a symbol of prayer, it was fitting that the multitude should be praying while the priest entered the Holy Place for them, and cast the incense upon the golden altar. The fragrant smoke rose up, representing the prayers and offerings of the people. It is fair to infer from the narrative that this offering took place on the Sabbath. The usual time or hour of incense was in the morning about 9 o'clock, and in the afternoon about 3 o'clock. The worshippers would stand with bowed heads, their faces being towards the Holy Place, into which the priest had gone.

**SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.**—1. God raised up men fitted to record and publish the work of Christ. 2. Men divinely inspired diligently investigated the truths and facts concerning the gospel. 3. The gospel truths were surely established from the beginning. 4. It is the greatest honor to be counted righteous before God. 5. Godly people are not free from great trials. 6. It is our duty to assemble in the sanctuary to worship God. 7. When the minister is presenting the needs of the people before God, the congregation should be praying also.

### THE FORERUNNER ANNOUNCED. 1 : 11-25.

JERUSALEM, B.C. 6 TO B.C. 5.

**11. an angel of the Lord]** Angelic appearances are mentioned in the Old Testament history, as to Jacob, Moses, Joshua, Gideon, Manoah, Samuel, David, and Daniel. Luke, more fully than the other evangelists, refers to this ministration of angels in the founding of the Christian church. The place of the angel's appearance was on the right or north side of the altar: held to be the most propitious side. Compare Matt. 25 : 33 ; Mark 16 : 5. The altar of incense was also called the golden altar, because it was first made of acacia wood overlaid with gold. Ex. 30 : 1-38. Such a divine presence may well have alarmed Zacharias, for since the days of the prophet Malachi over four centuries before, these divine communications had become exceedingly rare, or ceased altogether. Indeed when they were quite frequent, good persons were sometimes in great alarm at them. Manoah was sure he would die after seeing an angel. Judg. 13 : 22. Daniel nearly fainted with fear at such an appearance. Dan. 10 : 8, 15, 16.

#### COMMON VERSION.

10 And the whole multitude of the people were praying without at the time of incense.

11 And there appeared unto him an angel of the Lord standing on the right side of the altar of incense.

12 And when Zacharias saw *him*, he was troubled, and fear fell upon him.

#### REVISED VERSION.

10 of the Lord and burn incense. And the whole multitude of the people were praying

11 without at the hour of incense. And there appeared unto him an angel of the Lord standing on the right side of the altar of

12 incense. And Zacharias was troubled when

**13. Fear not . . for thy prayer is heard]** The angel of the gospel took up the note echoed from the angel of the promise. The angel said to Daniel "Fear not" when he promised that Michael the great prince should come to deliver Israel from its troubles. Dan. 10:12, 13. The special petition, the prayer which Zacharias had just been making, as the answer implies, was heard: that is, heard and answered. You shall have a son. Joyful news to the Hebrew family! And, better than this joyful news, thou shalt call his name John, meaning "Jehovah is gracious;" for this son shall be great; the forerunner of him whose coming the old prophets have foretold.

**14. many shall rejoice]** The father would have joy, and great exultation over this son, and not he alone, but many would rejoice over his birth. Multitudes thronged him when he began his ministry and baptism. The promise implies that the prayer of Zacharias had not been for himself only, but for his people also.

**15. great in the sight of the Lord]** Or literally "before the face of the Lord," a Hebraism. How great he was in God's sight Jesus tells the Jews, as Luke informs us in Chap. 7 : 24-27. A person may be great in the sight of men, who is small in the sight of God.

**shall drink no wine nor strong drink]** So the Revised Version reads. From this and the passage in 7 : 33, it is inferred that John the Baptist was a Nazirite, from נָזִיר *Natzir*, "to separate." See Num. 6 : 2, 13, 21, Revised Version. As a member of that class he must abstain from wine and strong drink for his entire life, and also from cutting his hair. Indeed, he was not permitted to use the fruit of the wine in any form. See Num. 6 : 2-8. He was required to be a "holy" man unto the Lord all his days. The Greek word for strong drink is from the Hebrew שָׁכַר *Shakar*, "to be intoxicated," which was also forbidden to the priests while performing their official duties. Besides being temperate, John was to be filled with the Holy Spirit from his birth: a holy child, for a holy cause, animated and guided by the Holy Spirit.

**16. many . . shall he turn]** The prophecy of Malachi 4 : 6 would be fulfilled in John. "Many" would be turned, but not all. John came in the spirit and power of an Old Testament prophet, to usher in the New. He is the connecting link between the old and the new dispensation.

## COMMON VERSION.

13 But the angel said unto him, Fear not, Zacharias: for thy prayer is heard; and thy wife Elisabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John.

14 And thou shalt have joy and gladness; and many shall rejoice at his birth.

15 For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb.

16 And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God.

## REVISED VERSION.

13 he saw *him*, and fear fell upon him. But the angel said unto him, Fear not, Zacharias: because thy supplication is heard, and thy wife Elisabeth shall bear thee a son, and

14 thou shalt call his name John. And thou shalt have joy and gladness; and many

15 shall rejoice at his birth. For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and he shall drink no wine nor <sup>1</sup>strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Spirit, even

16 from his mother's womb. And many of the children of Israel shall he turn unto the

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *sikera*.

**17. in the spirit and power of Elijah]** As a herald goes before a king, so John would go before the Messiah. He would have the sternness, boldness, faithfulness, and power of the old prophet in reproofing sin, and in preparing the way for Christ. The Jews believed that Elijah would appear before the Messiah. See Matt. 11: 14; 17: 10-13. He would restore concord which irreligion destroys, in family life, by turning the hearts of the fathers to the children; to their proper religious training and upbringing; and the disobedient Israelite or Jew to follow in the wisdom of the righteous, and by these ways to make ready a people prepared for the Lord. His particular statement of the mission of John so closely resembles the language of prophecy, that an intelligent and godly priest like Zacharias could not mistake its meaning.

**18. Whereby shall I know this?]** The promise seemed so improbable, when he regarded his advanced age and that of his wife, that he desired some proof or sign of its certainty. So Abraham hesitated to believe a similar promise. Gen. 17: 17.

**19. I am Gabriel]** The angel now assures Zacharias of his authority to make the wonderful promise and prediction by saying "I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God." To a Jewish soul this would be a strong attestation of the promise, accompanied by the divine presence that Zacharias saw. For Jewish tradition held that four angels surrounded the throne of God: Gabriel who stood before his face, and who understood seventy languages including the Aramaic, Michael who was at the right hand of the throne, Uriel at the left, and Raphael behind it. *Tal. Bab. Sota*, 33: 1. *Sabbat*, 12: 2, &c. See also the book of Enoch, and Tobit 12: 15. "Gabriel" means "hero of God." He was sent to Daniel, 8: 16, on a special mission, as he now came to Zacharias.

**20. not able to speak]** In your lack of faith you ask a sign. This is the sign, "Thou shalt be silent and not able to speak, until the day that these things shall come to pass." This may seem to some a severe punishment; but let them remember that Zacharias had been praying for a son, and the angel had simply assured him that his prayer was answered. It would almost seem

## COMMON VERSION.

## REVISED VERSION.

17 And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.

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

19 And the angel answering said unto him, I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God; and am sent to speak unto thee, and to shew thee these glad tidings.

20 And, behold, thou shalt be dumb, and not able to speak, until the day that these things shall be performed, because thou believest not my words, which shall be fulfilled in their season.

17 Lord their God. And he shall<sup>1</sup> go before his face in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to walk in the wisdom of the just; to make ready for the

18 Lord a people prepared for him. And Zacharias said unto the angel, Whereby shall I know this? for I am an old man, and my

19 wife<sup>2</sup> well stricken in years. And the angel answering said unto him, I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God; and I was sent to speak unto thee, and to

20 bring thee these good tidings. And behold, thou shalt be silent and not able to speak, until the day that these things shall come to pass, because thou believedst not my words, which shall be fulfilled in their sea-

<sup>1</sup> Some ancient authorities read *come nigh before his face*

<sup>2</sup> Gr. *advanced in her days.*

that Zacharias was like many Christians now, not really expecting an answer to his prayer, and so his prayer was a distrust of God. It was this that brought the punishment.

**21. the people . . . marvelled]** Priests did not usually tarry in the Holy Place longer than was needful to make their offering. The Talmud held that they might die if they tarried, *Tal. Bab. Toma. 52: 2*, perhaps an inference from, or a reflection of the punishment of Nadab and Abihu, or of Korah and his company described in Num. 16.

**22. he could not speak]** The priest usually dismissed the people from the courts of the temple by a benediction when he came out of the Holy Place. For the appointed form of the blessing see Num. 6: 23-26. But Zacharias could not pronounce the blessing. They understood in some way that he had seen a vision in the sanctuary (Holy Place), for he kept making signs to them, and remained dumb. Some find in this a symbol of the silence of the law in the presence of the gospel, but this seems too fanciful.

**23. days of his ministration]** From this verse it is fair to infer that Zacharias completed the period of his ministration, although he had lost his speech. When that was done he left Jerusalem for his home in the hills of Judæa. See v. 59. The priests were permitted to reside outside of Jerusalem, often at a considerable distance. When the turn of their course came, however, they were required to be in the city.

**25. the Lord . . . looked on [upon] me]** Some suppose Elisabeth hid herself that she might have a protracted season of communion with the Lord. This is a fair inference from what she said. Children were counted a heritage from the Lord by the Hebrews, and the lack of children a punishment from the Lord, and hence a disgrace among men. See Ps. 113: 9; 127 and 128. Thus the Lord had graciously taken away the disgrace, and she poured out her soul in devout thanksgiving for the blessing.

SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.—1. Godly men are awed by the appearance of divine messengers. 2. Our prayers are not always rejected when the answer is long delayed. 3. Godly children are a source of great joy to godly parents. 4. To be great before God is true greatness. 5. John was filled with the Holy Spirit from his birth; children are never too young to receive the grace

## COMMON VERSION.

21 And the people waited for Zacharias, and marvelled that he tarried so long in the temple.

22 And when he came out, he could not speak unto them: and they perceived that he had seen a vision in the temple; for he beckoned unto them, and remained speechless.

23 And it came to pass, that, as soon as the days of his ministration were accomplished, he departed to his own house.

24 And after those days his wife Elisabeth conceived, and hid herself five months, saying,

25 Thus hath the Lord dealt with me in the days wherein he looked on me, to take away my reproach among men.

## REVISED VERSION.

21 son. And the people were waiting for Zacharias, and they marvelled<sup>1</sup> while he tarried

22 in the<sup>2</sup> temple. And when he came out, he could not speak unto them: and they perceived that he had seen a vision in the

23 temple: and he continued making signs unto them, and remained dumb. And it came to pass, when the days of his ministration were fulfilled, he departed unto his house.

24 And after these days Elisabeth his wife conceived; and she hid herself five months, saying, Thus hath the Lord done unto me in the days wherein he looked upon me, to take away my reproach among men.

<sup>1</sup> Or, at his tarrying

<sup>2</sup> Or, sanctuary.

of God. 6. The Lord is not pleased with unbelief in any of his servants. 7. Angels take a deep interest in the redemption of man. 8. Children are a blessing from the Lord. 9. God punishes unbelief in the godly; yet answers their prayers by sending great blessings.

THE MESSIAH ANNOUNCED. 1 : 26-38.

NAZARETH, B.C. 6.

**26. in the sixth month... Gabriel]** From Jerusalem and the hill country of Judæa, the sacred writer now takes us into Galilee. In the sixth month after Gabriel had appeared to Zacharias in the sanctuary of the temple at Jerusalem, he is again sent to earth, this time to a humble home in Nazareth. On Nazareth, see notes under chap. 4:16. The town Nazareth was not one of importance, since it is not named in the Old Testament, in the Talmud, nor in Josephus, who speaks of 204 cities and towns in Galilee. It is now dear to every Christian heart as the home of Jesus during his childhood and youth.

**27. a virgin espoused [betrothed] to... Joseph]** In a Jewish home "betrothal" was as important as marriage is among us. In Galilee, where the habits of the people were more simple than in parts of Judæa, the bride was "betrothed" or chosen, not for money, but for her personal character and fitness. The mode of betrothal was either a solemn avowal in the presence of witnesses with an added money pledge; or by a writing formally prescribed, the ceremony concluding with a benediction upon the betrothal and the parties. From that time the relationship of Joseph and Mary would be as sacred as if they had been wedded. Joseph was of the house of David, the royal line. Mary, the maiden bride, must have been of the same house and lineage, otherwise her son Jesus could not have been the "son of David," but only the reputed son, since Joseph was not his real, but only his reputed father. Luke's genealogy shows that Mary was of the house of David, and it is also implied in v. 32.

**28. Hail... highly favoured]** The greeting of the angel was startling, yet it conveyed the highest commendation that could be bestowed on a woman; very graciously accepted, hence "highly favoured," "a daughter of grace" as Bengel interprets it; the Lord is with thee. This is not a benediction, but a declaration of a fact by the angel. The clause "blessed art thou among women" is found in some Greek MSS. (A. C. D.), but is omitted in the Revised Version; it is not found in the Sinaitic or Vatican MS., and may

COMMON VERSION.

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

27 To a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary.

28 And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women.

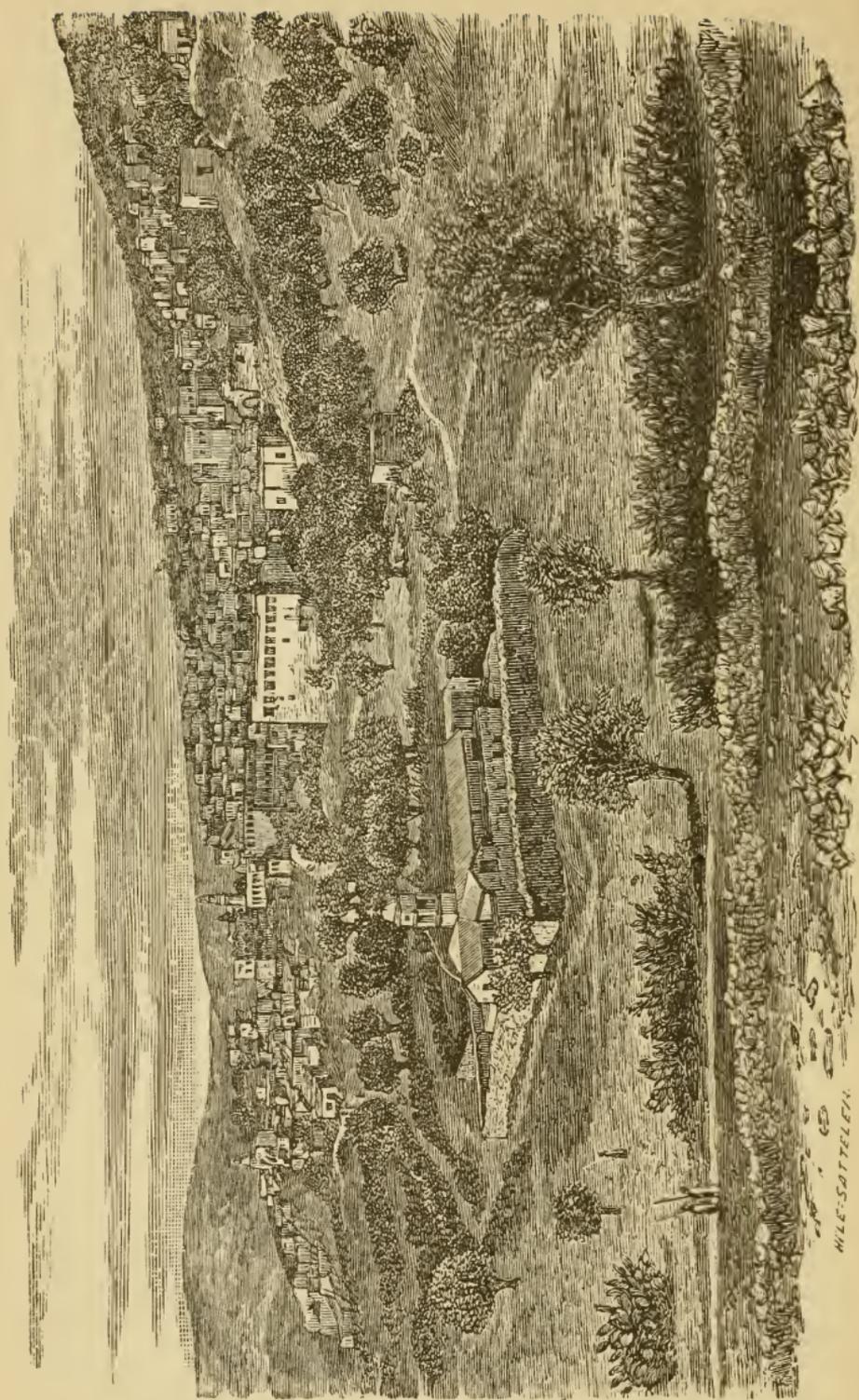
REVISED VERSION.

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

27 named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary.

28 And he came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art <sup>1</sup>highly favoured, the Lord is

<sup>1</sup> Or, *endued with grace*



MILE-SATTELEN.

Nazareth. (After Photographs.)

have been transferred here from v. 42, where it appears in the salutation of Elisabeth. The famous Romanist prayer to the Virgin Mary, *Ave Maria*, based on this greeting, and on v. 42, did not come into use even in its first part until the 13th century, and the latter part probably not until about the 16th century, the concluding clause, "now and at the hour of our death," being a still later addition.

**30. Fear not, Mary]** As Zacharias feared and trembled at the presence of Gabriel in the temple, so Mary was greatly troubled (the Greek is strong, "stirred through and through") at his presence, and by his greeting in her humble home in Nazareth. She was the more perplexed, because it was not usual for a Jew to use formal salutations to a woman. See *Tal. Bab. Kid.* 70 : 1, 2. The angelic messenger first calms her fears, and then assures her that he has not come as a messenger of judgment, but of grace, "thou hast found favour [grace] with God."

**31. call his name Jesus]** Jesus is the Greek form of the Hebrew name Jehoshua, contracted to Joshua, which means salvation of Jehovah. In the Gospel narratives the Saviour is called Jesus over 500 times, and Christ alone about 50 times, and Jesus Christ or Christ Jesus about 10 times. He is called Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins. *Matt.* 1 : 21.

**32. the Son of the Highest]** or "Most High." He shall be called, and shall be, the Son of the Most High. He was the only begotten Son, so declared by the Father, and has been called and acknowledged such by the church.

**the throne of his father David]** It is a singular perversion of this plain language, to say that "father" is here to be taken in a national and theocratic sense, as Meyer and others hold, and not in its most obvious and natural sense. The plain sense is that Jesus was a son of David by ordinary and natural descent, and to be so Mary must have been of the tribe and lineage of David. And this agrees with the general testimony of the Scriptures, of the Jews, and of the early Christians. Compare also, *Ps.* 132 : 11 ; *Mic.* 5 : 4 ; *Is.* 9 : 6, 7, and *Phil.* 2 : 9-11 ; *Rev.* 22 : 16. On the permanence of his reign and kingdom, see *Dan.* 2 : 44 ; 7 : 13, 14 ; *Ps.* 45 : 6 and "He shall reign for ever and ever." *Rev.* 11 : 15.

## COMMON VERSION.

29 And when she saw *him*, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be.

30 And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary : for thou hast found favour with God.

31 And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS.

32 He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest ; and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David :

33 And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever ; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.

## REVISED VERSION.

29 with thee.<sup>1</sup> But she was greatly troubled

at the saying, and cast in her mind what

30 manner of salutation this might be. And

the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary :

31 for thou hast found <sup>2</sup> favour with God. And

behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb,

and bring forth a son, and shalt call his

32 name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall

be called the Son of the Most High : and the

Lord God shall give unto him the throne of

33 his father David : and he shall reign over

the house of Jacob <sup>3</sup> for ever ; and of his

<sup>1</sup> Many ancient authorities add *blessed art thou among women*. See ver. 42.

<sup>2</sup> Or, *grace*

<sup>3</sup> Gr. *unto the ages*.

**34. How shall this be]** Zacharias questioning the angel's promise, asked for a sign, and was answered by a punishment. Mary accepting the announcement humbly asks in wonder how it is to be, since she is not yet married. The purity of her character will be involved. The Galilean maiden has greater faith under a severer strain upon her godly nature, than the Judæan priest. It was a reasonable and natural question which she asked and a clear and satisfactory answer is given by the angel.

**35. Holy Ghost [Spirit] shall come upon thee]** Gabriel answers Mary's question, since to a virgin heart there would be a conscious impossibility of the fulfillment of the promise without involving her purity of character. The angel therefore explains the divine mystery. The Holy Spirit, the Fountain and Creator of all life, shall come upon thee, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee. Compare the expression in Gen. 1:2, "the Spirit of God moved upon [brooded over] the face of the waters," giving life to dead inorganic matter. Wherefore Mary was assured that the one to be born would be called "holy," and in an exceptional and exclusive way, the Son of God. To one familiar with the Old Testament Messianic prophecies, as Mary must have been, these expressions of the angel would be definite enough to point to the near fulfillment of the Messianic promises. How clearly she may have understood that Jesus was to be the long expected Messiah, cannot be decided. Probably she hoped it would be so, and waited for further evidence which the providence of God might vouchsafe to her. It is an "undesigned proof" of the truthfulness of this narrative, that the idea of such a miraculous conception and birth, is quite foreign to the Jewish mind, as Geikie observes. Their thoughts of the nature of the Messiah as a temporal king, would further preclude the probability of any such a story being invented by a Jew.

**36. thy cousin [kinswoman] Elisabeth]** To assist Mary's faith and further to confirm the promise, Gabriel tells Mary of the joy which is soon to be in the house of Elisabeth, a very close relative of her family, possibly a cousin as the Common Version reads, though the Greek word does not so exactly define the relationship; it does mean one of the same family and a near relative. Then the angel reminds her of the power of any word from God, see v. 37, Revised Version, and thus concludes his assurance.

## COMMON VERSION.

34 Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?

35 And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.

36 And, behold, thy cousin Elisabeth, she hath also conceived a son in her old age; and this is the sixth month with her, who was called barren.

## REVISED VERSION.

34 kingdom there shall be no end. And Mary said unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? And the angel

answered and said unto her, The Holy Spirit shall come upon thee, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee: wherefore also <sup>1</sup>the holy thing which is be-

gotten <sup>2</sup>shall be called the Son of God. And <sup>36</sup>behold, Elisabeth thy kinswoman, she also hath conceived a son in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her that <sup>3</sup>was

<sup>1</sup> Or, that which is to be born shall be called holy, the Son of God. insert of thee. <sup>3</sup> Or, is

<sup>2</sup> Some ancient authorities

**38. the handmaid of the Lord]** Mary in humble submission, as the Lord's handmaid (Greek, bondmaid, as if she regarded herself a female slave to the Lord), and with innocence and in admirable grace bows to the appointment of heaven for her. Bishop Ryle felicitously says: "A moment's reflection will show us, that it was no light matter to become mother of our Lord in this unheard of and mysterious way. It brought with it, no doubt, at a distant period great honor; but it brought with it for the present no small danger to Mary's reputation, and no small trial to Mary's faith. All this danger and trial the holy virgin was willing and ready to risk. She asks no further questions. She accepts the honor laid upon her with all its attendant perils and inconveniences." Behold, the handmaid, literally the female slave or servant of the Lord. "Be it unto me according to thy word." And the angel departed from her. How simple is this genuine narrative compared with the diffuse, inflated and bombastic accounts in some of the so-called apocryphal gospels. There is a delicacy as well as a simplicity of speech, a reticence, conciseness and propriety in the entire history that marks it as genuine, and inspired. The message delivered, the angel hastens back to heaven and to God.

**SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.**—1. God sends his messengers to the humble poor who love and obey him. 2. He confers unexpected and often great blessings upon some whom the world counts obscure. 3. It is the greatest honor to be in favor with God. 4. The birth of the Saviour is the most important event in the history of fallen man. 5. Things ordered of God may be above nature, but not contrary to her. 6. Christ's kingdom shall endure for ever and ever. 7. When God speaks we are to be humble, believing, resigned, and hopeful in God.

### THE VISIT AND SONG OF MARY. vs. 39-56.

HILL COUNTRY OF JUDEA. B.C. 5.

The remarkable message of the angel to Mary about herself and her aged relative Elisabeth must have given Mary deep anxiety of mind. The narrative leads us to believe that as soon as she could arrange for it, Mary made the visit to Elisabeth. The journey of about 80 miles from Nazareth, in Galilee, by way of Jerusalem to the hill country of Judæa south of Jerusalem, probably in the region of Hebron, would require several days. After the greeting by the aged Elisabeth, the more youthful Mary in a state of spiritual exaltation uttered the noble hymn which the Roman church named the *Magnificat* from the first Latin word with which it begins in the Vulgate version.

#### COMMON VERSION.

37 For with God nothing shall be impossible.

38 And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her.

#### REVISED VERSION.

37 called barren. For no word from God shall  
38 be void of power. And Mary said, Behold, the <sup>1</sup>handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her.

<sup>1</sup> Gr. bondmaid

**39. went into the hill country with haste]** The motives for such a journey are obvious. Mary would rejoice with her relative Elisabeth, receive confirmation of the good news, and have the counsel of her kinswoman, older and more experienced than herself, in respect to the wisest course for her to follow in relation to her betrothed husband Joseph. The town to which she went was not called Judah, but was in the territory of that tribe. Tradition places it at, or in the region of Hebron, as cities in that region were allotted to priests. She went "with haste" which implies not merely speed on the journey, but no long delay in starting upon it, after the angel had departed.

**41. Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost [Spirit]** As Mary entered the home of the aged Elisabeth, she would give her the usual Jewish greeting or salutation, "The Lord be with thee." This greeting was accompanied by a joyous delight in Elisabeth and a spiritual exaltation, the Holy Spirit coming upon her with unusual and prophetic power. All these facts may have been made known by Mary afterward and reported in Luke's Gospel under the direction of the Holy Spirit.

**42. Blessed art thou among women]** A similar expression is found in the Hebrew song of Deborah and Barak. Judg. 5 : 24. The language of the Old Testament would be familiar to the wife of a godly priest like Zacharias, and at this time of Roman rule, she would particularly dwell on the songs of deliverance from foreign domination. In a loud and joyous voice Elisabeth pours out the intense feelings of her soul. She appears to speak of Mary's condition by the spirit of prophecy, for there is no intimation that Mary had yet informed her of the angelic visit.

**43. the mother of my Lord should come]** This is further evidence that Elisabeth now spake by inspiration of the Spirit, as this language plainly refers to Mary as the mother of the coming Messiah, a fact which the Spirit had imparted to Elisabeth. She knew a wonderful child was promised to Zacharias and herself, but great as he was to become in the sight of the Lord, here was the mother of a greater now before her, and in humility and reverence she wonders that one so blessed and honored should visit her. It would be more fitting she thinks for Elisabeth to have paid that honor to

## COMMON VERSION.

39 And Mary arose in those days, and went into the hill country with haste, into a city of Juda;

40 And entered into the house of Zacharias, and saluted Elisabeth.

41 And it came to pass, that, when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost:

42 And she spake out with a loud voice, and said, Blessed *art* thou among women, and blessed *is* the fruit of thy womb.

43 And whence *is* this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?

44 For, lo, as soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in mine ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy.

## REVISED VERSION.

39 And Mary arose in these days and went into the hill country with haste, into a city

40 of Judah; and entered into the house of

41 Zacharias and saluted Elisabeth. And it came to pass, when Elisabeth heard the

42 salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elisabeth was filled with the

43 Holy Spirit; and she lifted up her voice with a loud cry, and said, Blessed *art* thou

44 among women, and blessed *is* the fruit of thy womb. And whence *is* this to me, that

the mother of my Lord should come unto me? For behold, when the voice of thy

salutation came into mine ears, the babe

Mary. Mother and child were thrilled with delight to hear the salutation of the mother of the Lord.

**45. blessed is she that believed]** This verse may be translated, And blessed is she that believed that there shall be a fulfilment of the things which have been spoken to her from the Lord. This means that Elisabeth rejoices in the clear faith of Mary at the angelic promise, and perhaps mentally puts this faith in contrast with the hesitating belief of Zacharias, who was now speechless for his partial unbelief, while Mary is joyous in her praises of the Lord. The *Magnificat* or song of Mary has been called a "mosaic of Old Testament imagery and language." Compare the song of Hannah, 1 Sam. 2 : 1-10. It is a New Testament Psalm in spirit, and has been divided into four stanzas of unequal length. The first stanza extols God's grace, vs. 46-48; the second, his power, vs. 49, 50; the third, his justice, vs. 51, 52; and the fourth, his faithfulness, vs. 53-55. The song has had a prominent place in the worship of the church for centuries. It is found there as early as 507. It is Messianic and Jewish in its undertone rather than distinctively Christian, and this marks it as genuine; the first beatitude of the New Testament.

**46. My soul doth magnify the Lord]** This does not mean that the Lord is made any greater in himself; for he is infinite in his greatness and exaltation. But her soul recognizes, praises and exalts the Lord within itself, and expresses its feelings to others. Compare the similar language in Ps. 34 : 2, 3; Hab. 3 : 18. She rejoiced in God as the source of her salvation—not merely in a general sense, but in him as a personal Saviour.

**48. all generations shall call me blessed]** Mary was of an obscure town, from an humble family, without worldly wealth, rank, or social position, and yet she belonged to the royal line of David. In contrast with this lowly condition the Lord had looked with special grace upon her, and inspired by the Spirit she foretold the great honor in which her name would be held in all generations. This does not warrant prayers or divine honors to Mary, but only declares that her happiness and blessing in being selected to become the mother of the Lord will be acknowledged by the generations to come. Her attitude is one of the greatest humility, and farthest removed from the Mariolatry bestowed upon her in the Romish church. Compare similar language by Leah in Gen. 30 : 13 and by Hannah in 1 Sam. 1 : 11; 2 : 7, 8. Thus far all was due to the sovereign grace of God.

## COMMON VERSION.

45 And blessed is she that believed: for there shall be a performance of those things which were told her from the Lord.

46 And Mary said, My soul doth magnify the Lord,

47 And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.

48 For he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden: for, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed.

## REVISED VERSION.

45 leaped in my womb for joy. And blessed is she that <sup>1</sup>believed; for there shall be a fulfilment of the things which have been spoken

46 to her from the Lord. And Mary said, My soul doth magnify the Lord,

47 And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.

48 For he hath looked upon the low estate of his <sup>2</sup>handmaiden:

For behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed.

<sup>1</sup> Or, believed that there shall be

<sup>2</sup> Gr. bondmaiden.

**49. hath done to me great things]** God's power had been signally manifested to her; great honor had been bestowed upon her. It was one that brought great trials with it, and the greatest strain that could be placed upon a woman's reputation, but in her innocence, she could but exclaim of the Lord, "holy is his name." The Psalmist used similar language, Ps. 126 : 2, 3, and 111 : 9. Then Mary breaks forth in praise of God's great mercy in words that are caught from the grand refrain of Ps. 118, "his mercy endureth for ever," and the beatific song of David, "the mercy of the Lord *is* from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him," Ps. 103 : 17, which she sends re-echoing as a Christian song in successive ages of the church militant.

**51. hath scattered the proud]** These figures and thoughts are common in Hebrew poetry. The Psalmist sings: "Thou hast scattered thine enemies with thy strong arm," Ps. 89 : 10, and "his right hand, and his holy arm, hath gotten him the victory," Ps. 98 : 1. Compare also the song of Moses, Ex. 15 : 12, 16. For the second clause compare Job 5 : 12 ; 26 : 12 ; Ps. 33 : 10 ; and Prov. 15 : 25, where the Lord's judgments upon the proud are vigorously and poetically expressed.

**52. exalted them of low degree]** The old Hebrew song of Hannah has similar contrasts, 1 Sam. 2 : 6, 7, and the Psalmist praises God for like providences in his day, Ps. 113 : 6-8. The older poem of Job is also full of like imagery, Job 5 : 9, 11, 15, 19.

**55. as he spake to [unto] our fathers]** Mary closes her wonderful *Magnificat*, her song of praise, by exalting the faithfulness of God in fulfilling his promises.

"The hungry he hath filled with good things ;  
And the rich he hath sent empty away."

The same thought is found in the Messianic prophecy of Isaiah, "my servants shall eat, but ye shall be hungry," Is. 65 : 13. See also, 58 : 7. He hath holpen [taken by the hand] his servant Israel, according to the promise in Is. 41 : 8, 9, and elsewhere, Ps. 98 : 3, in remembrance of his mercy, as the Jews had sung for generations in their great Hallel at every passover feast, from Ps. 118, "his mercy endureth for ever," and in that scarcely less familiar

## COMMON VERSION.

49 For he that is mighty hath done to me great things; and holy *is* his name.

50 And his mercy *is* on them that fear him from generation to generation.

51 He hath shewed strength with his arm ; he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.

52 He hath put down the mighty from *their* seats, and exalted them of low degree.

53 He hath filled the hungry with good things; and the rich he hath sent empty away.

54 He hath holpen his servant Israel, in remembrance of *his* mercy ;

55 As he spake to our fathers, to Abraham, and to his seed for ever.

## REVISED VERSION.

49 For he that is mighty hath done to me great things ;

And holy is his name.

50 And his mercy is unto generations and generations

On them that fear him.

51 He hath shewed strength with his arm ;

He hath scattered the proud <sup>1</sup> in the imagination of their heart.

52 He hath put down princes from *their* thrones,

And hath exalted them of low degree.

53 The hungry he hath filled with good things ;

And the rich he hath sent empty away.

54 He hath holpen Israel his servant,

That he might remember mercy

(As he spake unto our fathers)

Toward Abraham and his seed for ever.

<sup>1</sup> Or, *by*

Hebrew historic song of thanksgiving, Ps. 136. The covenant God had made with the fathers he had now signally renewed and was about to fulfill in the Messiah. Israel was to be redeemed, for Mary in her devout soul had no thought that the people would fail to recognize and to accept the Messiah. Thus she sang her wonderful hymn, rejoicing that her Son was to be the Redeemer of his people, sitting on the throne of David and restoring (in her mind) all the spiritual and temporal glory to Israel.

**56. abode with her about three months]** How delightful the companionship of these kindred and devout souls was, the heavenly minded alone can imagine. Elisabeth knowing Mary's secret trial and her innocence, they would naturally desire to remain together until duty called Mary to Nazareth again. Then she must meet those who might not readily accept her report of the vision of the angel, and she must await God's providential ways for making the mysterious message and the truth known to Joseph.

**SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.**—1. Believers love to talk of God's grace. 2. There is an enforced silence of unbelief, and the voluntary silence of the believing heart. 3. Praise God for his mercy. 4. Praise God for his power. 5. Praise God for his holy justice. 6. Praise God for his faithfulness in fulfilling his promises. 7. Praise God for his bountiful blessings. 8. The spirit of true worship has been the same in all ages. 9. God and his great salvation have been the theme of song among all his saints, and will be to the end of time. 10. Christ is the centre of the world's hopes; the only Saviour of Jew and Gentile. 11. The Spirit enables us to magnify the Lord. 12. Our lives should be one continuous and grand *Magnificat*, a song of praise to our Redeemer.

### THE BIRTH OF JOHN. 1:57-66.

HILL COUNTRY OF JUDEA, B.C. 5.

Mary probably left her kinswoman before the birth of John the Baptist, as the ordinary reader would infer from the order of the narrative, though she *may* be included among her cousins [kinsfolk] of verse 58, and have remained to rejoice with Elisabeth over that joyous event.

**58. mercy towards her]** The birth of a first-born son was always a cause for rejoicing in every Hebrew house. How much more cause for it would there be in this instance, when the position of the parents in the priestly order, their advanced age, and the remarkable angelic revelations preceding the birth, and the prophecy of the future character and greatness of the child are all considered? So the neighbors and relatives gathered, as was the custom in the East, to offer personal congratulations to the parents, and to rejoice with them.

#### COMMON VERSION.

56 And Mary abode with her about three months, and returned to her own house.

57 Now Elisabeth's full time came that she should be delivered; and she brought forth a son.

58 And her neighbours and her cousins heard how the Lord had shewed great mercy upon her; and they rejoiced with her.

#### REVISED VERSION.

56 And Mary abode with her about three months, and returned unto her house.

57 Now Elisabeth's time was fulfilled that she should be delivered; and she brought forth

58 a son. And her neighbours and her kinsfolk heard that the Lord had magnified his mercy towards her; and they rejoiced with

**59. on the eighth day]** The act of circumcision by which the child was set apart as holy to the Lord, was one of great solemnity. In the time of Christ it was usual to require ten persons to be present as witnesses; to offer a prayer of blessing at the beginning; and to give the child a name. The persons present named him (or were calling him) Zacharias, because the father who should name him was yet dumb, and that was a priestly name, common to his family.

**60. Not so; but he shall be called John]** The mother no doubt had been informed by her husband through signs, or by writing, what the angel had said of the child, and of his name.

**61. none of thy kindred]** It would be an unusual and quite unnatural thing in the East for the child not to be named after his father, or some one of the family. A strange name in a family was almost as offensive as a foreign wife.

**62. made signs]** They would scarcely make signs to one who could hear, though he being speechless would be compelled to make signs to them. It is therefore inferred that Zacharias was deaf as well as dumb, for if he could have heard, they would naturally have spoken to him, rather than have made signs.

**63. for a writing table [tablet]** Various forms of writing tablets were then in common use. One was made of wood and smeared over with wax, or



FORMS OF STYLUS, TABLETS, ETC.

more primitive still, was covered over with sand, smoothed carefully, when the writing could be done with an ivory, wood, or iron stylus, or pencil. Bengel says that the law ended with *cherem*, "curse," Mal. 4: 16, but the first word under the gospel was

Johannan, "John," "grace," of Jehovah. For Zacharias wrote, "His name is John. And they marvelled all."

**64. his mouth was opened immediately]** The promise and the com-

COMMON VERSION.

59 And it came to pass, that on the eighth day they came to circumcise the child; and they called him Zacharias, after the name of his father.

60 And his mother answered and said, Not so; but he shall be called John.

61 And they said unto her, There is none of thy kindred that is called by this name.

62 And they made signs to his father, how he would have him called.

63 And he asked for a writing table, and wrote, saying, His name is John. And they marvelled all.

64 And his mouth was opened immediately, and his tongue loosed, and he spake, and praised God.

REVISED VERSION.

59 her. And it came to pass on the eighth day, that they came to circumcise the child; and they would have called him Zacharias, after 60 the name of his father. And his mother answered and said, Not so; but he shall be 61 called John. And they said unto her, There is none of thy kindred that is 62 called by this name. And they made signs to his father, what he would have him 63 called. And he asked for a writing tablet, and wrote, saying, His name is John. And 64 they marvelled all. And his mouth was opened immediately, and his tongue loosed,

mand of the angel being both fulfilled; the punishment which was the sign of their certainty is now removed as suddenly as it came.

**spake [blessing] God**] See Revised Version. It is the imperfect tense in Greek, "continued to speak." The first words were in praise of God for his goodness, and mercy, not so much upon Zacharias, great as they appeared to him, but upon the people, for the great redemption was accomplished as it seemed to him.

**66. What . . . child shall this be?**] or "What then shall this child be?" as in the Revised Version. The minds of the Jewish people were at this time greatly troubled; and trembling between fear and hope. They feared the increased power of Rome over them: they hoped for a coming deliverer, the Messiah. Even the intimation that he was born, only added to their anxiety lest he should be destroyed, or they crushed before he grew up to rally and realize the forlorn hopes of Israel. Cherishing these hopes they carefully considered the facts of the birth of John, and asked, what truly shall this child be? For indeed the hand of God was with him. It was a question of wonder in view of the facts. Notice, in their bewildered and excited state of mind, how their speech takes on the old Hebraistic forms of expression which Luke has reproduced in the Greek. See on this phrase, "Let thy hand be upon the man of thy right hand," Ps. 80 : 17.

**SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.**—1. The promises and threatenings of God may tarry, but are sure to come to pass. 2. All the world loves sympathy: rejoicing over blessings as well as mourning over calamities. 3. Children are a heritage from the Lord: godly parents will consecrate them to the Lord. 4. Divine commands are to be obeyed, though contrary to worldly customs. 5. Our speech is given us to glorify God. 6. We ought to pray that the hand of the Lord may be with our children.

### THE PROPHECY OF ZACHARIAS. 1 : 67-80.

HILL COUNTRY OF JUDEA, B. C. 5.

**67. filled with the Holy Ghost [Spirit] and prophesied]** Zacharias having shown that his doubts were removed, and that he would yield full belief and ready obedience to the divine message, is now in a special manner filled with the Holy Spirit, and "prophesied." This word in classical Greek means one who speaks for another, and especially one who speaks for a god. Thus Zacharias is here enabled to interpret God's will to his people. For this "prophecy" is not so much "foretelling events" as interpreting prophe-

#### COMMON VERSION.

65 And fear came on all that dwelt round about them: and all these sayings were noised abroad throughout all the hill country of Judea.

66 And all they that heard *them* laid *them* up in their hearts, saying, What manner of child shall this be! And the hand of the Lord was with him.

67 And his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Ghost, and prophesied, saying,

#### REVISED VERSION.

65 and he spake, blessing God. And fear came on all that dwelt round about them: and all these sayings were noised abroad throughout

66 all the hill country of Judea. And all that heard them laid them up in their heart, saying, What then shall this child be? For the hand of the Lord was with him.

67 And his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Spirit, and prophesied, saying,

cies already made to his people, and pointing out how these are now to be fulfilled.

**68. Blessed be the Lord God of Israel]** These are exactly the words of David when he heard that his successor was enthroned, 1 Kings 1:48. They were fitting words to herald the coming of David's greater Son. God "hath visited" as a defender and deliverer and to his prophetic vision had redeemed his people already.

**69. raised up a horn of salvation]** The horn in the East is the symbol of great power. The Arabs refer to Alexander the Great as the "two horned." In the Psalms the horn is in frequent use for power, Ps. 89:17, 24; 92:10; 112:9; 132:17; 148:14. Notice also the vision of a beast with ten horns, and of the horned ram and goat in Dan. 7:20; 8:3, 5. The horn is also an emblem of glory, 1 Sam. 2:1, and of plenty, Ezek. 29:21. In Palestine the great horned animals were the most powerful beasts known, and



HORNS WORN AS HEAD-ORNAMENTS BY ORIENTALS.

were therefore chosen as symbols of might, as the lion and river-horse were in other lands where those animals were common.

**in the house of . . . David]** This has a double reference, no doubt. It primarily refers to John the Baptist, but to him as the forerunner of the greater one from the house of David, the Messiah.

**70. by the mouth of his holy prophets]** Zacharias glances at the great chain of Messianic prophecies, from their beginning at the fall until the close of Old Testament prophecy. The promises to Abraham make Messiah a Jew. Jacob's word limits his descent to the tribe of Judah, and Psalm 89 again declares him to be of the house of David. Isaiah further limits his birth. The Messiah is not to be from the great and the mighty, but from the despised and the lowly. And Micah narrows the field again, and fixes the place of his birth at Bethlehem of Judah. These prophecies were in the main rightly understood by believing Jews, and Zacharias voiced devout feeling in these exalted utterances.

COMMON VERSION.

68 Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed his people,

69 And hath raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David;

70 As he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began:

REVISED VERSION.

68 Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel; For he hath visited and wrought redemption for his people,

69 And hath raised up a horn of salvation for us In the house of his servant David

70 (As he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets that have been of old),

**71. from our enemies . . . that hate us]** These two clauses are in apposition, and both refer to the same class ; Israel's enemies. This may be taken as a temporal and as a spiritual deliverance also. To the Jewish mind the two were well-nigh inseparable. The pure and peaceable worship of God could only be enjoyed by a national deliverance from their enemies and by independence from foreign temporal domination. The promise to the fathers, and the covenant in all Old Testament times meant to them the bestowal of temporal and spiritual mercies. This thought is more fully and clearly declared in vs. 74, 75. The Jewish nation had suffered almost untold horrors during the Maccabæan period, and under the Macedonians and the Romans, and preceding and up to the time of this prophecy. They would dwell upon a deliverance from these sore afflictions. Yet the words being the promptings of the Holy Spirit through Zacharias may also be applied in a Christian sense to that greater deliverance from spiritual enemies and the horrors of sin to which the Jew and Gentile alike are subject.

**73. oath . . . Abraham]** The "oath" here refers to the same promise as the "holy covenant" of v. 72. The covenant is found in various texts, in Gen. 12 : 3 ; 17 : 4 ; 22 : 16, 17 : and is referred to in Heb. 6 : 13, 14, 17.

**76. thou shalt go before]** Zacharias in this verse points out the precise work which his son was to do. He says, thou, little child ; not thou, my son. He speaks as a prophet rather than as a father. The last of the Old Testament prophets in spirit, John the Baptist was also to usher in the new dispensation of grace and glory coming through Jesus Christ. How the way was prepared for the Messiah by John's preaching and baptism, Luke tells us in the following chapters. He gave a knowledge of salvation : his ringing call was, Repent, that your sins may be put away. The Romish idea that ignorance is the mother of devotion finds no favor here. Popes and pagans may love to keep people in ignorance ; true Christianity promotes the highest knowledge and spreads truth.

**78. the dayspring from on high]** This is voicing the substance of

## COMMON VERSION

71 That we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us ;

72 To perform the mercy *promised* to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant ;

73 The oath which he sware to our father Abraham,

74 That he would grant unto us, that we, being delivered out of the hand of our enemies, might serve him without fear,

75 In holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life.

76 And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest : for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways ;

77 To give knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of their sins,

78 Through the tender mercy of our God ; whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us,

## REVISED VERSION.

71 Salvation from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us ;

72 To shew mercy towards our fathers, And to remember his holy covenant ;

73 The oath which he sware unto Abraham our father,

74 To grant unto us that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies

Should serve him without fear,

75 In holiness and righteousness before him all our days.

76 Yea and thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Most High :

For thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to make ready his ways ;

77 To give knowledge of salvation unto his people

In the remission of their sins,

78 Because of the<sup>1</sup> tender mercy of our God, <sup>2</sup>Whereby the dayspring from on high <sup>3</sup>shall visit us,

<sup>1</sup> Or, *heart of mercy*

<sup>2</sup> Or, *Wherein*

<sup>3</sup> Many ancient authorities read *hath visited us*.

the prophecies in Is. 60 : 1, and Mal. 4 : 2. The "dayspring" refers to Christ. Peter calls him the day-star, 2 Pet. 1 : 19 ; and John writes of "the bright and morning star," Rev. 22 : 16. As the dawn is seen in the east breaking through the darkness, so the dawn of the spiritual life is seen in the preaching of John, who heralds the coming Messiah, the light that is to dispel the darkness of sin.

**79. the shadow of death]** Those in sin are in the shadow of death, for the "wages of sin is death." For similar use of the figure, see Job 10 : 21 ; Ps. 23 : 4 ; Is. 9 : 2. The Sun of righteousness is rising upon the world, but the mountains of sin hide his light, and the people sit in the shadow of death. The wicked can have no peace. Those who are guided into the way of Christ walk in the way of peace.

**80. the child grew]** He grew in a twofold way: in body, and in spirit. As the body increased in size, the spirit became stronger for God and the truth. He remained secluded in the deserts, not a sandy waste, but a sparsely settled portion of Judæa. So Moses was prepared for his great work in the deserts of Sinai. Thus Paul was secluded in the deserts of Arabia, that he might become the great apostle of the Gentiles. It is not very likely that John and Jesus were intimate companions or playmates in their childhood, as Christian art has often represented them. The education of John as the son of a priest must have been widely different from that of Jesus as the carpenter's son in Nazareth. They would have in common, however, the training in the synagogue, the school-life, where alike they would learn the law and become familiar with large portions of the Old Testament Scriptures. John led this life of seclusion until the day of his showing unto Israel, the time when he entered upon his public work of preaching and baptizing. In this prophecy of Zacharias there are: 1. Thanksgiving for the immediate appearing of the Messiah ; 2. Praises to God for the fulfillment of his promises ; 3. Joy over the deliverance and redemption which the Messiah would bring ; 4. A clear view of the preparatory work which John the Baptist must do ; 5. The comfort which God's people derive from the light of Christ.

**SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.**—1. The Holy Spirit enables us to understand God's providences and his word. 2. God is the Redeemer of his people. 3. Believers in olden time had a chain of assurances that Christ would come to redeem his people. 4. Spiritual enlightenment, in time works intellectual and civil freedom : it is opposed to bondage of the mind, to bondage of the body. 5. Only a godly people can be a truly free people. 6. Repentance prepares the way for Christ to save. 7. God loved sinners, and showed mercy toward them. 8. Man without Christ is in the shadow of death, and without hope. 9. Christ is the dayspring from on high : he is the light of the world.

## COMMON VERSION.

79 To give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.

80 And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, and was in the deserts till the day of his shewing unto Israel.

## REVISED VERSION.

79 To shine upon them that sit in darkness and the shadow of death ;

To guide our feet into the way of peace.

80 And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, and was in the deserts till the day of his shewing unto Israel.

## THE BIRTH OF JESUS. 2: 1-20.

NAZARETH AND BETHLEHEM, B. C. 5.

The fullness of time had now come: the forerunner had come: that period which is the centre of all the world's history had come. "The Word was God," God manifest in the flesh. Hitherto there had been the twilight of revelation: now the sunrise time had come. It was not "noonday;" that time is yet in the future so far as we can see: but we are in the full daylight of the Sun of righteousness in the earth. Let us prayerfully study the wonderful advent of this King of righteousness.

**1. in those days]** In the days when the events just related in connection with the birth of John were taking place. The order for the taxation or enrollment was made at about the same time.

**a decree from Cæsar Augustus]** He was the second of the Cæsars, and nephew of Julius, an ambitious, vain, treacherous, yet generous ruler. In his reign, literature and arts were cultivated, so that the "Augustan age" of Rome has passed into a proverb. Augustus ordered a general enrollment or census not less than three times, A. U. C. 726, 746, and 767, and he prepared a *breviarium* of the whole empire, which was presented to the senate after his death. Josephus says that Quirinius (Cyrenius) came to Syria as imperial legate, and completed a census in 6 or 7 A. D. How then can the enrollment mentioned by Luke as having taken place ten years earlier under Quirinius be explained? For a long time this question could not be definitely answered, and the difficulty was one of the commonplace arguments of infidelity. Recently it has been discovered that Quirinius was twice governor of Syria, the first time from B. C. 4 to A. D. 1, and the second time A. D. 6 to 11. It was during his first period that the enrollment or "taxing" mentioned by Luke took place. "The whole world" is the whole Roman Empire, which was then popularly spoken of by Roman writers as the whole world, since Rome ruled the world.



COIN OF CÆSAR AUGUSTUS,  
NOW IN BERLIN.

For a long time this question could not be definitely answered, and the difficulty was one of the commonplace arguments of infidelity. Recently it has been discovered that Quirinius was twice governor of Syria, the first time from B. C. 4 to A. D. 1, and the second time A. D. 6 to 11. It was during his first period that the enrollment or "taxing" mentioned by Luke took place. "The whole world" is the whole Roman Empire, which was then popularly spoken of by Roman writers as the whole world, since Rome ruled the world.

**4. Nazareth, into . . . Bethlehem.]** As Joseph was of the tribe of Judah, he went to Bethlehem his native city to be enrolled. Usually the Romans required the people to be registered, or to enroll their names in the

## COMMON VERSION.

CHAP. II.—And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Cæsar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed.

2 (And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.)

3 And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city.

4 And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judæa, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, (because he was of the house and lineage of David,)

## REVISED VERSION.

2 Now it came to pass in those days, there went out a decree from Cæsar Augustus, that all <sup>1</sup> the world should be enrolled. This was the first enrolment made when Quirinius was governor of Syria. And all went to enrol themselves, every one to his own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judæa, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and

<sup>1</sup> Gr. the inhabited earth.

place where they resided. But the Jews were allowed to follow their own custom in this. Before the death of Herod the Great, subjects from Galilee would be allowed to register in Judæa, and this has been properly pointed out as an undesigned mark of the historic accuracy of Luke. Being of the house of David, Joseph and Mary went from their hill town of Nazareth to Bethlehem, about six miles south of Jerusalem, to be enrolled; or "to register," or "enroll himself," as the Greek of "to be taxed," in v. 5, may be literally rendered. The Roman law required men, women and children to be enrolled, hence Mary had to be enrolled. Whether she was required to go to the place of enrollment, or only to have her name entered by her husband, is not clear. The journey was probably a voluntary one on her part. They went "every one to his own city," v. 3; that is, to his native city, because the Jewish genealogies would be kept there; each tribe keeping these separately, and also the record of each family or household for generations. The Jewish custom was very strict for carefully recording the ancestry of each of their families.

**7. her firstborn son]** This language does not necessarily imply that they had other children after this "firstborn," and must not be pressed as positive evidence of subsequent children, though it points that way. There are other texts in support of it, as, "his sisters," referred to in Mark 6: 3.

**wrapped him in swaddling clothes]** Tradition says Mary wrapped or swathed her babe with her own hands. The usual custom of the East is to wrap a new-born babe round and round with a long piece of cloth, so that it looks like a little live mummy.

**in a manger]** The mangers, or feeding troughs for cattle in the East, are usually of stone, and are in the center of the khan or caravansary, around which upon a raised floor are unfurnished apartments or chambers for travellers. A manger is shaped like a box or kneading trough, and Dr. Thomson says it does very well to lay little babies in; indeed he adds, "our own children have slept there, in our rude summer retreats on the mountains" of Syria. The Eastern inn would scarcely answer to our idea of a hotel. It would be without servant, provisions and furniture. "The inn of the East has a range of vaulted chambers," says Prof. Post, "arranged around a large open court. These chambers have only small high windows for ventilation toward the outer side, but they are quite open toward the court. Along the walls are stone mangers for the mules and asses, and in one of these mangers the infant Saviour was laid. . . . It is quite common for well-to-do people to sleep in the vaulted chambers with their beasts of burden, or in the open court, or on the sward outside the khan." It would be simply

## COMMON VERSION.

5 To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child.

6 And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered.

7 And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

## REVISED VERSION.

5 family of David; to enrol himself with Mary, who was betrothed to him, being

6 great with child. And it came to pass, while they were there, the days were ful-

7 filled that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn son; and she wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

an empty house or shelter, the traveller having to provide beds, provisions, cooking utensils and servants to wait upon him, all of which must be taken with him on his journey. At a small place like Bethlehem the caravansary would be small, and perhaps a cave was utilized for the purpose, as the old tradition asserts. The small town would be crowded, and no empty apartment was left for Joseph and Mary.

It was not want of hospitality or poverty, but want of room, that left them to the open area among the animals. Some maintain that the Greek word for "inn" is such a broad one as to include "guest chamber," and this has led to the supposition that they were not at a public khan, but were entertained in a private house, and as the "best room" was already taken, they were in the best place left, in the centre of the house allotted to the beasts.



EASTERN CARAVANSARY.

This is possible, but scarcely consistent with the obvious tenor of the narrative. Bethlehem, now Beit-lahm, "house of bread," is on a long narrow ridge, with abrupt terraced slopes. Justin Martyr (died about A. D. 140), born in Shechem, and living in Palestine, mentions a tradition that Jesus was born in a cave at Bethlehem, and Helena the Empress built the church of the Nativity (A. D. 330) over the grotto or cave thus pointed out. The cave noted as the birthplace is now in the solid rock 20 feet beneath the great choir of the church, and is reached by a long winding passage. Hepworth Dixon accepts the cave as the Lord's birthplace, and tries to show that it was owned by Boaz, and was the home of David! "David's well," the "plain of the shepherds," and other like places are also shown now, but the claim of these to be the true localities where the Biblical events took place,

rests upon traditions buried under much rubbish of superstition. The chapel cave beneath the church at Bethlehem was the study of Jerome, where he spent nearly thirty years in making his Latin Version of the Scriptures, the Vulgate, which is still the standard version in the Roman Church.

**8. shepherds . . in the field . . by night]** The birth of Christ is now popularly fixed on December 25: this rests on a tradition that cannot be traced beyond the fourth century, yet it is accepted by Athanasius, Jerome, and Ambrose. An earlier tradition fixed January 6, and by some early Fathers still other dates are given, as May 20, and April 20. See Clement Alex. *Strom.* 1 : 339. And indeed, every month of the year has been supported as the true period of our Lord's birth. For discussion of the year of his birth, see Rice's Commentary on Matthew. The objection to December 25, that it would then be too cold for flocks and shepherds to abide in the field, is comparatively groundless. The description of the scene by Milton, in his immortal Ode to the Nativity,

"It was the winter wild, while the heaven-born child,  
All meanly wrapt, in the rude manger lies,"

befits an English or American December, better than one in Palestine. Tyrwhitt Drake found the fellahin ploughing in the fields in the middle of December, 1872, near Haifa, and grain growing, some six inches high. Prof. Post, of Beirut, for 25 years a resident of Syria, tells me that shepherds live in the open air the whole year. Pastures, instead of being covered with snow at that season as in northern Europe and America, are just attaining their full freshness and green grass after the summer's drought. Clad in a sheepskin cloak, with the woolly side in, and the tanned and oiled part of the skin without, the shepherd can abide with comparative comfort in the field to protect his flock from the wolves and leopards (cheetahs) that prowl about. The sheep are seldom attacked by the Syrian fox or jackal. Still in December in Palestine now, shepherds would commonly be more likely to seek the shelter of a fold by night. The fields on the slopes west of Bethlehem were the pasture for sheep that were to be used in offerings at the temple, so an old tradition tells us; thus these shepherds may have been watching such flocks. The narrative at least implies that they were familiar with the Messianic predictions and looking for the coming One.

**9. glory of the Lord]** While the shepherds were abiding in the field keeping watch by night over their flock, an angel of the Lord stood by them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they feared with a great fear. The angel Gabriel had appeared to Zacharias and to Mary, and an angel also had appeared to Joseph. Who this angel was that stood by the

## COMMON VERSION.

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

9 And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them; and they were sore afraid.

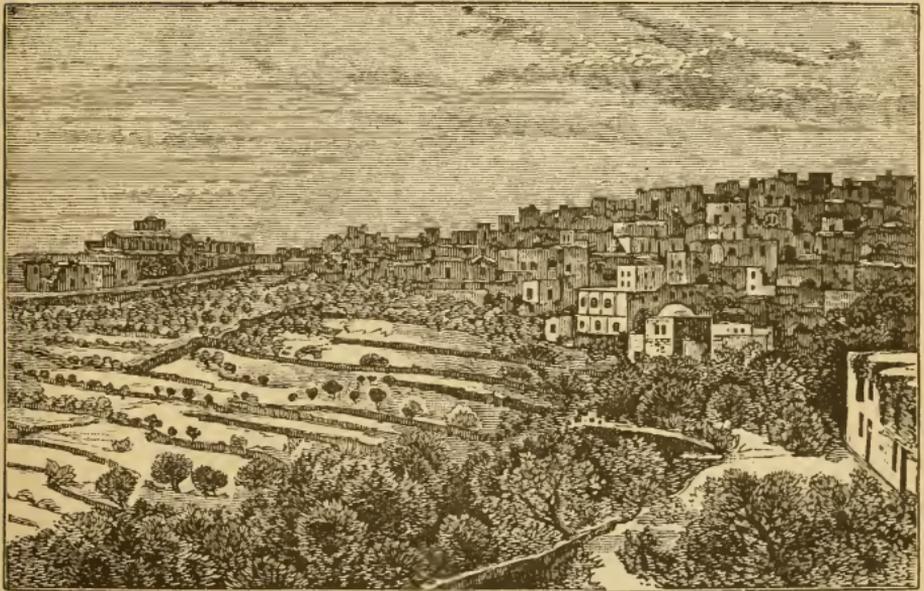
## REVISED VERSION.

8 And there were shepherds in the same country abiding in the field, and keeping <sup>1</sup> watch  
9 by night over their flock. And an angel of the Lord stood by them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they

<sup>1</sup> Or, night-watches



The Church of the Nativity, Bethlehem.



Bethlehem. (From Original Photograph by Bonfils.)

shepherds (see revised reading) we are not told; he may have been the same also that Joseph saw, and perhaps Gabriel. Being familiar with Old Testament descriptions of the glory about the ark, they would recognize that glory as now surrounding them, and they were filled with very great fear. Such remarkable divine brightness had often been the signal for some awful judgment in olden time.

**11. a Saviour . . Christ]** The angel quiets the fears of the simple-hearted shepherds as Gabriel had those of Mary (1:30), and instead of bearing a sword of vengeance, assures them that he is the bearer of good tidings of great joy which shall be to all the people. That means primarily, to all Israel, but broadly to poor shepherds, and rich townsmen, Jew and Gentile. These are the good tidings: there is born to you this day in the city of David, to you Bethlehemites, a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord. He is the Messiah the anointed Lord. Then the angel gives them "the sign" or mark by which they may know the child, and become witnesses for Christ. Ye shall find a babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, and lying in a manger. These two things would distinguish the babe from any other that might be in the town. And in a small town it would not be difficult to find the one thus pointed out. For though Bethlehem now has about 5000 inhabitants, at the birth of Christ we infer from history that it was a much smaller place.

**13. the heavenly host]** This great event of such unspeakable importance to man, was also one of profound interest and rejoicing among the angelic host. John saw angels around the throne, ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands proclaiming with a loud voice, the glory of the Lamb. Rev. 5:11, 12. So now suddenly with the angel, perhaps just above them, though that is not stated, there was a multitude of the heavenly host praising God.

**14. Glory to God]** The angelic host used *human* language in their praises, that their worship might thus be intelligible and helpful to the shepherds and to man, not because it was the most familiar to them. They praise God as glorious and glorified in the highest heaven, for the birth of the

## COMMON VERSION.

10 And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

11 For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

12 And this *shall* be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

13 And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,

14 Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

15 And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us.

## REVISED VERSION.

10 were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Be not afraid; for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to

11 all the people: for there is born to you this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is

12 <sup>1</sup> Christ the Lord. And this *is* the sign unto you; Ye shall find a babe wrapped in swad-

13 dling clothes, and lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,

14 Glory to God in the highest, And on earth <sup>2</sup> peace among <sup>3</sup> men in whom he is well pleased.

15 And it came to pass, when the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this <sup>4</sup> thing that is come to pass, which the Lord hath made

<sup>1</sup> Or, *Anointed Lord*

<sup>2</sup> Many ancient authorities read *peace, good pleasure among men.*

<sup>3</sup> Gr. *men of good pleasure.*

<sup>4</sup> Or, *saying*

Saviour; they praise him that on earth peace and good will toward men are at hand. So the Greek received text reads. There is another Greek reading followed by the Revised Version, which though unusual and awkward, is favored by the majority of the older MSS. Thus read it means, Glory to God in heaven and on earth peace among men in whom he is well pleased. But even here the thought is still the *good will of God to men*, and not as the Roman Version has it, the good will of men to God. If the revised text is to be followed (but it is stoutly disputed), then the thought of the angelic host seems to dwell on the peace which is to come to the earth among men of good pleasure. The angels did not for a moment imagine that any one of the human race could be such an ingrate as not to accept with pleasure the great gift of salvation through the only Son of God. No wonder this song, *Gloria in Excelsis*, has been so deeply imbedded in the service of the church and in the hearts of her worshippers. There may be no golden bells in heaven to ring out their joyful notes as at the birth of an earthly king, but there was a choir of angels that filled the skies with their sweetest and holiest music and songs at the birth of the Messiah King, the Saviour of mankind.

**16. they came with haste]** So it came to pass when the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, "Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing that is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us. And they came with haste." Their proposal "to see this thing," literally "the word," did not imply unbelief, but a desire to see this wonderful child for themselves. With the impulsive zeal of the East they rushed away with haste, down the hills and across the valley to the town. Half an hour would suffice to bring them there. A little inquiry would guide them to the house where these strangers might be. The shepherds indeed would know where to find the khan without inquiry. Here they found Mary, notice she is named first, and Joseph, and also the babe lying in a manger, as the angel had said. Seeking the Saviour we will find him.

**18. all . . . that heard it wondered]** The shepherds did not inquire how this humble child could be the Christ. They began at once to proclaim what the angel had said about the babe; the angelic song that followed, and how they had found it just as the angel had said. This was enough for the shepherds: they believed. And their simple testimony made all who heard it marvel. The hearers could not see what all the things spoken of the babe could mean. They could not explain it, so they simply wondered.

**19. Mary kept all these sayings]** She kept putting these things together in her mind; considering what all the wonderful events connected

## COMMON VERSION.

16 And they came with haste, and found Mary and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger.

17 And when they had seen *it*, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child.

18 And all they that heard *it* wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds.

19 But Mary kept all these things, and pondered *them* in her heart.

## REVISED VERSION.

16 known unto us. And they came with haste, and found both Mary and Joseph, and the 17 babe lying in the manger. And when they saw *it*, they made known concerning the saying which was spoken to them about this child.

18 And all that heard *it* wondered at the things which were spoken unto them by the shep-

19 herds. But Mary kept all these <sup>1</sup>sayings,

with the remarkable babe might really mean, and how the predictions and expectations concerning him would come to pass. She must have spoken of these facts and her feelings later, after Jesus entered upon his public work, so that the apostles, especially John with whom she had a home in her advancing age, became familiar with them.

**20. the shepherds returned]** The shepherds returned to their duties with their flocks, glorifying and praising God for two things: 1. What they had heard. 2. What they had seen. They were in humble station, but their public testimony is the earliest on record for Christ. Notice in connection with the birth of Jesus: 1. The sacred writer fixes the event exactly into the world's great history. 2. The decree of a world ruler providentially causes Jesus to be born in Bethlehem, rather than in Nazareth where his parents resided, and also that the babe should be laid in a manger; both exactly fulfilling prophecy. 3. Not kings or great men, but humble shepherds are chosen to be the first public witnesses and heralds of the birth of the Saviour. 4. Angels are profoundly interested in the work of man's redemption. 5. The shepherds at their daily and nightly duties were blessed by the brightness of the divine presence.

**SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.**—1. The birth of Christ is the greatest event in the world's history. 2. God can providentially cause the greatest rulers unwittingly to fulfill divine prophecies. 3. He can overrule every providence of our lives to further his purpose. 4. The incarnation of the Son of God is a divine mystery: who shall comprehend it? 5. The glory of God fills the highest heaven. 6. Salvation is of God, not of man. 7. The believing soul shall be satisfied; for he shall see Christ as he is.

### THE PRESENTATION IN THE TEMPLE. 2:21-39.

BETHLEHEM AND JERUSALEM, B. C. 4.

**21. his name was called Jesus]** When God made his covenant with Abraham he commanded, "he that is eight days old shall be circumcised among you, every man child in your generations, he that is born in the house, or bought with money of any stranger." Gen. 17:12. As one who would voluntarily become subject to the law, Jesus must obey this command. In the presence of ten witnesses, the rite would be performed by the father or some other friend of the family. It was also the custom formally to name the child when this rite was performed. So this babe was named Jesus, as the angel had directed before his birth. The Old Testament notes four persons who were named before their birth, Isaac and Ishmael, Gen. 17:19; 16:11, Josiah and Cyrus, 1 Kgs. 13:2; Is. 44:28. The Talmud says that

#### COMMON VERSION.

20 And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them.

21 And when eight days were accomplished for the circumcising of the child, his name was called JESUS, which was so named of the angel before he was conceived in the womb.

#### REVISED VERSION.

20 pondering them in her heart. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, even as it was spoken unto them.

21 And when eight days were fulfilled for circumcising him, his name was called Jesus, which was so called by the angel before he was conceived in the womb.

six persons have been called by their names before their birth, Isaac, Ishmael, Moses, Solomon, Josiah and the Messiah, the latter is inferred from Ps. 72 : 17. *Eliezer* 32.

**22. to present him to the Lord]** When the days of their (mother and child, see revised reading) purification according to the law of Moses were fulfilled, which for a son were 40 days, Lev. 12 : 2, 4 (but tradition had added a day making it 41), Joseph and Mary brought Jesus to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord in the temple. Jesus was made of a woman, made under the law. Gal. 4 : 4. The firstborn male of every family of Israel (perhaps not of Levites) had to be redeemed, Num. 3 : 13, in commemoration of the sparing of Israel's firstborn in Egypt, when those of the Egyptians were slain. Ex. 12 : 2, 14, 15. Even if Mary had been of the Levites, yet Joseph was not, and as the tribal relations of children were counted after the father, Num. 3 : 15, and not after the mother (though rabbinical traditions had perverted this law, see *Maimom.* 1. 5), therefore, Jesus would require to be redeemed. This answers the erroneous objection of Edersheim (*Life of Jesus* I. 194, note 2.) to the Levitic descent of Mary; moreover in Num. 18 : 15, it would seem that all firstborn without exception must be redeemed. The redemption money of a firstborn male child was five shekels, equal to about \$2.50 or \$3.00. The offering required of the mother was a lamb if she were able, or if poor a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons, Lev. 12 : 8. One dove was for a burnt offering for sin which is strong evidence against the Romish doctrine that the Virgin Mary was immaculate or sinless.



THE PIGEON.

**25. Simeon . . devout, waiting [looking] for the consolation of Israel]** Who this Simeon was is unknown. He surely was not the great son of Hillel, also called Simeon. His holy character closely resembled that of Zacharias, Luke 1 : 6. "May I see the consolation of Israel," was a common Jewish formula in asseveration and also in prayer, before the time of Christ. And curiously enough another Simeon is named in the Talmud as having used it frequently at that period, see *Tal. Bab. Chag.* 16 : 2. The "consolation" referred both to the redemption, and to the Redeemer of Israel.

## COMMON VERSION.

22 And when the days of her purification according to the law of Moses were accomplished, they brought him to Jerusalem, to present him to the Lord;

23 (As it is written in the law of the Lord, Every male that openeth the womb shall be called holy to the Lord;)

24 And to offer a sacrifice according to that which is said in the law of the Lord, A pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons.

25 And, behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon; and the same man was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel: and the Holy Ghost was upon him.

## REVISED VERSION.

22 And when the days of their purification according to the law of Moses were fulfilled, they brought him up to Jerusalem, to present him to the Lord (as it is written in the law of the Lord, Every male that openeth the womb shall be called holy to the Lord),

23 and to offer a sacrifice according to that which is said in the law of the Lord, A pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons. And behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon; and this man was righteous and devout, looking for the consolation

24 and to offer a sacrifice according to that which is said in the law of the Lord, A pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons. And behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon; and this man was righteous and devout, looking for the consolation

**26. the Lord's Christ]** The Lord's anointed. The saintly and (as is inferred but not said) aged Simeon had been assured by the Holy Spirit that before he died he would see the Messiah. And he had come into the temple in (that is, filled with) the Holy Spirit, rather than led by him as the Common Version implies, though this may have been likewise true. Simeon waiting thus devoutly in the temple, met the parents of Jesus with the child, as they were offering the redemption money, after the custom of the law.

**28. took he him up in his arms]** Simeon "received him into his arms" is the revised reading. The Greek word in fact contains both thoughts, for it includes the taking and receiving what is offered. The parents doubtless seeing the deep interest Simeon had in the child offered to let him take the babe. So Simeon devoutly blessed God, for the fulfillment of his promise, and then in a state of high spiritual ecstasy his thoughts, and thanksgiving took on a measured poetic form of expression in a song that has been known by a Latin name "*Nunc Dimittis*," from the first two Latin words which begin it in the Vulgate Version, as the song of Mary is known as the *Magnificat*, and the prophecy of Zacharias as the *Benedictus*.

**29. lettest thou thy servant depart]** The Greek word for "Lord" here is an unusual one, *δέσποτα*, exactly our word "despot" in the old English sense of "master," one who has a "bond servant," as the Greek for servant also means. Having fulfilled the promise that I should see the Lord's anointed, now let me depart, die peacefully, as "a master" would set free his bond servant. Death to the aged saint is a release, as being manumitted is to a slave.

**32. A light . . to the Gentiles]** Simeon recognized in Jesus, the Messiah, that salvation now prepared in the presence of all peoples, not before Israel alone but before all nations, even a light for revelation to, or unveiling (so the Greek word means) of the Gentiles, a thought found in Is. 52: 10; 42: 6, besides being the glory of Israel. The Gentiles had been veiled under the darkness of sin. Now Christ the light had come to "unveil" them, to remove this veil of darkness from them, that they might see the light.

## COMMON VERSION.

26 And it was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ.

27 And he came by the Spirit into the temple: and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him after the custom of the law,

28 Then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said,

29 Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word:

30 For mine eyes have seen thy salvation,

31 Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people;

32 A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel.

## REVISED VERSION.

26 of Israel: and the Holy Spirit was upon him. And it had been revealed unto him by the Holy Spirit, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ.

27 And he came in the Spirit into the temple: and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, that they might do concerning him after the custom of the law, then he received him into his arms, and blessed God, and said,

29 Now lettest thou thy <sup>1</sup>servant depart, O <sup>2</sup>Lord,

According to thy word, in peace;

30 For mine eyes have seen thy salvation,

31 Which thou hast prepared before the face of all peoples;

32 A light for <sup>3</sup>revelation to the Gentiles And the glory of thy people Israel.

<sup>1</sup>Gr. *bondservant*.

<sup>2</sup>Gr. *Master*.

<sup>3</sup>Or, *the unveiling of the Gentiles*

**33. his father and his mother were marvelling]** One point of interest in this verse is that Joseph is named as "his father," see Revised Version. Jesus never referred to Joseph as his father. The words of Simeon deepened the impression which had already been made by the angelic messengers, and the words of the shepherds; this led also to further blessing by Simeon, and a significant warning.

**34. .. is set .. for a sign]** These words were prophetic, and were not then understood by the hearers. The "falling" is equivalent to overthrow, as of the Pharisees, Sadducees, Herodians, and Nazarenes in their spiritual contests with him; the "rising" spiritually as of the twelve apostles and the great company of the disciples. As a sign spoken against, became widely true in apostolic days, "as concerning this sect we know that everywhere it is spoken against." Acts 28:22. Even the name given to his followers was one of derision, and Jesus was called the Nazarene. The attacks would even reach the person and the soul of the mother. Some have thought that this implied the martyrdom of Mary, but tradition and Scripture are silent on this point. It had a fulfillment sore enough when Mary beheld her Son crucified, as a culmination of indignities and cruelties which were heaped upon him. All this suffering of Christ was needful, that the true state of the sinful human heart might be laid open, and salvation become an accomplished fact.

**36. Anna, a prophetess]** Anna is the Greek form of the Hebrew Hannah, meaning "grace." It is remarkable that a woman should be mentioned as a prophetess at this period when no prophets are recognized. Prophecy had been silent for over 400 years. Even if it be admitted that Anna is called a "prophetess" only in the sense of one who is a spiritual teacher, and not as one foretelling future events, this recognition of a woman in this position at the beginning of the New Testament era is significant. She is named as a daughter of Phanuel, as if he were a well-known person. Miriam, Deborah, and Huldah are in like manner named in the Old Testament as exercising the prophetic gift. Again, that Anna was not of Judah, but of Asher is remarkable. That tribe was carried captive, and no mention is made of any one in it that returned. But this shows that not all of its members perished; a remnant survived.

**37. a widow .. fourscore and four]** Anna had been married seven

## COMMON VERSION.

33 And Joseph and his mother marvelled at those things which were spoken of him.

34 And Simeon blessed them, and said unto Mary his mother, Behold, this *child* is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against;

35 (Yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also); that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.

36 And there was one Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Aser: she was of a great age, and had lived with a husband seven years from her virginity;

37 And she was a widow of about fourscore and four years, which departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day.

## REVISED VERSION.

33 And his father and his mother were marvelling at the things which were spoken

34 concerning him; and Simeon blessed them, and said unto Mary his mother, Behold, this *child* is set for the falling and the rising of many in Israel; and for a sign which is

35 spoken against; yea and a sword shall pierce through thine own soul; that thoughts out

36 of many hearts may be revealed. And there was one Anna, a prophetess, the daughter

of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher (she was <sup>1</sup> of a great age, having lived with a hus-

37 band seven years from her virginity, and she had been a widow even unto fourscore

and four years), who departed not from the temple, worshipping with fastings and sup-

<sup>1</sup> Gr. advanced in many days.

years, and at the death of her husband, lived a holy life in the temple courts. There are varied readings and renderings in respect to Anna's age. The English revisers read "she had been a widow even for fourscore and four years;" if this be the true reading, then Anna must have been from 105 to 110 years of age. For, if she was married at sixteen and lived seven years with a husband, and eighty-four years as a widow, she would be 107. The "great age" of v. 36 in our versions would seem to favor this view, but the Greek literally is "advanced in many days" which is not so strong as "of great age." The Common Version and the American revisers' reading mean that Anna was eighty-four years of age; "she had been a widow even unto fourscore and four years," and this is the most satisfactory meaning. She lived in some of the many chambers about the temple, for its courts at this period were occupied by traders and money changers whom our Lord drove out. She "served God with fastings and prayers" or, she was "worshipping with fastings and supplications night and day," as the Revised Version reads. The "holy men" and "holy women" common in the East are in many cases imitations, or counterfeits of the truly godly. There is a large class, the der-vishes that spend their lives in this way; and live by begging.

**38. spake of him]** From this it would appear that Anna was one who taught and exhorted, rather than foretold future events. She spake of the Lord, "to all them that were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem," see Revised Version. Simeon was waiting for the consolation of Israel; others "were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem." But the two expected the same great event: Jerusalem being the place where it was expected that the "consolation" and "redemption" would begin.

**39. returned into Galilee]** The presentation in the temple was followed by the visit of the wise men to Jesus at Bethlehem, the flight into Egypt, the massacre of the babes by Herod, and the return from Egypt to Galilee. These events appear to have been crowded together, but are noted by Matthew, though omitted by Luke. Omissions are not contradictions. Nor can it be proved from these omissions that Luke had or that he had not Matthew's and Mark's Gospels before him, when he wrote.

In review of the great facts in this section notice: 1. Jesus as an infant was subject to Jewish law and obeyed it. 2. He was named by special command from God. 3. His mother's offerings imply that she was poor. 4. There is a devout and believing Simeon in a temple when the priests are skeptical Sadducees. 5. Early in gospel history a woman is mentioned as a prophetess or teacher in the temple.

SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.—1. The Christian is subject to law. 2. Jesus fulfilled the law for us. 3. The Lord knows how to pity the poor, for he was

## COMMON VERSION.

38 And she coming in that instant gave thanks likewise unto the Lord, and spake of him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem.

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

## REVISED VERSION.

38 plications night and day. And coming up at that very hour she gave thanks unto God, and spake of him to all them that were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

39 And when they had accomplished all things that were according to the law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own city Nazareth.

a child in the house of a poor man. 4. Each believer is to be just and devout before God, even if others are heedless. 5. God blesses those who are faithful, even as he blessed Simeon. 6. The Holy Spirit filled the souls of the godly before the day of Pentecost. 7. Women have a work to do in teaching and testifying for Christ.

### JESUS WITH THE DOCTORS IN THE TEMPLE. 2:40-52.

NAZARETH AND JERUSALEM, B.C. 4 TO A.D. 9.

Into these 13 verses are condensed all the authentic facts we have concerning the life of Jesus from the return to Nazareth to his entrance upon his ministry. With this exception there are 29 years of the life of the Son of God about which the Bible is profoundly silent. And this silence is strong proof of its accuracy and divine authority. There is no passage like this in the Bible, none more full of interest and instruction to youth.

**40. the child grew, and waxed strong]** Four things of great importance are stated about the childhood of Jesus. He had a human body, so he grew; he increased in stature and physical power. He "waxed strong," he developed in physical strength, for the words "in spirit" are omitted in many MSS. and in the Revised Version; and the phrase must therefore apply to his whole nature, body, and mind, that became strong.

**filled with wisdom]** or literally "becoming full of wisdom;" an expression which is clear and broad enough to cover all the teaching Jesus would receive at home, and in the synagogue school of his day, as well as a special fullness of wisdom flowing from his divine nature. In his earliest years he would be taught like other Jewish children of his day, by the mother and later also by the father until four or five years of age. At five a Jewish boy of that time would be sent to the synagogue school to read the Scriptures (Old Testament), beginning with Leviticus. He already had learned the *Torah*, "commandments," at home. The Scriptures would continue to be almost his only study until he was ten years of age. Leviticus, the entire Pentateuch, the Prophets and finally the Hagiographa, would be mastered, and large portions lodged in the memory. From ten to fifteen he would study the traditional law, then chiefly taught orally, but at a later period written out in the Talmud. The "grace" or favor of God was upon him, he was "full of grace and truth," is John's expression of the same fact. John 1:14. There is nothing here of the extravagant legends, silly, boastful miracles and strange inventions which crowd the pages of the apocryphal gospels. The reader is conscious of power in the "silences" of Scripture.

**41. went . . every year]** They went up to Jerusalem and down from Jerusalem. That city is upon a high ridge, 2500 feet above the Mediterranean

#### COMMON VERSION.

40 And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom; and the grace of God was upon him.

41 Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of the passover.

#### REVISED VERSION.

40 And the child grew, and waxed strong,  
<sup>1</sup> filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him.

41 And his parents went every year to Jeru-

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *becoming full of wisdom.*

Sea; and to reach it from any town of Palestine one must go *up*. The law in Deut. 16 : 1-16 required all the males to appear before the Lord three times in a year. This law was given while the tabernacle in the wilderness was the place of the presence of the Lord. The father of Samuel went up to the "yearly sacrifice" as the parents of Jesus did. 1 Sam. 1 : 21. This implies that the custom of going *three* times a year was not kept up. The law did not require women to attend, but Hillel had recommended that women also should come. Mary went with Joseph from a personal desire to attend, no doubt, as well as from custom. The feast of the passover was the great feast, Ex. 23 : 15-17, and took place in the early spring, about Easter time in our month of April.

**42. when he was twelve years old]** This passover that Jesus attended would be in the spring following the fall or winter when he became twelve years of age; hence it would be some time in April, about A.D. 9. When a Jewish youth had passed the age of twelve he was required to attend the passover feast. The Mishnah and Maimonides are not quite clear as to the precise time that the youth formally became a son of the law, though it is usually held to be when he has become 13 years, or 13 years and one day old. Others imply that in his twelfth year he became a son of the law, and began to wear the phylactery at thirteen. The legal time may have been anticipated a year or so in practice, as Edersheim supposes, but it is fair to infer that after entering the thirteenth year the youth was required to attend the passover, and with this law Jesus complied, going up with his parents, yet as personally responsible before the law. This is important to bear in mind in interpreting his action in remaining behind in the temple. This early maturity of children is characteristic of the East. A Syrian youth of twelve is more mature than one of that age in America or England. Boys of fifteen and younger marry in the East, while girls seldom wait beyond that age for marriage.

**43. fulfilled the days]** The feast of unleavened bread lasted seven days. This and the passover were observed at the same time. The passover was on the 14th day of the first month (Nisan), and on the 15th the seven days' feast of unleavened bread began, so the whole service would require eight days. Ex. 12 : 15-18; Deut. 16 : 1-8. To make this journey from Nazareth to Jerusalem would require about four days. The city would be crowded: Josephus says the passover was attended by three millions of pilgrims at this period. We of the Western world have little conception of the vast crowds that make religious pilgrimages in the East. There is a Moslem shrine at Tanta in Egypt which is said to be visited by a million of pious pilgrims in one year. Mecca swarms with pilgrims at certain seasons of the

## COMMON VERSION.

42 And when he was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem after the custom of the feast.

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

## REVISED VERSION.

42 salem at the feast of the passover. And  
43 when he was twelve years old, they went up after the custom of the feast; and when they had fulfilled the days, as they were returning, the boy Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem; and his parents knew it not;

year. This form of worship is characteristic of the East. These instances may illustrate the annual gatherings at Jerusalem in the time of Christ.

**Jesus tarried behind]** Being now recognized as a "son of the law," his parents no longer *legally* responsible for his conduct, when the returning caravan of pilgrims started north, Jesus remained behind in Jerusalem. In the crowd, his parents did not know it. It would be difficult in this throng to find him, and no longer a child to be closely guarded, it was assumed that he was in the company somewhere, looking out for himself, as we would say.

**44. went a day's journey]** A day's journey in the East is about 20 miles. The first stopping-place going north, according to tradition, was *Beeroth-el-Bireh*, but this is less than 10 miles out and scarcely a day's journey. Wherever the halt for the night was made, it was only then that an opportunity was given to search for Jesus. The cavalcade on the road would go in single file, as now in Eastern travelling, and the paths are too narrow for riding along the line. The youth was not found among any of the relatives or acquaintances of the family at the night halt, and the sorrowful parents turned back to Jerusalem seeking the lost youth.

**46. after three days they found him]** The three days are to be counted from the time of their leaving Jerusalem; surely it is not meant three days of searching *in* Jerusalem. The journey out would be one day, the return another, and the third day they found him. This is the usual Eastern mode of counting time. He was in the precincts of the temple, where the great Jewish teachers met and conversed or lectured upon questions relating to Jewish law, customs, and observances. These conferences were free to any intelligent Jewish youth. Who these "doctors" or teachers were we do not certainly know. But about this period the great Hillel and his noted opponent, Shammai, were in Jerusalem; and Simeon, a famous son of Hillel, Rabbi Jochanan, and Jonathan ben Uzziel, the compilers of the Chaldean Targum on the sacred books, flourished; and the youthful Gamaliel, afterward teacher of the apostle Paul, and Nicodemus, and Joseph of Arimathea, with others noted for their Jewish learning, were rising teachers of this period. Jesus was "sitting" in the midst or at the feet of the temple teachers, as pupils were wont to do in the synagogue schools of the period. He was hearing them and asking them questions, a thing not only allowed, but desired by the teachers in all Jewish schools of the day. Jesus had attended the synagogue school at Nazareth, as Jewish youth were compelled to do, and we may believe had gained much knowledge and a maturity of thought which fitted him to be a good listener to the temple teachers and an

COMMON VERSION.

44 But they, supposing him to have been in the company, went a day's journey; and they sought him among *their* kinsfolk and acquaintance.

45 And when they found him not, they turned back again to Jerusalem, seeking him.

46 And it came to pass, that after three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions.

REVISED VERSION.

44 but supposing him to be in the company, they went a day's journey; and they sought for him among their kinsfolk and acquaintance; and when they found him not, they returned to Jerusalem, seeking for him.

46 And it came to pass, after three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the <sup>1</sup>doctors, both hearing them,

<sup>1</sup> Or, teachers

acute questioner also. These great men would be deeply interested in one so apt as a scholar, and so acute in learning. There is no intimation of forwardness or of an exhibition of superior wisdom on the part of Jesus, but a natural, respectful, thoughtful attitude following the customary rules of the schools of that day, whether in the synagogue or in the temple.

**47. at his understanding and his answers]** The usual mode of teaching was for the teacher to propose questions and the pupils or hearers to answer. Sometimes all the listeners were given an opportunity to answer, and then the teacher pointed out the best answer and explained why he thought it the best. What the answers or questions were at this time between the teachers and Jesus we do not know. The amazement of the men of learning in the temple over his discernment and wisdom shows that his answers were exceptionally wise. They could not be so amazed at the mere ability to repeat from memory large portions of the law: this was a common attainment in a bright Jewish youth. Josephus somewhat pompously says of himself that when he became a "son of the law" he had such a knowledge of it that the chief priests and principal men used to consult him on the interpretation of difficult questions in their sacred law. Philo, a contemporary of Christ, also speaks of the reverence the Jews had for their law and the diligence with which they taught it to all their children from their earliest infancy. So Timothy was thoroughly instructed in the Scriptures. 2 Tim. 3: 15.

**48. Son, why]** When his parents found him in the temple they, too, were amazed, and his mother, speaking with the natural feelings of a mother's heart, said familiarly: Child, why hast thou done this to us? Behold thy father and I, being intensely distressed, have been seeking you. The Greek word for "sorrowful" is a strong one; "with aching hearts" might be an English equivalent.

**49. How is it that ye sought me?]** The emphasis is on sought, as the next clause shows. You need not have sought for me. Did you not know that I must (as a necessity of my nature) be concerned in the things of my Father? In the Greek the expression is elliptical: the noun for "business" or "house" not being expressed. Hence the phrase takes on the broadest signification: "the things" of my Father. This would include the house, and the business or affairs of the Father. This explains the variation in the renderings. The Common Version reads "business," the Revised reads "house," while in the margin "business" is inserted and also the broader meaning, "things" of the Greek. It is better to take it in the broadest sense, and as all the Father's "things" centered at his house, the temple; his parents

## COMMON VERSION.

47 And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers.

48 And when they saw him, they were amazed: and his mother said unto him, Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing.

49 And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?

## REVISED VERSION.

47 and asking them questions: and all that heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers. And when they saw him, they were astonished: and his mother said unto him, <sup>1</sup> Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? behold, thy father and

49 I sought thee sorrowing. And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? knew ye not that I must be <sup>2</sup> in my Father's

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *Child*.

<sup>2</sup> Or, *about my Father's business* Gr. *in the things of my Father*.

ought not to have been surprised to find Jesus there, or to have expected to find him elsewhere.

**50. they understood not the saying]** The words he spake were simple enough, they knew them, but how were they applicable to the youthful Jesus; this they did not understand. As already seen there was not so much an ambiguity as an indefiniteness growing out of its broad application, and this would be an added cause of their inability to understand the saying. But there was no disrespectful, or disobedient spirit in the reply. This is certain from his subsequent course in returning to Nazareth, and "was subject unto them."

**51. with them . . to Nazareth]** Jesus disappears from sacred history again for nearly eighteen years. All we know of those long years in the humble home at Nazareth, is that he voluntarily continued subject to his parents. What the sorrows and joys of that home were we can only conjecture. It is generally supposed that Joseph died soon after this event. Justin the Martyr, who lived in the first century after Christ, reports a tradition that Jesus worked at the carpenter's trade, and made yokes and plows. His townsmen speak of him as "the carpenter's son," and "the carpenter." Matt. 13 : 55 ; Mark 6 : 3.

**his mother kept all these sayings]** The great prominence given to the mother as mover, and speaker in these and other events in the early life of Jesus, is in opposition to the Oriental idea that the father is the absolute head, and guide in the family and over the children. That the sacred writers record the forwardness and leadership of the mother in the face of this well-known custom of the East, is an undesigned evidence in confirmation of the truthfulness and genuine character of their report.

**52. in wisdom and stature, and in favour]** Aside from his obedience to his parents, this verse contains all the authentic knowledge we have of the life of the Son of God on earth for about eighteen years. It is a repetition in almost the same language, of the record made of his life before he became twelve years of age, v. 40. Again he advances in wisdom, and *ἡλικία*, a word used by the Greeks to express both "age" and "stature," hence the rendering of it by "stature" in the text of our versions, and by "age" in the margins. Jesus in his divine nature could not be said to increase "in wisdom," for God is infinitely wise. The Gospels do not profess to give a history of the divine nature, except as it may be involved in his human nature. There can be no history of God, with whom all things and all time are eternally present. The history is that of Jesus in the flesh, his human nature. In that he advanced in wisdom, in age, in stature, and in favour with God and men.

## COMMON VERSION.

50 And they understood not the saying which he spake unto them.

51 And he went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them: but his mother kept all these sayings in her heart.

52 And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.

## REVISED VERSION.

50 house? And they understood not the saying which he spake unto them. And he

went down with them, and came to Nazareth; and he was subject unto them: and his mother kept all *these*<sup>1</sup> sayings in her heart.

52 And Jesus advanced in wisdom and <sup>2</sup>stature, and in <sup>3</sup>favour with God and men.

<sup>1</sup> Or, *things*

<sup>2</sup> Or, *age*

<sup>3</sup> Or, *grace*

**SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.**—1. Children should grow, become strong, and seek grace from God. 2. The spiritual feasts and fasts connected with the worship of God should be faithfully observed by parents and children. 3. The Christian child will love the house of God. 4. He will earnestly seek instruction of ministers and teachers. 5. He will be cheerfully submissive and obedient to his parents. 6. Youthful Christians will seek to advance in the highest wisdom. 7. They will grow in favor with God and good men.

**JOHN'S MINISTRY.** LUKE 3:1-14. Compare Matt. 3:1-10; Mark 1:1-6.

JUDÆA, A. D. 26, 27.

**1. Now in]** Luke records the matters of gospel history "in order." He fully and carefully marks the time when Jesus began his public work. The baptism by John was the introduction to that work. Luke sets this great event of the gospel in its proper place in the world's history by a sixfold specification of the civil and priestly rulers of that period. While Matthew says that the birth of Jesus was "in the days of Herod the king," Matt. 2:1; and Mark speaks of the preaching of John as "in those days," Mark 1:9, Luke fixes the time by naming the Cæsar that was reigning, the year of his reign, the ruler of Judæa, and three tetrarchs then ruling in regions joining Judæa, and also the high priests in office at this period.

**fifteenth year .. of Tiberius]** Tiberius was the step-son and successor of Augustus Cæsar. He was co-ruler or co-emperor of the Roman Empire for two years, then sole ruler from Aug. 19, 767 A. U. C. or A. D. 14. The "fifteenth year" from the beginning of his co-rule with Augustus (764-765 A. U. C.) would be 779 or 780 A. U. C. (or A. D. 26). As Jesus was born about four years before the beginning of our Common Era, that is, 749 or 750 A. U. C. (B. C. 5, 4), he would be 30 years of age in A. D. 26. See Luke 3:23. Tiberius was born B. C. 42, was a successful soldier, winning the love of his army, and honors from the people. He was talented, but ambitious, licentious, cruel, abused his wife and mother, poisoned his nephews, set spies to watch



TIBERIUS CÆSAR.

noble families, became infamous in crime, and after a swoon was smothered by his attendants in A. D. 37, aged 79.

**Pontius Pilate]** Pilate was the sixth Roman procurator or "governor" of Judæa and held the office for ten years: A. D. 26-36. He outraged Jewish

COMMON VERSION.

**CHAP. III.**—Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Cæsar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of Iturea and of the region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias the tetrarch of Abilene,

REVISED VERSION.

**3** Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Cæsar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judæa, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of the region of Iturea and Trachonitis, and

feelings by removing the army headquarters to Jerusalem and placing martial standards with the image of the emperor in the Holy City, by taking money from the temple treasury to build an aqueduct, and by killing Galileans while they were offering sacrifices. Later he yielded somewhat to Jewish wishes, notably in condemning Christ to be crucified. Pilate was deposed and banished to Gaul A.D. 37.

**Herod]** This was Herod Antipas, son of Herod the Great, and tetrarch of Galilee and Peræa, B.C. 4 to A.D. 39. He was crafty, deceitful, and unprincipled; married a daughter of Aretas, an Arabian king; sent her away, and took Herodias his brother Philip's wife. John reproved him for this sin, but Herod cast John into prison, and killed him. A "tetrarch" literally means "ruler of a fourth part" of a country.

**Philip]** This Philip was half brother to the Philip whose wife Herod Antipas had taken. He ruled as tetrarch over Batanæa (Bashan), Trachonitis and Auranitis (Hauran); built Cæsarea Philippi on the site of Paneas; enlarged Bethsaida east of the Jordan and called it Bethsaida Julius and died there A.D. 34. Ituræa is named after Jetur (Yetur) a son of Ishmael, Gen. 25 : 15. It was a region of basaltic rock lying between Hermon and Damascus: its modern name is *Jedur*. Trachonitis is the Argob of Deut. 3 : 14, and the modern *Lejah*.

**Lysanias]** There were two or more rulers of this name in that region. Josephus mentions one, who was put to death about 60 years before this period. An inscription with Lysanias as tetrarch was found in the region by Pococke. The first Lysanias had a "kingdom" of Chalcis, not a tetrarchy. The inscription refers to a later one, and probably this Lysanias of Luke. Abilene lay to the east of Hermon and was watered by the Barada, a river of Damascus.

**2. Annas and Caiaphas]** Annas was appointed high priest by Quirinius (Cyrenius) about A.D. 7. He was removed about A.D. 14, by Gratus who made Ishmael, then Eleazer a son of Annas, and next Simon, and lastly in A.D. 25, Joseph Caiaphas, a son-in-law of Annas, actual high priest. The Mosaic law gave no authority for making and unmaking a high priest in this way. The true Jew regarded the office as hereditary for life, except in case of some physical defect, as blindness, Lev. 21 : 17-21, or in case of misdemeanor. Annas and five of his sons, and a son-in-law held this sacred office; Jonathan a son of Annas succeeded Caiaphas and after him another son Matthias. But it is not probable that two persons were acting high priests at the same time, or that two alternated in performing its duties. Yet there were two high priests at the same time in David's day, Abiathar of the party of David, and Zadok of the party of Saul, 2 Sam. 8 : 17; 15 : 35; 1 Kings 1 : 7, 8; 2 : 27.

How is "in the high-priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas" to be explained? The New Testament narratives imply that Annas was regarded by many Jews

## COMMON VERSION.

2 Annas and Caiaphas being the high priests, the word of God came unto John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness.

## REVISED VERSION.

2 Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene, in the high-priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came unto John the son of Zacharias

as the true and lawful high priest. See John 18:13; Acts 4:6. Josephus says the high priest preceding Annas was chosen by the people, and if Annas was thus confirmed by the Jews, they would naturally regard him as the rightful high priest, though Caiaphas was acting high priest under Roman authority. Such interference with their religious customs, the Jews were not slow to resent. Hence Luke accurately represents the confused condition of the office at this period when he says, "in the high-priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas." See Revised Version.

**the word of God came unto John]** This was a divine and personal call. He had a word from God. Teachers and ministers now need both the inward and the outward, the divine and the personal call, and also the word of God; then they may be faithful messengers of Christ.

**in the wilderness]** The wilderness of Judæa was an uncultivated, or sparsely settled region on the northwest side of the Dead Sea and it reached to the Jordan valley.

**3. baptism of repentance]** The ringing word in John's preaching was "repent." He saw that men were sinners; they must repent.

On the meanings of the two different words rendered "repent" in the Gospels, see my Commentary on Matthew, p. 283.

Their sins must be put away, remitted, or they could not see salvation. He made baptism the sign and outward mark of that repentance which he preached. There was no remission, no forgiveness, without repentance. The first three Gospels unite in emphasizing this as the central truth in John's preaching. They also agree in making the wilderness and the Jordan valley the scene of his labors.

**4. it is written]** Luke like Matthew points to Old Testament prophecy, which this preaching of John exactly fulfilled, as proof that Jesus was the expected Messiah.

**voice of one]** This citation follows the Septuagint or Greek version of Is. 40:3, current in Christ's time. Compare the Revised Versions here and in Is. 40:3, 4.

**5. Every valley shall be filled]** When a king or great man made a journey in the East, couriers were sent ahead to call on the governors and the people to repair the roads for him; to fill the hollows, dig down steep hills, straighten the sharp crooks, remove rocks, fallen trees and other obstructions. This call illustrates the spiritual preparation to be made for Messiah's coming.

## COMMON VERSION.

3 And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins;

4 As it is written in the book of the words of Esaias the prophet, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.

5 Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be brought low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways shall be made smooth;

## REVISED VERSION.

3 in the wilderness. And he came into all the region round about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance unto remission 4 of sins; as it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet,

The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make ye ready the way of the Lord, Make his paths straight.

5 Every valley shall be filled, And every mountain and hill shall be brought low; And the crooked shall become straight, And the rough ways smooth;

**6. salvation of God]** This "salvation of God" means the salvation brought by the advent of the Messiah, which all were to see. How this was fulfilled in part appears in the scene at Pentecost. Acts 2 : 5-21.

**7. to the multitudes]** John's preaching resembled the messages of Elijah. It was fearless, heart-searching, direct, swift, and earnest. This and his birth, ascetic life, and sanctity, combined to attract attention, and drew to him Pharisee, Sadducee, priest, scribe, soldier, publican and common people in vast crowds. Many came to get a blessing or baptism, as thousands now flock to a "holy man" in the East. They had little thought of changing their lives; not a few were hypocrites.

**of vipers]** Brood of vipers, who hath warned you? These words might seem harsh, without Matthew's statement that they were addressed to the Pharisees and Sadducees, many of whom came as spies, and were hypocritical in seeking baptism from John. The viper or serpent was a symbol of their venomous hypocrisy, and also of the deadly nature of their pernicious teachings. See Matt. 16 : 1, 6; 22 : 35.

**8. Bring forth fruits]** You pretend to have repented; your conduct belies your words. Your repentance is not real; prove that it is heart repentance by your fruits, your good works. Having Abraham for your natural father, will not save your souls. Some Jewish Rabbis taught that no child of Abraham's could be lost, because the promise was that Abraham should always have a seed to serve God. John tells them that God can raise up children to Abraham from the stones; therefore they too must bring fruits for repentance, or be rejected.

**begin not]** Do not fancy that because you are born into the church (children of Abraham), that you will be saved. You have lost your right in God's family; you are no longer sons but bastards. God is able to raise up true godly children from those you consider as dead religiously as are these stones in the Jordan. John referred, no doubt, to the call of the Gentiles.

**9. the axe . . . laid]** And at the "root," to cut down the whole tree, the whole Jewish nation, and not merely to lop off a few branches. The time for repentance or for judgment had



EASTERN AXE.

## COMMON VERSION.

6 And all flesh shall see the salvation of God.

7 Then said he to the multitude that came forth to be baptized of him, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?

8 Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance, and begin not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, That God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.

9 And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: every tree therefore which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.

## REVISED VERSION.

6 And all flesh shall see the salvation of God.

7 He said therefore to the multitudes that went out to be baptized of him, Ye offspring of vipers, who warned you to flee from the

8 wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of <sup>1</sup>repentance, and begin not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children

9 unto Abraham. And even now the axe also lieth at the root of the trees: every tree therefore that bringeth not forth good fruit

<sup>1</sup> Or, your repentance

come. The fruitless and formal professor of religion is now condemned. He will not escape the "wrath to come."

**10. What . must we do ?]** The people who asked this question were sincere seekers after truth. Their consciences had been touched. They said, we want to act as repentant and forgiven persons. What should we do? So the rich young ruler in a similar legal spirit asked, "What good thing shall I do?"

**11. He that hath two coats]** John's answer is in the spirit of the Old Testament law. The "coat" was an inner garment, the Roman tunic, a long garment reaching to the knees, and having sleeves, and worn alike by poor and rich. The people were to share with their poor neighbors, whatever clothes and food they could spare. The Persic and Ethiopic versions read "let him give one to him that has not" a garment to wear.

**12. came also publicans]** Or strictly "tax gatherers." These publicans were the collectors of Roman taxes and were hated and despised by the Jews. They were not properly the Roman *publicani*, who were commonly wealthy Romans of rank and farmed out the revenues to be collected. These "publicans" or "tax gatherers" were rather under servants, Gentiles or degenerate Jews, usually covetous, grasping, and cruel in exacting taxes, the poor being often left with nothing and to starve. They addressed John respectfully: "Teacher, what shall we do?"

**13. Extort no more]** The extortion of the tax gatherer was and is proverbial in the East. His profit depends upon what he can extort from the farmer and the shop-keeper. If he collected barely what was appointed for each person to pay, the tax collector's gains were small. But he was and is now allowed in Syria, to extort large amounts from the people, which he shares with his superior officer, who will then wink at the robbery.

**14. soldiers . . what must we do?]** The soldiers here were the Jewish police as Ewald and Grotius suggest, and probably Herod's soldiers, "marching" (for so the Greek implies), perhaps from fortresses like Machærus; possibly Roman soldiers like the centurion of Capernaum were among the number.

**Do violence to no man]** John does not say to the soldiers, throw down your arms and leave the army, nor to the publicans, quit collecting taxes. He

## COMMON VERSION.

10 And the people asked him, saying, What shall we do then?

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

12 Then came also publicans to be baptized, and said unto him, Master, what shall we do?

13 And he said unto them, Exact no more than that which is appointed you.

14 And the soldiers likewise demanded of him, saying, And what shall we do? And he said unto them, Do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely; and be content with your wages.

## REVISED VERSION.

10 is hewn down, and cast into the fire. And the multitudes asked him, saying, What

11 then must we do? And he answered and said unto them, He that hath two coats, let

12 him impart to him that hath none; and he

13 that hath food, let him do likewise. And there came also <sup>1</sup>publicans to be baptized,

and they said unto him, <sup>2</sup>Master, what

14 must we do? And he said unto them, Extort

no more than that which is appointed you.

14 And <sup>3</sup>soldiers also asked him, saying, And

we, what must we do? And he said unto them, Extort from no man by violence,

neither accuse any one wrongfully; and be content with your wages.

<sup>1</sup> See marginal note on Matt. v. 46.

<sup>2</sup> Or, *Teacher*    <sup>3</sup> Gr. *soldiers on service*.

requires persons in any lawful calling to refrain from extortion, violence, and wrong, and to be content with their wages. The Greek word for wages, first signified "fish or other food eaten with bread," then "rations" for soldiers, and in a wider sense any "pay" for service. The Roman soldier received about a *denarius* (fifteen cents) a day. John said to them, what you have agreed to work for, that take without grumbling. In some states of society the military profession may be lawful, and war may be excusable if not justifiable, as in defence against foreign and barbarian invasion, and in putting down unrighteous rebellion. In becoming a Christian, one is not to give up any honest work or situation. So Paul directed the Corinthians. 1 Cor. 7 : 20-22.

SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.—1. The gospel events are indisputably fixed in the world's history. 2. God raises up and trains men in the church and in the wilderness to do his work. 3. Christ will have a way prepared for his coming. 4. The humble are to be exalted; the proud to be brought low, the extortioner to become honest, the soldiers and officers to keep from violence, and to rule in love, the sinner to repent and change his mind and life. 5. Repentance and pardon are sweet words to the penitent sinner. 6. Bless God for the offer of pardon, and for his salvation. 7. Whoever repents truly, or from the heart, will show the fruits of his repentance in daily life. 8. Every one, whether rich or poor, soldier or servant, finds that godliness changes the heart and conduct. 9. God could get along without receiving proud Pharisees or hypocrites. So he can get along without you; but you cannot afford to get along without him.

CHRIST'S INTRODUCTION TO HIS WORK. 3 : 15-38. Compare Matt. 3 : 11-17 and 1 : 1-17; Mark 1 : 7-11.

VALLEY OF THE JORDAN, A. D. 27.

**15. the people were in expectation]** or "in suspense;" waiting for John to tell whether he was some prophet or the Christ. Luke alone states this; it explains John's confession in verses 16 and 17. The wide popular impression that John might be the Messiah, shows how strongly his preaching had taken hold on the people. He forcibly declares that Christ's way must be prepared; the people reasoned in their hearts whether John himself was not the Christ.

**16. John answered . . . all]** This declaration that he was not the Christ made to the people, and repeated to a delegation of priests and Levites, John 1 : 19-23, shows his moral greatness. John promptly and emphatically

COMMON VERSION.

15 And as the people were in expectation, and all men mused in their hearts of John, whether he were the Christ, or not;

16 John answered, saying unto them all, I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire:

REVISED VERSION.

15 And as the people were in expectation, and all men mused in their hearts concerning John, whether haply he were the

16 Christ; John answered, saying unto them all, I indeed baptize you with water; but there cometh he that is mightier than I, the latchet of whose shoes I am not<sup>1</sup> worthy to unloose: he shall baptize you<sup>2</sup> in the

<sup>1</sup>Gr. sufficient.

<sup>2</sup>Or, with

removed any impression that would falsely exalt himself, or draw attention from his blessed Master.

**mightier than I]** The people already accepted John as a great teacher and prophet. But John says one "mightier than I" is coming; so much greater that I am not worthy (or "sufficient" in station) to untie the thong or lace of his shoes, a work the lowest servant does for a master. The difference in power and station between John and Christ was so wide, that John uses the strongest familiar eastern illustration to measure it.



EASTERN SHOE WITH LATCHET OR LACE.

**he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost]** John's baptism with water was an outward sign of cleansing from sin. Christ would actually cleanse them by

the Holy Spirit and fire. The tongues of fire on the head accompanied the descent of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost. Acts 2: 3, 4. Fire is usually a symbol of purification or of spiritual power.

**17. his [threshing] floor]** This verse graphically pictures a common eastern farming scene. The fan is a broad shovel for tossing the grain and broken straw into the air, that the wind may blow away the chaff. The floor is a circular spot usually on a slight elevation, where the ground is beaten hard for threshing out the grain. The garner is not like our barn, but may be a bin or vault in the ground, lined and plastered with clay to keep the grain dry. The "floor" is the Christian Church, the fan and the wind signify the separating power of the Spirit; the wheat the saints, the garner is heaven, and the chaff signify the wicked.

**18. many other . . preached he]** The "other things" or "exhortations" mean other words enforcing these same truths, and also other truths of the gospel different from those here named. Some are noticed in John 1: 29-34; 3: 27-30. But all these urged the good news of salvation, of preparation for the coming kingdom of heaven.

**19. Herod . . being reproved]** This was Herod Antipas; see under v. 1. Luke narrates the cruel act of Herod in casting John into prison, and the

COMMON VERSION.

17 Whose fan <sup>is</sup> in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and will gather the wheat into his garner; but the chaff he will burn with fire unquenchable.

18 And many other things in his exhortation preached he unto the people.

19 But Herod the tetrarch, being reproved by him for Herodias his brother Philip's wife, and for all the evils which Herod had done,

REVISED VERSION.

17 Holy Spirit and <sup>in</sup> fire: whose fan is in his hand, throughly to cleanse his threshing-floor, and to gather the wheat into his garner; but the chaff he will burn up with unquenchable fire.

18 With many other exhortations therefore preached he <sup>1</sup>good tidings unto the people;

19 but Herod the tetrarch, being reproved by him for Herodias his brother's wife, and for

<sup>1</sup> Or, *the gospel*

occasion of it, by anticipation and parenthetically. A more full account is given in Matt. 14 : 1-12, and Mark 6 : 16-29.

**reproved . . for all]** This brief additional proof of the fidelity of John in reproving sin, Luke alone gives. Matthew and Mark say that he reproved Herod for taking his brother Philip's wife. A keen, searching preacher like John could not fail to see many other evil things in the life of a cruel, sensual, and dissolute ruler like Herod. John plainly rebuked this ungodly man, and so strongly appealed to his conscience that in spite of the "plain preaching," Herod often heard him gladly. Mark 6 : 20.

**20. added . . above all]** All Christian antiquity held that the climax of Herod's wicked works was the imprisonment of John and his execution. So Luke notes this as an evil deed "above all" the others Herod did.

Josephus relates that when Aretas made war upon Herod because the latter had married, and then put away Aretas's daughter, the army of Herod was destroyed through the treachery of fugitives from the tetrarchy of Philip. "Some of the Jews thought that the destruction of Herod's army came from God, and that very justly," says Josephus, "as a punishment for what he did against John, who was called the Baptist: for Herod slew him who was a good man and commanded the Jews to exercise virtue, both as to righteousness toward one another and piety toward God, and so to come to baptism; for that the washing [with water] would be acceptable to him, if they made use of it not in order to the putting away of some sins [only], but for the purification of the body; supposing still that the soul was thoroughly purified before hand by righteousness." Josephus reports what is implied in the Gospels, that Herod feared the crowds coming to John's baptism might be incited to rebellion, and therefore sent John a prisoner to Machærus because of this "suspicious temper," and there put him to death. This may well have been an added reason for Herod's act. The destruction of Herod's army the Jews regarded as a mark of God's displeasure to him. See *Ant. Bk. 18 ; 5 : 2*.

**21. all the people were baptized]** Then it came to pass in the baptizing of all the people [people from all quarters], Jesus also being baptized and praying, the heaven was opened, and the Holy Spirit came down in bodily form like a dove upon him. While baptism of the people signified their entrance upon a godly life, the baptism of Jesus marked his entrance upon his public ministry as the Messiah. It is significant that Jesus had a season of prayer at his baptism; a fact stated by Luke only. While he was praying, heaven was opened and the Holy Spirit descended; so now prayer reaches heaven, and brings the special power of the Holy Spirit upon God's waiting people. The gentleness, meekness, and grace of the Spirit of Christ are fittingly symbolized by the dove-like form. On baptism, see *People's Commentary on Matthew*, p. 48.

## COMMON VERSION.

20 Added yet this above all, that he shut up John in prison.

21 Now when all the people were baptized, it came to pass, that Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened,

## REVISED VERSION.

20 all the evil things which Herod had done, added this also to them all, that he shut up John in prison.

21 Now it came to pass, when all the people were baptized, that, Jesus also having been baptized, and praying, the heaven was

**23. about thirty years of age]** Jesus entered upon his public ministry when he was about thirty years old. Some may ask, why did he delay it until he was thirty? The priests and Levites entered upon their full public duties at this age. Num. 4:3, 23, 35; 1 Chron. 23:3. Tradition and custom also fix the legal age for entering upon the duties of the priesthood at thirty. The Levites, however, became helpers for the priests at an earlier age. 1 Chron. 23:24. Hence Jesus conformed to Jewish law in entering upon his work as our great high priest when he was thirty years of age.

THE GENEALOGY, vs. 23-38.—In comparing this genealogical list with that of Matt. 1, we notice: 1. Luke traces the ancestry back from Jesus, while Matthew reverses this order. 2. Luke traces it back to Adam, Matthew to Abraham only. 3. The list in Luke from Adam to Abraham agrees with the lists in Gen. 5:3-32 and 11:10-27, except that a Cainan appears between

## COMMON VERSION.

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

23 And Jesus himself began to be about thirty years of age, being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph, which was the son of Heli,

24 Which was the son of Matthat, which was the son of Levi, which was the son of Melchi, which was the son of Janna, which was the son of Joseph,

25 Which was the son of Mattathias, which was the son of Amos, which was the son of Naum, which was the son of Eshl, which was the son of Nagge,

26 Which was the son of Maath, which was the son of Mattathias, which was the son of Semei, which was the son of Joseph, which was the son of Juda,

27 Which was the son of Joanna, which was the son of Rhesa, which was the son of Zorobabel, which was the son of Salathiel, which was the son of Neri,

28 Which was the son of Melchi, which was the son of Addi, which was the son of Cosam, which was the son of Elmoadam, which was the son of Er,

29 Which was the son of Jose, which was the son of Eliezer, which was the son of Jorim, which was the son of Matthat, which was the son of Levi,

30 Which was the son of Simeon, which was the son of Juda, which was the son of Joseph, which was the son of Jonan, which was the son of Eliakim,

31 Which was the son of Melea, which was the son of Menan, which was the son of Mattatha, which was the son of Nathan, which was the son of David,

32 Which was the son of Jesse, which was the son of Obed, which was the son of Booz, which was the son of Salmon, which was the son of Naasson,

33 Which was the son of Aminadab, which was the son of Aram, which was the son of Esrom, which was the son of Phares, which was the son of Juda,

## REVISED VERSION.

22 opened, and the Holy Spirit descended in a bodily form, as a dove, upon him, and a voice came out of heaven, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased.

23 And Jesus himself, when he began to teach, was about thirty years of age, being the son (as was supposed) of Joseph, the son of Heli,

24 the son of Matthat, the son of Levi, the son of Melchi, the son of Jannai, the son of Joseph, the son of Mattathias, the son of Amos,

26 the son of Nahum, the son of Eshl, the son of Naggai, the son of Maath, the son of Mattathias, the son of Semein, the son of Josech,

27 the son of Joda, the son of Joanan, the son of Rhesa, the son of Zerubbabel, the son of

28<sup>1</sup> Shealtiel, the son of Neri, the son of Melchi, the son of Addi, the son of Cosam, the

29 son of Elmoadam, the son of Er, the son of Jesus, the son of Eliezer, the son of Jorim,

30 the son of Matthat, the son of Levi, the son of Symeon, the son of Judas, the son of Joseph, the son of Jonam, the son of Elia-

31 kim, the son of Melea, the son of Menna, the son of Mattatha, the son of Nathan, the

32 son of David, the son of Jesse, the son of Obed, the son of Boaz, the son of<sup>2</sup> Salmou,

33 the son of Nahshon, the son of Amminadab,

<sup>3</sup> the son of<sup>4</sup> Arni, the son of Hezron, the

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *Salathiel*. <sup>2</sup> Some ancient authorities write *Sala*. <sup>3</sup> Many ancient authorities insert the son of *Admin*: and one writes *Admin* for *Amminadab*. <sup>4</sup> Some ancient authorities write *Aram*.

Arphaxad and Salah (Shelah), but in this Luke agrees with the Septuagint version current in his time. Matthew and Luke also agree in the fourteen generations from Abraham to David. 4. From David to Jesus, Luke is more full than Matthew. For example, from David to Zerubbabel (Zorobabel), Matthew gives only sixteen names, Luke gives twenty-two; from Zerubbabel to Jesus, Matthew gives eleven names, Luke twenty. 5. The two lists have only two names alike between David and Joseph the husband of Mary, and these may not designate the same persons.

Why are two genealogies of Jesus given? How can these variations in them be accounted for? The simplest and best answer to these questions is, that Matthew gives the ancestral line of Joseph, and Luke that of Mary. In support of this view notice, 1. That in the first list Joseph is called the son of Jacob, and in the second the son of Heli. Now Joseph could not have been the natural son of Jacob, and of Heli also; but he could have been the [natural] son of Jacob as Matthew tells us, and the [legal] son [son-in-law] of Heli, as Luke informs us. 2. To declare that both lines of ancestry are those of Joseph; that one gives his legal, kingly, or official ancestry, and the other his natural descent, is to leave us without a list showing that Jesus was a natural descendant from David and Abraham, a fact of great importance to the Jews and in sacred history. 3. For, Jesus was born by the Holy Ghost of Mary. Her line of descent through her father could be as easily known to the evangelists as that of Joseph. 4. The language of Luke in the beginning of the list is peculiar. Of others it is "the son of," but "Jesus . . . being son (as was supposed) of Joseph." Moreover in the Greek every name in the list except Joseph's has the article "the" before it. Joseph is without this definitive mark and the word "son" before Joseph in verse 23 has no article in the Greek, although the English translators have inserted one there. This is not a form of expression which we would have expected, if Luke intended to give a genealogy of Joseph, but it would not seem unnatural to introduce one of Mary, in this part of his narrative. 5. The variation in names from Heli to David are explained, since one list relates to Joseph and the other to Mary. 6. To speak of a daughter-in-law

## COMMON VERSION.

34 Which was *the son* of Jacob, which was *the son* of Isaac, which was *the son* of Abraham, which was *the son* of Thara, which was *the son* of Nanchor,

35 Which was *the son* of Saruch, which was *the son* of Ragau, which was *the son* of Phalec, which was *the son* of Heber, which was *the son* of Sala,

36 Which was *the son* of Cainan, which was *the son* of Arphaxad, which was *the son* of Sem, which was *the son* of Noe, which was *the son* of Lamech,

37 Which was *the son* of Mathusala, which was *the son* of Enoch, which was *the son* of Jared, which was *the son* of Maleleel, which was *the son* of Cainan,

38 Which was *the son* of Enos, which was *the son* of Seth, which was *the son* of Adam, which was *the son* of God.

## REVISED VERSION.

34 *son* of Perez, the *son* of Judah, the *son* of Jacob, the *son* of Isaac, the *son* of Abraham,

35 the *son* of Terah, the *son* of Nahor, the *son* of Serug, the *son* of Reu, the *son* of Peleg,

36 the *son* of Eber, the *son* of Shelah, the *son* of Cainan, the *son* of Arphaxad, the *son* of Shem, the *son* of Noah, the *son* of Lamech,

37 the *son* of Methuselah, the *son* of Enoch, the *son* of Jared, the *son* of Mahalaleel, the

38 *son* of Cainan, the *son* of Enos, the *son* of Seth, the *son* of Adam, the *son* of God.

as a daughter, and of a son-in-law as a son was not uncommon among the Jews. Naomi calls Ruth "daughter." Ruth 1:8, 11, 12; 2:2. 7. It is objected that the Jews did not usually trace descent through a female line. But this is tracing the descent of Mary's father, Heli. And there are instances of noting the female line of descent in the Old Testament as in the case of Jair, 1 Chron. 2:21, 22; 7:14, and of Barzillai, Ezra 2:61; Neh. 7:63. Lightfoot quotes an old tradition which says Mary was the daughter of Heli or Eli.

Some maintain that Heli was the own brother of Jacob, and that Joseph and Mary were own cousins. The latter may have been cousins, as Mary and Elizabeth were. But if Jacob and Heli were brothers it would imply that Matthan and Matthas designate the same person, and the different names in the two lines back of him must then be explained.

The omissions in the list in Matthew are explained in my Commentary on that Gospel. To conclude: the view here taken is not without some difficulties, but they are more easily answered than upon any other explanation, as already shown. The Scripture assures us that Christ would be born of David and the evangelists gave these lists to show Hebrews and Christians of their time that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of David. Had they made any mistake in the lists, we may be sure the unbelieving Jews of that day would have promptly pointed out the error. The absence of any successful attack at this point is strong confirmatory evidence of the historical accuracy of the records.

**SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.**—1. A great man will not accept the credit or praise due to another. 2. Preachers and teachers cannot save themselves or others, but they can point them to Christ. 3. The Holy Spirit comes in answer to prayer. 4. Wheat, or chaff: which will you be? 5. If you repent and are forgiven, Jesus will gather you as wheat. If you remain unrepentant, he will cast you out as chaff. 6. John was a faithful, godly, popular, practical, and copious teacher. He could lead men to repentance and to Christ: an example for Christian teachers. 7. Jesus was the Christ, the Son of David, and of Abraham.

**THE TEMPTATION OF JESUS.** 4:1-13. Compare Matt. 4:1-11; Mark 1:12, 13.

WILDERNESS AND JUDÆA, A. D. 27.

**THE TEMPTATION.**—Luke's narrative of this mysterious and awful conflict with Satan equals in fulness that of Matthew. The third form of temptation noted here, is the second noted in Matthew; and the second given by Luke is noted third and last by Matthew. Matthew's order seems the more natural one. Mark's brief account and Luke's full narrative both convey the impression that the temptation extended through the entire 40 days. Matthew's account implies that the three forms of temptation specially mentioned took place at the end of the 40 days. Both these views may be true. Jesus may have been subject to temptation from Satan during the entire period of 40 days, while the three final assaults specially described may have been made at the close of this period.

**1. Jesus . . . full of the Holy Ghost]** The Holy Spirit had come like a dove upon him at his baptism, two persons of the Trinity being united with the human nature of Jesus.

**returned from the Jordan]** That is, Jesus went toward Galilee from whence he had come. Matt. 3: 13. The direct route from the place of baptism would be northwest to the wilderness about Mt. Quarantana, which is the traditional place of the temptation. There was another route to Galilee from Jericho through Peræa. Our Lord came from Galilee by this route on his final journey to Jerusalem, but the more direct route through Judæa is the more probable one intended here.

**2. did eat nothing]** Matthew says Jesus "fasted forty days and forty nights." To "eat nothing" implies a total abstinence from food, though it does not in this connection of necessity force us to this meaning only, for Jesus says "John came neither eating nor drinking," Matt. 11: 18, when he simply contrasts his own habits with the spare diet of John. Nor is it *necessary* to hold that the fast was miraculous; long fasts for 40 or more days it is claimed have been voluntarily observed by some in modern times. Moses was 40 days in the mount with God. Ex. 34: 28.

**3. this stone that it become bread]** The definite adjective "this," and also "these" in Matthew are graphic touches, and read like a historical narrative, as it is. We seem to see the devil pointing to the stone as he utters his evil words: turn this stone into a loaf. Jesus in v. 4 answers the tempter by citing a portion of Deut. 8: 3.

**5. in a moment of time]** That the kingdoms of the world were shown to Jesus "in a moment," is stated by Luke only. Compare "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye," 1 Cor. 15: 52. This form of the temptation is placed last by Matthew; both add that the devil showed also "the glory of them."

**6. for . . . to whomsoever I will, I give it]** Luke alone adds this assertion of Satan in respect to his ownership of the kingdoms of this world. The devil's claim was not true, but really false. Sin had despoiled man

## COMMON VERSION.

CHAP. IV.—And Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost returned from Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness,

2 Being forty days tempted of the devil. And in those days he did eat nothing: and when they were ended, he afterward hungered.

3 And the devil said unto him, If thou be the Son of God, command this stone that it be made bread.

4 And Jesus answered him, saying, It is written, That man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.

5 And the devil, taking him up into a high mountain, shewed unto him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time.

6 And the devil said unto him, All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will, I give it.

## REVISED VERSION.

- 4 And Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan, and was led in the Spirit in the wilderness during forty days, 2 being tempted of the devil. And he did eat nothing in those days: and when they were 3 completed, he hungered. And the devil said unto him, If thou art the Son of God, command this stone that it become <sup>1</sup> bread. 4 And Jesus answered unto him, It is written, 5 Man shall not live by bread alone. And he led him up, and shewed him all the kingdoms of <sup>2</sup> the world in a moment of time. 6 And the devil said unto him, To thee will I give all this authority, and the glory of them: for it hath been delivered unto me;

<sup>1</sup> Or, a loaf    <sup>2</sup> Gr the inhabited earth.

of his inheritance, robbing God; temporary and partial rule of the world had been usurped by Satan. The bold tempter intends to forestall any questioning of his power to deliver what he offers, by explaining that the worldly kingdoms though not originally his, have been handed over to him to do what he pleases with them. This was a lying boast. For, in fact, God is the only absolute owner of the earth. "The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof." Ps. 24:1.

**7. If thou therefore wilt worship before me]** Notice the reading "before me" of the Revised Version. The Romanists, who fall down before the images of the Virgin and the crucifix, say, we do no wrong; we do not worship the images, but "before" them, we really worship God the Maker of all. Imagine the devil saying to Jesus, you can fall down and worship before me; it will be all right: if you choose, you may think that you are not worshipping me, but worshipping a God who made all. The Jesuit, on his theory, could have yielded to the temptation without sin. What a contrast to this double-dealing, is the conduct of Jesus!

**8. Thou shalt worship the Lord]** The clause "get thee behind me, Satan," is omitted in the Revised Version, as it is not found here in the best MSS. but may have been transferred from Matt. 4:10. The tempter is again repelled, by a citation from Deut. 6:13; it follows the Septuagint Version which was current among the Jews at this time.

**9-12. led him to Jerusalem]** The devil conducted him to Jerusalem, not bore ("brought") him as the Common Version might imply. Luke's narrative of this form of the temptation coincides exactly with that of Matthew. See my Commentary on Matthew, pp. 51, 52. "The devil had his head full of Scripture, and his heart full of rebellion."

"The devil can cite Scripture for his purpose;  
An evil soul producing holy witness  
Is like a villain with a smiling cheek,  
A deadly apple rotten at the heart."—*Shakespeare.*

But the devil misquoted and misapplied Scripture. The first was a temptation to distrust God, the third here noted, to presumption, and the second,

## COMMON VERSION.

7 If thou therefore wilt worship me, all shall be thine.

8 And Jesus answered and said unto him, Get thee behind me, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.

9 And he brought him to Jerusalem, and set him on a pinnacle of the temple, and said unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down from hence:

10 For it is written, He shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee:

11 And in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.

12 And Jesus answering said unto him, It is said, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.

## REVISED VERSION.

7 and to whomsoever I will I give it. If thou therefore wilt worship before me, it shall all be thine. And Jesus answered and said unto him, It is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. And he led him to Jerusalem, and set him on the <sup>1</sup>pinnacle of the temple, and said unto him, If thou art the Son of God, cast thyself down from hence: for it is written,

10 He shall give his angels charge concerning thee, to guard thee:

11 and,  
On their hands they shall bear thee up,  
Lest haply thou dash thy foot against a stone.

12 And Jesus answering said unto him. It is said, Thou shalt not try the Lord thy God.

<sup>1</sup>Gr. *wing.*

to wicked ambition. The answer to this call to throw himself down from a wing of the temple at Jerusalem, to prove the Scripture that angels would bear him up and save him from any harm, was also drawn from Deuteronomy (6 : 16). In each case Jesus successfully resisted the devil by skilfully using God's word. We can imitate him in this.

**13. departed from him for a season]** Matthew and Mark say that angels ministered unto him at this time. The devil left him for a time only. He was waiting an opportunity, "biding his time." He returned again, when he prompted Peter to rebuke Jesus, Matt. 16 : 23 ; and again when he entered into Judas the betrayer, John 13 : 27, and in Christ's agony in the garden and sufferings on the cross. Notice also that the malice of the Jews is ascribed to the influence of the devil in John 8 : 44, and compare John 14 : 30, with Luke 22 : 53, and Heb. 4 : 15.

SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.—1. In time of spiritual exaltation, the devil may be near at hand with temptations. 2. The devil often tempts us through our appetites and passions. 3. The devil can quote and misuse Scripture. 4. Whoever is led by the Spirit may come into temptation, but he will come out again. 5. The devil will make extravagant offers of worldly honors to ruin a soul. 6. Spiritual consecration may bring spiritual trials. 7. Jesus triumphed by using the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God : so may we vanquish the tempter. 8. Distrust of God, presumption, and inordinate ambition are three common sins of fallen human nature. 9. The devil may omit for a season, but never gives up his malicious efforts to destroy a soul.

REJECTED AT NAZARETH. 4 : 14-30. Given by Luke only ; but compare Matt. 13. 53-58 ; and Mark 6 : 1-6.

NAZARETH, NEAR THE CLOSE OF A. D. 27.

John describes the Judæan ministry of Jesus which lasted nearly a year, but the other evangelists refer to it, only here and there. Some suppose this rejection at Nazareth is the same as that related by Mark 6 : 1-6 ; because they think it unlikely that Jesus would have returned to Nazareth after the violent treatment here described. Yet Jesus returned to Jerusalem again and again, after similar threats from the Jewish rulers, and appeared in cities and public places where they were encountered. The incidents of the visit to Nazareth and their surroundings in Luke, are quite different from those given in the visit narrated by Mark. In the latter the disciples were with him ; in the former, there is no mention of disciples. Luke is too full and exact for us to suppose he omitted such a fact. Then he clearly places this visit early in the ministry of Jesus, while the visit noticed by Mark is evidently at a later period of the ministry. Probably about a year intervened

## COMMON VERSION.

13 And when the devil had ended all the temptation, he departed from him for a season.

## REVISED VERSION.

13 And when the devil had completed every temptation, he departed from him <sup>1</sup>for a season.

<sup>1</sup> Or, until

between the two visits to Nazareth. The sisters of Jesus were living in Nazareth at the time of the second visit. See Mark 6 : 3.

**14. in the power of the Spirit]** That power which came specially upon him at baptism, was strengthened after his victory over the tempter and was manifested to the public by the first miracle at Cana of Galilee. John 2 : 1-11. See also this power as explained in Romans 15 : 13.

**through all the region]** Jesus went through the country like the Jewish rabbis or teachers, having several followers or attendants, no doubt, as they were accustomed to have. It would seem as strange then, for a teacher to go alone, as it would to us to see a preacher going about with ten or twelve pupils accompanying him. The region where the fame of Jesus now spread was lower Galilee. The miracle at Cana soon after the baptism, and his teachings and works in Judæa, spread before him in Galilee.

**15. taught in their synagogues]** Working miracles and speaking with persuasive and convincing power, he would be recognized and invited to teach, or address the people by the chief ruler of any synagogue in Galilee. The divine power appeared in his speech and bearing, so that all admired and praised him.

**16. came to Nazareth]** This was an obscure town, among the hills of lower Galilee, about fourteen miles from the sea of Galilee, six miles west of Mt. Tabor, and sixty-six miles north of Jerusalem. It was the home of Jesus in his youth. It is now called En-Nâsireh, and has 5000 to 6000 inhabitants : 2500 Greeks ; 2000 Mohammedans ; 800 Latins and a few Protestants. Farming, gardening, and various handicrafts and trades are followed by the towns-people. It has a synagogue, a Latin, a Greek, a Protestant, and a Maronite church. Behind and near the latter is a "brow of the hill," probably the one over which the Nazarenes attempted to throw Jesus. Near the Greek church is a very old spring called "Mary's well," to which Mary herself may have gone for water, as women do now.

**as his custom was . . into the synagogue]** Custom answers for anything in the East. "Whatever is done is right," is an Oriental proverb. Jesus was in the habit of attending the synagogue on the Sabbath, not only in his youth at Nazareth, but afterward wherever he might be on the Sabbath day. For both are implied in this statement. See v. 15. He kept the Sabbath ; he attended God's service on that day. Laymen could address the people in a synagogue, as they can now in a Moslem mosque.

*Synagogues* were quite numerous at this period in Judæa and Galilee. Ruins of synagogues are now seen at Tell Hum (Capernaum), Meiron, Safed, Arbela, and in many other places in Palestine. A synagogue might be built

## COMMON VERSION.

14 ¶ And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee : and there went out a fame of him through all the region round about.

15 And he taught in their synagogues, being glorified of all.

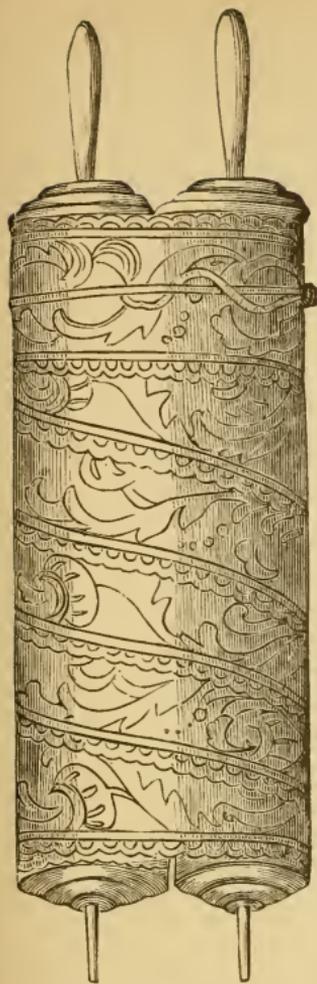
16 ¶ And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up : and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read.

## REVISED VERSION.

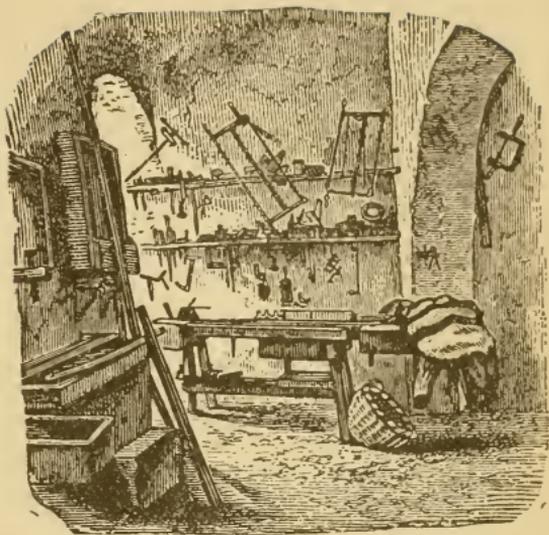
14 And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee : and a fame went out concerning him through all the region

15 round about. And he taught in their synagogues, being glorified of all.

16 And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up : and he entered, as his custom was, into the syuagogue on the sab-



An Ancient Book.



A Carpenter's shop at Nazareth. (After a Photograph.)  
See Mark 6 : 3.



Ruins of a Synagogue at Kefr-Bir'im, near Kadesh in Galilee.  
(By Permission from *Pal. Memoirs.*)

in any place, where there were worshippers enough to erect it and maintain the worship. In earlier times it was built on a hill or rise of ground, when possible; and so placed that worshippers entering it would face toward Jerusalem. In later times both of these rules were disregarded, as we infer from the ruins of about a dozen synagogues recently discovered and described in Palestine. The ruins of the synagogue at Tell Hum show the entrance to the main building on the south side, while three entrances to a later addition are at the north side, and one is on the east side. When the entrance was on the south in Galilee, and hence toward Jerusalem, it is supposed that the worshippers passed around to the north end, and thus were brought to face Jerusalem. No ruins of a synagogue have been found at Nazareth. The one at Kerazeh (Chorazin) was built of black basalt stone. "The synagogue" implies that there was only one in Nazareth. It was like the temple in shape, being longer than it was wide, with a raised platform at the farther end. Behind a veil on this platform was the ark or chest in which a roll of the law and rolls of the prophets were kept. In front of the veil stood the "*Migdal ez*" (tower of wood) or small desk like our pulpit for the reader. The women were at one side (or in a gallery), and always behind a lattice or screen and hidden from the male worshippers. The congregation usually stood. When seated the people faced Jerusalem: but the rulers and those having the chief seats upon the platform or near it faced the congregation, and their backs were toward the ark and Jerusalem. The rulers and officers of the synagogue were a *sagan* (chief ruler), a *chazzan* (minister), who arranged the building for service, and brought out the roll and put it back, and also taught the synagogue school during the week; and "the rulers," a council of aged and influential men who, with the chief ruler, ordered its affairs.

**stood up to read]** In the synagogue, one might rise to signify his desire to read. Besides it was customary for the Jews to stand when they read the Scriptures in public. The congregation or the chief ruler must have requested Jesus to read. For "a reader may not read until the chief of the congregation bids him read; yea, even a minister of the congregation or a ruler of the synagogue, may not read of himself, until the congregation, or the chief among them bids him read."\* Therefore Jesus being permitted to read "he stood up." They even forbid the reader of the law to lean upon anything.† But this rule did not apply to reading from the book of Esther: for in reading that, the reader was allowed to stand or sit.‡ And Jesus, no doubt, waited for the roll to be handed to him by the *chazzan* or "minister" as was the custom in the synagogue.‡

**17. there was delivered unto him . . . Isaiah]** The law must have

## COMMON VERSION.

17 And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written,

<sup>1</sup> Or, a roll

## REVISED VERSION.

17 bath day, and stood up to read. And there was delivered unto him <sup>1</sup> the book of the prophet Isaiah. And he opened the <sup>2</sup> book, and found the place where it was written,

<sup>2</sup> Or, roll

\* *Maimon. Hil. Teph.* 12:7.

† *Mishna. Megill.* 4:1.

† *Ben. Asher.* in *T. Megill.* 3:1.

‡ *Mishna. Yoma.* 7:1.

been first read. As teaching was the principal object of the synagogue; its services were simple, varied, and elastic. It usually began with two benedictions or prayers, and the *shema* "hear," a recitation of three texts from the law as a kind of "creed," to wit, Deut. 6 : 4-9 ; 11 : 13-21 ; and Num. 15 : 37-41, followed by another prayer. The Mishnah declares that he who read from the prophets was expected to say the "*shema*" and the prayers also.\* It is quite probable our Lord conformed to this custom when in the synagogue at Nazareth. After the "creed" and prayers came the reading of a lesson from the law. The law must be read in regularly successive sections, and the Pentateuch was divided into fifty-four sections for this purpose; one section being read on each successive Sabbath of a year, beginning with the Sabbath after the feast of Tabernacles. The reading of the law was followed by a lesson from the prophets. The *chazzan* of the synagogue handed Jesus a "roll of the prophet Isaiah." The Jewish Scriptures were written upon long rolls of papyrus or parchment. The roll of the law was rolled up from both ends.

**opened the book]** The Greek word rendered "opened," means literally "unrolling" the book or roll. When one wished to find a particular place in a Jewish roll or book of the law, he unrolled the roll at one end, while he rolled it up at the other, until he found the place. It was forbidden to unroll a book of the law before a public congregation.† All other Jewish books, including the prophets, were rolled from the beginning to the end of them, and the roll of the prophets might be unrolled before the congregation.‡ So Jesus unrolled the book, to find the place, as any reader would then do. And the reader was not required to read consecutively in the prophets, but might skip portions,|| provided there was no pause in the reading. Notice how exactly the narrative of Luke shows that Jesus conformed to the Jewish rules, in unrolling the roll of Isaiah before the congregation, and as we shall see under v. 18, in exercising his privilege of not reading texts in their regular succession. He found the place, not so much by seeking for it; but, as the Greek word implies, casually, in popular phrase "by chance," or as we would say providentially.

**18. anointed me to preach]** The passage Jesus read is from the third portion of Isaiah which relates to the person, work, sufferings and triumph of the church of the Messiah. It is known as the *haphthara*, or section appointed to be read on the great day of atonement. The citation here quite closely follows the Septuagint of Is. 61 : 1-3. But the clause "to set at liberty them that are bruised" is not in Is. 61 : 1-3, but is found in the Greek version of

## COMMON VERSION.

18 The Spirit of the Lord *is* upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised,

## REVISED VERSION.

18 The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,  
 1 Because he anointed me to preach 2 good tidings to the poor:  
 He hath sent me to proclaim release to the captives,  
 And recovering of sight to the blind,  
 To set at liberty them that are bruised,

<sup>1</sup> Or, *Wherefore*

<sup>2</sup> Or, *the gospel*

\* *Megill.* 4 : 5.

† *Sopherim.* 11 : 2.

† *Yoma.* 70 : 1. *Maimon. Hil. Teph.* 12 : 23.

|| *Megill.* 4 : 4.

Is. 58:6. This privilege of selecting or "skipping" was allowed in the reading of the prophets as we have seen. In using the permission the reader was not allowed to pause, nor must his interpreter. In reading the old Hebrew of the Scriptures, a *methurgeman* or "interpreter" was required who translated the old Hebrew into the vernacular Aramaic. The reader would read three clauses, and then the interpreter would interpret them to the congregation. We know this custom prevailed later, and probably it began as early as Christ's day. Jesus preached in the wisdom and power of the Spirit; those whom God sends to preach, he qualifies for that work. The peculiar mark of Messiah's work would be that it was to and for the poor. This has ever characterized the true gospel; it is for the poor, and in sharp contrast with false religions in this respect. Deliverance, sight, and liberty are further marks of that spiritual jubilee which the gospel was to bring to the world.

**19. acceptable year]** The Lord's time for completing the great redemption from sin had come; the world's great jubilee year. It was the "fulness of time." See Gal. 4:4.

**20. closed the book]** Jesus rolled up the roll or book, as the high priest did after he had read the law on the day of atonement. Jesus then handed the roll to the *chazzan*, the minister or sexton of the synagogue, who was required to place it securely in the chest again.\* The minister was required to receive the roll in his right hand, and to hand it to another with the same hand. †

**and sat down]** While reading the Scriptures he stood, as the Jewish custom required; but in preaching or teaching their custom was to sit. So Jesus sat to deliver an address or sermon with which the service of the synagogue usually concluded. This sermon or teaching might be by any person of culture whom the chief of the synagogue should invite, either priest, scribe, or layman. Thus the apostles were invited to speak, after the law and prophets had been read in the synagogue at Antioch. Acts 13:15.

**eyes of all . . . were fastened on him]** The Greek word for fastened is used twelve times by Luke (ten times in the Acts), and is a medical term, signifying close and continued looking. They were eagerly waiting for his teaching on this remarkable passage.

**21. this Scripture . . . fulfilled]** Here Jesus began to depart from the fixed rule of the synagogue and its elders. A settled principle of the orthodox Jewish rabbis was, "every one is bound to teach in the very language of his teacher." But in public address in the synagogue, a larger liberty was

## COMMON VERSION.

19 To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.

20 And he closed the book, and he gave it again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him.

21 And he began to say unto them, This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears.

## REVISED VERSION.

19 To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.

20 And he closed the <sup>1</sup>book, and gave it back to the attendant, and sat down: and the eyes of all in the synagogue were fastened

21 on him. And he began to say unto them, To-day hath this scripture been fulfilled in

<sup>1</sup> Or, roll

allowed. Delitzsch gives an example of an ancient address based upon "He hath clothed me with the garments of salvation," Is. 61 : 10, in his "Day in Capernaum," pp. 131-133. This new *darshan* or "teacher" (so called from *darash*, "to ask") had been trained up among them, but now began a discourse in a language of his own. This was startling : it might be a heresy.

**22. wondered at the words of grace]** The hearers were amazed, not so much at the moral force as the beauty, of what he said. It was not the matter chiefly, but the manner in which the Saviour spoke, that excited their wonder. It implies that there was a gentleness, sweetness and persuasiveness in his manner and language that they admired. They wondered that a plain son of a carpenter from their own town had such power. And they asked one another, "Is not this Joseph's son?"

**23. Physician, heal thyself]** This was a common Jewish proverb; "Physician, go heal thyself;" and "Physician, go heal thy lameness."\* It is not found in ancient Greek. But the last clause of the verse has its counterpart in other languages. They repeated this proverb to him in substance when he was on the cross. See Matt. 27 : 42; Mark 15 : 31.

**heard done in Capernaum]** This he declares they would say to him, but Luke does not tell us that they did say it on this occasion; hence it is fair to infer that there was a later visit, as noted in Mark. Jesus had healed a nobleman's son at Capernaum, and he had been there with his mother and brethren some days. John 2 : 12. It is in accord with Christ's usual work to suppose that other miracles had already been done in Capernaum, though the evangelists have not narrated them.

**24. No prophet is accepted in his own country]** There is an old Chinese proverb very similar. The French say "no man is hero to his valet," and "few men are admired by their servants." Plutarch gives a similar Greek proverb used by Antigonus. Jesus "did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief." Matt. 13 : 58.

**25, 26. three years and six months]** This is the period of the drought, as given also in James 5 : 17. The "third year" noted in 1 Kings 18 : 1, as

## COMMON VERSION.

22 And all bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth. And they said, Is not this Joseph's son?

23 And he said unto them, Ye will surely say unto me this proverb, Physician, heal thyself : whatsoever we have heard done in Capernaum, do also here in thy country.

24 And he said, Verily I say unto you, No prophet is accepted in his own country.

25 But I tell you of a truth, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land;

26 But unto none of them was Elias sent, save unto Sarepta, a city of Sidon, unto a woman that was a widow.

## REVISED VERSION.

22 your ears. And all bare him witness, and wondered at the words of grace which proceeded out of his mouth : and they said, Is

23 not this Joseph's son? And he said unto them, Doubtless ye will say unto me this parable, Physician, heal thyself : whatsoever we have heard done at Capernaum, do also

24 here in thine own country. And he said,

25 Verily I say unto you, No prophet is acceptable in his own country. But of a truth I say unto you, There were many widows in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when there came a great famine

26 over all the land; and unto none of them was Elias sent, but only to <sup>1</sup> Zarephath, in the land of Sidon, unto a woman that was a

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *Sarepta*.

the time when the Lord directed Elijah to shew himself to Ahab, and when rain would be sent, refers to the "third year" of Elijah's sojourn with the widow. The drought began nearly a year before the prophet went to Zarephath. The story of this drought is found in 1 Kings 17 and 18. Sarepta (Zarephath) was a town of Phœnicia near the sea-coast, between Tyre and Sidon; now called *Surafend*. These instances illustrate the wisdom and power of Jesus in drawing lessons from Old Testament narratives.

**27. Naaman the Syrian]** He alone was cured by Elisha, and he was a Syrian, a foreigner; although there were many lepers in Israel also at that time, Elisha cured none of them; nor had Elijah saved one of the many starving widows in Israel in that time of great famine; but he had saved one in the Phœnician town outside of Israel. The inference to be drawn from these examples was easily seen. You Nazarenes are like the people of Israel in Ahab's day. The Lord passed them by for their wickedness and saved a Gentile; so he will now reject Israel for unbelief and call the Gentiles. Only a divine Teacher would have drawn such a lesson from these Old Testament narratives.

**28. filled with wrath]** There is almost a touch of irony in these words. The evangelist makes the reader see the gross inconsistency of the Nazarenes in boiling with anger while within God's house. They did not restrain their wrath for a reverent or decent closing of the service.

**29. rose up] or "rising up"]** This implies that they were sitting during the reading and address, and in their great rage having sprung up at once before the service had formally ended they forcibly put him out of the synagogue, and hustling him out of their little town, were about to throw him over the "brow of the hill" or precipice, probably the one near the Maronite Church, which is now from forty to fifty feet high. The so-called "Mount of Precipitation" where one tradition places this scene is two miles from the city (more than a Sabbath day's journey), and therefore not the place. If they thought him guilty of blasphemy, the punishment would be death by stoning. Hurling one down a rocky cliff was regarded by the rabbis as a form of stoning.

**30. passing through the midst of them]** This was a wonderful though not *necessarily* a miraculous escape. His calmness, dignity, energy and wisdom would enable him to astonish and baffle an angry mob, and to escape from their fury. "Went his way," seems to favor the idea of a resolute, brave man, of high moral character marching through the wild, angry crowd,

## COMMON VERSION.

27 And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Eliseus the prophet; and none of them was cleansed, saving Naaman the Syrian.

28 And all they in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath,

29 And rose up, and thrust him out of the city, and led him unto the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might cast him down headlong.

30 But he, passing through the midst of them, went his way,

## REVISED VERSION.

27 widow. And there were many lepers in Israel in the time of Elisha the prophet; and none of them was cleansed, but only 28 Naaman the Syrian. And they were all filled with wrath in the synagogue, as they 29 heard these things; and they rose up, and cast him forth out of the city, and led him unto the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might throw him 30 down headlong. But he passing through the midst of them went his way.

as they sought to hold him, and walking away leaving them staring after him in amazement, not knowing what to think of him.

**SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.**—1. Successfully to overcome a great temptation gives increased spiritual power. 2. A strong character behind a bold preacher awakens men's admiration, and sometimes their hatred. 3. Jesus set us an example in habitually attending service in God's house. 4. God's word is the source of instruction in God's house. 5. Jesus set us an example of reverence and decorum in the sanctuary. 6. Close attention to the word and to the teaching is commendable in worship. 7. The Old Testament has rich spiritual lessons for our instruction and comfort. 8. The gospel of Jesus is hope and strength for the poor. 9. "Truth embitters those whom it does not enlighten." 10. Luther says, "The word of God is a sword, a war, a poison, a scandal, a stumbling-block, a ruin," to those who resist it. 11. How inconsistent, how insane, to be carried away with anger against God's truth in the house of God!

**HEALING IN CAPERNAUM.** 4: 31-44. Compare Mark 1: 21-39; Matt. 8: 14-17.

CAPERNAUM, SPRING, A. D. 28.

The call of four disciples which Matthew and Mark place before the healing of Peter's wife's mother, Luke narrates after that miracle and in the next chapter, and here continues his account of the teaching of Jesus in the synagogue.

**31. came down to Capernaum]** Nazareth was up in the hills; Capernaum down by the Lake of Galilee, and over 1500 feet lower than Nazareth. Capernaum (town of Nahum), which is not named in the O. T., became Christ's "own city," and the scene of some of his most remarkable miracles and teachings. It was on the northwest shore of the Lake of Galilee, and probably at *Tell Hum*. The roads to Tyre and Sidon, to Damascus, Sepphoris (a chief city of Galilee), and Jerusalem from this city were then great thoroughfares. It was also in the center of what might be called the "trades district" of Palestine. It had collectors of customs, a noted synagogue, and was one of the most important cities of Galilee, but its complete destruction fulfills the woes pronounced upon it. Matt. 11: 23, 24. Luke 10: 15. Had Luke written to a Hebrew of Palestine, it would have been unnecessary to inform his reader that Capernaum was "a city of Galilee." From this and similar references to cities in Galilee, it is inferred that he wrote to a Gentile not acquainted with Galilee.

**taught them]** Or better, "was teaching them." For the Greek conveys the idea of a continuous or habitual act; "he was teaching them on the Sabbath days" (the plural form in Greek). This teaching, as we learn from Mark 1: 21, was in "the synagogue" (see also v. 33) as it had been in Nazareth and elsewhere.

COMMON VERSION.

31. And came down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee, and taught them on the sabbath days.

REVISED VERSION.

31. And he came down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee. And he was teaching them on

**32. they were astonished]** The Greek word for astonished is a strong one, literally meaning "to strike one out," as in boxing, or to knock one senseless, and hence to be struck with sudden astonishment. Here again it was at the manner of his teaching. The astonishment was also increased by the matter of it.

**his word was with authority]** It was in sharp contrast with that of the scribes, for it carried power and authority with it. It was direct, and appealed to the conscience and heart for its truthfulness. The scribes supported every statement and minute point in their teaching by tedious and endless references to authorities, to previous rabbis. Farrar pithily says, "Christ referred to no precedents; quoted no authorities; dealt with fresher and nobler topics than fantastic *hagadoth*, 'legends,' and weary *halachoth*, 'rules.' He spoke straight from the heart to the heart." Really eminent teachers usually do this.

**33. spirit of an unclean devil [demon]** As he was teaching in the synagogue one who had the spirit of an unclean demon croaked out (as the Greek word for "cried out" primarily means). The Greek word also, *δαιμόνιον*, "demon," was used to signify supernatural beings, wicked or good. Hence the word "unclean" is added here to show that this was a bad demon or spirit, though not the devil, for which another word, *διάβολος*, "diabolus" is used. After making reasonable allowance for whatever figurative language may be found in the narratives of the healing of demoniacs, and for known physical diseases that might produce some similar symptoms, there are still peculiar features of these manifestations not accounted for, and the only rational conclusion is that these persons were actually tormented by demoniacal spirits. The Holy One became incarnate; and that the devil should strive to imitate this, by causing evil spirits to enter men, that is, to become incarnate, agrees with what we know of the character of Satan. Why should it seem strange that the devil exercised this power, to resist the kingdom which Christ was to set up among men? Modern science has not yet shown that such actual demoniacal possession even now is impossible. For further information, see special note on demoniacal possession in my Commentary on Matthew, pp. 103, 104.

**34. what have we to do with thee]** The demoniacal man "croaked out" "*Ea*," which may mean "Desist," or "Let alone," as in the Common Version, or may simply be an exclamation "Ah!" as in the Revised Version. Then he added the question, implying that there was nothing common between

## COMMON VERSION.

32 And they were astonished at his doctrine: for his word was with power.

33 ¶ And in the synagogue there was a man, which had a spirit of an unclean devil, and cried out with a loud voice,

34 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.

## REVISED VERSION.

32 the sabbath day: and they were astonished at his teaching; for his word was with

33 authority. And in the synagogue there was a man, that had a spirit of an unclean demon; and he cried out with a loud voice,

34 Ah! 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

them. You are against us, you must have come to destroy us. For I know who you are, the Holy One of God.

**35. Hold thy peace]** "Be silent" or "muzzled," for the same Greek word is rendered "muzzle" in 1 Cor. 9 : 9. Jesus did not need, nor would he accept the testimony of demons as to his true character and mission. His answer is, "Come out !"

**he came out]** What a simple record is this ! Jesus spake the word "come out;" the demon threw the man down (Mark puts a different and more graphic word, "tearing him" or "convulsing him," 1 : 26, Revised Version), and came out without having hurt him. It would have been marvellous if the people had not been "amazed." Canon Mozley wisely observes, "miracles are not contrary to nature, but beyond and above it."

**37. fame [rumour] into every place]** In v. 14, it is said his fame went into all the region; that is, was widely known in that region. Now it spreads more universally into every hamlet and town of the region. The former implies that it was known to some in every important town; now it becomes so widely and so generally diffused that in every place his work and fame are the topic of conversation; "he is in everybody's mouth," as a common proverb has it.

**38. into Simon's house]** From sitting in the synagogue teaching, Jesus "rose up," and went into Simon Peter's house, or Mark says "the house of Simon and Andrew," Mark 1 : 29, the two brothers having a house or home together.

**Simon's wife's mother]** The friends and disciples of Christ were not free from sickness and afflictions. This healing is recorded by three evangelists, Matt. 8 : 14; Mark 1 : 30. The Roman Church requires all priests and ministers to be celibates, and will not allow them to be married; but Peter, who they say was the first pope, had a wife; and appears to have taken her about with him in his apostolic labors. See 1 Cor. 9 : 5.

**a great fever]** Here Luke uses a medical word. The ancients, as Galen says, divided fevers into "great" and "little." The members of the family joined in asking Jesus to heal her.

**39. stood over her]** Jesus stood so that he was bending over her.

## COMMON VERSION.

35 And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him. And when the devil had thrown him in the midst, he came out of him, and hurt him not.

36 And they were all amazed, and spake among themselves, saying, What a word is this! for with authority and power he commandeth the unclean spirits, and they come out.

37 And the fame of him went out into every place of the country round about.

38 ¶ And he arose out of the synagogue, and entered into Simon's house. And Simon's wife's mother was taken with a great fever; and they besought him for her.

39 And he stood over her, and rebuked the fever; and it left her: and immediately she arose and ministered unto them.

## REVISED VERSION.

35 One of God. And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him. And when the demon had thrown him down in the midst, he came out of him, having

35 done him no hurt. And amazement came upon all, and they spake together, one with another, saying, What is <sup>1</sup>this word? for with authority and power he commandeth the unclean spirits, and they come out.

37 And there went forth a rumour concerning him into every place of the region round about.

38 And he rose up from the synagogue, and entered into the house of Simon. And Simon's wife's mother was holden with a great fever; and they besought him for her.

39 And he stood over her, and rebuked the fever; and it left her: and immediately she rose up and ministered unto them.

<sup>1</sup> Or, *this word, that with authority . . . come out ?*

And he took her hand (so Matthew and Mark say), and rebuked the fever, and he raised her up, and the fever left her at once. As proof of a complete cure she immediately arose and began to wait upon them, as the hostess of a house would in caring for her guests.

**40. the sun was setting]** This was the Sabbath day, v. 31. Works of necessity and mercy are lawful on the Sabbath. But the rabbis, who perverted the law, would not allow the people to bring their sick to Jesus until the Sabbath had ended, which was at sunset; for, the Jews counted the day as beginning at sunset and ending at the next sunset. In the twilight the crowds gathered about the door of Simon's house, bearing all kinds of diseased, lame, blind, crazy, and demoniac persons, until no doubt the narrow street was choked with the multitudes. But they were all sent away rejoicing, for the Great Physician having laid his hands on every one of them, he healed them.

**41. devils [demons] also came out]** The cure of this class of afflicted persons was so remarkable that special mention is made of them. They cried or "croaked out," declaring that Jesus was "the Son of God." "Christ" is omitted here, in the most of the best MSS. and also in the Revised Version; but appears at the end of the verse. The demons made this confession, perhaps, to excite the opposition of Jewish rulers, and thus hinder Jesus in his work. But Jesus silenced even the demons, proving that he had power greater than evil spirits possessed.

**42. into a desert place]** Jesus rose very early; "a great while before day" Mark says (1: 35), and retired as daylight began to dawn, to a solitary desert (deserted, that is uninhabited) place for prayer. But Simon and the people searched for him, as one seeks for what is missed, and came and detained or held him back, lest he should transport himself from them.

**43. I must preach . . . to other cities]** Jesus makes this a plea or argument for going away. He must tell the glad tidings of the kingdom, for the Greek word means "to evangelize" and is not *κηρύσσω*, "*kerusso*," the common word for "preach," which, however, is used in v. 44.

**44. was preaching in . . . Galilee]** He continued preaching, the usual

## COMMON VERSION.

40 ¶ Now when the sun was setting, all they that had any sick with divers diseases brought them unto him; and he laid his hands on every one of them, and healed them.

41 And devils also came out of many, crying out, and saying, Thou art Christ the Son of God. And he rebuking *them* suffered them not to speak: for they knew that he was Christ.

42 And when it was day, he departed and went into a desert place: and the people sought him, and came unto him, and stayed him, that he should not depart from them.

43 And he said unto them, I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also: for therefore am I sent.

44 And he preached in the synagogues of Galilee.

## REVISED VERSION.

40 And when the sun was setting, all they that had any sick with divers diseases brought them unto him; and he laid his hands on every one of them, and healed

41 them. And demons also came out from many, crying out, and saying, Thou art the Son of God. And rebuking them, he suffered them not to speak, because they knew that he was the Christ.

42 And when it was day, he came out and went into a desert place: and the multitudes sought after him, and came unto him, and would have stayed him, that he should

43 not go from them. But he said unto them, I must preach the <sup>1</sup>good tidings of the kingdom of God to the other cities also: for therefore was I sent.

44 And he was preaching in the synagogues of <sup>2</sup>Galilee.

<sup>1</sup> Or, *gospel*

<sup>2</sup> Very many ancient authorities read *Judæa*.

word for proclaiming, in the synagogues. It is a curious fact that the Sinaitic, Vatican and some other MSS. read here "of Judæa" instead "of Galilee." But "Galilee" seems to be the most natural and fitting reading in this connection. Indeed, the other reading appears so unnatural, and so like an erroneous one, that although several critical editors had adopted it, the Revisers of 1881 declined to follow it, though they put it in the margin. It seems quite foreign to the course of Luke's narrative here to introduce a reference to the Judæan ministry of Jesus.

SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.—1. God's house is glorified by a visit of the Lord from heaven. 2. The devil departs where Jesus enters. 3. Evil spirits knew Christ before men recognized him. 4. Demons did not become better, but worse from their knowledge of Christ. 5. Jesus came to free us from the power of the devil. 6. Christ hears our call, when we are in temporal distress: if it seems best he sends deliverance. 7. It is good to retire often for rest and prayer. 8. The good news of the kingdom of heaven should be spread everywhere. 9. The Sabbath and the house of God may bring help to soul and body.

THE DRAUGHT OF FISHES. 5:1-11. Compare Matt. 4:18-22, Mark 1:16-20, and also John 21:3-12.

NEAR CAPERNAUM, SPRING, A.D. 28.

This miraculous draught of fishes is narrated by Luke only, but the call of the four disciples is given by Matthew and Mark also. The circumstances attending this call as stated by Luke are not inconsistent with those given by the others. They all place the call near Capernaum, by the beach of the Lake of Galilee, and where those called were fishing. In the peculiar form of the call of the first two they also agree in substance, and that the last two, James and John, were with their father Zebedee mending their nets. Luke alone describes the miraculous draught of fishes, and refers to the crowd washing nets, and teaching the people from the boat. But there are so many facts in common that it appears obvious that the three accounts refer to the same call.

**1. pressed upon him]** The crowds were eager to hear and to be healed. Luke uses a strong word. The "multitude pressed," literally, "lay down upon" him, while he was standing on the beach of the lake.

**lake of Gennesaret]** The other evangelists call it a "sea;" perhaps following a Hebrew idiom which calls any sheet of water, *yam*, "sea." Luke uses the more accurate Greek term, *λίμνην*, "lake." The Lake of Galilee is a clear, beautiful, pear-shaped sheet of water, about 12 miles long by 5 miles wide. The Jordan river flows through it, coloring the waters for a mile after its entrance. The lake is sixty miles northeast from Jerusalem, and is nestled down among the hills, in a basin that is depressed about 650 feet below the

## COMMON VERSION.

CHAP. V.—And it came to pass, that, as the people pressed upon him to hear the word of God, he stood by the lake of Gennesaret,

## REVISED VERSION.

5 Now it came to pass, while the multitude pressed upon him and heard the word of God, that he was standing by the lake of

level of the Mediterranean Sea. There were numerous towns and cities, and a thriving commerce around this lake in the time of Christ. Josephus gives a glowing description of its cool, sweet waters, the fish which abounded in them, and of the sandy shores. He also describes the land of Gennesaret along the lake as wonderful for its fruitful soil, its mildness of climate, its great variety of autumnal fruits, declaring that it furnished grapes and figs for ten months in the year, besides producing olives, oleanders, walnuts, almonds, and palms in great abundance. See *Jew. War.* 3, 10: 7-8. Its waters still abound in shoals of fish. See v. 6. The broken range of hills of limestone and basalt which hem it in makes it liable to storms and sudden gusts of wind which often sweep down upon the lake now, as they did in our Lord's day.

**2. two ships [boats] standing** These were two small fishing boats, one Simon's and the other probably Zebedee's, pulled up on the beach. There are only a few fishing boats (three or four) on the lake now, although fish still abound. The timber for boats is scarce; fish bring a high price, as there is a government tax upon those sold. But the boats and vessels then

found upon the lake must have been very numerous; some say there were thousands. The fishermen having toiled all night, had pulled their boats up on the white sandy beach, and had gone on shore to clean and mend their nets, to be ready for the next night's work.

**their nets]** The Greek word here used, *δικτυα*, may have first meant cast nets, but later it appears to have been applied to any kind of net. In using the casting net, which was pear-shaped, the fisherman commonly went out into the water, and seeing signs of



BOAT ON SEA OF GALILEE. (After a Photograph.)

fish, dexterously twirled the net over his head, flinging it out flat upon the water over the fish, the weights at the rim of the net causing it to sink down quickly and to enclose the fish. Two other words are used to designate fishing nets in the gospels. In Matt. 4: 18, *ἀμφίβληστρον*, meaning "what is thrown around," and describes the casting net. In Matt. 4: 20, he uses the other word, *δικτυα*, for "nets," apparently referring to the same ones as in v. 18. But in Matt.

COMMON VERSION.

2 And saw two ships standing by the lake: but the fishermen were gone out of them, and were washing *their* nets.

REVISED VERSION.

2 Gennesaret; and he saw two boats standing by the lake: but the fishermen had gone out of them, and were washing *their* nets.

13 : 47, the word for net is *σαγήνη*, which means a "drag net," or a long one like our seine.

**3. he sat . . and taught . . out of the boat]** The boat belonged to Simon, shared probably by Andrew. To have greater freedom in speaking he entered the boat, and had Simon put it out a little from the shore, then he sat down as ancient teachers usually did, while teaching the multitude which stood on the sloping beach.

**4. let down your nets]** This he said to all in the boat. And when Jesus ceased speaking he said to Simon, "Put out into the deep." He used the sailor's term for pushing out a vessel (the same word appears in v. 3). Loosen out or let down your nets (*δίκτυα*), the same general term for any kind of a net, for a draught. What our Lord bids us do we should do; obedience is our part; results are with him.

**5. Master, we have toiled all night]** Simon answers by telling the Master of a night of fruitless toil, to point out the apparent uselessness of the work, but yielded obedience with hesitation. Luke's word here for Master is not the Hebrew "rabbi," nor the common Greek word "teacher," but it is the classical Greek word *ἐπιστάτης*, meaning "one set over," that is, "overseer" or "commander," as of a ship; in a broader signification "Master." The word is frequently used in the Septuagint, but in the New Testament by Luke only. The disciple Simon had been fishing all night, the usual time for success in that work, but had not caught a fish, yet to please and obey the Master he would let down the "nets;" the better reading being the plural as in the Revised Version.

**6. they inclosed a great multitude of fishes]** And having let down their nets they inclosed a great multitude of fishes, and their nets were breaking. The shoals of fish are so large and closely compacted together often in this lake now, that a haul with drag nets or even casting nets might take in so many fish as to cause the nets to break.

**7. beckoned unto their partners]** The word rendered "beckoned" is common with Greek writers from Homer down, and means first, "to nod," then "to wink," or "to make signs" with the head, eyes, or hands. The

## COMMON VERSION.

3 And he entered into one of the ships, which was Simon's, and prayed him that he would thrust out a little from the land. And he sat down, and taught the people out of the ship.

4 Now when he had left speaking, he said unto Simon, Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught.

5 And Simon answering said unto him, Master, we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing: nevertheless at thy word I will let down the net.

6 And when they had this done, they inclosed a great multitude of fishes: and their net brake.

7 And they beckoned unto *their* partners, which were in the other ship, that they should come and help them. And they came, and filled both the ships, so that they began to sink.

## REVISED VERSION.

3 And he entered into one of the boats, which was Simon's, and asked him to put out a little from the land. And he sat down and

4 taught the multitudes out of the boat. And when he had left speaking, he said unto Simon, Put out into the deep, and let down

5 your nets for a draught. And Simon answered and said, Master, we toiled all night, and took nothing: but at thy word I will

6 let down the nets. And when they had this done, they inclosed a great multitude of fishes; and their nets were breaking;

7 and they beckoned unto their partners in the other boat, that they should come and help them. And they came, and filled both

Orientalists often make all three signs at once, in their demonstrative way. Their "partners" were James and John (v. 10). The fish filled both boats, "so that they began to sink." This does not force us to think that the boats were in danger of going under the water, but that the weight of the load pressed the boat down in the water perhaps to the gunwale.

**8. fell down at Jesus' knees]** "Simon Peter" (for his full name now appears) was ardent, impulsive, devoted to his Master, and as forward to confess his own unworthiness, as he was bold to avow his devotion to Jesus. He now sees how unbelieving he had been, and how reluctant in spirit to obey the command of the Master to let down the nets. This unbelief was his sin; and he frankly confesses it. The wonderful draught of fishes had convicted him of his sin. God often uses providential events to convince us of our own unbelief and sin. Simon did not use the Greek word for "man" in general, when he said, "I am a sinful man," but that particular word which refers to an individual; he above all other men, felt himself to be sinful. So strong was this conviction, that he was impulsively forced to ask the "Lord" (Greek, *κύριε*, which may have implied divine character), the Master, to depart from him. He felt himself to be too sinful to associate with one so true as the Master. Compare also "woe is me!" of Is. 6:5, and "I abhor myself," of Job 42:5, 6. The Arabs have a common expression not unlike it. If a man of rank offers him an honorable seat, he declines it with "*Astagh fir Allah*," "I ask forgiveness of God." An intimation that one is worthy of great attention is answered by a similar expression, even when the attention is finally accepted. This illustrates Oriental habits, the modern expression quite closely corresponding to that used by Simon.

**9. he was amazed]** The Greek is even stronger; amazement clasped around him, and all those with him, at the catch of fishes which they had taken. The words are chosen from the language applied to hunting and fishing.

**10. sons of Zebedee]** Peter, James, and John were thenceforth to be the prominent disciples of Jesus. Zebedee was a man in comfortable circumstances, for he had hired servants, Mark 1:20, owned boats, and his family was of enough importance for his son John to be acquainted with the high priest at Jerusalem. John 18:15. The Greek word for "partner" means primarily "an associate for profit."

**thou shalt catch men]** Jesus answers Simon's impulsive request, and turns his amazement into another channel, by saying "Fear not; from henceforth thou shalt be catching men alive;" for this is the full meaning.

## COMMON VERSION.

8 When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord.

9 For he was astonished, and all that were with him, at the draught of the fishes which they had taken:

10 And so *was* also James, and John, the sons of Zebedee, which were partners with Simon. And Jesus said unto Simon, Fear not; from henceforth thou shalt catch men.

## REVISED VERSION.

8 the boats, so that they began to sink. But Simon Peter, when he saw it, fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, Depart from me; for

9 I am a sinful man, O Lord. For he was amazed, and all that were with him, at the draught of the fishes which they had taken;

10 and so were also James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon.

And Jesus said unto Simon, Fear not; from

By obeying in casting the nets for fish, you have proved your fitness for the greater and more difficult work. You have been taking fish for death; now you are to take men for life; to make converts for eternal life. Fish was the symbol of the primitive Christians. The word ἰχθύς, "fish," is a familiar inscription on the catacombs of Rome. The five letters in it were the five initials of Ἰησοῦς χριστὸς θεοῦ υἱὸς σωτήρ, "Jesus Christ, Son of God, Saviour." Tertullian says, "We little fishes, after our fish (ἰχθύς) are born of water." Socrates has a like simile: "Try to be good and to catch the good. I will help you, for I know the art of catching men." *Xen. Mem.* 2: 6.

**11. they left all and followed him]** This fairly implies that they quit their occupation of fishing, and became constant attendants and disciples of Jesus. They had seen Jesus before, when John the Baptist had pointed out Jesus to Andrew and another, John 1: 35-42. This must have taken place before John was cast into prison, and therefore before this call mentioned by Luke. Peter at a later period, reminds the Lord of how much he and the others had left to follow him. The boats, nets, fish, home, worldly hopes, comforts, habits, were as much to them as far greater possessions might be to others. These were their "all," and none can forsake more than his all for Christ.

**SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.**—1. The simple gospel will draw men. 2. A humble fisher may be helpful to the greatest preacher. 3. The Christian is to do what the Lord directs. 4. Previous failure should not hinder us from trying again, when the Lord calls. 5. The Lord's presence and power bring success in all spiritual work. 6. It is possible for the Lord to draw men as well as to collect fish. 7. Prosperity is sometimes a severer test of character than adversity. 8. Conviction of sin humbles; grace comforts. 9. The sinner enlightened, feels that he is unworthy to be in company with the Master. 10. The draught of fishes was less wonderful than the draught of souls on the day of Pentecost. 11. Those who forsake all for Christ, gain all.

HEALING THE LEPER AND THE PARALYTIC. 5: 12-26. Compare Matt. 8: 2-4; 9: 2-8; Mark 1: 40-45; 2: 1-12.

GALILEE (PERHAPS HATTIN), AND CAPERNAUM, SPRING OF A. D. 28.

**12. in one of the cities]** That is, Jesus was in one of the cities and villages of Galilee, and on his first circuit, preaching and healing. Some who place this healing after, rather than before, the sermon on the Mount, suggest that the town was Hattin, near the so-called Mount of Beatitudes (Horns of Hattin).

COMMON VERSION.

11 And when they had brought their ships to land, they forsook all, and followed him.

12 ¶ And it came to pass, when he was in a certain city, behold a man full of leprosy; who seeing Jesus fell on his face, and besought him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.

REVISED VERSION.

11 henceforth thou shalt catch men. And when they had brought their boats to land, they left all, and followed him.

12 And it came to pass, while he was in one of the cities, behold, a man full of leprosy: and when he saw Jesus, he fell on his face, and besought him, saying, Lord, if thou

**a man full of leprosy]** Luke again uses the common medical phrase to describe the leper's condition. He was full of leprosy; it had covered his body. The Jews regarded the leper as "a dead person." It is worthy of note that when the leprosy covered all the man's flesh, that is, when "full of leprosy" as here, he was considered clean under the Levitical law. See Lev. 13: 13. In this case, as in cases mentioned in Lev. 13 and 14, it was chiefly a disease attacking the skin. Indeed, there is small ground for identifying the leprosy of the Bible with the horrible and incurable disease *Elephantiasis Arabum*, now sometimes called leprosy. It is enough to state here that this modern disease extends to the bones, which it destroys, is hereditary, thought to be contagious, incurable, and in the end fatal. The leprosy of Lev. 13 and 14 was the opposite of this, a disease of the skin, not deeper than the tissues, was not hereditary, nor contagious, though often obstinate, was sometimes cured, and sometimes got well of itself, and was seldom fatal. All the rhetorical pictures of the horrible modern disease, drawn on the mistaken idea of its identity with the common types of Biblical leprosy, are very impressive, but foreign to proper Biblical interpretation. For a full discussion of this question see my Commentary on Matthew, pp. 101-103.

**fell on his face]** This was the usual Eastern mode of salutation to a superior. But he also prayed to, or "worshipped" Jesus, as Matthew informs us (8: 2), and beseeching, said, If thou willest, thou art able to cleanse me.

**13. I will]** And having stretched forth his hand, he touched him saying, I will, be thou cleansed. There was no delay; the echo to the leper's prayer was the answer of the Lord. To touch a leper made one unclean; the touch of Jesus made the leper clean. When the soul cries, God be merciful to me a sinner, healing and justifying grace promptly answers by free forgiveness. The sinful heart is gone; a new nature is given. The child of sin becomes a child of God.

**14. tell no man]** For, 1. The leper was not to boast of his case. 2. He was not to raise unnecessary excitement about the work of Jesus. 3. Jesus would not be advertised as a miracle-worker. Wonder-working was not his great mission, but teaching and founding the kingdom of heaven. So Jesus sternly (Mark 1: 43, revised reading, margin) charged him to tell no man, a charge which the leper disobeyed.

**shew thyself to the priest]** The priest was the proper official to examine and pronounce upon a supposed cure of a leper. The leper was then to make offerings described in Lev. 14: 2-32. Passing an examination by the priest would be a testimony not only to the priest but to the people, that he was now cured, and clean, and no longer to be excluded from society as the leper was, under Jewish law.

## COMMON VERSION.

13 And he put forth *his* hand, and touched him, saying, I will: be thou clean. And immediately the leprosy departed from him.

14 And he charged him to tell no man: but go, and shew thyself to the priest, and offer for thy cleansing, according as Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them.

## REVISED VERSION.

13 wilt, thou canst make me clean. And he stretched forth his hand, and touched him, saying, I will; be thou made clean. And straightway the leprosy departed from him. 14 And he charged him to tell no man: but go thy way, and shew thyself to the priest, and offer for thy cleansing, according as Moses commanded, for a testimony unto

**15. so much the more went abroad the report]** This was in consequence of the disobedience of the leper, who, contrary to the charge of Jesus, "blazed abroad the matter." Mark 1:45. The result was, that still greater crowds gathered to be healed, and Jesus was forced to retire to the wilderness. Luke also adds that Jesus "prayed" while alone in this desert place.

**17. one of those days]** This is better than the reading, "on a certain day," of the Common Version. It shows the indefinite note of time by Luke. Jesus was teaching during the time noticed in chap. 4:43, in a house, Mark tells us, to which Luke adds, Pharisees and doctors of the law were sitting by who had come out of every village of Galilee, Judæa, and Jerusalem. This is not to be regarded as the language of popular hyperbole, but implies that these Pharisees and doctors were representatives of these classes from all these sections, attracted thither by the fame of Jesus, and sent to inspect and report upon his work and character. Later a similar delegation appear as spies to watch and accuse him. Matt. 15:1.

**the power of the Lord]** There are two Greek readings of this clause: (1) "the power of the Lord was present to heal them," that is, the people needing healing, as the Common Version reads. And (2) the power of the Lord (the Almighty) was with him (Jesus) to heal, as the Revised Version reads, basing it on the text of the Sinaitic, Vatican, and one other Uncial MS.

**18. a man that was palsied]** The house was full of people, and every space was crowded even about the door, while Jesus was teaching in the house. And behold, four persons came bearing on a bed, or little couch, like a thin mattress or common Eastern mat, a man that was palsied, or as Luke literally says, "had been paralyzed," a more accurate medical term describing a disease which deprives the limbs of sensation or of the power of motion, and sometimes of both.

**they sought . . . to lay him before him]** But they could not reach even the door with their charge, because of the crowd. This is characteristic of the stolid, immovable doggedness with which an Eastern crowd will stick to its place, and not give way even for the sick or the helpless. So the four could not get the paralytic through the door to Jesus.

## COMMON VERSION.

15 But so much the more went there a fame abroad of him : and great multitudes came together to hear, and to be healed by him of their infirmities.

16 ¶ And he withdrew himself into the wilderness, and prayed.

17 And it came to pass on a certain day, as he was teaching, that there were Pharisees and doctors of the law sitting by, which were come out of every town of Galilee, and Judea, and Jerusalem : and the power of the Lord was present to heal them.

18 ¶ And, behold, men brought in a bed a man which was taken with a palsy : and they sought means to bring him in, and lay him before him.

## REVISED VERSION.

15 them. But so much the more went abroad the report concerning him : and great multitudes came together to hear, and to be healed of their infirmities. But he withdrew himself in the deserts, and prayed.

17 And it came to pass on one of those days, that he was teaching ; and there were Pharisees and doctors of the law sitting by, who were come out of every village of Galilee and Judæa and Jerusalem : and the power

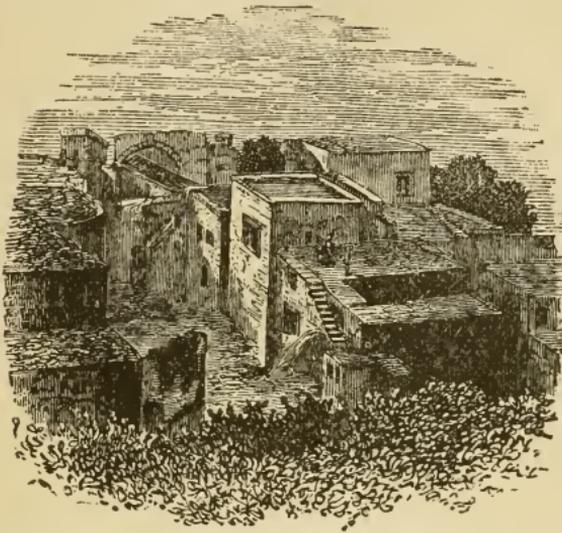
18 of the Lord was with him <sup>1</sup> to heal. And behold, men bring on a bed a man that was palsied : and they sought to bring him in,

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *that he should heal*. Many ancient authorities read *that he should heal them*.

**19. went upon the housetop]** Unable to get in through the door, the four with the paralytic turned to the stairway leading to the roof, found in Eastern houses upon the outside of the house.

**through the tiling [tiles]** The apparent difference of this account from that of Mark, who says, "when they had broken up the roof," is easily

harmonized. Most of the houses in Syria were flat roofed, low, often only one story. The roof was supported by beams, over which were laid boards, reeds, branches, or flat stones, but in this case the covering was evidently of tiles, over which was placed a layer of clay or earth, hard-rolled, to shed rain. They would first "dig through" or break up the earthen covering, as Mark says, then take up the tiles, as Luke implies. If the house was of one story, the pallet could be let down easily into the court, in the centre of the house, or if it



STAIRCASE OUTSIDE OF AN EASTERN HOUSE. (After a Photograph.)

was of two stories, Jesus would be in the guest-room, the largest in the house and on the second floor; so they could readily let the paralytic down by holding to the corners of his thick mat, not needing the aid of ropes.

**20. thy sins are forgiven thee]** Jesus seeing their faith, that is, the faith of the poor man's friends, and of the man also, said to the sick (Greek), "Man, thy sins have been remitted thee." Your need has been anticipated: you "have been" forgiven. They sought healing of the body; Jesus first gave healing of the soul. Perhaps Jesus saw that past sin had brought the affliction, and thus his words had a deeper meaning, than appear at a cursory reading. The cause of affliction is removed; soul and body are to be healed. The Jews held that disease was the result of some sin, either of the sufferer or of his parents. See John 9 : 2.

**21. Who can forgive]** This question implies that even in this corrupt

COMMON VERSION.

19 And when they could not find by what way they might bring him in because of the multitude, they went upon the housetop, and let him down through the tiling with his couch into the midst before Jesus.

20 And when he saw their faith, he said unto him, Man, thy sins are forgiven thee.

21 And the scribes and the Pharisees began to reason, saying, Who is this which speaketh blasphemies? Who can forgive sins, but God alone?

REVISED VERSION.

19 and to lay him before him. And not finding by what way they might bring him in because of the multitude, they went up to the housetop, and let him down through the tiles with his couch into the midst before Jesus. And seeing their faith, he said, 21 Man, thy sins are forgiven thee. And the scribes and Pharisees began to reason, saying, Who is this that speaketh blasphemies? Who can forgive sins, but God

time the Jewish priests did not presume to pronounce sins forgiven, as the Romish priests do now. They did not speak out their objections, but thought them, or whispered them among themselves. Their thought took on a contemptuous and sneering form: Who is this fellow that speaketh blasphemies? Who but God can forgive sins? This last position was right; though their first one was wrong. For, if Jesus had not been divine, the Pharisees would have been right on both points. That Jesus assumed to forgive sins, and wrought the miracle to prove his right and power to do so, shows that he was divine, as well as human. The only other alternative is to believe that he deceived the people, pretending to be what he was not, and therefore, that he was a bad man. But every rationalistic and reputable skeptical writer holds Jesus to have been a good man. He "perceived their thoughts" or "reasonings," and answered them, which was another evidence of his divine character.

**23. easier, to say]** It would be easy for an impostor to say thy sins are forgiven because no one could test the fact: but it would be easy to test the healing. The healing was, however, like all miracles of Jesus, to attest his word, his mission as the true Messiah. So he follows his first words to the man by the command, "Arise, and take up thy couch," that these Pharisees, representatives of the rulers, might know that he had power to forgive sin, a power which it was said the Messiah would have. Dan. 7 : 13-22; Acts 5 : 31.

**25. he rose up before them]** A paralytic, helpless, borne of four to Jesus, at his word at once received strength to rise up, roll up his couch or mat, and walk away to his house praising God for this healing of body and soul. The crowd that refused him entrance now stand back in amazement to allow the healed man a way out through the door.

**26. We have seen strange things to-day]** It was a miracle that astonished all, including, no doubt, the Pharisees. Luke says, literally, "And amazement seized all." The Greek word *ἐκστασις*, *ecstasis* (our word ecstasy is from it), is a strong one meaning "to put one out of his usual mind." The "multitude," Matthew more specifically says, "glorified God" and were filled with fear. The Pharisees, while astonished, are not to be included among the "all" who "glorified God," or among the multitude filled with holy awe or

## COMMON VERSION.

22 But when Jesus perceived their thoughts, he answering said unto them, What reason ye in your hearts?

23 Whether is easier, to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Rise up and walk?

24 But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power upon earth to forgive sins, (he said unto the sick of the palsy,) I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy couch, and go into thine house.

25 And immediately he rose up before them, and took up that whereon he lay, and departed to his own house, glorifying God.

26 And they were all amazed, and they glorified God, and were filled with fear, saying, We have seen strange things to day.

## REVISED VERSION.

22 alone? But Jesus perceiving their reasonings, answered and said unto them, <sup>1</sup> What

23 reason ye in your hearts? Whether is easier, to say, Thy sins are forgiven thee; or to say,

24 Arise and walk? But that ye may know that the Son of man hath authority on earth to forgive sins (he said unto him that was palsied), I say unto thee, Arise, and take up

25 thy couch, and go unto thy house. And immediately he rose up before them, and took up that whereon he lay, and departed to his

26 house, glorifying God. And amazement took hold on all, and they glorified God; and they were filled with fear, saying, We have seen strange things to-day.

<sup>1</sup> Or, *Why*

fear. They were, it is more likely, filled with indignation, as their subsequent conduct shows.

**SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.**—1. The sinner, like the leper, must come to Jesus. 2. He must believe that Jesus has power to put away his sin. 3. Christ is ready to say to every repentant sinner, "I will; be thou clean." 4. Jesus directed the leper to gain official proof of the cure: he sends to the penitent the Holy Spirit to attest his forgiven state. 5. Jesus sought retirement for prayer; so should his disciples. 6. Where Jesus is, there is power to heal sin-sick souls. 7. Bear your friends to Christ in the arms of prayer. 8. Do not be discouraged when multitudes would hinder your doing it. 9. Christ can heal the helpless in soul and body. 10. The unbelieving will carp at, and strive to hinder and undo the work of the Holy Spirit.

**LEVI'S CALL AND FEAST.** 5: 27-39. Compare Matt. 9: 9-13; Mark 2: 13-17.

CAPERNAUM, A. D. 28.

Jesus had chosen disciples from among the fishermen of Galilee. Now he adds one from the despised and hated class of tax-collectors. It is not certain that the feast followed immediately upon the call, though the fact that the two events are connected in the accounts given by the three evangelists points to that conclusion.

**27. a publican, named Levi]** After the events connected with the healing of the paralytic, yet without a definite note of the length of time that intervened, Jesus went forth from Capernaum along the sea-side, and beheld a tax-collector, Levi by name, sitting in a toll-house. There is strong evidence that Levi was the same as Matthew, the writer of the first Gospel. Levi was his first, possibly his family name; and Matthew, "gift of God," the name he was known by as a disciple. A tradition as old as Clement of Alexandria regards him as one of the ascetic class of Jewish Essenes. He may have been related to the priestly class, though this is uncertain. He was collector of the customs or tolls on goods and articles passing across the lake, or on the high road from the north, to and from the sea-coast and the south. He was sitting in a toll-booth or house, at his work, or waiting and watching for the coming of those from whom revenue was to be collected. The call to discipleship came to him while engaged in the common duties of his calling.

**28. he left all]** Or, "he forsook all." It is not at all likely that he neglected to close his accounts, and to turn them over, with the proceeds due from his tax collections, to some superior or proper officer of the government. This he could easily and promptly do, if he was a collector under Herod, as it is fair to infer that he was, since Herod managed the Roman taxes in his

COMMON VERSION.

27 ¶ And after these things he went forth, and saw a publican, named Levi, sitting at the receipt of custom: and he said unto him, Follow me.

28 And he left all, rose up, and followed him.

REVISED VERSION.

27 And after these things he went forth, and beheld a publican, named Levi, sitting at the place of toll, and said unto him, Follow me. And he forsook all, and rose up and

province or tetrarchy. Levi would not become, nor Jesus accept a disciple, when it was the occasion of dishonest dealings with former employers.

**29. Levi made him a great feast]** This incidentally assures us that Levi had a house, was in very comfortable circumstances, and therefore had much to leave in following the Master. The word for "feast," means primarily "a reception," "a banquet." Levi bridged the wide chasm between the poor, the despised, and the company of Christian disciples, that is, the church; his success is a hint to the church now in dealing with the "masses." Matthew himself does not say who gave the feast, nor when it was, but tells of the "many publicans and sinners" that came to it, and of the conversation. Luke writing to Gentiles does not say "sinners," as Matthew and Mark do, but says there was a great crowd of publicans and "others" at the feast. This implies that Levi had a large house. The Greek word rendered "sitting" means "were lying down" or "reclining;" for this mode of taking their meals the Jews had adopted either from the Greeks and Romans, or more probably from the Persians.

**30. murmured against his disciples]** While reclining at the banquet in Levi's house, the Pharisees and their scribes (notice the reading of the Revised Version) murmured (literally "muttered") against the disciples. Why they did not make their objections direct to the Master, we are not informed. Perhaps they were afraid of defeat and discomfiture from Jesus, but thought to confound and disaffect some of these "unlearned" disciples. The scribes were the recognized teachers, who copied and explained the Jewish law. Scribes were common in the time of David, 2 Sam. 20 : 25, but as a class they came into prominence about the time of the captivity. Persons were admitted to this body by special examination.

**Why do ye eat . . with [the] publicans]** A Pharisee would not invite a "sinner" as a guest, nor would he allow one of the common people to touch him lest he should be defiled. A Jewish rabbi was forbidden to eat with common people, to talk with a woman, or to walk out at night. (See *Mishnah* and *Tul. Bab. Sab.* 13 : 1.) They could not understand how Jesus, so noted now as a Galilean rabbi, should do these things forbidden by Jewish oral law.

**31. Jesus answering]** Jesus appears to have overheard the questionings of the scribes (see Mark 2 : 17) and answers for his disciples. The answer is a common proverb, but it had a deeper meaning than the hearers at first perceived. Those having good health, as you think you have, do not

## COMMON VERSION.

29 And Levi made him a great feast in his own house: and there was a great company of publicans and of others that sat down with them.

30 But their scribes and Pharisees murmured against his disciples, saying, Why do ye eat and drink with publicans and sinners?

31 And Jesus answering said unto them, They that are whole need not a physician; but they that are sick.

## REVISED VERSION.

29 followed him. And Levi made him a great feast in his house: and there was a great multitude of publicans and of others that

30 were sitting at meat with them. And <sup>1</sup>the Pharisees and their scribes murmured against his disciples, saying, Why do ye eat and drink with the publicans and sinners?

31 And Jesus answering said unto them, They that are whole have no need of a physician;

<sup>1</sup>Or, *the Pharisees and the scribes among them*

need a physician, but those having bad health do need one. These publicans and sinners you confess are in a very bad spiritual state; they need a spiritual physician. There was a keen touch of irony in the reply. You fancy you are in health; you are not conscious of your spiritual sickness; others are sensible of their need.

**32. to call the righteous]** Jesus came to seek and to save the lost; to call those who could be made to feel their need of salvation. Those who were determined to be saved by the law, and those who were righteous in their own eyes, or so self-conceited that they imagined their lives to be perfect like the Pharisees, Jesus did not come to call. The sinner that could be made conscious of his sin, whoever he was, whether Pharisee or publican, Jew or Gentile, Christ came to call to repentance. Thus Jesus is the physician of the soul.

**33. the disciples of John fast]** In this question the disciples of John joined with the Pharisees, as Matthew and Mark tell us. It would be only human if John's disciples had a trace of jealousy toward Jesus and his followers, which may have prompted this question. John's disciples would naturally adopt the abstemious and ascetic habits of John himself, and be encouraged in their course by the frequent fasts of the Jews. Fastings and prayers, with strict customary offerings, were the chief features of popular religion among the Jews in Christ's day, as they are with the Romish and other formalistic churches now. The Pharisee boasted, "I fast twice in the week; I give tithes of all that I get."

**35. when the bridegroom shall be taken away]** Jesus the bridegroom was with his people; mournful fasts would be as much out of place as fasting at a wedding. When the bridegroom is taken away, crucified by the Jews, then his disciples will indeed mourn. They did fast as Peter, Acts 10:30, and in appointing officers. Acts 13:2, 3; 14:23. Some extend the meaning here to the whole period between the ascension and the second coming of Christ. But this seems to strain the primary import of the words, and to make difficulties with other words of Jesus; as for example, his pledge to them at the ascension, "I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." Matt. 28:20.

**36. a new garment . . upon an old garment]** Render the Greek text

## COMMON VERSION.

32 I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

33 ¶ And they said unto him, Why do the disciples of John fast often, and make prayers, and likewise the *disciples* of the Pharisees; but thine eat and drink?

34 And he said unto them, Can ye make the children of the bridechamber fast, while the bridegroom is with them?

35 But the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then shall they fast in those days.

36 ¶ And he spake also a parable unto them; No man putteth a piece of a new garment upon an old; if otherwise, then both the new maketh a rent, and the piece that was *taken* out of the new agreeth not with the old.

## REVISED VERSION.

32 but they that are sick. I am not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance.

33 And they said unto him, The disciples of John fast often, and make supplications; likewise also the *disciples* of the Pharisees;

34 but thine eat and drink. And Jesus said unto them, Can ye make the sons of the bridechamber fast, while the bridegroom is

35 with them? But the days will come; and when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, then will they fast in those days.

36 And he spake also a parable unto them; No man rendeth a piece from a new garment and putteth it upon an old garment; else he will rend the new, and also the piece  
• from the new will not agree with the old.

here thus: "And he spake a parable also unto them thus; No one having rent a patch from a new garment, putteth it upon an old garment; but if so, he even will rend the new, and the patch from the new will not harmonize [as sounds harmonize] with the old." See Revised Version. The meaning is, that attempting to take a part of the gospel of Christ to patch the old ceremonial religion would destroy the gospel, only to make the Jewish religion appear more defective and imperfect than before. "The teaching of Christ," says Farrar, "was a new and seamless robe which would be spoilt by being rent." The contrast between the old and new system of religion would become more glaring than it then was.

**39. new wine]** This illustration of the wine is added to emphasize the teaching in that of the two garments. No one puts (pours) new wine (the Greek word includes must, and fermented wine) into old bottles (Greek, "leathern bags"), but if so, the new wine will rend the bottles, and itself will be spilled; and the bottles destroyed. But new wine must be put into new bottles. And no one drinking (continuous act; having drunk) the old, wishes new, for he says the old is good (that is good enough). The meaning of this parable is: it is impossible to put the gospel into the old ceremonial forms of the Jewish church; both will be destroyed in the attempt. If they could be put together, nothing would be gained by the Jews. They are wedded to the old (their ceremonial worship); to them it seems good enough, so they have no desire for the new, the gospel and the grace it bestows. Our Lord in this parable is not to be held as approving the use of wine; he merely uses the current custom of the time to illustrate and impress the spiritual lesson he was teaching.

SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.—1. The despised, like the hated tax-collectors, are called to be followers of Christ. 2. Persons are called when engaged in their daily duties. 3. Idleness is no virtue, nor is it a door to the Christian life. 4. The saved are grateful for their salvation. 5. The publican is won to Christ, and in turn wins others. 6. It is right to mingle with the sinful and despised, when by so doing we can win them to a better life. 7. Christ came to make men see their sins, and to call them to repentance. 8. The contrast between the old ceremonial worship and the spiritual worship of the gospel is glaring enough without attempting to unite them. 9. A conservatism that is content with the old, merely because it is old, is foolish.

## COMMON VERSION.

37 And no man putteth new wine into old bottles; else the new wine will burst the bottles, and be spilled, and the bottles shall perish.

38 But new wine must be put into new bottles; and both are preserved

39 No man also having drunk old *wine* straightway desireth new; for he saith, The old is better.

## REVISED VERSION.

37 And no man putteth new wine into old <sup>1</sup>wine-skins; else the new wine will burst the skins, and itself will be spilled, and the 38 skins will perish. But new wine must be 39 put into fresh wine-skins. And no man having drunk old *wine* desireth new: for he saith, The old is <sup>2</sup>good.

<sup>1</sup>That is, *skins used as bottles.*

<sup>2</sup>Many ancient authorities read *better.*

JESUS AND THE SABBATH. 6:1-11. Compare Matt. 12:1-13; Mark 2:23-28; 3:1-12.

GALILEE, SUMMER, A.D. 28.

Jesus, in reaffirming the Mosaic law concerning the Sabbath, cleared away the rubbish of numberless rules which the rabbis had heaped upon its observance. The Jewish schools of that day had about forty classes of regulations in respect to it, some very trivial. They gravely discussed whether it was lawful to eat an egg on the Sabbath which a hen had laid upon that day. The principle Jesus laid down is clear; works of worship, of necessity, and of mercy are lawful on the Sabbath; but not of money-making, business, selfish pleasure, or selfish amusement. The maintenance of the Sabbath for rest of body and of mind, and for the worship of God, is a foremost question in the three great Christian nations of the world to-day, America, England, and Germany.

**1. on a sabbath]** Notice the revised reading, which omits "second . . after the first," words which are expressed by one word in the Greek. The Sinaitic, Vatican, and some other MSS. omit the word. If retained, as in the Common Version, it may be explained in a dozen different ways, no one of them being satisfactory. Some suppose the Jews had three chief Sabbaths in the year: 1, the Passover Sabbath; 2, the Pentecost; 3, the Tabernacles; and that this, literally "second . . first" Sabbath meant the one at Pentecost. Others make it the first Sabbath after the second day (Sabbath) in the Passover. This was the day on which the first ripe sheaf of barley was waved as an offering before the Lord. Lev. 23:10-12. This is the most satisfactory; the other ten or more interpretations are mere conjectures. If the word is genuine (which is not certain), its meaning does not affect any doctrine of the Scripture, and is therefore of little importance.

**he . . through the corn fields]** Now it came to pass on a Sabbath that he was going through the corn fields (Revised Version), the fields of grain, since maize was not grown in Palestine then. It implies either that Jesus was going between two fields, or along a path, through a field of grain. The fields were not fenced as with us, and paths were made through the fields by neighbors and travelling strangers. Thus Mark uses a word which means literally "began to make *their* way plucking the ears," in speaking of the act of the disciples at this time, Mark 2:23, as if they made a fresh path through the grain, a very common thing to do in the East now, but the other narratives imply that Jesus went along a path already made, and did not pick the grain. The disciples rubbed the grain (wheat or barley) in their hands, as farmers' children often do to get out the grain to eat in harvest time.

COMMON VERSION.

CHAP. VI.—And it came to pass on the second sabbath after the first, that he went through the corn fields; and his disciples plucked the ears of corn, and did eat, rubbing them in their hands.

REVISED VERSION.

6 Now it came to pass on a <sup>1</sup>sabbath, that he was going through the cornfields; and his disciples plucked the ears of corn, and

<sup>1</sup> Many ancient authorities insert *second-first*

**2. not lawful . . on the sabbath]** The Mosaic law allowed one to take the grain to eat when hungry. Deut. 23 : 25. But these Pharisees, perhaps some of the spies sent to watch him (Matt. 15 : 1) and his disciples, Luke here says asked his disciples the question ; Matthew and Mark say they asked Jesus. The natural explanation of this is that they asked the disciples first, and then, to have ground for their accusation against him, appealed to him personally to see if he would justify the act of the disciples. The rabbis said that plucking ears was a kind of reaping, and rubbing them was a kind of threshing ; so they made out both to be forbidden, and the offenders were to be stoned. The rabbis held on the other hand that "sacrificing, drives away the Sabbath," and also, "in the temple there is no Sabbath," that is, work for the ends of worship is right.

**3. what David did]** The answer bears a tone of surprise, and perhaps irony also: have ye not read even, what David did? David, your pattern and model of observances in such matters! See 1 Sam. 21 : 1-6. This answer must have cut keenly, for the rabbis themselves have this comment on the act of David: "when David found nothing but the shew-bread, he said to the priest, 'Give me of this that I may not die of hunger, for where life is in danger, the strictness of the Sabbath is no longer in force,'" *Jal. Rub.* 127 : 2. The priests were allowed to eat the shew-bread, or "loaves of setting forth" before God.

**5. lord . . of the sabbath]** The Son of man means Christ himself. The word for "lord" is the common word for master, one who has a right to command; hence lord of the Sabbath means one who has a right to decide and order things relating to the Sabbath. He cut away and destroyed rabbinical additions to the law of the Sabbath, that he might secure the better understanding and observance of the original command.

**6. on another sabbath]** This healing in the synagogue seems to have been on the Sabbath following that mentioned in vs. 1-5. But in what town the synagogue was, is unknown; it was in a place in the interior of Galilee, though not far from the lake.

**his right hand was withered]** The cause of this "withered" or dried hand is not stated. It may have been paralysis, or some similar form of dis-

## COMMON VERSION.

2 And certain of the Pharisees said unto them, Why do ye that which is not lawful to do on the sabbath days?

3 And Jesus answering them said, Have ye not read so much as this, what David did, when himself was a hungered, and they which were with him;

4 How he went into the house of God, and did take and eat the shewbread, and gave also to them that were with him; which it is not lawful to eat but for the priests alone?

5 And he said unto them, That the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath.

6 And it came to pass also on another sabbath, that he entered into the synagogue and taught: and there was a man whose right hand was withered,

## REVISED VERSION.

2 did eat, rubbing them in their hands. But certain of the Pharisees said, Why do ye that which it is not lawful to do on the sabbath day?

3 And Jesus answering them said, Have ye not read even this, what David did, when he was an hungered, he, and they that were with him; how he entered into the house of God, and did take and eat the shewbread, and gave also to them that were with him; which it is not lawful to eat save for the priests alone?

4 And he said unto them, The Son of man is lord of the sabbath.

5 And he said unto them, The Son of man is lord of the sabbath.

6 And it came to pass on another sabbath, that he entered into the synagogue and taught: and there was a man there, and his

ease now known to destroy the power to use the arm. Jerome quotes a spurious gospel which says the man was a stone mason, maimed by accident, but the accounts in our Gospels point to some disease as the cause.

**7. whether he would heal on the sabbath]** The stricter sort of Pharisees held it to be violating the Sabbath to tend the sick, or to console them. The Talmud even forbids taking medicine on that day, except in particular cases and in special ways. For example, vinegar might be put in the mouth for the toothache on the Sabbath, provided it be afterward swallowed; "A sore throat might be gargled with oil; but the oil must not be swallowed." Sweet spices could not be used for the toothache, but might be used to sweeten the breath. The scribes and Pharisees were generally very strict; the school of Sadducees were more lax in their rules of Sabbath observances. The former class was now watching Jesus to find ground for accusing him of breaking the law of the Sabbath.

**8. said to the man . . . stand forth]** When Jesus knew their thoughts, literally their "reasonings," he said to the man with the withered hand, "Rise up, and stand forth in the midst." Jesus would have the miracle done openly, so that even enemies could not dispute the fact, nor the reality of the cure. In this, the miracles of Jesus are in striking contrast with many assumed to be done by followers of the false prophet, and of false religions.

**9. Is it lawful on the sabbath to do good]** The Common Version reads "on the sabbath days," but the majority of the best Greek MSS. support the revised reading. Jesus knowing that they were "reasoning" whether he would count it lawful or unlawful to heal on the Sabbath, a question disputed sharply between the Pharisees and Sadducees of that day, and they having asked him the question as Matthew tells us, 12: 10, he in answer, turns the question upon them. The Greek word used by Luke implies a previous conversation, though none is mentioned by him. Jesus returns their question, with a new point to it: "Is it lawful on the sabbath to do good" (as I am proposing to do), "or to do harm?" (as you are proposing to do), "to save life" (as I do), "or to destroy it?" (as you are plotting to do, by seeking an occasion to kill me). At a later period he put their own question to them in a more direct form, that he might yet more clearly interpret the law of the observance of the Sabbath. See Luke 14: 3.

**10. his hand was restored]** The Pharisees saw that the question as

#### COMMON VERSION.

7 And the scribes and Pharisees watched him, whether he would heal on the sabbath day; that they might find an accusation against him.

8 But he knew their thoughts, and said to the man which had the withered hand, Rise up, and stand forth in the midst. And he arose and stood forth.

9 Then said Jesus unto them, I will ask you one thing; Is it lawful on the sabbath days to do good, or to do evil? to save life, or to destroy it?

10 And looking round about upon them all, he said unto the man, Stretch forth thy hand. And he did so: and his hand was restored whole as the other.

#### REVISED VERSION.

7 right hand was withered. And the scribes and the Pharisees watched him, whether he would heal on the sabbath; that they might  
8 find how to accuse him. But he knew their thoughts; and he said to the man that had his hand withered, Rise up, and stand forth in the midst. And he arose  
9 and stood forth. And Jesus said unto them, I ask you, Is it lawful on the sabbath to do good, or to do harm? to save a life, or to  
10 destroy it? And he looked round about on them all, and said unto him, Stretch forth thy hand. And he did so: and his hand

Jesus returned it to them was unanswerable or could be answered only one way; so they were silent as Mark tells us, Mark 3:4. And Jesus looked round about on them all with anger, being grieved at the hardening of their hearts (Mark 3:5). He said unto the man, "Stretch forth thy hand." And the man stretched forth his hand, and his hand was restored whole as the other. The words "as the other" are not found in the best MSS. in Luke or Mark, but appear in Matthew.

**11. what they might do to Jesus]** The scribes and Pharisees were thwarted in their plot. Their question had been thrown back upon them, in a form that compelled them tacitly to admit the cure to be lawful on the Sabbath. No medicine had been given, no labor performed; only a word had been spoken, and the hand was cured. So the foiled Pharisees were filled with madness, or "foolishness" as the margin reads. They had further conference among themselves and with the Herodians what they might do, that is, what it was possible for them to do to Jesus, who had so easily foiled them, and kept the people evidently on his side. How could they silence him without a popular tumult? The question perplexed them. Meanwhile Jesus withdrew and escaped from them. Matt. 12:15. Among topics for review and for sermons in this section are: The law of Sabbath observance: works of necessity are right on the Sabbath: works of mercy are right. The day is for man's good. The Lord gave and interpreted the law of the Sabbath. All works needful for saving life on that day are lawful. Works for gain, pleasure or selfish gratification are unlawful.

SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.—1. True religion seeks to glorify God on the Sabbath. 2. The Sabbath is to give man a time to know God, and to be exercised in acts of mercy and love. 3. The Sabbath rightly kept restores the harmonies of the week from the discords of sin and worldliness. 4. Saints are not to be left to starve, because it is the Sabbath. 5. The hungry are to be fed, the sinful reclaimed, the sick cared for even on the Sabbath. 6. Hypocrisy and bigotry burn out all charity. 7. It is an aggravated sin to indulge thoughts of harm on that day. 8. When Jesus commands us, he gives power to fulfil his command. 9. Wicked men silenced often become furious with anger.

CALLING AND TEACHING THE TWELVE. 6:12-26. Compare Matt. 10:2-4; and chaps. 5 to 7. Mark 3:13-19.

GALILEE, A. D. 28.

This call of the Twelve noted by Luke is also given in Mark 3:13-19. Matthew narrates a special mission of the Twelve, and in connection with that mission gives their names as having been already chosen, and his language in 10:1 implies an earlier call, as recorded here by Luke. There

COMMON VERSION.

11 And they were filled with madness; and communed one with another what they might do to Jesus.

REVISED VERSION.

11 was restored. But they were filled with<sup>1</sup> madness; and communed one with another what they might do to Jesus.

<sup>1</sup> Or, *foolishness*

need be little difficulty therefore in showing how these several narratives may be harmonized. Of the twelve, at least seven, and probably eight came from the region of Capernaum and Bethsaida; Peter, Andrew, James, John, James of Alphæus, Lebbæus, and Philip, to whom we may add Matthew the publican. Nathanael was from Cana of Galilee, John 21 : 2. The original homes of the others are unknown. It has been inferred that Judas Iscariot was of Judah, but the inference rests on slender grounds. One tradition speaks of Thomas as the same as Judas the brother of Jesus, but this is not generally credited. Simon the Zealot was from the fanatical sect known as Zealots, but his home is unknown.

**12. in those [these] days]** Not intended to be a very definite mark of the time; it was when Jesus was wearied with labors, and with the envious and harrying spies from the Pharisees who kept dogging his steps.

**continued all night in prayer]** Jesus went out into the mountain (for a definite article is in the Greek); some mountain well known to which he was accustomed to retire. Tradition names the Horns of Hattin as the mountain, about four miles west of the Sea of Galilee. There he was all night in prayer: the Greek literally reads, "and he was through the whole night in the prayer of God;" meaning that he was completely wrapped or absorbed in prayer. "The prayer of God" is a Hebraism, for a prayer of great vehemence, fervency, and power. It is not likely that there is any reference to a *proseuche* or "prayer house" as at Philippi, Acts 16 : 13, for these places were usually by a running stream which would scarcely be found on a mountain in that region. The spirit of Christ was a spirit of prayer. He was to choose his disciples in the morning. What an example of devotion he set them and us!

**13. twelve . . he named apostles]** Only 12 were selected; and there had been 12 patriarchs and 12 tribes in Israel. They were named apostles, which means "messengers," those who are sent. Any rabbi or teacher in the East at that day would be expected to have disciples accompanying him. It would be quite strange and unbecoming in a great teacher not to go about attended, so the people would think, for long custom had settled that point. Then Jesus began to require a larger and more formal body of helpers than he had secured hitherto. They would be under his instruction, and in time qualified to prepare the way for his personal teaching, and eventually to go on gospel missions by themselves.

**13-16. Simon . . Andrew, etc.]** The four lists given of the twelve in

## COMMON VERSION.

12 And it came to pass in those days, that he went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God.

13 ¶ And when it was day, he called unto him his disciples: and of them he chose twelve, whom also he named apostles;

14 Simon, (whom he also named Peter,) and Andrew his brother, James and John, Philip and Bartholomew,

15 Matthew and Thomas, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon called Zelotes,

## REVISED VERSION.

12 And it came to pass in these days, that he went out into the mountain to pray; and he continued all night in prayer to God.

13 And when it was day, he called his disciples: and he chose from them twelve, whom

14 also he named apostles; Simon, whom he also named Peter, and Andrew his brother, and James and John, and Philip and Bartholomew,

15 and Matthew and Thomas, and James the son of Alphæus, and Simon who was

Matt. 10 : 2-4, Mark 3 : 16-19, here, and in Acts 1 : 13, are arranged in nearly the same order, and are peculiar in naturally falling into three groups of four each, Peter, Philip, and James of Alphæus being at the head of each group in each of the four lists. See People's Commentary on Matthew, p. 113.

Their names are significant. Simon means "hearing." He was named Peter, "a stone" or "rock." Andrew, meaning "manly," was Peter's brother, son of Jonas of Bethsaida. James, same as Jacob, "a supplanter," and John, "beloved," were sons of Zebedee, also of Bethsaida, and named "Boanerges," "sons of thunder," perhaps from their strong character. Philip, "lover of horses," is supposed to be of Greek or Hellenistic extraction, from his Greek name. Bartholomew, "son of Tolmai," was no doubt the same as Nathanael, "gift of God," and from Cana of Galilee. Matthew, also meaning "gift of God," was formerly called Levi the publican, and was of Capernaum. Thomas, "twin," called also Didymus, "twin," was the doubter. James of Alphæus was known also as James the less, or "little," probably because he was small of stature. Simon the Zealot was of the fanatical sect of Zealots. Judas of James was called Lebbæus, "hearty," and Thaddæus, also, but he is not the same as the James the brother of the Lord, Gal. 1 : 19, though Jerome aptly called him the "three-named." Judas Iscariot, whom some suppose from his name was a native of Kerioth of Judæa, became the traitor. Why our Lord chose Judas he has not definitely explained, and it is vain to speculate about it. There are many obvious lessons that may be drawn from the fact that a traitor was among the twelve. He fulfilled prophecy. So did Cyrus, and also others who were not of God's fold.

**17. came down with them]** This may be rendered, and having descended with them, he stopped upon a level place, and a great crowd of his disciples [gathered], and a great multitude of people. The order of events will be sufficiently clear and will harmonize with the account of Matthew, if we suppose that he called a number of his disciples to him, v. 13, and chose the twelve, then came down to the level place with them, where he met the multitude and healed them as narrated in vs. 17-19; then seeing the multitudes on this level place, he again went up the side of a mountain spur, where his disciples gathered about him, as stated in Matt. 5 : 1, and Jesus sat down, perhaps upon a projecting crag, and taught. Upon the Horns of Hattin there is just such a "level place" described fully by Robinson, Stanley and others, above which a peak rises, filling all the conditions of this narrative both by Luke and by Matthew. It is not necessary to assume that there

## COMMON VERSION.

16 And Judas *the brother* of James, and Judas Iscariot, which also was the traitor.

17 ¶ And he came down with them, and stood in the plain, and the company of his disciples, and a great multitude of people out of all Judea and Jerusalem, and from the sea coast of Tyre and Sidon, which came to hear him, and to be healed of their diseases;

18 And they that were vexed with unclean spirits: and they were healed.

## REVISED VERSION.

16 called the Zealot, and Judas *the 1 son* of James, and Judas Iscariot, who became a

17 traitor; and he came down with them, and stood on a level place, and a great multitude of his disciples, and a great number of the people from all Judea and Jerusalem, and the sea coast of Tyre and Sidon, who came to hear him, and to be healed of their

18 diseases; and they that were troubled with

<sup>1</sup> Or, brother. See Jude 1.

were two discourses. For further discussion, see my Commentary on Matthew 5: 1.

**19. multitude sought to touch him]** Luke adds here interesting details omitted by the other evangelists, telling us: 1, that these multitudes came from widely different parts of Palestine; some from the south, Judæa, and some from the extreme northwest on the borders of Tyre and Sidon, Phœnician cities on the Mediterranean; 2, they came to hear him; and 3, to be healed of their diseases, and demoniacal troubles. How pitiable must have been the sight of such a great crowd of diseased, demoniac persons! How joyful, too, for they were all healed! 4, they all sought to touch him; the touch like that of the timid woman with the issue of blood, had healing power. The "virtue" or better "power came forth from him," as the Revised Version reads, and healed all. Blessed cure! when the touch of the Son of God heals.

**THE SERMON.**—The Evangelists do not profess to give a verbatim nor a very full account of the discourses of Jesus. They report rather a few of the leading truths, which it seems evident that our Lord presented with great fulness and variety of thought and illustration. This fact is sufficient to account for the variation in the narrative here as compared with that of Matthew. Luke, writing to the Gentiles, omits the Lord's exposure of the false teachings of the scribes about oaths, fasts, divorces and almsgiving, which are reported by Matthew. The topics presented may be grouped under these heads: 1, blessings and woes, vs. 20-26; 2, the gospel of love, 27-38; and 3, of good works, 39-49.

**20. Blessed be [are] ye poor]** Or better, "Blessed *are* the poor." "Poor," indeed, those multitudes were, and being meek also, seeking healing, they came under the prophecy then fulfilled, "to preach good tidings unto the meek," Is. 61: 1. Having faith to come for healing and to be healed, they became heirs of the new kingdom.

**21. Blessed . . hunger . . weep]** These words like the first are intended to comfort those that had been sickly, diseased, and tormented by unclean spirits, and in the East where many starved to death, the words no doubt were meant to comfort them in their bodily distress as well as apply more profoundly to their spiritual needs.

**22. hate you]** Persecution is not an unmixed evil; coming for the sake of Christ, it will become a blessing. To be cast out of the synagogue, to be

## COMMON VERSION.

19 And the whole multitude sought to touch him: for there went virtue out of him, and healed *them* all.

20 ¶ And he lifted up his eyes on his disciples, and said, Blessed *be ye* poor: for yours is the kingdom of God.

21 Blessed *are ye* that hunger now: for ye shall be filled. *Blessed are ye* that weep now: for ye shall laugh.

22 Blessed are ye, when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you *from their company*, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake.

## REVISED VERSION.

19 unclean spirits were healed. And all the multitude sought to touch him: for power came forth from him, and healed *them* all.

20 And he lifted up his eyes on his disciples, and said, Blessed *are ye* poor: for yours is

21 the kingdom of God. Blessed *are ye* that hunger now: for ye shall be filled. Blessed *are ye* that weep now: for ye shall laugh.

22 Blessed are ye, when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you *from their company*, and reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's

cursed as bad, and of the evil one were to be counted joy, when all this was because a person was a follower of Christ. "We glory in tribulations," Rom. 5 : 3. The disciples of Christ would not escape persecution, for their (the Jewish) fathers did after the same manner to the prophets.

**24. woe unto you that are rich]** The precise thoughts in verses 24-26 do not appear in Matthew's report of the sermon on the mount, and this is a strong argument with some for supposing that this is from an entirely different discourse. But neither of the evangelists attempts to give a complete report, and the difficulty of fitting these thoughts into that discourse arises chiefly from wrongly assuming that the discourse must have been made according to the strict logical rules of the modern rhetorician, rather than according to the simple and natural association of ideas. There is no more difficulty in fitting vs. 24-26 of this chapter into the sermon on the mount, than there would have been in fitting the thoughts in Matt. 7 : 15-20, into the place they now occupy in that sermon, had they been reported by Luke and not by Matthew. Moreover these "woes" would naturally follow the "blessings" of Matt. 5 : 12. The "woes" may be interpreted as not so much a denunciation, as a declaration, and therefore an expression of pity, rendering it "woe for you that are rich," that fancy yourselves in need of nothing, like the church at Laodicea, Rev. 3 : 17. Your consolation, you have received. So too of the full, and the merry, those given to present enjoyments; the present is soon gone: the pleasure burns itself out, and leaves ashes. And when all men speak well of a Christian professor, he must be a trimmer to please all, and therefore not a true follower of Christ. The same truth is put in other forms, as, "If ye were of the world, the world would love his [its] own," John 15 : 19: "Know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God?" Jas. 4 : 4.

**SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.**—1. The Lord spent a night in prayer, before selecting his apostles: let us imitate him by having a season of prayer before entering upon any important work. 2. God chooses and endows his messengers. 3. They may be from humble classes: but with his blessing they will be successful. 4. Christ and his people may appoint and solemnly set apart saints for his service. 5. Christ can heal all the disorders of the soul. 6. The telegraphic touch of prayer and of faith brings healing to the soul now. 7. Blessings and comforts are in store for those who suffer now for Christ's sake. 8. Woe and sorrow are in store for those who now neglect Christ to enjoy the world. 9. Sinners are not apt to speak well of those who faithfully point out their sins.

## COMMON VERSION.

23 Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy: for, behold, your reward is great in heaven: for in the like manner did their fathers unto the prophets.

24 But woe unto you that are rich! for ye have received your consolation

25 Woe unto you that are full! for ye shall hunger. Woe unto you that laugh now! for ye shall mourn and weep.

26 Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you! for so did their fathers to the false prophets.

## REVISED VERSION.

23 sake. Rejoice in that day, and leap for joy: for behold, your reward is great in heaven: for in the same manner did their

24 fathers unto the prophets. But woe unto you that are rich! for ye have received your

25 consolation. Woe unto you, ye that are full now! for ye shall hunger. Woe unto you,

ye that laugh now! for ye shall mourn and

26 weep. Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you! for in the same manner did their fathers to the false prophets.

THE LAW OF LOVE. 6 : 27-38. Compare Matt. 5 : 44 to 7 : 2.

GALILEE, SUMMER, A.D. 28.

This section treats of the law of love: How it is to be applied; *a.* in outward acts, *b.* in spirit, *c.* in judging.

**27. Love your enemies]** Revenge in acts, words or feelings is condemned, and hatred of an enemy also. We ought to hate sin, but love the sinner. This is like God. It is contrary to heathen and human thought. The Romans erected temples to the goddess of revenge. Homer called revenge sweet and heroic. Yet they said forgiving an enemy was a noble act. A godly man in early times, seeing the searching force of these commands, exclaimed, "Either these are not Christ's precepts, or we are no Christians." To win those who hate Christ and his people, Christians must do them good. Blessing must be returned for cursing; prayers for spiteful usage. For illustrations, see Christ's prayer on the cross, "Father, forgive them," Luke 23 : 34, and Stephen's prayer, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge," Acts 7 : 60.

**29. smiteth thee on the one cheek offer also the other]** The common customs and laws of retaliation, widely prevalent and leading to long and bloody feuds even to this day in the East, are here expressly forbidden. In the East to meet violence by violence was and still is the popular rule. Retaliation and revenge for personal injury lie at the root of lawlessness in all western Asia. In few sections is it safe to travel there unarmed and without a strong guard. The Christians were to submit to wrong rather than to take the law into their own hands. Masked mobs, vigilance committees of "respectable citizens," secret organizations of whatever kind, for avenging and punishing wrongdoers without judicial trials, are unchristian in form and spirit. Their existence is hostile to Christian civilization. Personal and private redress, where every one assumes the right to punish an offender, is lawlessness itself. But this charge surely does not require us to put our lives at the mercy of a madman, or to allow him to beat our brains out with our own cane snatched from us. We are to take all lawful methods to preserve our own lives, as well as those of our neighbors, and to leave retaliation to the powers that are ordained of God. The commands of God do not conflict: we may abstain from retaliation in spirit and conduct, but we are not to commit physical or moral suicide by neglecting to care for our life. The "cloak" was the Eastern abba—the outer or upper garment of the East, resembling the cloak worn with us.

**30. Give to every one]** Form the habit of giving, and give with dis-

COMMON VERSION.

27 ¶ But I say unto you which hear, Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you,

28 Bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you.

29 And unto him that smiteth thee on the one cheek offer also the other; and him that taketh away thy cloak forbid not to take thy coat also.

30 Give to every man that asketh of thee; and of him that taketh away thy goods ask them not again.

REVISED VERSION.

27 But I say unto you who hear, Love your enemies, do good to them that hate you,

28 bless them that curse you, pray for them that despitefully use you. To him that

29 smiteth thee on the one cheek offer also the other; and from him that taketh away thy

30 cloke withhold not thy coat also. Give to every one that asketh thee; and of him that taketh away thy goods ask them not again.

crimination, but not to Jews alone, as the scribes do, or to your "own set" or class, but to those of every class and condition, Jew and Gentile, Christian, Mohammedan and heathen. This precept applies to spiritual things with a deeper significance than even to temporal things. This is not intended to foster improvidence, or wastefulness in temporal or spiritual things. Christ also declared that pearls were not to be cast before swine, and the apostle said if a man would not work, neither should he eat. We are not to turn the world into a great "poorhouse," nor to encourage vagabondism and shiftlessness. The Pharisees of that day would give only to a Jew, and designated the Gentile poor, as "dogs." This spirit was denounced without qualification by our Lord. And he sums up the whole in the concise and clear principle stated in v. 31, the golden rule of the New Testament.

**32. what thank have ye ?]** There is no moral credit in simply loving those who love us : the wicked do so. It is no mark of godliness simply to do good to those who do good to us ; many godless people do like that. It is no proof of Christ-likeness simply to lend to those from whom we expect as much in return ; wicked persons will do so. But to do these three things : 1, love your enemies ; 2, do good to those that fail to do good to you ; 3, lend to the needy, not looking for a return, this is to be like your heavenly Father, who is kind to the unthankful and the evil. This will show that you are his children.

**36. Be . . merciful]** Prove yourself merciful, by the conduct above described, that you may be like your Father, Matthew says "Be perfect." God is the "Father of mercies," 2 Cor. 1 : 3, and as mercy is one of the chief attributes of God shown to man, to be merciful like him is to reach completeness in our sphere, as he is complete "perfect" in his sphere.

**37. Judge not]** Go not about in a censorious or judging spirit. Carry out the golden rule here also, judging as you would wish to be judged ; do not condemn with severity, but weigh in Christian and kindly balances. Do not seek to judge, but if one must, let it be a "righteous judgment," considerate and Christian.

## COMMON VERSION.

31 And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise.

32 For if ye love them which love you, what thank have ye? for sinners also love those that love them.

33 And if ye do good to them which do good to you, what thank have ye? for sinners also do even the same.

34 And if ye lend to them of whom ye hope to receive, what thank have ye? for sinners also lend to sinners, to receive as much again.

35 But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest; for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil.

36 Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful.

37 Judge not, and ye shall not be judged: condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: forgive, and ye shall be forgiven:

## REVISED VERSION.

31 And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise.

32 And if ye love them that love you, what thank have ye? for even sinners love those that love them.

33 And if ye do good to them that do good to you, what thank have ye? for even sinners

34 do the same. And if ye lend to them of whom ye hope to receive, what thank have ye?

35 even sinners lend to sinners, to receive again as much. But love your enemies,

and do them good, and lend, <sup>1</sup>never despairing; and your reward shall be great,

and ye shall be sons of the Most High: for he is kind toward the unthankful and evil.

36 Be ye merciful, even as your Father is merciful. And judge not, and ye shall not be

37 judged: and condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: release, and ye shall be re-

<sup>1</sup> Some ancient authorities read *despairing of no man*.

**38. good measure]** This is another form of putting the principle in the golden rule. Give and forgive, and it shall be given and forgiven you. Goodness multiplies in the distribution. The measure of spiritual good becomes more full by sharing it with others. It will run over and be returned into your own bosom. The last clause of v. 38 is a proverb, and found its way in almost this form into the Talmud, possibly from this saying of Christ. The phrase shall men give "into your bosom," alludes to the large, loose outer garment which men in the East wear, and form into a large fold or pocket in front for holding things, as we use a pocket. It is said that when Croesus offered Alcmaeon as much gold as he could carry on his person, he put on a very large robe, and filled the bosom with the precious metal.

**SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.**—1. The golden rule, "As ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise," is the guide to our conduct. 2. Retaliation is contrary to the law of Christ. 3. A selfish spirit is contrary to the law of Christ. 4. An unforgiving spirit is contrary to the law of Christ. 5. An ungenerous spirit is inconsistent with the spirit of Christ. 6. A censorious spirit is contrary to the law of Christ. 7. To love friends and hate enemies is no distinctive mark of a Christian spirit. 8. To do good to those who do good to us, will not prove that we are Christians. 9. To love our enemies, to render good for evil, to pray for those who abuse us, are fruits of a true Christian spirit. 10. To be merciful is to imitate Christ.

HEARING AND DOING. 6 : 39-49. Compare Matt. 7 : 3-27.

GALILEE, SUMMER, A. D. 28.

*Topics.*—Christian sincerity; four comparisons: the blind guide; the mote and beam in the eye; the good and bad fruit; the good and evil treasure. Doing: the house on the rock, and the house on the sand.

**39. the blind lead [guide] the blind]** The blind are very numerous in the East. It is no uncommon sight to see them groping their way along, and even trying to guide each other. The spiritual truth represented by this simile is obvious. How can a man who is blind to spiritual truth guide others into it! Or, how can one who has no knowledge or experience in the Christian life lead others into that life! They will both alike stumble into pitfalls of error. Then Christ is the only sure guide. A disciple is not to be above the Master, but to walk with and like his Master. Maimonides the learned Hebrew writer has reproduced this thought in this form, "He that learns shall not be greater than he of whom he learns, but shall be as he." *Bava. Kam. 2 : 5.*

COMMON VERSION.

38 Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again.

39 And he spake a parable unto them; Can the blind lead the blind? shall they not both fall into the ditch?

REVISED VERSION.

38 leaved: give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, shall they give into your bosom. For with what measure ye mete it shall be measured to you again.

39 And he spake also a parable unto them, Can the blind guide the blind? shall they

**41. the mote . . the beam]** In your censorious spirit, you magnify, or are quick to see the smallest fault in your neighbor, but do not perceive the enormous faults in your own character. You are neither consistent nor sincere. Put away your own great faults, then you will be able properly to help your neighbor to put away his less grievous ones; the "motes," literally "chips" or "splinters" in his character.

**43. good tree . . corrupt tree]** The general principle of purity and sincerity of life as a necessary qualification to leading others into a right life is illustrated by the tree and its fruit. The good tree cannot bear corrupt (literally, rotten) fruit, nor can a rotten tree bring forth good fruit. You know the character of the tree by the kind of fruit it bears. So you know the character of a person by the daily conduct. The figure is changed from the general (tree) to the particular (thorn tree). The thorn is abundant, and of many kinds in Syria. It will not produce figs, nor will the bramble bush (the word is the same as that for the "burning bush" at Horeb in the Septuagint of Ex. 3 : 2-4) bear grapes.

**45. good treasure . . evil treasure]** The figures are now applied to man's character and conduct. Out of the good man come good words and deeds, because there is a treasury of goodness in his heart. His thoughts and affections are pure. Out of the evil man comes evil, because the store of things in his heart is evil. Words, like deeds, come from the fountain of the man's spiritual life, called the heart.

**47. heareth . . and doeth]** Hearing is important, but not all. We must add doing to hearing. None other can call Jesus Lord. "Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves." Jas. 1 : 22.

## COMMON VERSION.

40 The disciple is not above his master : but every one that is perfect shall be as his master.

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

42 Either how canst thou say to thy brother, Brother, let me pull out the mote that is in thine eye, when thou thyself beholdest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, cast out first the beam out of thine own eye, and then shalt thou see clearly to pull out the mote that is in thy brother's eye.

43 For a good tree bringeth not forth corrupt fruit ; neither doth a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.

44 For every tree is known by his own fruit. For of thorns men do not gather figs, nor of a bramble bush gather they grapes.

45 A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good : and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil : for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh.

46 ¶ And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?

47 Whosoever cometh to me, and heareth my sayings, and doeth them, I will shew you to whom he is like :

## REVISED VERSION.

40 not both fall into a pit? The disciple is not above his <sup>1</sup>master: but every one when he

41 is perfected shall be as his <sup>1</sup>master. And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam

42 that is in thine own eye? Or how canst thou say to thy brother, Brother, let me

cast out the mote that is in thine eye, when thou thyself beholdest not the beam that is

in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, cast out first the beam out of thine own eye, and

then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the 43 mote that is in thy brother's eye. For there

is no good tree that bringeth forth corrupt fruit; nor again a corrupt tree that bringeth

44 forth good fruit. For each tree is known by its own fruit. For of thorns men do not

gather figs, nor of a bramble bush gather 45 they grapes. The good man out of the

good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and the evil *man* out

of the evil *treasure* bringeth forth that which is evil: for out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh.

46 And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do

47 not the things which I say? Every one that cometh unto me, and heareth my words, and doeth them, I will shew you to whom

**48. built a house]** He that both hears and does what the Lord says, is like the man building a house, who digged and went deep, and placed a foundation on the solid rock. When the flood rose, and the stream (the same word as for river) brake against that house, even that did not shake it, since it had been well founded on a rock. Hearing God's truth and practicing the Christian virtues, makes a firm foundation for a Christian character that enables it to stand against the floods of error. This graphic illustration from the sudden floods during the rainy season in Syria would be very forcible and familiar. The ground may be dry and parched, and the streams dry, and in a few hours the rain pouring down, will make a rushing torrent, equal in volume to a river, along water beds quite dry before the rain; and only a strongly built house upon a rock foundation can stand against such a sudden, sweeping current.

**49. house upon the earth]** The foolish hearer who fails to do what the Lord requires, yet because he has heard, thinks himself secure, finds his professed Christian character swept away in a sudden flood of evil, like the house stuck upon the loose earth ("sand" in Matt. 7 : 26), which the sudden floods undermine and sweep away into ruins. This, too, is a common sight in Syria. There are many houses thus built, sometimes whole villages, by the shiftless and indolent fellahin, that are swept away in an hour, leaving the owners houseless and homeless.

SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.—1. False teachers are blind guides. 2. The Pharisees were sad examples of false teachers. 3. Successfully to reprove others, we should be blameless ourselves. 4. One's conduct and conversation are a test of his character. 5. Profession without practice is a common and a great sin. 6. Self-examination qualifies one for examining others. 7. Usually the most censorious persons are the most faulty. 8. Stier says, "The hypocrite takes credit for a virtue which he has not, and the dissembler conceals the vices he has." 9. To bear good fruit, we must have a new nature in Christ. 10. Outward virtues are leaves; the fruit, holiness, must come from the heart. 11. Profession is of no value, without the possession of the true religion. 12. "Without a holy heart and a holy life, all will be ruined in the hour of temptation." *Quesnel*.

HEALING THE CENTURION'S SERVANT. 7 : 1-10. Compare Matt. 8 : 5-13.

CAPERNAUM, SUMMER, A. D. 28.

When Jesus had ended his discourse on the "level place" he went down to the Lake of Galilee into Capernaum. A centurion had a young servant who

COMMON VERSION.

48 He is like a man which built a house, and digged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock : and when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently upon that house, and could not shake it ; for it was founded upon a rock.

49 But he that heareth, and doeth not, is like a man that without a foundation built a house upon the earth ; against which the stream did beat vehemently, and immediately it fell ; and the ruin of that house was great.

REVISED VERSION.

48 he is like : he is like a man building a house, who digged and went deep, and laid a foundation upon the rock : and when a flood arose, the stream brake against that house, and could not shake it : <sup>1</sup> because it had been well builded. But he that heareth and doeth not, is like a man that built a house upon the earth without a foundation ; against which the stream brake, and straightway it fell in ; and the ruin of that house was great.

<sup>1</sup> Many ancient authorities read for it had been founded upon the rock : as in Matt. vii. 25.

was very sick, and he asked Jesus to heal him. Jesus commended the centurion's faith and healed the servant. The narrative is given more fully by Luke than by Matthew.

**1. ended all his sayings]** When Jesus had ended (literally, "had filled all his words into the ears of the people"), that is, all that he wished to say at this time in the ears (rather than audience) of the people, he descended from the mountain, great multitudes following him, Matt. 8: 1, and he went into Capernaum.

**2. a certain centurion's servant]** At least two things are implied in these words: the centurion was a Roman military officer or captain over 100 soldiers; the servant was a bond-servant or slave, as the Greek word implies; the centurion believed Jesus could heal the sick child. This young slave was highly prized, "dear unto him," not so much implying affection as esteem, because of his fidelity in service.

**3. sent . . elders]** In the shorter account of it by Matthew it is said "there came unto him a centurion," while here it is more fully stated that he came or sent first by Jewish elders, and then by friends. This difference in the narratives is explained by the very common Latin rule in law that what one does by another, he does himself, and Matthew has thus stated that the centurion did himself, what he authorized and ordered to be done. Anything wanted in the East is usually sought through mediators. These middle-men are always ready to offer their services for buying, selling, making love, getting a physician, interviewing a magistrate or a governor, and for any of the thousand trivial and petty things in daily life, which non-Asiatics would do themselves directly. The "elders" of a synagogue, says the Jerusalem Talmud, number 21, and compose a smaller sanhedrin and form a bench of three. *Sota* 23: 3. Sending "elders of the Jews," who appear to have gone willingly, and to have pressed the centurion's request, strongly implies that he was a proselyte of the gate.

**5. loveth our nation]** Clearly then, he was not a native Jew, but of Gentile origin, but he may have accepted Judaism so far as to become a "proselyte" of the class afterward called "of the gate," not accepting circumcision, as proselytes in full were required to do. So the elders came and besought him "instantly" (used in the old English sense of "earnestly"), for the centurion was a worthy man. By "worthy," Jewish elders would mean that

## COMMON VERSION.

## REVISED VERSION.

**CHAP. VII.**—Now when he had ended all his sayings in the audience of the people, he entered into Capernaum.

2 And a certain centurion's servant, who was dear unto him, was sick, and ready to die.

3 And when he heard of Jesus, he sent unto him the elders of the Jews, beseeching him that he would come and heal his servant.

4 And when they came to Jesus, they besought him instantly, saying, That he was worthy for whom he should do this:

5 For he loveth our nation, and he hath built us a synagogue.

7 After he had ended all his sayings in the ears of the people, he entered into Capernaum.

2 And a certain centurion's <sup>1</sup>servant, who was <sup>2</sup>dear unto him, was sick and at the <sup>3</sup>point of death. And when he heard concerning Jesus, he sent unto him elders of the Jews, asking him that he would come

4 and save his <sup>1</sup>servant. And they, when they came to Jesus, besought him earnestly, saying, He is worthy that thou shouldst do

5 this for him: for he loveth our nation, and

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *bondservant*.

<sup>2</sup> Or, *precious to him* Or, *honourable with him*

he was friendly to their religion, for he had shown his love for the nation by building a synagogue at his own expense. See the Revised Version. If modern *Tell Hum* is the site of Capernaum, the ruins of a synagogue now found there, may represent the one built by this centurion. The ruins show that it was built of marble and stood just above the lake.

**6. sent friends]** All the details of this account accord well with what we know to be the custom in the East. Messengers are sent in succession to an important person, of whom a favor is desired, making the request in varied form with many expressions of humility. And when it is known that the request will be granted, it is quite customary to send again urging the great one not to put himself to trouble, and offering apologies and expressions of unworthiness and the like.

**I am not worthy]** I am not great enough, or of enough importance, to have Jesus come under my roof. The Greek word for "worthy" is not the same as in v. 4 and in v. 7. Here the thought is greatness of rank; in vs. 4 and 7 it is primarily "weight," as of character or of reputation; hence "worthy" is used in those verses in the sense of having "merit," rather than of having high rank. So the centurion says through the friends, "neither thought I myself worthy," as having sufficient merit or goodness of character, to come unto thee, but say with a word, and my boy shall be healed. It would be quite in keeping with Eastern custom if the centurion himself had followed close upon the heels of this second deputation as he may have done, and this would further account for the narrative of the healing as given by Matthew.

**8. I also am . . . under authority]** Being a centurion he would be under the authority of the chiliarch or colonel in command of 1,000 soldiers, as the centurion had command of 100 soldiers. He had these 100 soldiers under himself, and could say to one, Go, and to another, Come, and each of the 100 soldiers would obey the command. So the centurion appears to have regarded the sickness of his slave either as due to demons or to some peculiar state of body, which were under the authority of Jesus, precisely as the centurion's soldiers were subject to his order. It is somewhat remarkable that while Matthew calls the disease "palsy," Luke, a physician, does not name the disease.

## COMMON VERSION.

6 Then Jesus went with them. And when he was now not far from the house, the centurion sent friends to him, saying unto him, Lord, trouble not thyself; for I am not worthy that thou shouldst enter under my roof:

7 Wherefore neither thought I myself worthy to come unto thee: but say in a word, and my servant shall be healed.

8 For I also am a man set under authority, having under me soldiers, and I say unto one, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it.

## REVISED VERSION.

6 himself built us our synagogue. And Jesus went with them. And when he was now not far from the house, the centurion sent friends to him, saying unto him, Lord, trouble not thyself: for I am not <sup>1</sup> worthy that thou shouldst come under my roof:

7 wherefore neither thought I myself worthy to come unto thee: but <sup>2</sup> say the word, and

8 my <sup>3</sup> servant shall be healed. For I also am a man set under authority, having under myself soldiers: and I say to this one, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my <sup>4</sup> servant, Do this, and

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *sufficient*.<sup>2</sup> Gr. *say with a word*.<sup>3</sup> Or, *boy*<sup>4</sup> Gr. *bondservant*.

**9. I have not found so great faith]** These words were not spoken to the centurion, nor to his friends, but to the people that were following Jesus. And this is an incidental indication that the centurion himself had now joined the deputation of friends which he had sent. The centurion, a Gentile and a military man, Jesus commended as having greater faith than any one he had found among God's chosen people, Israel. The woman of Syrophœnicia and a Roman centurion surpassed in their faith the great Jewish rabbis! The added remarks against the unbelieving Israelites reported by Matthew (8: 11, 12) are omitted by Luke, who is writing chiefly for the Gentiles.

**10. found the servant whole]** This healing was effected by a word spoken at a distance from the place where the sick slave was. The words "that had been sick" are omitted in the Revised Version, as they are not found in the best Greek MSS. The narrative is complete without them.

SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.—1. A good master shows kindness to his servant. 2. A man fitted to command will know how to obey. 3. A man of authority should be a man of true humility. 4. God spake, and the heavens and the earth were made: he said "Let there be light," and light was: Christ spake, and the centurion's servant was healed. 5. Jesus marvelled at the centurion's faith; what wonderful faith it must have been, to cause Christ to marvel! Once he marvelled at unbelief, Mark 6: 6. Shall he marvel at our faith, or our unbelief?

### RAISING THE SON OF THE WIDOW OF NAIN. 7: 11-18.

NAIN IN GALILEE, SUMMER, A. D. 28.

There are only three instances of raising the dead (aside from Christ's own resurrection) narrated in the Gospels. The raising of the son of the widow of Nain, mentioned by Luke only, was the earliest miracle of this kind which Jesus did. The second instance was that of Jairus, the ruler's daughter, mentioned by the first three evangelists, and the last was the raising of Lazarus mentioned by John only.

**11. a city called Nain]** Notice the difference of time given in the Common and in the Revised Version. This is due to a change of a single letter in the Greek reading: some MSS. reading τῆ and others τῶ. The latter is more likely to be the correct reading, and it is followed in the Revised Version. The Common Version first read Naim, for Nain, as it now stands. This, like many other verbal changes in the Common Version of 1611, was

#### COMMON VERSION.

9 When Jesus heard these things, he marvelled at him, and turned him about, and said unto the people that followed him, I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel.

10 And they that were sent, returning to the house, found the servant whole that had been sick.

11 ¶ And it came to pass the day after, that he went into a city called Nain; and many of his disciples went with him, and much people.

#### REVISED VERSION.

9 he doeth it. And when Jesus heard these things, he marvelled at him, and turned and said unto the multitude that followed him, I say unto you, I have not found so great 10 faith, no, not in Israel. And they that were sent, returning to the house, found the 1 servant whole.

11 And it came to pass 2 soon afterwards, that he went to a city called Nain; and his disciples went with him, and a great multitude.

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *bondservant*.

<sup>2</sup> Many ancient authorities read *on the next day*.

made in later editions and accepted. Nain (meaning "pleasant" or "lovely") was a small town in the hill country of Galilee, about twenty-five miles southwest from Capernaum. Jerome knew it and placed it near Mt. Tabor and the river Kishon. *Ad Marcellum*, 44. It would be farther from Capernaum than an ordinary day's journey on foot in Palestine. Nain now called *Nein* is a miserable Mohammedan village of about twenty mud and stone houses. There is a road now leading down a steep slope from the town toward ancient sepulchral caves on the west of the village. On this downward road, no doubt, Jesus met the funeral company. He was on one of his preaching circuits through Galilee, attended by his disciples, and a great crowd followed him.

**12. to the gate of the city]** This small town was a walled city, hence the "gate" of entrance to the city. Ordinarily all Jewish burials are outside the walls of a city. This one would be in some of the rock-hewn sepulchres now seen near the west side of Nain. The dead person carried out was the only son of a widow, who evidently had many friends, for many were with her. The Talmud prescribes that an infant might be buried by one woman and two men. Whoever was carried on a bier, many mourned for him, and whoever was known to many, many attended him. It was counted an act of kindness and mercy to follow a corpse to burial (See *Mishna, Peah*, 1 : 1), and the Mishna forbids any work when a dead man is buried. "Those who carry the bier, such as go before . . . and such as go after it, are exempt from saying the Shema" (prayer). *Mish., Berachoth*, 3:1. The rabbis say that of the persons accompanying the corpse, a part went before the bier and a part followed, as was doubtless the case with the funeral company Jesus met coming out of Nain.

**13. the Lord saw her]** The term "Lord" is applied to Jesus about thirty times in Matthew, over forty times in Luke, and more than one hundred and twenty times in the four Gospels. Some have inferred from this that Luke wrote much later than Matthew and Mark, but the difference in the number of times this term is used in proportion to the length of the respective Gospels is not great enough to make an argument of much weight. It is evidence rather of the diversity and independence of the writers.

**had compassion]** The sympathy of Jesus with human sorrow and anguish is frequently mentioned in the Gospels. This miracle, one of the most significant proofs of his mission, was not called out merely as a proof, but sprang also from his infinite compassion for the suffering. His first words were to the sorrowing widowed mother, "Weep not."

**14. touched the bier]** In Palestine the dead are borne out, according

## COMMON VERSION.

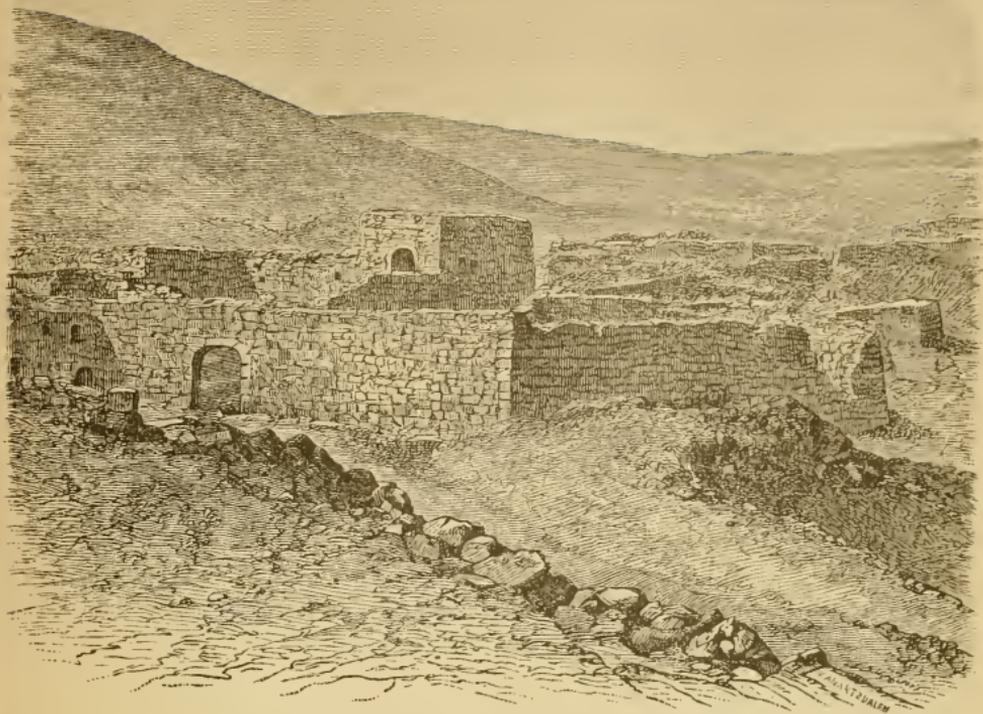
12 Now when he came nigh to the gate of the city, behold, there was a dead man carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow: and much people of the city was with her.

13 And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not.

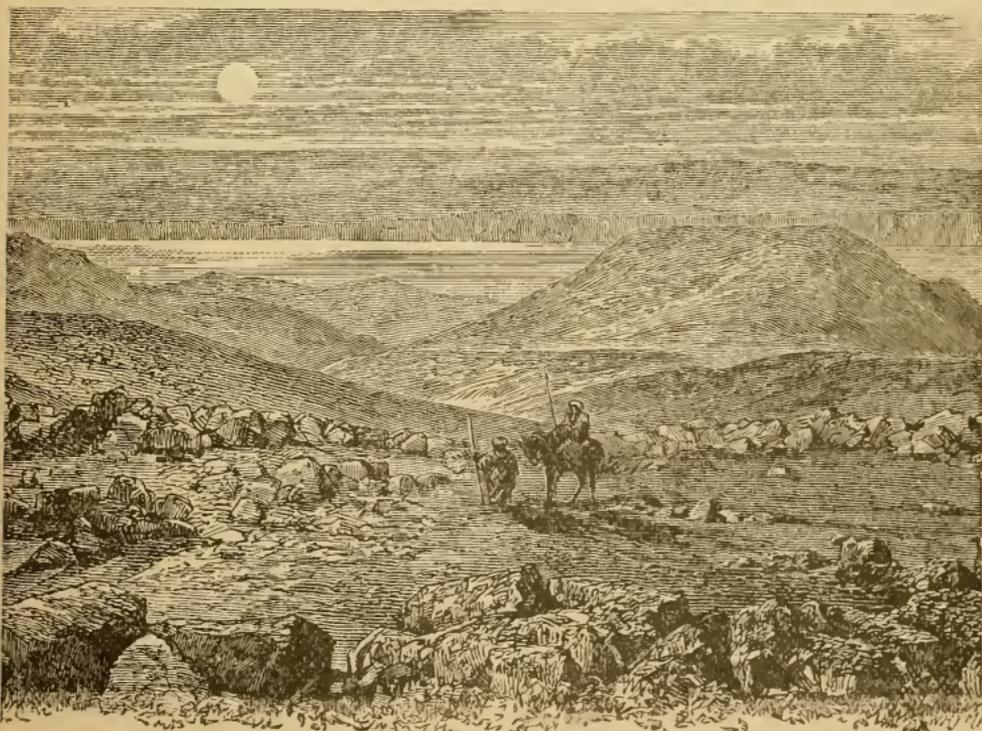
14 And he came and touched the bier: and they that bare *him* stood still. And he said, Young man, I say unto thee, Arise.

## REVISED VERSION.

12 Now when he drew near to the gate of the city, behold, there was carried out one that was dead, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow: and much people of the city was with her. And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not. And he came nigh and touched the bier: and the bearers stood still. And he said, Young man, I say unto



Ruins of Nain. (*After a Photograph.*)



Site of Machærus.

to Dr. Post, either wrapped in the outer garment, abba, and such covering as the family can afford; a napkin or handkerchief on the face and without a coffin, but on a bier; or, if in a coffin without a lid, the whole body being exposed to view. At a funeral of an adult the crowd is usually large, and the mourners' wailing loud and very pathetic. The bier is usually borne high above their heads by the bearers, so that all may see the body. Touching the bier was a sign to the bearers to stop, which they at once did.

**Young man . . . Arise]** If this was spoken in Aramaic, only two words would be required. He that is the resurrection and the life speaks, and the dead arise. John 11 : 25, 26. The rabbis would not touch the dead for fear of being defiled; Jesus touched the bier that life might be restored to the body.

**15. delivered him to his mother]** The dead man sitting up on the bier and beginning to speak proved the reality of the raising to the large company. In no case where the dead were restored to life does the Bible tell us what they said. Their experience and their knowledge of anything beyond death are withheld from us. The body was in full view and there was no possible chance for deception in this case. It is a beautiful touch of sympathy and tenderness that Jesus handed the young man alive to his mother, no doubt with some cheering and comforting words. See similar instances in 1 Kings 17 : 23 ; 2 Kings 4 : 36, 37.

**16. great prophet]** The company were filled with awe, and praised God for what they had seen. They at once recalled Elijah and Elisha and declared that a great prophet like these had arisen "among us," even us in Galilee. The great expectation of some wonderful prophet was now realized. "God hath visited his people." See Luke 1 : 68 ; John 3 : 2.

**17. this rumour [report] . . . went forth]** Such a miracle would be reported quickly and widely. The whole country would ring with the accounts of his work. All Galilee, Samaria, and Judæa would be talking of this great prophet and of his wonderful power.

**18. the disciples of John]** The whole country was in excitement over Jesus, and the disciples of John the Baptist found a way of telling John in his prison at Machærus about the works and fame of this new prophet who seemed to excel John himself. They were doubtless perplexed, and wanted to know who this wonder-worker might be. John put them in the way to know, as the next section tells us.

Wordsworth calls attention to the accuracy of Luke as an observer and historian as shown in this narrative. Seven particulars are specified: 1. the

## COMMON VERSION.

## REVISED VERSION.

15 And he that was dead sat up, and began to speak. And he delivered him to his mother.

16 And there came a fear on all: and they glorified God, saying, That a great prophet is risen up among us; and, That God hath visited his people.

17 And this rumour of him went forth throughout all Judea, and throughout all the region round about.

18 And the disciples of John shewed him of all these things.

15 thee, Arise. And he that was dead sat up and began to speak. And he gave him to his mother. And fear took hold on all:

16 and they glorified God, saying, A great prophet is arisen among us: and, God hath visited his people. And this report went

forth concerning him in the whole of Judæa, and all the region round about.

18 And the disciples of John told him of all

name of the city ; 2, the gate ; 3, the crowd with the funeral procession ; 4, the age of the dead and his circumstances ; 5, the mother, a widow having no other son ; 6, the words our Lord spoke ; 7, the effect on the people.

SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.—1. Jesus was always busy in doing good ; his disciples should imitate him. 2. His greatest miracles were witnessed by a crowd of people. 3. They were never for display, nor done solely to prove his mission ; they sprang also from his sympathy for suffering humanity. 4. To sympathize with the afflicted is a Christian act. 5. Christ comforts the widow and the afflicted. 6. Christ is the resurrection and the life. 7. Sin is like death, to which it leads ; Christ gives us the victory over sin and death.

JOHN AND JESUS. 7 : 19-35. Compare Matt. 11 : 2-19.

GALILEE, A. D. 28.

*Analysis.*—John in prison sends two disciples to Jesus, asking, “ Art thou he that cometh ? ” Jesus worked several miracles, and bade John’s disciples go back and tell what they had seen. Jesus declares John to be the greatest of the prophets. The people rejoice ; the Pharisees reject God’s counsel. The parable of the children in the market place.

**19. John calling . . two of his disciples]** John had been shut up in prison by Herod. Matt. 14 : 3-12. John sent two disciples that they and their associates might be assured of the true character of Jesus, and possibly that his own faith might be confirmed. It would not be strange if he was depressed and discouraged by the long imprisonment. His disciples were restless ; perhaps unwilling to acknowledge Christ. If the delegation came from the castle of Machærus in Peræa to the region of Nain, it would be a journey of two or three days.

**Art thou he]** The question was, Art thou the coming one, the Messiah, or should we look for another ? The Greek implies by another, one of a different kind. The point in John’s mind seems to have been, it is time for the Messiah ; if you are he, it is time that you reveal yourself as the Messiah. John doubtless shared in the Jewish expectation that when the Messiah came he would set all things right. So from the gloomy walls of his cell in Machærus, John was looking for a vindication of his conduct by the coming One.

**21. he cured many]** The disciples of John witnessed many miracles.

COMMON VERSION.

19 ¶ And John calling unto him two of his disciples sent them to Jesus, saying, Art thou he that should come? or look we for another?

20 When the men were come unto him, they said, John Baptist hath sent us unto thee, saying, Art thou he that should come? or look we for another?

21 And in that same hour he cured many of their infirmities and plagues, and of evil spirits; and unto many that were blind he gave sight.

REVISED VERSION.

19 these things. And John calling unto him

<sup>1</sup> two of his disciples sent them to the Lord, saying, Art thou he that cometh, or look

20 we for another? And when the men were come unto him, they said, John the Baptist hath sent us unto thee, saying, Art thou he

21 that cometh, or look we for another? In that hour he cured many of diseases and

<sup>2</sup> plagues and evil spirits; and on many

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *certain two.*

<sup>2</sup> Gr. *scourges.*

Jesus cured diseases of the ordinary kind, "plagues," or literally, "scourges," which meant diseases that were believed to be sent as special punishments from God, and evil spirits, and blind. Luke as a physician carefully divides the diseased into three classes, and distinguishes each of these from the blind.

**22. tell John what things ye have seen and heard]** This was the answer to John. They were eye-witnesses of the works of Jesus, and they were to add "the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up." See revised reading. The only detailed account of raising the dead in the ministry of Jesus up to this time is that of the widow's son, and possibly according to a few harmonists, of Jairus' daughter. But we do not know how many cases there were that are not mentioned. We know that many miracles were performed by Christ of which we have no detailed report. Yet, great as these things are, the greatest spiritual miracle, which is the climax of this list of marvelous works and of evidence is, the poor have the gospel preached to them. This list would be the strongest proof to John who was familiar with Messianic prophecy, for it plainly refers to Is. 29:18; 35:4-6, and 60:1-3. The Pharisees, as we know from the Talmud, despised the poor as worthless, and so John would know that Jesus fulfilled prophecy. The closing blessing had also a fine turn in the message, with a reproving tinge in it. Many will be scandalized in me, will stumble; see Revised Version; as prophecy declares, "he hath no form nor comeliness." Is. 53:2, 3; Luke 2:34.

**24. concerning John]** Jesus' testimony concerning John is one of those tender, earnest, and exquisitely beautiful utterances of our Lord, that sparkle like diamonds in the twilight. The testimony is reserved until after John's messengers have gone, that it may not seem to be words of compliment so common in Oriental speech. The work of John had been chiefly in the wilderness of Judæa; hence the people went there to meet him. The reed was a tall, slender plant, easily shaken or whisked about by the wind, and it was very abundant along the Jordan where John was baptized. John was no slender, trifling character blown about by every new doctrine. He was no delicate, spiritual *dilettante*, merely amusing himself by turning himself into a preacher, and clothing himself in fine raiment, and seeking the "soft, easy"

## COMMON VERSION.

22 Then Jesus answering said unto them, Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard; how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the gospel is preached.

23 And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me.

24 ¶ And when the messengers of John were departed, he began to speak unto the people concerning John, What went ye out into the wilderness for to see? A reed shaken with the wind?

25 But what went ye out for to see? A man clothed in soft raiment? Behold, they which are gorgeously appavelled, and live delicately, are in kings' courts.

## REVISED VERSION.

22 that were blind he bestowed sight. And he answered and said unto them, Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard; the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, the poor have <sup>1</sup>good tidings preached to

23 them. And blessed is he, whosoever shall find none occasion of stumbling in me.

24 And when the messengers of John were departed, he began to say unto the multitudes concerning John, What went ye out into the wilderness to behold? a reed

25 shaken with the wind? But what went ye out to see? a man clothed in soft raiment? Behold, they that are gorgeously appavelled, and live delicately, are in kings' courts.

<sup>1</sup> Or, the gospel

places, and talking "smooth things" to those in luxury, and in gorgeous apparel. He had faithfully reprov'd the proud and luxurious Herod in his gorgeous court, for his sin, and was now languishing in prison for his boldness.

**26. a prophet]** All the people accepted John as a prophet, see Luke 20 : 6, but Jesus ranked him far higher. He was the special messenger noted in Mal. 3 : 1, therefore much more than a prophet; he was the great forerunner. He was the greatest prophet born of woman; the greatest prophet "that ever lived," is our popular phrase. But the "lesser" (for so is the Greek) in the kingdom of God is greater than he. The one who now has the full privileges of that kingdom of which John was the forerunner, has greater opportunities for spiritual growth and blessing than were possible before the completion of Christ's redemptive work, for John or any Old Testament prophet to receive.

**29. justified God, being baptized]** Of course, no man can make God more just than he is, since he ever has been infinitely just. It means that the people perceived, confessed, and declared God's justice, in his providential acts among men. These people had been prepared for making this confession, for they had been baptized of John, and must have openly confessed their sins. There were two other classes (the Pharisees and lawyers) not included among the first two (all the people, and the publicans) who "rejected the counsel of God against themselves," the Common Version reads. But that may mean that the counsel of God was against them, which is not the meaning in the Greek. The Revised Version is better, "rejected for themselves the counsel of God," or, with yet greater clearness read, "the Pharisees and lawyers thwarted the good purpose of God towards them." This they did by not confessing their sins, "not having been baptized" of John. The loving will of God to them in providing salvation, they nullified by their unbelief and impenitence.

**32. we piped unto you]** Notice that the phrase "and the Lord said"

## COMMON VERSION.

26 But what went ye out for to see? A prophet? Yea, I say unto you, and much more than a prophet.

27 This is *he*, of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee.

28 For I say unto you, Among those that are born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist: but he that is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he.

29 And all the people that heard *him*, and the publicans, justified God, being baptized with the baptism of John.

30 But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of him.

31 ¶ And the Lord said, Whereunto then shall I liken the men of this generation? and to what are they like?

32 They are like unto children sitting in the marketplace, and calling one to another, and saying, We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned to you, and ye have not wept.

## REVISED VERSION.

26 But what went ye out to see? a prophet? Yea, I say unto you, and much more than a prophet. This is he of whom it is written,

Behold, I send my messenger before thy face,

Who shall prepare thy way before thee.

28 I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there is none greater than John: yet he that is <sup>1</sup> but little in the kingdom of

29 God is greater than he. And all the people

when they heard, and the publicans, justified God, <sup>2</sup> being baptized with the baptism

30 of John. But the Pharisees and the lawyers rejected for themselves the counsel of

31 God, <sup>3</sup> being not baptized of him. Where-

unto then shall I liken the men of this generation, and to what are they like?

32 They are like unto children that sit in the marketplace, and call one to another; who say, We piped unto you, and ye did not

dance; we wailed, and ye did not weep.

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *lesser*.

<sup>2</sup> Or, *having been*

<sup>3</sup> Or, *not having been*

of v. 31, which introduces this comparison in the Common Version, is omitted in the Revised Version, not being in the best Greek copies of the Gospel. They have probably come from some church lessons, where the text was introduced by this remark when read in the church service. This illustration would be familiar to the hearers. The marketplace in the Eastern city is open like our modern city squares, where people trade, hear the news, and the children have their games and sports. The Jews in Christ's day were not less foolish, perverse, and hard to please than a lot of children at play, calling one to another in the market-place, "we piped" (played on the pipe as at a wedding) to you, and ye did not dance. Then changing the play, "we wailed" (imitating mourners at a funeral) and ye did not weep. These were mock plays of children, first imitating a wedding scene, and then a funeral scene, but in neither way could one set of children please their fellows. So the Jews were equally hard to please, for neither John's asceticism, nor the social habit of Jesus suited them. In speaking of the plays of children and their dancing as an illustration of the unreasonableness of the Jews of that day, no opinion is expressed upon the propriety of dancing. Ryle wisely observes that the dancing mentioned here is not to be twisted or tortured into an excuse for modern dancing parties and balls. "The dancing spoken of in Scripture has no resemblance to the dancing of modern times." The peevish children looking at their fellows refused to take part in any kind of a game, but are sulky and sour; so the merry ones point out the foolishness of their conduct. Just as unreasonable were the Jews. John came as a Nazirite, using the simplest food and dress, and living in seclusion, not mingling in the free social habits of the people, and the Pharisees refused to accept him, saying, he hath a demon. The Son of man came mingling freely with the people, in his common habits of eating and social life, acting like them, and they refused to accept him as a teacher, saying, behold a gluttonous man, and a wine bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners. Neither mode of life would satisfy them. They were sulky, sour, and as unreasonable as a lot of disagreeable children.

**35. wisdom is justified]** There is no ground for supposing that "children" is here used to signify those who ought to be wise, or that wisdom refers to that of a mere worldly sort, or that "justified" is used in the sense of "condemned." The children of wisdom is a common Hebraism or Hebrew idiom of the Old Testament, meaning those who are wise. Wisdom is used in the good sense, and personified. It means the wisdom of God's purpose, and ways in presenting salvation to the human race. In fact wisdom was

## COMMON VERSION.

33 For John the Baptist came neither eating bread nor drinking wine; and ye say, He hath a devil.

34 The Son of man is come eating and drinking; and ye say, Behold a gluttonous man, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners!

35 But wisdom is justified of all her children.

## REVISED VERSION.

33 For John the Baptist is come eating no bread nor drinking wine; and ye say, He

34 hath a demon. The Son of man is come eating and drinking; and ye say, Behold a

35 gluttonous man, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners! And wisdom <sup>1</sup> is justified of all her children.

<sup>1</sup> Or, was

“justified,” confessed, and acknowledged as just by that foolish generation. Or, as Alexander observes, wisdom was justified on the part of her favored and honored children. The wisdom of God in the mission of John and in the mission of Christ was justified by the disciples of John, and by the vast number of Christian disciples.

SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.—1. A wise minister sends his perplexed people to Jesus. 2. Jesus solves our perplexing doubts by his works of providence and of grace. 3. The perplexed are comforted and sometimes warned also. 4. Jesus knows his faithful servants. 5. He will point out their faithfulness in due time. 6. The believer now has far greater privileges than the godly had in Old Testament times. 7. Some men frustrate the love of God by their unreasonableness. 8. We are to judge Christianity by its fruits. 9. There never was a true Christian teacher who could please all men. 10. Those who love sin will be captious or sulky, or find some fault with every one who calls them to repentance. 11. Luther said, “If one preaches the gospel, it is nothing; if he preaches the law, it is nothing again; he can neither make people really joyous, nor really sorry.”

## SIMON THE PHARISEE, AND THE SINFUL WOMAN. 7: 36-50.

GALILEE, A.D. 28.

This incident is narrated by Luke only. It is not to be identified with the anointing at Bethany narrated in Matt. 26: 6-13; Mark 14: 3-9; John 12: 1-9. The circumstances of the two anointings were widely different. This one mentioned by Luke took place in Galilee, the other in Judæa; this Simon was a Pharisee, that Simon a leper; in this the anointing was from love, and by a sinful woman, in that it was for Jesus' burial, and by Mary, who had been some time a disciple; in this the Pharisee is reproved, in that the disciple; in this the objection is to Jesus for allowing a sinful woman to touch him, in that it is to the waste of ointment. That there should be two Simons is no more remarkable than that there should be two named James, or two called Judas in the little band of apostles.

**36. one of the Pharisees]** There is no evidence that this Pharisee invited Jesus to his table to do him harm. On the contrary, Simon seems to have had respect for Jesus as a popular rabbi, and intended to compliment him. That Simon was dignified, somewhat consequential and formal in his manner, is consonant with Eastern custom in such cases, and with Simon's wish to observe and to learn more about this new teacher. Though not a particular friend of Jesus, it is not necessary to charge Simon with hostility or insincerity. In what town of Galilee Simon lived is unknown, but it was in the region west of the Lake of Galilee.

**sat down to meat]** He “reclined” as at a meal, for “meat” or “meal” is not stated in Greek. In the early times the Jews sat with the feet curled up under them as the Arabs now do, but the more luxurious mode of reclining at full length on divans or wide couches with the feet stretched out from

## COMMON VERSION.

36 † And one of the Pharisees desired him that he would eat with him. And he went into the Pharisee's house, and sat down to meat.

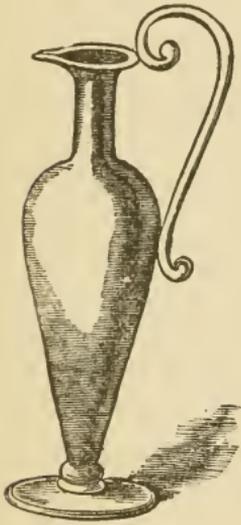
## REVISED VERSION.

36 And one of the Pharisees desired him that he would eat with him. And he entered into the Pharisee's house, and sat down to

the table was introduced from the Persians, Greeks and Romans, and prevailed in Syria in the time of Christ. Jesus did not seek invitations like these, nor did he refuse them, but accepted them as opportunities for doing good.

**37. a woman . . . a sinner]** The woman was known in the city as a sinner, see Revised Version, the word here usually being interpreted to mean an unchaste woman, though the Greek word is not elsewhere applied to woman in this sense in the New Testament. The "was" is to be taken as applying to her past life generally, but not as declaring that she was at that moment pursuing her sinful course, as the Pharisee judged, v. 39. In coming to Jesus, the woman showed that she was already penitent, and had faith, which brought her to the feet of Jesus. She may have heard him preach and thus have believed, and found peace. Now she expresses her gratitude for her peace of soul.

**alabaster box [cruse]** These flasks of alabaster were common in Syria. They were made of a species of gypsum or sulphate of lime, and also



ALABASTER VASE.

of a carbonate of lime, found in Egypt, and Pliny says also near Damascus. *Nat. Hist.* 1:36, 8. It was known among the Greeks and Romans; for it is said, "Venus gave to Phaon an alabaster box with ointment, with which Phaon being anointed, became the most beautiful of men" so that the women of Mitylene fell in love with him. These perfume flasks were highly valued by Hebrew women, though not permitted to be carried on the Sabbath, as a writer so accurate as Edersheim says. *Life of Jesus*, vol. 1, p. 566. The Mishna declares that one rabbi counted a woman "guilty," but "the sages absolve her" if she carried out a smelling bottle or a balm flask only. But פְּטוּר *Patur*, "to discharge" or "absolve," in this tractate means that the person is not subject to extreme penalties as stoning to death, though one would be exposed to the minor punishment of stripes. "To absolve" by no means is equivalent "to permit."

Compare Mishna, *Sabbat* 6:3, also Rabbi Raphall's introduction to Treatise *Sabbat*. The woman brought this precious ointment, which some suppose she had hitherto used to increase her charms for a sinful purpose, and now offered it as an expression of her love to Jesus for leading her into a new life.

**38. kissed his feet and anointed them]** It is very common now in .

COMMON VERSION.

37 And, behold, a woman in the city, which was a sinner, when she knew that *Jesus* sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster box of ointment,

38 And stood at his feet behind *him* weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe *them* with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed *them* with the ointment.

REVISED VERSION.

37 meat. And behold, a woman who was in the city, a sinner; and when she knew that he was sitting at meat in the Pharisee's house, she brought<sup>1</sup> an alabaster cruse of

38 ointment, and standing behind at his feet, weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears, and wiped them with the hair of her head, and<sup>2</sup> kissed his feet, and anointed

<sup>1</sup> Or, a flask

<sup>2</sup> Gr. *kiss'd much*.

the East for friends and even strangers to enter, and look upon a feast like this Simon had, without exciting remark. A Scotch traveler as long ago as 1839 describes a similar freedom of strangers at an Eastern feast which he attended. See Narrative of a Mission to the Jews. The woman drew near the side of the couch where Jesus was, his feet being bare as the custom was there, and with her tears of repentance which fell on his feet wet them, and then she dried them with her long hair, and anointed his feet with the ointment. She also "kept kissing" his feet, for the Greek word is intensive, an act which in the East was expressive of honor for a great person.

**39. This man . . . if he were a prophet]** Some MSS. read, "the prophet" the one Moses had foretold. The Pharisee did not speak his thoughts aloud, but only within himself. This throws light on his motive in asking Jesus to eat with him. He wished to know more clearly where to place Jesus as a teacher; whether among prophets, or the rabbis of his day. So he reasons within himself: if Jesus were a prophet he would know this woman to be a sinner, and would not allow her to touch him. For a Pharisee held himself to be defiled if he but touched the garments of the common people. *Mish. Chag. 2 : 7.* To talk with a woman in public was a most extraordinary and unusual thing among the Jews. The Pharisee assumed that Jesus would do as other rabbis did. But Jesus knew fully about the woman, allowed her to touch him, and knew the Pharisee's thoughts.

**40. Master, say on]** There is no disrespect in this answer. It was a common one among teachers of that day; frequent examples occur in the Mishna and Jewish writings; Rabbi Ishmael answered Rabbi Gamaliel in precisely the same words.

**41. two debtors]** Debt is the common condition of the East; the rate of interest is high, from 12 to 60 per cent. annually. The Moslems dodge the letter of their law forbidding their taking interest, by counting interest and principal together at first, and taking a promise for the value of both at the beginning. If the debtor cannot pay at the end of this time, as usually he cannot, the creditor again adds the fresh anticipated interest to the face of the first promise, and the debtor renews his promise to pay in this form, so that the original sum grows with frightful rapidity. One debtor mentioned in the illustration owed ten times as much as the other. The 500 pence was equal to about \$75, and 50 pence to about \$7.50. Having nothing to pay (a most common thing there), the creditor freely forgave them both. Now, accepting the Pharisee's

## COMMON VERSION.

39 Now when the Pharisee which had bidden him saw it, he spake within himself, saying, This man, if he were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman *this is* that toucheth him; for she is a sinner.

40 And Jesus answering said unto him, Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee. And he saith, Master, say on.

41 There was a certain creditor which had two debtors: the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty.

## REVISED VERSION.

39 them with the ointment. Now when the Pharisee who had bidden him saw it, he spake within himself, saying, This man, if he were <sup>1</sup>a prophet, would have perceived who and what manner of woman *this is* that toucheth him, that she is a sinner.

40 And Jesus answering said unto him, Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee. And he

41 saith, <sup>2</sup>Master, say on. A certain lender had two debtors: the one owed five hundred

<sup>1</sup> Some ancient authorities read *the prophet*. See John 1 : 21, 25.

<sup>2</sup> Or, *Teacher*

mode of judging only for the sake of teaching him a truth, Jesus asks which debtor will love the creditor most.

**43. to whom he forgave most]** That Simon saw how his answer would convict himself, is not certain. He may have perceived in part, the drift of the illustration. But he was not left long in suspense. "Thou hast rightly judged," says Jesus.

**44. thou gavest me no water]** To offer water for the public washing of the feet, Professor Post says, is not now common in Syria, but water is offered to wash the hands after, and often before a meal. The other custom was common at an early period however (see Gen. 18 : 4 ; Judges 19 : 21) ; and appears not to have fallen entirely into disuse in the time of Christ, see 1 Tim. 5 : 10, and read also John 13 : 4-10. Simon had neglected this mark of courtesy. The low sandals worn without stockings, allowed the feet to become very dusty and made the custom a proper one for cleanliness. The woman in her penitence and love had washed Jesus' feet with tears and wiped them with her hair. Then Simon had given Jesus no kiss (the Greek implies a kiss of friendship). This was not an unusual salutation among friends in the East, or even among strangers when introduced. See Gen. 33 : 4 ; Ex. 18 : 7. The kiss now is always given on the cheek, not on the lips. The woman had "kept kissing" the feet of Jesus. Anointing the head is not now a common custom in Syria, but to sprinkle it with fragrant water or perfume is still regarded as a delicate compliment to a guest. It was common at festivals, however, in Biblical times. For notices of the custom see Ps. 23 : 5 ; 141 : 5 ; Matt. 6 : 17. All these customs were also common among the Greeks and some other nations, and receive abundant illustration from the Egyptian monuments. Examples may be found in Birch's Wilkinson's Ancient Egyptians.

**47. Her sins . . . are forgiven]** In the Greek the verb is in the perfect passive more nearly equivalent to "have been forgiven," as implying a previous forgiveness, which accounts for her coming and for her tearful joy

## COMMON VERSION.

42 And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me therefore, which of them will love him most?

43 Simon answered and said, I suppose that *he*, to whom he forgave most. And he said unto him, Thou hast rightly judged.

44 And he turned to the woman, and said unto Simon, Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet: but she hath washed my feet with tears, and wiped *them* with the hairs of her head.

45 Thou gavest me no kiss: but this woman, since the time I came in, hath not ceased to kiss my feet.

46 My head with oil thou didst not anoint: but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment.

47 Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, *the same* loveth little.

## REVISED VERSION.

42 <sup>1</sup>shillings, and the other fifty. When they had not *wherewith* to pay, he forgave them both. Which of them therefore will

43 love him most? Simon answered and said, He, I suppose, to whom he forgave the most. And he said unto him, Thou hast

44 rightly judged. And turning to the woman, he said unto Simon, Seest thou this woman?

I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet: but she hath wetted my feet with her tears, and wiped them

45 with her hair. Thou gavest me no kiss: but she, since the time I came in, hath not

46 ceased to <sup>2</sup>kiss my feet. My head with oil thou didst not anoint: but she hath anointed

47 my feet with ointment. Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom

little is forgiven, *the same* loveth little.

<sup>1</sup> See marginal note on Matt. xviii. 28.

<sup>2</sup> Gr. *kiss much*.

while anointing the feet of Jesus. You know her forgiven sins are many, inasmuch as she loves much, as you see; for to whom little is forgiven, little he loves. Jesus then turns and addressing the woman repeats to her direct what he had said to Simon, "Thy sins are [have been] forgiven." There is no good ground for identifying this woman with Mary Magdalene. Though the Lord cast seven demons out of Mary Magdalene there is no hint in the Scriptures that she was an unchaste woman. The church in the middle ages accepted the tradition that this woman and Mary Magdalene were the same, and put this text into the church lessons for a memorial of her. This tradition was regarded as untrustworthy by the Greek fathers generally. The Latins accepted it, but not until after Gregory the Great; it is rejected by the majority of Protestant writers. Nor is there any foundation for identifying this sinful woman with Mary of Bethany.

**49. who is this]** The friends of the Pharisee at the table began to think within themselves, Who is this that has such presumption as to forgive sin? There was no Romanist assumption in the Pharisees. Perhaps their surprise was expressed in their faces. Without answering them, or their thoughts, the Lord changed the form of his address to the woman, perhaps that she might not be misled into thinking that her acts of devotion had saved her. So he says, thy faith hath saved thee; "go in [into] peace." They held rightly that none but God could forgive sin; Christ forgave sin because he is the only Son of God; though strictly at Simon's house, it was a declaration of pardon, as Wordsworth observes, which faith had anticipated. Then we must not be misled by the illustration, into questioning whether the greater sinners we are the greater will our gain be. The Lord does not deal in moral contradictions of this sort. The matter will be clearer, if, as Trench suggests, the debt be considered not as so many outbreakings of sin, but as so much consciousness of sin on our part. Those who have the deepest *sense* of sin love the Saviour most; not those always who have committed the most outrageous and heinous sins.

**SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.**—1. The world may seek Christians, to know more of their religion. 2. Sinners may hear Christ, yet not accept him. 3. The forgiven sinner rejoices to be at the feet of the Saviour. 4. Forgiveness is the main spring of love to Christ. 5. The forgiven soul will offer its most precious gifts to the Redeemer. 6. The censorious see little that is good in others. 7. All are debtors to God. 8. No man can pay this debt and satisfy the law of God. 9. God offers free and full forgiveness. 10. Where there is little sense of sin there will be little sense of forgiveness. 11. Our love to Christ will be in proportion to our sense of sin and of forgiveness. 12. Our sense of sin is not measured by the knowledge others have of our guilt. 13. We are saved by grace through faith, as the gift of God. See Eph. 2 : 5.

## COMMON VERSION.

48 And he said unto her, Thy sins are forgiven.

49 And they that sat at meat with him began to say within themselves, Who is this that forgiveth sins also?

## REVISED VERSION.

48 And he said unto her, Thy sins are forgiven. And they that sat at meat with him began to say <sup>1</sup> within themselves, who is

<sup>1</sup> Or, among

PREACHING: THE SOWER. 8 : 1-15. Compare as to the Sower, Matt. 13 : 1-23 ; Mark 4 : 1-25.

GALILEE, SUMMER, A. D. 28.

The "preaching" tour noticed in vs. 1-3 seems to have been a second circuit, which Jesus made in Galilee. A first circuit may be referred to in Luke 4 : 42-44, and more definitely in Matt. 4 : 23-25, Mark 1 : 35-39, before the formal selection of the Twelve. This second circuit is mentioned by Luke only, and was after the Twelve apostles were chosen. A third circuit seems to be noticed in Matt. 11 : 1, and Mark 6 : 6, though it is not certain that there were three distinct circuits in Galilee. The best harmonists arrange the order of the events in this chapter as follows: 1. Second circuit in Galilee, vs. 1-3. 2. Desire of his mother and brethren to see Jesus, vs. 19-21. 3. Parable of the sower, vs. 4-18. 4. Stilling the tempest, vs. 22-25. 5. Healing the Gadarene demoniac, vs. 26-40. 6. Raising Jairus' daughter, etc., vs. 41-56. They put in other events between 5 and 6, as Levi's feast noticed in Luke 5 : 29-39, while 4 and 5 succeed each other without intervening events. But between each of the others from 1 to 4, other events are supposed to have occurred, that are mentioned by the gospel writers.

From the account of the forgiven woman, Luke naturally goes on to narrate the ministering of other women to Jesus during the preaching tour that was made about this time; the twelve also went with him.

**1. he went . . . preaching]** And it came to pass afterward, or as the Greek says, "in the order" or "succession." The same word in chap. 1 : 3, is rendered "in order," and means "in close succession," after the event narrated in 7 : 50. Jesus travelled through the cities and villages proclaiming the good news of the kingdom of God, and the twelve with him. Reading it without the last verb, which is not in the Greek, the sense is different from that gained by the English versions. It implies that Jesus and the twelve were heralding the good news together, and not that Jesus alone "preached," the twelve being with him merely as companions; they were co-laborers in the gospel mission.

**2. Mary . . . Magdalene]** The Hebrew name means "a plaiter of hair" or a "tower." The Babylonian Talmud speaks of Mary, "a plaiter of woman's hair," using a similar Hebrew word. But it is more probable that she is named after Magdala, "tower," the place whence she came, a town near Tiberias. There is no reason for identifying her with the sinful woman

COMMON VERSION.

50 And he said to the woman, Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace.

CHAP. VIII.—And it came to pass afterward, that he went throughout every city and village, preaching and shewing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God: and the twelve were with him,

2 And certain women, which had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities, Mary called Magdalene, out of whom went seven devils,

REVISED VERSION.

50 this that even forgiveth sins? And he said unto the woman, Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace.

8 And it came to pass soon afterwards, that he went about through cities and villages, preaching and bringing the<sup>1</sup> good tidings of the kingdom of God, and with him the 2 twelve, and certain women who had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities, Mary that was called Magdalene, from whom

<sup>1</sup> Or, *gospel*

of the former chapter. She was terribly afflicted with demons and Jesus cured her, Mark 16 : 9, and being in good circumstances, she as a disciple provided needful temporal things for the comfort of Jesus and the twelve. There is no ground for the popular opinion that she was once an unchaste woman. She was at the crucifixion, burial, and resurrection. Compare Mark 15 : 47 ; 16 : 1-9 ; and John 19 : 25 ; 20 : 11-18. The "seven" demons indicates complete possession, seven being one of the complete Hebrew numbers.

**3. Joanna . . Susanna]** We know no more of these women than is here stated. Joanna's husband was either Herod's treasurer, or the head of his household. The Greek word is used in both senses. His wife was in high social position, as Obadiah in Ahab's house, and as the saints in Nero's household. The loving ministry of women is fittingly noticed in the Gospels. They were benevolent, full of good deeds and gentle ministrations.

**4. he spake by a parable]** When a great multitude came together, and, as Luke adds, "they of every city resorted unto him," perhaps in consequence of the "preaching" circuit mentioned in vs. 1-3, he spake by parable ; that is, by using a real or supposed natural incident to teach religious truth. For a special discussion on the use and meaning of parables, see Rice on Matthew, p. 138. The parable seems to be a very easy and simple style of teaching. But let any one try to make a good parable suitable for teaching spiritual truth, and he will probably find it not as easy as it seems. Compare any of the parables found in secular literature with those spoken by our Lord, and the great superiority of the latter will at once appear.

**5. sower went]** It is "the sower," not "a sower." Jesus was seated in a boat, and the crowd stood on the beach, Matt. 13 : 2. He could point the people to the rich plain of Gennesaret where the grain was then growing, from the sowing of a few weeks before. He used this scene before him to illustrate the growth of the spiritual kingdom. The sower went forth to sow his seed. Jesus was the divine Sower: his seed is the word of God. See v. 11.

**way side . . was trodden . . and . . devoured]** Fields are without fences, and are often crossed by foot-paths, in the East. Even through growing grain, paths will be made by strangers and neighbors, and some superstitious farmers of Syria consider it a good omen to have them made. So in a broadcast sowing on a field *before* the plowing, which is the usual way in the East, the seed would be "trodden underfoot," a touch of naturalness given by Luke only, and in keeping with what any traveller may see there at seed

## COMMON VERSION.

3 And Joanna the wife of Chuza Herod's steward, and Susanna, and many others, which ministered unto him of their substance.

4 ¶ And when much people were gathered together, and were come to him out of every city, he spake by a parable :

5 A sower went out to sow his seed : and as he sowed, some fell by the way side ; and it was trodden down, and the fowls of the air devoured it.

## REVISED VERSION.

3 seven demons had gone out, and Joanna the wife of Chuzas Herod's steward, and Susanna, and many others, that ministered unto <sup>1</sup> them of their substance.

4 And when a great multitude came together, and they of every city resorted unto

5 him, he spake by a parable : The sower went forth to sow his seed : and as he sowed, some fell by the way side ; and it was trodden under foot, and the birds of the

<sup>1</sup> Many ancient authorities read *him*.

time. He may also see flocks of birds of every sort swooping down and carrying away the seed, especially that falling along the paths, even before the rude plow of that country covers it. The birds represent Satan who comes and catches away the word from hard hearts, beaten like a path, by the steady tread of worldly thought and worldly pleasure and business. See v. 12. They do not care to believe, and so they miss being saved. The word is good, the teacher is faithful, but the heart is too hard and unprepared for the truth.

**6. fell upon a [on the] rock]** The heavy beds of rock are covered with very thin soil. The grain springs up quickly, from the warmth, but the soil is too shallow, and the Eastern sun dries it soon, so that the grain withers. So some hearts are shallow; they impulsively rejoice while hearing the word, as in revivals, or religious excitements, are very demonstrative and ardent for a little time, but when trials and testings come through putting their profession into practice, they give up, wilt, do not stand the test. See v. 13.

**7. the thorns . . choked it]** Thorns of many kinds abound in Palestine. In its soil weeds grow rank and thorns also. The grain seed grows slower, for the thorn has the start, and slow-growing grain soon gets overshadowed and choked. So there are hearts that receive the word, mingled with the thoughts, and cares of this world, its business and its pleasures, and while the hearts are not yet hardened by these cares, as in the wayside hearers, yet soon the worldly thoughts and cares outgrow in interest and importance the word and its lessons, and thus the word is choked. See v. 14. They may have some evidence of bearing fruit for a time, but the spiritual fruit is blasted and never comes to ripeness or completeness. It is the semblance without the substance.

**8. good ground]** Observe the difference is in the ground, the heart, not in the sower or the seed. Where the heart is prepared, "honest and good," like the Psalmist's, Ps. 119: 11, the fruit is good. See v. 15. Notice too that of the four kinds of soil, only one was fruitful: of the four kinds of hearts or hearers, only one kind really profited by the word.

**he cried]** Saying these things, he cried aloud, as a herald would call to the people to hearken: these spiritual truths are of such infinite concern that whoever has any moral sense should give careful attention to them.

**9. his disciples asked]** The disciples were perplexed over this parable. It was comparatively a new mode of teaching for Jesus to use. So when the twelve and a few others were alone, Mark 4: 10, they asked him several

## COMMON VERSION.

6 And some fell upon a rock; and as soon as it was sprung up, it withered away, because it lacked moisture.

7 And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprang up with it, and choked it.

8 And other fell on good ground, and sprang up, and bare fruit a hundredfold. And when he had said these things, he cried, He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

9 And his disciples asked him, saying, What might this parable be?

## REVISED VERSION.

6 heaven devoured it. And other fell on the rock; and as soon as it grew, it withered

7 away, because it had no moisture. And other fell amidst the thorns; and the thorns

8 grew with it, and choked it. And other fell into the good ground, and grew, and brought forth fruit a hundredfold. As he said these things, he cried, He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

9 And his disciples asked him what this

questions, as "what this parable might be" or mean, and why he spoke in parables.

**10. Unto you it is given to know]** You have a heart for these things, therefore these truths can be understood by you, and will be revealed to you. A similar thought was expressed at another time. "If any man willeth to do his will, he shall know of the teaching." John 7 : 17, Revised Version. The "mysteries" or secrets, the hidden power of spiritual truth, are revealed by the Spirit to those who sincerely desire to know them. The word is borrowed from the religious mysteries of the Greek religion which were explained only to the "initiated," the disciples. If they were explained to those having no heart for them, the truths would not be appreciated nor understood. The truths would only tend further to harden the heart. They would be pearls before swine. To those who have rejected the truth already the truth is best presented in parables, that those who have a heart for it may profit by it, while those who have no heart for it will find it a mystery. Compare Paul's argument in Rom. 1 : 28-32.

**SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.**—1. The diligence of Jesus in teaching is an example to all Christians. 2. Our spiritual blessings should constrain us to deeds of benevolence. 3. Women may be very helpful in the work of Christ. 4. The humblest may minister to Christ's messengers. 5. Though the sower and the seed may be good, the heart may not be prepared to profit by the word. 6. From a heart trodden hard by worldly cares, the devil easily snatches away the word. 7. An impulsive reception of the word may bring no lasting fruit. 8. Trials test the strength of Christian profession. 9. Riches and worldly cares are liable to smother the growth of the word and of Christian life. 10. Any religion that does not bear good fruit is not safe. 11. There are three kinds of hearts unfit to receive the word to one kind that will profitably hear it. 12. Hear now. Now is the accepted time; there is no promise of a to-morrow. 13. The prepared heart will be given to those who desire it.

## COMMON VERSION.

10 And he said, Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God: but to others in parables; that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand.

11 Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God.

12 Those by the way side are they that hear; then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved.

13 They on the rock *are they*, which, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, which for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away.

14 And that which fell among thorns are they, which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of *this* life, and bring no fruit to perfection.

15 But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep *it*, and bring forth fruit with patience.

## REVISED VERSION.

10 parable might be. And he said, Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God: but to the rest in parables; that seeing they may not see, and hearing  
11 they may not understand. Now the parable  
12 is this: The seed is the word of God. And those by the way side are they that have heard; then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word from their heart, that they  
13 may not believe and be saved. And those on the rock *are* they who, when they have heard, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, who for a while believe,  
14 and in time of temptation fall away. And that which fell among the thorns, these are they that have heard, and as they go on their way they are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of *this* life, and bring  
15 no fruit to perfection. And that in the good ground, these are such as in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, hold it fast, and bring forth fruit with patience.

TEACHING: STILLING THE STORM. 8:16-25. Compare Mark 3:31-35; 4:21-25, and 36-41. Matt. 8:23-27; 12:46-50.

GALILEE, A. D. 28.

**16. No man, when he hath lighted]** The illustrations and applications of truth in vs. 16-18 are found in Mark 4:21-25 in nearly the same connection as here. But in Matthew they are found in different relations: v. 16 in Matt. 5:15, is a part of the Sermon on the Mount; v. 17 is in Matt. 10:26, in connection with the mission of the twelve, and part of v. 18 is found in Matt. 13:12. The simple and obvious explanation of all this is that our Lord repeated some of his sayings at different times and in different places. There is clear evidence of this in the Gospels. No man having lighted a lamp (for candles were not used in the East) covereth or hideth it under a vessel (the Greek word had a wide meaning, and applied to any household utensil or furniture), or places it under a bed (literally a couch). The Eastern bed is a simple mat or rug spread on the floor; a lighted lamp could not well be placed under it, but the couch or divan is raised from the floor and a low Eastern lamp could be placed under it. The object of a lamp is to give light to those in the house. So the Christian is to reflect the truth and grace of the Gospel.

**17. shall not be made manifest]** The truth here intended to be taught seems to be allied to that in Matt. 10:26, and perhaps the counterpart of it. It is not that secret sins will be revealed, though that is a truth elsewhere taught, so much as it is that the truths of the kingdom now taught by parable and privately explained to the disciples, will by and by, be revealed and spread before the world. This would come in due time. But see Luke 11:33-36.

**18. Take heed]** The disciples are to take heed how they hear, for now they are hearing for themselves, and for others also. The heedless hearer may think he hath the truth (see Revised Version), and his false confidence may cause him to miss even the opportunity to get it, which he would otherwise have improved.

**19-21. My mother and my brethren are these]** In what place in Galilee this visit of his "mother and brethren" was made to Jesus is unknown. The time it occurred was probably before speaking the parable of

COMMON VERSION.

16 ¶ No man, when he hath lighted a candle, covereth it with a vessel, or putteth it under a bed; but setteth it on a candlestick, that they which enter in may see the light.

17 For nothing is secret, that shall not be made manifest; neither *any thing* hid, that shall not be known and come abroad.

18 Take heed therefore how ye hear: for whosoever hath, to him shall be given; and whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he seemeth to have.

19 ¶ Then came to him *his* mother and his brethren, and could not come at him for the press.

REVISED VERSION.

16 And no man, when he hath lighted a lamp, covereth it with a vessel, or putteth it under a bed; but putteth it on a stand, that they that enter in may see the light.

17 For nothing is hid, that shall not be made manifest; nor *anything* secret, that shall

18 not be known and come to light. Take heed therefore how ye hear: for whosoever hath, to him shall be given; and whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that which he <sup>1</sup>thinketh he hath.

19 And there came to him his mother and brethren, and they could not come at him

<sup>1</sup> Or, *seemeth to have*

the sower. It is inferred that Joseph was dead, since he is not mentioned in the Gospels after the passover, when Jesus was twelve years old. He must have died before the crucifixion, as our Lord commended his mother to the care of John. John 19 : 27. Who the "brethren" were, has caused much discussion. Romanists usually hold that they were "cousins," near relatives or disciples, but not "brothers." This they do to maintain their peculiar doctrine about Mary. Some think they were sons of Joseph by a former marriage, hence only half-brothers of our Lord. The natural meaning would be that they were ἀδελφοί, own "brothers." The people asked "his sisters are they not all with us?" So they spoke of his brethren [brothers] James, and Joseph, and Simon, and Judas. Matt. 13 : 55, 56. But Jesus taught that those who hear the word of God and do it, are his very nearest relatives. There is a spiritual relationship that outranks in tenderness the natural.

**22. it came to pass]** On one of those days (see Revised Version), when he was preaching in Galilee, Jesus with his disciples entered a boat upon the lake of Galilee, and said to his disciples, let us go over unto the other (the Eastern) side of the lake : and they launched forth. Jesus, wearied with the long, severe labors of these days, desired rest. As "they sailed," probably in a small fishing boat having oars and small sails, Jesus lay down upon the cushion of the seat or bench in the hinder part of the boat and fell asleep.

**23. there came down a storm]** Notice the graphic and accurate language of Luke ; "there came down a storm of wind on the lake." There are ranges of hills and mountains around this lake, cut by deep gorges. (Often upon that lake now, one may see a sudden and violent wind storm rush down from these mountain gorges, lashing into foaming billows the bosom of the lake which a few minutes before was smooth and beautiful as a sheet of silver. The boat was filling with water and the little company were in great danger.

**24. Master, Master, we perish]** It is a curious fact that a different word is used for master, in the Greek, by each Evangelist. Matthew writes Κύριε, *Kurie*, "Lord," Mark, Διδάσκαλε, *didaskale*, teacher, while Luke writes Επιστάτα, *epistata*, literally "one set over," hence, master. The disciples recognized in Jesus one who filled all three of these offices to them. Their appeal

## COMMON VERSION.

20 And it was told him by certain which said, Thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to see thee.

21 And he answered and said unto them, My mother and my brethren are those which hear the word of God, and do it.

22 ¶ Now it came to pass on a certain day, that he went into a ship with his disciples : and he said unto them, Let us go over unto the other side of the lake. And they launched forth.

23 But as they sailed, he fell asleep : and there came down a storm of wind on the lake : and they were filled with water, and were in jeopardy.

24 And they came to him, and awoke him, saying, Master, Master, we perish. Then he arose, and rebuked the wind and the raging of the water : and they ceased, and there was a calm.

## REVISED VERSION.

20 for the crowd. And it was told him, Thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to see thee. But he answered and said unto them, My mother and my brethren are these who hear the word of God, and do it.

22 Now it came to pass on one of those days, that he entered into a boat, himself and his disciples ; and he said unto them, Let us go over unto the other side of the lake : and they launched forth. But as they sailed he fell asleep : and there came down a storm of wind on the lake ; and they were filling

23 with water, and were in jeopardy. And they came to him, and awoke him, saying, Master, master, we perish. And he awoke, and rebuked the wind and the raging of the water : and they ceased, and there was

to him in such peril and excitement would naturally be in their "mother tongue" which no doubt was Aramaic; so in this threefold account we have the full threefold sense in which they appealed to him for help. Jesus awoke, rebuked the wind and the surging of the waves, and they ceased and there was a calm. Compare Ps. 106 : 9, and Ex. 15 : 8-10. Notice the simplicity and dignity with which the facts are narrated. There is no amplification, no needless detail or effort to excite our wonder; there is the sublimity of truth.

**25. Where is your faith?** After all the miracles they had witnessed, after all the wisdom and power Jesus had shown, and after all his teaching for months past, why should they not have had faith? Some think it refers to a measure of faith that they formerly showed. As if he had asked "where is that faith which *you* have shown at other times," as in forsaking your nets to follow me?

**the winds and [the] water . . obey him** Who then is this? (Revised Version), they asked. He cannot be a mere man. What man could do this? There were probably other ships with them on the lake, as witnesses to this miracle. This may be intimated in the "men" that marvelled, mentioned in Matthew (8 : 27). The winds and the stormy sea were believed to be under the direct control of God, and this calm was scarcely to be accounted for from any but divine power. This idea therefore forced them to think that Jesus was endowed with power possessed by God alone.

SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.—1. Spiritual light is for others as well as for ourselves. 2. We are to spread the gospel in every part of our own land, and in the darkest corners of the heathen world. 3. Hear right. 4. Hear with faith, with reverence, with prayer. 5. Be doers, not hearers only. 6. Doers of his word are brothers and sisters of Christ. 7. The Master was weary with work. 8. The disciples have fears and alarms. 9. The storms in our spiritual life are often sudden and violent. 10. Jesus can still these storms. 11. Keep your faith in Christ bright and strong.

THE GADARENE DEMONIAIC. 8 : 26-40. Compare Matt. 8 : 28-34; Mark 5 : 1-21.

REGION OF DECAPOLIS, A.D. 28.

Of the three accounts of this miracle by the Evangelists, Matthew speaks of two demoniacs; Mark and Luke of only one. Doubtless one was more fierce, and his case is singled out for detailed description by Luke. The old maxim "he who tells of two, includes the one, and he who tells of the one does not deny the two," holds good as an explanation in this case. Robinson gives a good illustration from modern history. In 1824 Lafayette visited the United States, and was welcomed with honors and pageants. Historians will describe this as a great event of Lafayette's life. Some will

COMMON VERSION.

25 And he said unto them, Where is your faith? And they being afraid wondered, saying one to another, What manner of man is this! for he commandeth even the winds and water, and they obey him.

REVISED VERSION.

25 a calm. And he said unto them, Where is your faith? And being afraid they marvelled, saying one to another, Who then is this, that he commandeth even the winds and the water, and they obey him?

describe the visit and honors as enjoyed by two persons, Lafayette and his son. Will there be any contradiction?

**26. country of the Gadarenes [Gerasenes]** There are three Greek readings here; the great uncial MSS. not agreeing therein. The Alexandrian MS. reads "Gadarenes" as in the common English Version. The Vatican MS. reads "Gerasenes" as in the Revised Version. The Sinaitic MS. reads "Gergesenes." As Gadara was the larger, and better known city, it would seem natural to designate the region as the country of the Gadarenes. Yet it is clear the miracle could not have been very near to the city of Gadara, for it is too far from the Sea of Galilee. The region might be sufficiently designated after any one of several towns on the east side of the lake. The scene of the miracle was doubtless near the modern Khersa or Kersa, on the south-east shore, and on the opposite side of the lake from Capernaum. It lay in Gaulanitis.

**27. there met him . . . a certain man]** Luke, like Mark, fixes attention upon one. Perhaps this one was the most violent, or he made the request to go with Jesus after the healing, a fact which Luke and Mark mention, but Matthew omits. The man belonged to, or had lived in, the town of Gergesa (Khersa), at least until this affliction of demons came upon him; then he dwelt in the caves also used as burial places for the dead. He was so terribly afflicted that he wore no clothes, and would not stay in a house, but lived in the cave-tombs. There are many cave-tombs near modern Khersa.

**28. he saw Jesus . . . fell down]** There seems to have been a dual or double will in this poor man. He had a consciousness of his own, and there seems to have been a consciousness of the demons manifesting itself in his speech and in his acts. When the two wills came into collision the demons had the upper hand. Acting under the sway of the demons, the man fell down before Jesus, and in the common phrase of the East, cried out in a loud voice, What have I to do with thee? or, literally, what to me and to thee, Jesus, Son of the Most High God. I beseech thee, torment me not. The demons knew who Jesus was, as the man of himself would not; they knew his power. So they through the man make this confession.

**29. the unclean spirit to come out]** Here the demoniac is generally

## COMMON VERSION.

26 ¶ And they arrived at the country of the Gadarenes, which is over against Galilee.

27 And when he went forth to land, there met him out of the city a certain man, which had devils long time, and ware no clothes, neither abode in any house, but in the tombs.

28 When he saw Jesus, he cried out, and fell down before him, and with a loud voice said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God most high? I beseech thee, torment me not.

29 (For he had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. For oftentimes it had caught him; and he was kept bound with chains and in fetters; and he brake the bands, and was driven of the devil into the wilderness.)

## REVISED VERSION.

26 And they arrived at the country of the <sup>1</sup>Gerasenes, which is over against Galilee.

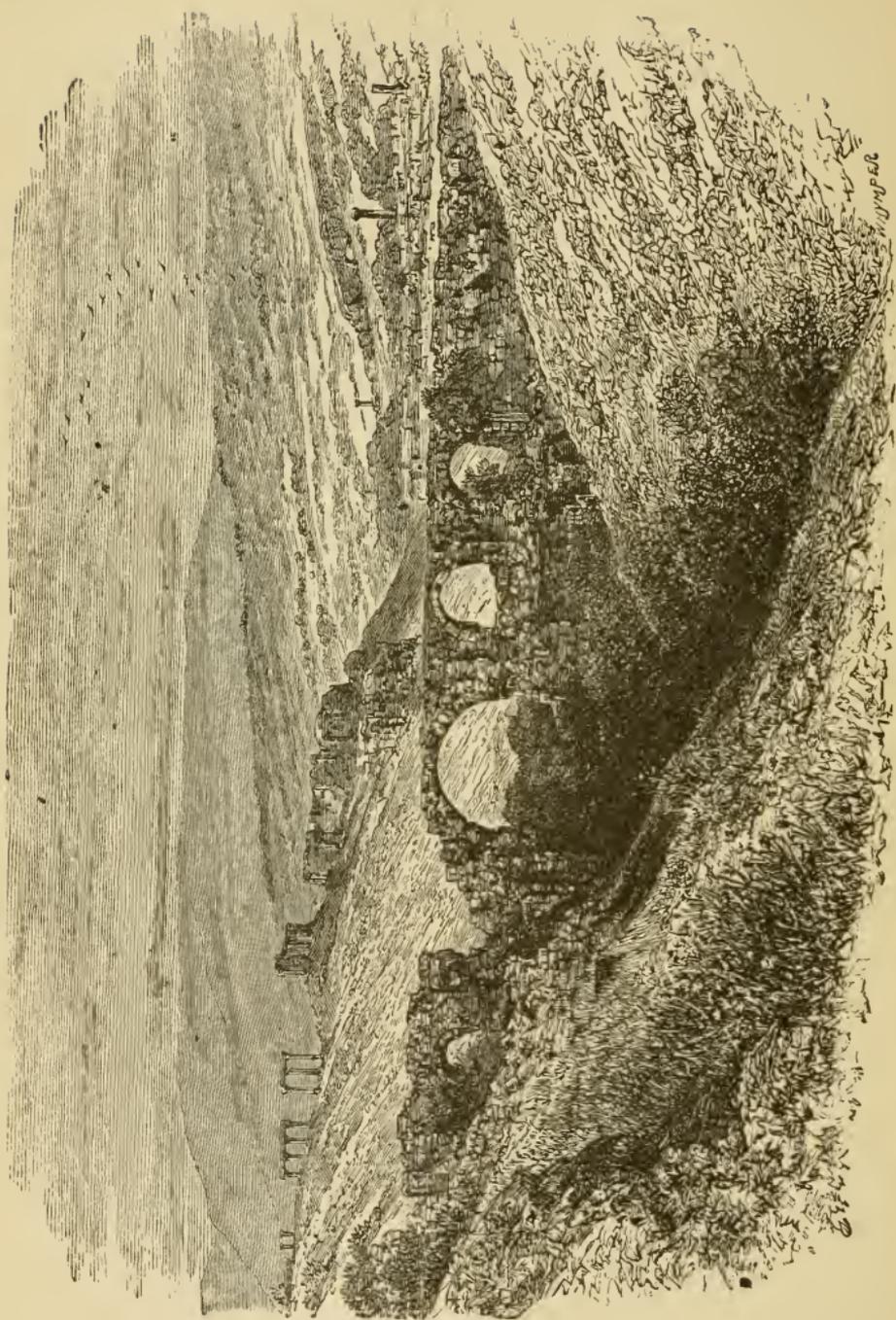
27 And when he was come forth upon the land, there met him a certain man out of the city, who had demons; and for a long time he had worn no clothes, and abode not in

28 any house, but in the tombs. And when he saw Jesus, he cried out, and fell down before him, and with a loud voice said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of the Most High God? I beseech thee, torment me not.

29 For he was commanding the unclean spirit to come out from the man. For <sup>2</sup>oftentimes it had seized him; and he was kept under guard, and bound with chains and fetters; and breaking the bands asunder, he was driven of the demon

<sup>1</sup> Many ancient authorities read *Gergesenes*; others, *Gadarenes*; and so in ver. 37.

<sup>2</sup> Or, *of a long time*



Ruins of Gadara.

spoken of as having an "unclean spirit," but in the next verse particularly, as having many demons. This possession gave the man extraordinary strength at times, and caused him to break chains, and rush away from his guards, into the wilderness. See Revised Version.

**30. Legion . . many devils]** Why Jesus asked the question, What is thy name? is not clear. It may have been asked to bring the man himself to a consciousness of his state; or, to reveal to others the serious and terrible power of Satanic spirits. The man appeared to answer, but the demons prompted the reply. The demons were "legion;" not that they were exactly 6,000, the number in a Roman legion, but it was a general phrase for "many" as "legion" is sometimes popularly used among us.

**31. into the deep [abyss]** The demons did not mean by "deep" or "abyss," the Lake of Galilee, but the place or prison of evil spirits. The same Greek word occurs in Rom. 10:7, and in Rev. 20:3. They did not wish to be sent into the abyss of torment, or special punishment. Anywhere they would go, even into swine rather than into the place prepared for them.

**32. he suffered them]** The demons asked to be suffered to enter the swine; Jesus suffered them. That is, he did not forbid or restrain them from going into the swine. The Greek word for "suffered" means primarily "to turn over," hence to suffer, allow, or permit. Why he did not restrain the demons from entering the swine, which led to the drowning of the herd, we cannot tell. Jesus restored a human soul, and saved it from the power of the demons. A herd of swine was nothing compared with the saving of a soul. But Jesus cannot be charged with causing the destruction of the swine; the demons led to their destruction; Jesus simply did not choose to restrain them from causing it, although he did restrain them from further power over the man they were destroying.

**33. ran violently . . . and were choked]** The demons from the man entered into the swine, and the herd ran violently down a steep place into the lake and were drowned. See Revised Version. The old English word "choked" in the Common Version which formerly meant "drowned," is now obsolete in that sense. There is a steep place now near Khersa, with a beach at its foot, down which a herd of swine might run and not recover before they were into the lake.

## COMMON VERSION.

30 And Jesus asked him, saying, What is thy name? And he said, Legion: because many devils were entered into him.

31 And they besought him that he would not command them to go out into the deep.

32 And there was there a herd of many swine feeding on the mountain: and they besought him that he would suffer them to enter into them. And he suffered them.

33 Then went the devils out of the man, and entered into the swine: and the herd ran violently down a steep place into the lake, and were choked.

34 When they that fed *them* saw what was done, they fled, and went and told *it* in the city and in the country.

## REVISED VERSION.

30 into the deserts. And Jesus asked him, What is thy name? And he said, Legion; for many devils were entered into him.

31 And they intreated him that he would not command them to depart into the abyss.

32 Now there was there a herd of many swine feeding on the mountain: and they intreated him that he would give them leave to enter into them. And he gave them leave.

33 And the demons came out from the man, and entered into the swine: and the herd rushed down the steep into the lake, and were drowned.

34 And when they that fed them saw what had come to pass, they fled, and told it in the city and in the coun-

**35. clothed, and in his right mind]** The swineherds ran to the city to tell the news, which brought a crowd from the city and vicinity to see what was done. They came to Jesus, and found the man from whom the demons had gone out sitting at the feet of Jesus, as a scholar was accustomed to sit when he was learning from his master. It implies, therefore, that Jesus was teaching the healed man of the kingdom of God. The man was in his right mind, the demon no longer having control of his will, and he was clothed. Notice these marks of his complete restoration. The men who saw all this were awed. Again they heard the story of how the man was miraculously healed.

**37. to depart from them]** After hearing the story again, all the people of the country of the Gadarenes, or Gerasenes as the Revised Version reads, asked him to depart from them, for they were seized with a great fear. One with such power aroused all their superstitious awe and dread of the most terrible calamities. That Jesus had saved a human soul, probably made far less impression upon them than the strange, wild, apparently self-destructive act of the swine. This they connected with Jesus and with the man. So they would not feel at ease with such a person as Jesus on their shores. He granted their prayer: he left them. The prayer of the wicked is sometimes granted.

**39. Return . . shew [declare] how great things God hath done]** The healed man desired to be with Jesus, but Jesus sent him away. The Lord knows how to direct every soul according to its needs, and for his glory. The young ruler was required to sell his possessions and "come and follow" Jesus. Matt. 19 : 21. The leper was charged to say nothing to any man, but to go show himself to the priest. Mark 1 : 44. The disciple in Matt. 8 : 21, 22, was not allowed even to go home and bury his father. But the Gadarene demoniac was sent home to his friends. And one reason is obvious. The whole country had stoutly urged Jesus to leave, so that he could not spread the news of the kingdom of God there. The healed man could not say much

## COMMON VERSION.

35 Then they went out to see what was done; and came to Jesus, and found the man, out of whom the devils were departed, sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed, and in his right mind: and they were afraid.

36 They also which saw *it* told them by what means he that was possessed of the devils was healed.

37 ¶ Then the whole multitude of the country of the Gadarenes round about besought him to depart from them; for they were taken with great fear: and he went up into the ship, and returned back again.

38 Now the man, out of whom the devils were departed, besought him that he might be with him: but Jesus sent him away, saying,

39 Return to thine own house, and shew how great things God hath done unto thee. And he went his way, and published throughout the whole city how great things Jesus had done unto him.

## REVISED VERSION.

35 try. And they went out to see what had come to pass; and they came to Jesus, and found the man, from whom the demons were gone out, sitting, clothed and in his right mind, at the feet of Jesus: and they

36 were afraid. And they that saw it told them how he that was possessed with

37 demons was <sup>1</sup>made whole. And all the people of the country of the Gerasenes round about asked him to depart from them; for they were holden with great fear: and

38 he entered into a boat, and returned. But the man from whom the demons were gone out prayed him that he might be with him:

39 but he sent him away, saying, Return to thy house, and declare how great things God hath done for thee. And he went his way, publishing throughout the whole city how great things Jesus had done for him.

<sup>1</sup> Or, saved

about the kingdom, but he could tell the story of his miraculous cure. He could tell what God had done for his body and for his soul. He obeyed; he published in the whole city how great things Jesus had done for him. Mark says he spread the news in Decapolis, the region of the ten cities east and south of the Lake of Galilee. Thus a wide portion of that country gained some knowledge of the work of Jesus. The people of Galilee welcomed Jesus back to their shore, though he had been thrust away from the opposite shore. They remembered his teaching and soon thronged about him to see and hear more. They were hungry for his gospel.

SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.—1. How sad is the state of those over whom Satanic spirits have control! 2. Jesus alone has power over evil in us and over the evil one. 3. What a change when Satan is driven out of a man, and the Holy Spirit enters! 4. The wicked do not want Jesus to remain near them. 5. It is a fearful judgment, when God answers the prayer of the wicked. 6. A human soul saved, and a herd of swine lost; or a herd of swine kept, and a human soul lost; which would you choose? 7. Sometimes God allows us to lose temporal possessions that we may give more attention to his kingdom. 8. The godless often love swine more than Christ. 9. The saved can tell what great things God has done for them.

RAISING JAIURUS' DAUGHTER; HEALING THE TIMID WOMAN. 8 : 41-56.  
Compare Matt. 9 : 18-26; Mark 5 : 22-43.

CAPERNAUM, A. D. 28.

**41. Jairus . . a ruler of the synagogue]** Mark says "one of the rulers." The synagogue was under the direction, not of clergymen, but of laymen, who also sometimes exercised judicial power. The "minister" of Luke 4 : 20 was an "attendant," Revised Version, something like our sexton. Usually there were ten men connected with each synagogue. Some suppose they were all judges or members of a smaller court; others that there were three judges; or three officers, or rulers, one who was the chief, and the others associated with him. See notes under 4 : 14-25. Jairus is from the Hebrew *Jair*, meaning "Jehovah enlightens." Judg. 10 : 3.

**42. only daughter, about twelve]** It is noteworthy that he should make a plea for a "daughter." In the East daughters were and still are regarded as of comparatively small importance in the house. The birth of a son is cause for great congratulation; not so the birth of a daughter. This incident shows how Jewish life differed from ordinary Eastern ideas, in esteem for girls in a family. Luke brings out the touching fact that this was an "only

COMMON VERSION.

40 And it came to pass, that, when Jesus was returned, the people *gladly* received him: for they were all waiting for him.

41 ¶ And, behold, there came a man named Jairus, and he was a ruler of the synagogue; and he fell down at Jesus' feet, and besought him that he would come into his house:

42 For he had one only daughter, about twelve years of age, and she lay a dying. But as he went the people thronged him.

REVISED VERSION.

40 And as Jesus returned, the multitude welcomed him; for they were all waiting for him. And behold, there came a man

named *Jairus*, and he was a ruler of the synagogue: and he fell down at Jesus' feet, and besought him to come into his house; 42 for he had an only daughter, about twelve years of age, and she lay a dying. But as he went the multitudes thronged him.

daughter." So he mentions an "only son" of the widow of Nain, in 7: 12, and the "only child," the lunatic boy, in 9: 38. Jairus' daughter at twelve years of age would be in the East quite mature, and she "lay a dying." Jesus started for the ruler's house, and the multitudes thronged him.

**43. a woman . . . had spent all her living]** Her disease made her ceremonially unclean. She had spent all her means upon physicians, but they had not cured her. Mark says she only grew worse. The Talmud gives several methods for the cure of this disease, but they are all similar to this: "set the sufferer where two ways meet, with a cup of wine in her hand, and let some one come suddenly behind and frighten her, saying, Arise from thy flux." If this was not effective, then another similar one was to be tried. Tradition gives the name of the woman, as Veronica, and one of the apocryphal gospels says she was one of the witnesses for Jesus at his trial before Pilate. As the name is not Jewish, the tradition cannot be trusted.

**44. touched the border of his garment]** This "border" was no doubt the Hebrew *Tsitsith*, which the law required to be worn, Num. 15: 38-40. It was a fringe or tassel at each of the four corners of the outer garment. In the time of our Lord, the school of Shammai decided that each tassel should consist of four filaments or threads, and be four finger-lengths, and attached to the corners of a square garment. Jesus would wear the ordinary dress of a Jewish teacher. This consisted of a long kerchief twisted into a *Sudar* or turban, and worn upon the head; of a *Chalug* or long undergarment or "coat," worn next the body; of a *Chiton* or outer close-fitting, sleeved garment reaching to the ankles, and secured about the loins by a girdle; of the *Tallith*, the square garment having the *Tsitsith* or tassels at the four corners. The afflicted woman worked her way through the throng, and came near enough to Jesus to touch one of the tassels at the corner of his *Tallith*, and immediately her bloody flux was cured.

**45. touched me]** There was no unconscious healing virtue in Jesus. When healing went forth, he willed it to go. So he asked, who is it that touched me? When all the disciples denied any knowledge of a special touch, Peter in his naturally impulsive way, speaking for the others, reminded Jesus of the crowd that were pressing and crushing upon him. But Jesus again explained that the touch was one that had given special healing to some one. Meanwhile looking about his eye selected the person.

## COMMON VERSION.

43 ¶ And a woman having an issue of blood twelve years, which had spent all her living upon physicians, neither could be healed of any,

44 Came behind him, and touched the border of his garment: and immediately her issue of blood stanch'd.

45 And Jesus said, Who touched me? When all denied, Peter and they that were with him said, Master, the multitude throng thee and press thee, and sayest thou, Who touched me?

46 And Jesus said, Somebody hath touched me: for I perceive that virtue is gone out of me.

## REVISED VERSION.

43 And a woman having an issue of blood twelve years, who<sup>1</sup> had spent all her living upon physicians, and could not be healed

44 of any, came behind him, and touched the border of his garment: and immediately the

45 issue of her blood stanch'd. And Jesus said, Who is it that touched me? And when all denied, Peter said,<sup>2</sup> and they that were with him, Master, the multitudes

46 press thee and crush thee. But Jesus said, Some one did touch me: for I perceived

<sup>1</sup> Some ancient authorities omit *had spent all her living upon physicians, and.*

<sup>2</sup> Some ancient authorities omit *and they that were with him.*

**47. declared . . for what cause]** The woman, conscious that the eye of Jesus had singled her out, tremblingly came, and falling down before him confessed before them all for what cause she had thus secretly touched him, and that she felt herself healed immediately. She was timid, and it was this frank confession that Jesus saw would be the best for her. He did not chide her for this secret approach and touch, a touch that the law counted unclean. Augustine happily says, "they press, she touches; flesh presses, faith touches."

**48. Daughter . . thy faith]** Not your touch, but your faith "hath saved you," see margin, Revised Version; go into peace. Having made this open confession, Jesus bids her depart with his blessing, completely healed.

**50. Fear not : . . believe]** While Jesus was talking with the woman a messenger comes from the ruler's house saying, Thy daughter is dead: worry not the teacher. Though he might have done something to cure the disease, he can do nothing now; so the ruler's friends believed. But Jesus overheard the message, and speaks to the ruler, Fear not; death need not destroy your hope, nor shake your belief.

**52. not dead, but sleepeth]** When Jesus reached the house the public mourners were already there, and the fearful wailing, weird flute-playing, and usual noise and confusion of an Eastern funeral had begun. According to the Mishna, the poorest Israelite when his wife died had not less than two fluters or pipers and one mourning woman, hired, of course. As this man was a ruler, there must have been several. The mourning women answered the pipers in doleful wails, the neighbors would chatter and praise the dead, and the tumult and uproar would be frightful to our ears. Jesus selected three of his disciples—Peter, James, and John, and the parents of the child—as witnesses. Then, speaking to the crowd to quiet them, he says, "She is not dead, but sleepeth." John 11 : 11. A boaster or a mere wonder-worker would have said exactly the opposite of this: she is not sleeping; not in a swoon,

## COMMON VERSION.

## REVISED VERSION.

47 And when the woman saw that she was not hid, she came trembling, and falling down before him, she declared unto him before all the people for what cause she had touched him, and how she was healed immediately.

48 And he said unto her, Daughter, be of good comfort: thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace.

49 ¶ While he yet spake, there cometh one from the ruler of the synagogue's house, saying to him, Thy daughter is dead; trouble not the Master.

50 But when Jesus heard it, he answered him, saying, Fear not: believe only, and she shall be made whole.

51 And when he came into the house, he suffered no man to go in, save Peter, and James, and John, and the father and the mother of the maiden.

52 And all wept, and bewailed her: but he said, Weep not; she is not dead, but sleepeth.

53 And they laughed him to scorn, knowing that she was dead.

47 that power had gone forth from me. And when the woman saw that she was not hid, she came trembling, and falling down before him declared in the presence of all the people for what cause she touched him, and how she was healed immediately.

48 And he said unto her, Daughter, thy faith hath<sup>1</sup> made thee whole; go in peace.

49 While he yet spake, there cometh one from the ruler of the synagogue's house, saying, Thy daughter is dead; trouble not

50 the<sup>2</sup> Master. But Jesus hearing it, answered him, Fear not: only believe, and she shall

51 be<sup>3</sup> made whole. And when he came to the house, he suffered not any man to enter in with him, save Peter, and John, and James, and the father of the maiden and

52 her mother. And all were weeping, and bewailing her: but he said, Weep not; for

53 she is not dead, but sleepeth. And they laughed him to scorn, knowing that she

1 Or, saved thee

2 Or, Teacher

3 Or, saved

but she is dead. Jesus meant that as he was so soon to arouse her, the temporary suspension of life was only like a sleep. But the crowd wholly derided him, knowing that she was dead.

**54. taking her by the hand]** The simplicity and marks of truthfulness of this narrative are noteworthy. When he had put out the noisy, tumultuous crowd, Jesus takes the girl by the hand, and says, child, arise. And her spirit returned, and she rose up immediately, and he commanded that something be given her to eat. Mark gives the two Aramaic words Jesus spoke to the girl, showing that his familiar tongue was the Aramaic. Again he charges the amazed parents not to tell of this miracle, perhaps lest he should be diverted from his true mission into one of mere wonder-working. It certainly is worthy of note that, on the other side of the lake, only a day or two before, he had directed the healed demoniac to go to his friends, and tell what great things God had done for him. In the case of Jairus the charge did not prevent the spread of his fame. See Matt. 9: 26.

**SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.**—1. In trouble and sorrow go to Jesus. 2. The greater our trouble, the greater our need of Jesus. 3. The timid may have strong faith. 4. Jesus can remove our secret troubles. 5. The crowd need not keep us from Jesus. 6. We cannot hide from the searching eye of God. 7. He will have us confess our blessings, and him as their author. 8. The touch of faith heals. 9. Christ's touch and call bring dead souls to life. 10. The spirit has an existence separate from the body. v. 55. 11. Christ has power over body and spirit after death. 12. His miracles were for his glory, and to confirm our faith.

**MISSION OF THE TWELVE.** 9:1-9. Compare Matt. 10:1-42; 11:1; 14:1, 2; Mark 6:7-16.

GALILEE, WINTER, EARLY IN A.D. 29.

**1. he called .. twelve .. and gave them power]** This appears to have been after a preaching circuit in Galilee (Matt. 9: 35-38), which Robinson and other harmonists regard as the third circuit. Jesus pitied the people, and sent out the twelve (see the revised reading), with the strength and the right to control demons and to cure diseases. This power was given to attest their message. As a minister now is given credentials from some ecclesiastical body of well-known authority, which he can show where he may not be known, and have his position and authority respected, so Jesus gave power over demons and over disease to the twelve, to be evidence of their true mission and of the truth of their message.

COMMON VERSION.

54 And he put them all out, and took her by the hand, and called, saying, Maiden, arise.

55 And her spirit came again, and she arose straightway: and he commanded to give her meat.

56 And her parents were astonished: but he charged them that they should tell no man what was done.

CHAP. IX.—Then he called his twelve disciples together, and gave them power and authority over all devils, and to cure diseases

REVISED VERSION.

54 was dead. But he, taking her by the hand, 55 called, saying, Maiden, arise. And her spirit returned, and she rose up immediately: and he commanded that *something* be given her to eat. And her parents were amazed: but he charged them to tell no man what had been done.

9 And he called the twelve together, and gave them power and authority over all

**2. preach the kingdom of God]** Their first business was "to preach," in the sense of herald, or proclaim, the kingdom of God; that is, the coming of that kingdom, and all that it meant to lost men. The healing was to attest the preaching, healing of body and spiritual healing also.

**3. Take nothing for your journey]** "Take" is from the Greek word meaning to "provide" one's self, as more definitely stated in Matthew. What they usually had and wore would be sufficient for this proposed journey; they need not provide a staff, wallet (a kind of knapsack), nor provision bag, bread, nor money, nor two coats (see revised reading). The people would entertain them on this mission. The people were not in houses scattered through the country, as in the farming sections of our country, but the houses were in clusters as hamlets, towns, and cities. When any two of the twelve entered a house (for they were sent out by twos, Mark 6 : 7) they were to abide in that house as long as they remained in that town. If they were not hospitably received, as the custom of the East required then, and does now, they were to witness against the town, by the formal act of shaking the dust from their feet. This the apostles at a later period did. See Acts 13 : 51 ; 18 : 6.

**6. preaching the gospel, and healing]** The twelve formed into six delegations, each delegation consisting of two disciples, made extended preaching tours "everywhere," meaning probably everywhere in Galilee, the region to which the narrative of Jesus' ministry by Luke here relates. Judas was among the twelve preachers. His words may have been earnest and his message truthful, yet his heart was not right towards God. It is a sad fact that a man may preach Christ with great earnestness, and yet be a lost sinner. Jesus trained his disciples, and multiplied his labors, spreading the news of salvation and the healing of the sick in every part of that country.

**7. Herod the tetrarch heard]** This was Herod Antipas, who heard of the work of the six companies of the twelve, and also of the increasing fame of Jesus. Herod was perplexed not so much by the works, as by the report of some that John, whom he beheaded, was risen from the dead.

## COMMON VERSION.

2 And he sent them to preach the kingdom of God, and to heal the sick.

3 And he said unto them, Take nothing for your journey, neither staves, nor scrip, neither bread, neither money; neither have two coats apiece.

4 And whatsoever house ye enter into, there abide, and thence depart.

5 And whosoever will not receive you, when ye go out of that city, shake off the very dust from your feet for a testimony against them.

6 And they departed, and went through the towns, preaching the gospel, and healing every where.

7 ¶ Now Herod the tetrarch heard of all that was done by him: and he was perplexed, because that it was said of some, that John was risen from the dead;

8 And of some, that Elias had appeared; and of others, that one of the old prophets was risen again.

## REVISED VERSION.

2 demons, and to cure diseases. And he sent them forth to preach the kingdom of God,

3 and to heal <sup>1</sup>the sick. And he said unto them, Take nothing for your journey, neither staff, nor wallet, nor bread, nor money;

4 neither have two coats. And into whatsoever house ye enter, there abide, and thence

5 depart. And as many as receive you not, when ye depart from that city, shake off the dust from your feet for a testimony against

6 them. And they departed, and went throughout the villages, preaching the gospel, and healing everywhere.

7 Now Herod the tetrarch heard of all that was done: and he was much perplexed, because that it was said by some, that John was risen from the dead; and by some, that Elijah had appeared; and by others, that one of the old prophets was risen again.

<sup>1</sup> Some ancient authorities omit *the sick*.

Among the "some" who said this was Herod himself, as Matthew tells us; 14 : 2; perhaps the result of his guilty conscience working upon his disordered or superstitious mind. Some Jews thought that Jesus was Elijah, or an old prophet risen from the dead.

**9. Herod said . . . who is this ?]** The perplexed and unsettled state of Herod's mind is forcibly brought out in the several narratives; John I beheaded, but who is this, about whom I hear such things? Then comparing the reports and suffering from the lashings of his conscience for the murder of John the Baptist, he exclaims, "This is John . . . risen from the dead; . . . therefore do these powers work in him." See Matt. 14 : 2, revised reading. And Herod sought to see Jesus, as he had often desired to see John and to hear him. He wished to gratify his curiosity, and he hoped perhaps to quiet his conscience by being assured that John had risen, thinking, if he had risen, his wickedness in beheading John might not be so great. Herod saw Jesus when the latter was arraigned before Pilate, for Pilate sent Jesus to Herod who mockingly arrayed him in gorgeous apparel and sent him back to Pilate. Luke 23 : 6-12.

**SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.**—1. The first Christian missionaries had strong credentials. 2. Their outfit was simple and inexpensive. 3. They were to preach the kingdom of God first, working miracles to call attention to, and to attest their mission. 4. The first mission was a "home mission." 5. The disciples were not to waste time in looking for "good places." 6. The faithful messengers preach everywhere. 7. The news of the gospel stirs up guilty consciences. 8. They are alarmed at the power of Christ and his messengers. 9. The guilty may have a curiosity to see Jesus, but no desire to obey him. 10. Quesnel thoughtfully observes: "Men will never be able to establish the kingdom of God . . . so long as they do not appear fully persuaded themselves of the truths which they preach. How can they appear so, if they plainly contradict them in their practice? In order to persuade others to be unconcerned for superfluities a man must not appear himself too much concerned about necessaries."

**THE FIVE THOUSAND FED.** 9 : 10-17. Compare Matt. 14 : 13-21; Mark 6 : 30-44; John 6 : 1-14.

IN GALILEE, A. D. 29.

**10. the apostles . . . returned]** The twelve returned in twos as they went out, and told Jesus what they had done. Neither of the evangelists, however, tell us what their report was or what they did. Perhaps their success was small compared with that of the seventy. If it had been great, and

COMMON VERSION.

9 And Herod said, John have I beheaded; but who is this, of whom I hear such things? And he desired to see him.

10 ¶ And the apostles, when they were returned, told him all that they had done. And he took them, and went aside privately into a desert place belonging to the city called Bethsaida.

REVISED VERSION.

9 And Herod said, John I beheaded: but who is this, about whom I hear such things? and he sought to see him.

10 And the apostles, when they were returned, declared unto him what things they had done. And he took them, and with-

had excited their wonder, it would have been natural for some of the evangelists to have recorded that fact.

**city called Bethsaida]** The Greek MSS. vary in their reading here, some reading "into a desert place belonging to a city called Bethsaida," as the Common Version reads: others omitting "into a desert place belonging," and reading "withdrew apart to a city called Bethsaida" as the Revised Version has it. Still other Greek copies omit "Bethsaida," which would leave us free to infer that the miracle might have been elsewhere, as perhaps in the region of Tiberias. See John 6 : 23.

**11. followed him]** Matthew and Mark tell us the people followed him on foot, easy enough to do if Jesus went by boat across the lake towards Tiberias, but not so easy, if he sailed across to the north-east beyond Bethsaida Julias, as some suppose. For, in that case the people going on foot around the lake would be compelled to ford the Jordan in spring time when it was much higher than usual, which we can scarcely believe "the women and children," Matt. 14 : 21, would be able to do safely, even if it is assumed that the men might ford or swim the swollen Jordan. This is a serious objection to locating the miracle on the north-east side of the lake. Wherever it was, Jesus refreshed by the brief rest in the boat welcomed the people, preached to them, and healed all that had need of healing. He instructed their souls and cured their bodies.

**12. into the towns [villages] and country round about]** This suggestion of the twelve made towards evening does not imply that they expected the crowds to return to their homes, but to find lodging and food in some of the hamlets or villages not very far away. It implies that there were villages and places not far away sufficient to provide for a crowd of 5000 with their women and children. There were, we know from Josephus, villages abundant for this purpose in the region of Tiberias. Whether there were places sufficient to lodge them near Julias on the north-east side of the lake is not known.

**13. Give ye them to eat]** The disciples knew of five loaves and two fishes, in the hands of a boy, who appears to have been a helper of the apostles; and these loaves were a scant supply provided for the Master and the twelve. They were barley loaves, John 6 : 9, food of the common people. The disciples could not see what the Master meant. He surely did not want them to use up their little money in buying food for such an immense crowd.

## COMMON VERSION.

11 And the people, when they knew *it*, followed him: and he received them, and spake unto them of the kingdom of God, and healed them that had need of healing.

12 And when the day began to wear away, then came the twelve, and said unto him, Send the multitude away, that they may go into the towns and country round about, and lodge, and get victuals: for we are here in a desert place.

13 But he said unto them, Give ye them to eat. And they said, We have no more but five loaves and two fishes; except we should go and buy meat for all this people.

## REVISED VERSION.

11 drew apart to a city called Bethsaida. But the multitudes perceiving it followed him: and he welcomed them, and spake to them of the kingdom of God, and them that had need of healing he healed. And the day began to wear away; and the twelve came, and said unto him, Send the multitude away, that they may go into the villages and country round about, and lodge, and get provisions: for we are here in a desert place. But he said unto them, Give ye them to eat. And they said, We have no more than five loaves and two fishes; except we should go and buy food for all this

So they waited in amazement for his explanation. He gave none, but instead a command.

**14. Make them sit down]** or, literally, "Make them recline" on the green grass, Mark 6:39, from which it is clear that it was spring, and that the summer sun had not yet parched up the grass, as it does in mid-summer in that country. The Lord loves order, not confusion. He requires the crowd to be seated, or more accurately, "to recline" on the green grass in ranks or companies by fifties, that is, fifty in parties or companies; not "in ranks" exactly, as the Common Version has it, but in groups. The Jewish custom would require that the men eat by themselves, and the "women and children" present, Matt. 14:21, would be apart by themselves. From Mark's description we infer that the ground was sloping, so that the groups or parties would appear to rise one above another, like plats in a garden upon the sloping side of a hill. Thus they could all see what Jesus had in his hands, and what he did.

**16. blessed . . brake . . gave]** There is a marvelous simplicity and impressiveness in this brief description. How graphic! The five loaves and the two fishes, in his hands, the look to heaven, the blessing, then the breaking and the giving to the disciples to hand to the multitude.

**17. broken pieces [fragments] . . twelve baskets]** The great crowd all ate, all were filled, and there remained over twelve baskets full of the fragments, not of pieces that were partly eaten, but of these that were not needed; so each disciple had a basket full to satisfy his hunger at another time. The baskets were the small provision baskets *κόφιννοι* in which a Jew commonly carried his food to avoid pollution when going abroad, or among non-Jewish or semi-Jewish peoples. In the miracle of the 4000 soon after, the basket was the larger rope-basket. The Latin poet Juvenal mentions the smaller wicker-basket here named. *Sat.* 3:14; 6:542. In the larger basket Paul was let down from the wall at Damascus, and escaped from the fury of his enemies. Acts 9:25. The old question of how to feed the hungry crowds presses upon Christ's disciples now as it did nearly 2000 years ago. He solved it then: his teaching and spirit must solve it now. But he meant to teach a profounder truth; "I am that bread of life." Read the sixth chapter of John as one of the best commentaries on the spiritual truth taught by this miracle.

SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.—1. Christ can supply food for the body and

## COMMON VERSION.

14 For they were about five thousand men. And he said to his disciples, Make them sit down by fifties in a company.

15 And they did so, and made them all sit down.

16 Then he took the five loaves and the two fishes, and looking up to heaven, he blessed them, and brake, and gave to the disciples to set before the multitude.

17 And they did eat, and were all filled: and there was taken up of fragments that remained to them twelve baskets.

## REVISED VERSION.

14 people. For they were about five thousand men. And he said unto his disciples, Make them <sup>1</sup> sit down in companies, about fifty

15 each. And they did so, and made them all <sup>16</sup> sit down. And he took the five loaves and the two fishes, and looking up to heaven, he blessed them, and brake; and gave to the disciples to set before the multitude.

17 And they did eat, and were all filled; and there was taken up that which remained over to them of broken pieces, twelve baskets.

<sup>1</sup>Gr. *recline*.

for the soul. 2. Jesus teaches his disciples that he has power to create food. 3. He impresses upon them, and upon the people that he loves order. 4. He sets us an example of reverence in asking a blessing on food. 5. He can feed a multitude in a desert: he can feed hungry souls in heathen lands. 6. He also gives abundance and to spare. 7. Yet he directs the fragments to be gathered, that there be no wastefulness.

THE CROSS FORETOLD. 9:18-27. Compare Matt. 16:13-28; Mark 8:27-31.

GALILEE, A. D. 29.

**18. as he was alone praying]** Luke often notes this habit of our Lord, of praying alone or apart, and this instance is recorded by Luke only. Jesus was on his way northward towards the region of Cæsarea Philippi and the Mount of Transfiguration.

**Whom say the people that I am?]** Or, to correct this ungrammatical expression, read "Who do the multitudes say that I am?" as in the revised reading. This question seems to have been asked, that Jesus might correct the views of the disciples. He surely knew what the people said, and did not ask the question to gain information of the disciples, but to fix right views of himself in their minds. They answered that some, as Herod, said he was John the Baptist, others that he was Elijah or one of the old prophets. The latter was the popular Jewish idea about Jesus.

**20. The Christ of God]** Following their first answer, comes a second personal and pointed question, Who say ye that I am? Peter, speaking for all, promptly declared Jesus to be the Messiah, for that is the meaning of "The Christ of God." It was a turning point in the history of the apostolic band. He was no longer "Master" merely, no longer a wonderful Jewish rabbi, and a wonder-worker, no longer a great prophet only; he was now and henceforth to be in their thoughts the Messiah of God's people, their temporal King (for this was yet foremost in their thought) and spiritual Deliverer and King. They still clung to the Jewish idea of the temporal reign of the Messiah, as we see from Mark 8:31-33. But they were to be silent now about his Messianic nature. The time had not come to proclaim it. He must yet be rejected by the priests, the representatives of his chosen people, and be crucified, and the third day after the killing must be raised again. He does not say, but implies that then they might proclaim his Messianic person and mission.

COMMON VERSION.

18 ¶ And it came to pass, as he was alone praying, his disciples were with him; and he asked them, saying, Whom say the people that I am?

19 They answering said, John the Baptist; but some say, Elias; and others say, that one of the old prophets is risen again.

20 He said unto them, But whom say ye that I am? Peter answering said, The Christ of God.

REVISED VERSION.

18 And it came to pass, as he was praying apart, the disciples were with him: and he asked them, saying, Who do the multitudes say that I am? And they answering said, John the Baptist; but others say, Elijah; and others, that one of the old prophets is risen again. And he said unto them, But who say ye that I am? And Peter answer-

**23. take up his cross]** If you would continue to be followers of the Messiah that ye call me, you will need further denial of self. There are no high positions, no places of ease and honor, no wealth or power to gratify the flesh as you might expect in the company of an earthly king. But there are daily crosses, a life of hardship, obscurity, persecution, and dishonor in the world, to follow me. See Rom. 8 : 36 ; 1 Cor. 15 : 31. If the apostles shared in the delusions of the scribes in respect to the glorious temporal reign of the Messiah, this language of Jesus must have dazed, and well-nigh bewildered them.

**24. save his life . . lose his life]** This remarkable paradox is well suited to fasten the truth upon all disciples. Trying to save the present life, the body, we risk and often lose the true life, the soul. We gain the pleasures of time and lose the bliss of eternity. The natural life is doomed to death ; we strive to save it, we lose it, and do not gain spiritual life in Christ. But losing this life in Christ we save it, by having it transformed into a new life in him who is the Life of his people. If a man gain the world, yet forfeit his own self, his true self, becoming a castaway in God's great kingdom, what a sorrowful bargain he has made ! The loss is eternal. This is the verse that is said to have been the spring of the life-long devotion and remarkable consecration of the great Catholic missionary, Francis Xavier.

**26. ashamed of me]** The cross, the trials, the persecutions, the loss of life itself, are awful tests of Christian faith and fidelity. No wonder some would stop, and stagger in the face of such a fiery pathway to heaven. But to turn aside, to waver is to be "ashamed" of Christ, and of such he will be ashamed in the day of his glorious appearance. What an agonizing prayer such a test wrings from every sincere follower of Jesus !

**27. not taste of death]** "Death" evidently means a natural death. What was it then to "see the kingdom of God" ? This has been variously answered : 1. To see the Christian church set up in the world. 2. To see Christ himself transfigured ; so Chrysostom, Jerome, Hilary, Theophylact,

## COMMON VERSION.

21 And he straitly charged them, and commanded *them* to tell no man that thing ;

22 Saying, The Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be slain, and be raised the third day.

23 ¶ And he said to *them* all, If any *man* will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.

24 For whosoever will save his life shall lose it : but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it.

25 For what is a man advantaged, if he gain the whole world, and lose himself, or be cast away ?

26 For whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory, and in his Father's, and of the holy angels.

27 But I tell you of a truth, there be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the kingdom of God.

## REVISED VERSION.

21 ing said, The Christ of God. But he charged them, and commanded *them* to tell

22 this to no man ; saying, The Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and the third day be raised up.

23 And he said unto all, If any man would come after me, let him deny himself, and

24 take up his cross daily, and follow me. For whosoever would save his life shall lose it ; but whosoever shall lose his life for my

25 sake, the same shall save it. For what is a man profited, if he gain the whole world,

26 and lose or forfeit his own self ? For whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my

words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in his own glory,

and *the glory* of the Father, and of the holy

27 angels. But I tell you of a truth, There are some of them that stand here, who shall in

no wise taste of death, till they see the kingdom of God.

and other early Christians held. 3. To see the destruction of Jerusalem, which marked the first stage of the new kingdom. 4. To see the second coming of Christ. 5. To see his resurrection. 6. To be converted before death. 7. That it has a continual fulfillment in the transfiguration, the resurrection, the ascension, the second coming, and the end of the world. The first seems the simplest and most natural interpretation.

SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.—1. The world has many opinions about Christ: most of them are wrong. 2. The true disciple is given spiritual discernment to know and confess Jesus as the Christ. 3. Sufferings and the cross were Jesus' portion for our sake. 4. The soul is of unspeakable value. 5. Some persons try to gain the world and lose their own souls. 6. "Those who have not gained Christ have lost all."—*Bernard*. 7. Better be Lazarus with Abraham, than the rich man in torment. 8. The kingdom of God will become glorious; his saints shall see it.

THE TRANSFIGURATION. 9 : 28-36. Compare Matt. 17 : 1-13; Mark 9 : 2-13.

REGION OF CÆSAREA PHILIPPI, A. D. 29.

**28. about eight days]** The article "an" of the Common Version has no representative word in the Greek, and should be omitted. The "eight days" here include the day from which the reckoning is made, and the day after the interval, while the "six days" of Matthew and Mark exclude them. Peter, James, and John were special witnesses, the elect or select three, at the raising of Jairus' daughter, and at the agony in Gethsemane.

**into a [the] mountain]** Tradition early pointed out Tabor as the scene of the transfiguration. Jerome accepted it, and the Empress Helena erected a church there to commemorate the event. Old as this tradition is, it has been quite uniformly rejected of late because recent explorations and historical investigation make it very improbable. Jesus was in the region of Cæsarea Philippi, just before and soon after the event. Some spur of Hermon is therefore more likely to have been the place of this glorious scene. Jesus again went into the mountain for prayer. Thus he prayed at his baptism, and at the appointment of the twelve. As he prayed, heaven seemed to draw near, and he was wrapped in a garment of light, his face was changed into glorious radiance, his whole form was transfigured from the human to the

COMMON VERSION.

28 ¶ And it came to pass about an eight days after these sayings, he took Peter and John and James, and went up into a mountain to pray.

29 And as he prayed, the fashion of his countenance was altered, and his raiment was white and glistering.

30 And, behold, there talked with him two men, which were Moses and Elias :

31 Who appeared in glory, and spake of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem.

REVISED VERSION.

28 And it came to pass about eight days after these sayings, he took with him Peter and John and James, and went up into the mountain to pray. And as he was praying, the fashion of his countenance was altered, and his raiment became white and dazzling.

30 And behold, there talked with him two men, who were Moses and Elijah; who appeared in glory, and spake of his<sup>1</sup> decease which he was about to accomplish at Jeru-

<sup>1</sup> Or, departure

angelic and divine, full of splendor, not as if light shone upon him, but as if he were all resplendent and glorious with light from within. The glory was "dazzling" like the glory of the noon-day sun. Two forms like men appeared, known in some way to the disciples as Moses and Elijah. They talked; their thoughts and conversation were of heaven, but they spoke in the language of earth. Their theme was redemption. Their discourse was of the work Christ was to complete at Jerusalem.

**32. saw his glory]** The rendering here may be "when they were awake or fully awake," as in the text of the common and revised readings, or it may be rendered "were heavy with sleep, but having remained awake [or watching] they saw his glory," adopting the reading in the margin of the Revised Version. This would mean that although they were very sleepy, they had remained watching through the scene, seeing this his glory. The other would imply that they were so heavy or overcome that they fell into a partial sleep in spite of themselves, but were roused up by the sight of his glory. The Greek word *διαγρηγορήσαντες* for "fully awake" is not used elsewhere in the New Testament, but the same verb without the prefix occurs 23 times, and 21 times (22 in the revised reading) is rendered "watch" or "watching," and not "to wake up." The prevalent meaning of it is clearly not "to wake up," but "to keep awake," "to watch." See Matt. 24 : 42, 43; 25 : 13; 26 : 38, 40, 41; Mark 13 : 34, 35, 37; 14 : 34, 37; Luke 12 : 37, 39; Acts 20 : 31. In one instance only it is rendered "wake," 1 Thess. 5 : 10, in the Common Version, but even there the Revised Version renders it "watch" in the margin. "To watch through" is the meaning of the compound word in ordinary Greek, so that the rendering "when they were awake" or "fully awake" is more an interpretation or gloss upon, than a rendering of the Greek. The sacred writer declares that though "heavy with sleep," they watched through the scene, and saw his glory. It was no dream of minds half awake; it was an actual event seen by trustworthy witnesses, who though naturally drowsy from weariness, watched through the entire glorious transfiguration and appearance of Jesus, and of his two heavenly visitors.

**33. let us make three tabernacles]** As the two men, Moses and Elijah, were parting from Jesus, see revised reading, or were taking leave of him, Peter in an ecstatic state said to Jesus, "Master," not teacher, but "the one set over us," "it is good for us to be here," and as if reminded of the joyous feast of tabernacles when the Jews dwelt in booths, he adds, let us make three booths, one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elijah, not

## COMMON VERSION.

32 But Peter and they that were with him were heavy with sleep: and when they were awake, they saw his glory, and the two men that stood with him.

33 And it came to pass, as they departed from him, Peter said unto Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here: and let us make three tabernacles: one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias: not knowing what he said.

## REVISED VERSION.

32 salem. Now Peter and they that were with him were heavy with sleep: but <sup>1</sup> when they were fully awake, they saw his glory, and the two men that stood with him.

33 And it came to pass, as they were parting from him, Peter said unto Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here: and let us make three <sup>2</sup> tabernacles: one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elijah: not knowing

<sup>1</sup> Or, having remained awake

<sup>2</sup> Or, booths

knowing what he said, he was so completely carried out of himself with joy and ecstatic feeling. Persons in modern times have become so completely absorbed in religious thought and enjoyment that they have become quite unconscious of what they did or said.

**35. This is . . . my Son]** Notice the revised reading, "This is my Son, my chosen; hear ye him." The cloud overshadowed them as it came upon the tabernacle in the wilderness, where it was a symbol of the divine presence. As Moses and Elijah entered into the cloud returning to heaven, the witnesses, the disciples feared. Then a voice came for the second time from heaven acknowledging Jesus as the Son, the chosen one of God, and called on his followers to hear him. After hearing the voice, the prostrate disciples were gently touched by Jesus, and they saw that he was again alone. The disciples were silent about this wonderful vision in those days, but after his ascension, when his appearance was so like the transfiguration, they reported it to all the disciples. On the way down the mountain, Jesus and his disciples had a conversation about the coming of Elijah, which Luke omits.

**SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.**—1. Christ was often in prayer apart from the multitude. 2. His divine glory was veiled while in human form. 3. The glory was there, and shone forth at his will. 4. Moses and Elijah appearing on the mount, shows us the safety of believers after death. 5. Saints in the world of spirits are deeply interested in the work of Christ and of saving men. 6. Jesus is the light of the world. 7. If it was good to see Jesus transfigured on earth, what must it be to see the ineffable glories of heaven!

**HEALING A CHILD: TEACHING BY A CHILD.** 9:37-48. Compare Matt. 17:14-21; 18:1-9; Mark 9:14-47.

REGION OF CÆSAREA PHILIPPI, AND GALILEE, A. D. 29.

**37. when they were come down]** Jesus and the three disciples spent the night on the Mount of Transfiguration. In the morning they came down to the foot of the mountain where were the nine disciples and a great multitude. Mark, whose account is more full, adds that the scribes were around the nine disciples troubling them with perplexing questions, and taunting them about their failure to cure the demoniac child.

**38. mine only child]** A man in the crowd cried out to Jesus as he ap-

COMMON VERSION.

34 While he thus spake, there came a cloud, and overshadowed them: and they feared as they entered into the cloud.

35 And there came a voice out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son: hear him.

36 And when the voice was past, Jesus was found alone. And they kept *it* close, and told no man in those days any of those things which they had seen.

37 ¶ And it came to pass, that on the next day, when they were come down from the hill, much people met him.

38 And, behold, a man of the company cried out, saying, Master, I beseech thee, look upon my son; for he is mine only child.

REVISED VERSION.

34 what he said. And while he said these things, there came a cloud, and overshadowed them: and they feared as they

35 entered into the cloud. And a voice came out of the cloud, saying, This is <sup>1</sup>my Son, my

36 chosen: hear ye him. And when the voice <sup>2</sup>came, Jesus was found alone. And they held their peace, and told no man in those days any of the things which they had seen.

37 And it came to pass, on the next day, when they were come down from the mountain, a great multitude met him.

38 And behold, a man from the multitude cried, saying, <sup>3</sup>Master, I beseech thee to look upon my son; for he is mine only

<sup>1</sup> Many ancient authorities read *my beloved Son*. See Matt. xvii. 5; Mark ix. 7.

<sup>2</sup> Or, *was past*      <sup>3</sup> Or, *Teacher*

peared. The people were amazed either by the character of Jesus' appearance, as in the case of Moses whose face shone when he came from the mount with God, or by the suddenness of his coming. The man appeals to Jesus as "Teacher" for help, and explains what was the cause of dispute between the scribes and the disciples. Here was an "only son" again, like that of the widow of Nain. This child was an epileptic, see Matt. 17 : 15, and a demoniac so sorely afflicted that his life was often in peril. His distressed father describes a paroxysm and how it affects the child.

**40. they could not]** There is no other record of any case of sickness which the disciples apart from the Master could not cure by the power he gave them. Here is a case of signal failure. It is a case of complex afflictions; demoniac and a "lunatic," or, judging from the symptoms more accurately, it was epilepsy. The cure baffled the nine disciples. Perhaps the severity of the disease filled them with distrust.

**41. faithless and perverse generation]** These words of reproof seem to be mainly intended for the father of the child and the scribes. But they must also be applied to the multitude, and to the disciples, though perhaps not with the same force as to the scribes. Then Jesus commands the father and his friends to bring the child. As the child was coming, "the demon dashed him down," and tore or convulsed him grievously. The description answers to a combined attack by the demon and by a fit of epilepsy. Mark adds the piteous plea of the father, "If thou canst do anything [after thy disciples have failed], have compassion on us." And he also gives the remarkable response of Jesus. The "if" is not mine, but thine to remove. "If thou canst! All things are possible to him that believeth." See Mark 9 : 23, revised reading. As the child had no power to exercise faith, the father must have faith for him, or he could not be cured. So the father cries out "I believe; help thou mine unbelief." Combining the several accounts the healing may be thus stated: 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. 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. But Jesus took him by the hand, and lifted him up; and he arose; and he delivered him again to his father. And they were all amazed at the mighty power of God.

## COMMON VERSION.

39 And, lo, a spirit taketh him, and he suddenly crieth out; and it teareth him that he foameth again, and bruising him, hardly departeth from him.

40 And I besought thy disciples to cast him out; and they could not.

41 And Jesus answering said, O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you, and suffer you? Bring thy son hither.

42 And as he was yet a coming, the devil threw him down, and tare him. And Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit, and healed the child, and delivered him again to his father.

## REVISED VERSION.

39 child: and behold, a spirit taketh him, and he suddenly crieth out; and it <sup>1</sup>teareth him that he foameth, and it hardly departeth 40 from him, bruising him sorely. And I besought thy disciples to cast it out; and they 41 could not. And Jesus answered and said, O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you, and bear with 42 you? bring hither thy son. And as he was yet a coming, the demon <sup>2</sup>dashed him down, and <sup>3</sup>tare him grievously. But Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit, and healed the

<sup>1</sup> Or, convulseth<sup>2</sup> Or, rent him<sup>3</sup> Or, convulsed

**43. they were all amazed [astonished]** "They were all astonished at the majesty of God." Calmness, dignity, and power were blended in this act of Jesus. The people were compelled to ascribe all these to the majesty of God, in Jesus. Though nine disciples had failed, the Master had with a word prevailed.

**45. they understood not this saying]** The disciples were lacking in faith, and this lack not only caused them to fail in the contest with the demoniac spirit, but led them to wonder at the power of Jesus. He wished them to remember why they had failed; so he said literally, "Put you these words into your ears." And he added another reason for the charge: "the Son of man shall be delivered up into the hands of men," and as he more fully explained, he shall be crucified, and the third day rise again. See Matt. 17: 22, 23; Mark 9: 31, 32. But they did not understand what he meant. After the resurrection and ascension they saw the truth very clearly; the Holy Spirit guided and enlightened their minds, and wrought a great change in their perception of Christ's teaching.

**48. whosoever shall receive this [little] child]** The disciples appear to have gained some vague idea, from the half understood predictions of Jesus, that he would soon be declared the Messiah, and would assume his royal power and set up his kingdom, as an earthly ruler would do. This was the occasion of a "reasoning" or dispute among the disciples. They disputed which one of them would become the greater in that kingdom; which would have the higher and more honorable place and the greater authority. If Peter was to become pope, here was the time and this the place for declaring it. Instead of doing so, Jesus signally rebuked Peter with the rest of the ambitious apostles. Taking a little child, and setting him by his side he gave them a very impressive object lesson on humility and true greatness. He that receiveth one such little child in my name, that careth for the least, and becometh the least, the most humble, teachable and willing to serve, is the

## COMMON VERSION.

43 ¶ And they were all amazed at the mighty power of God. But while they wondered every one at all things which Jesus did, he said unto his disciples,

44 Let these sayings sink down into your ears: for the Son of man shall be delivered into the hands of men.

45 But they understood not this saying, and it was hid from them, that they perceived it not: and they feared to ask him of that saying.

46 ¶ Then there arose a reasoning among them, which of them should be greatest.

47 And Jesus, perceiving the thought of their heart, took a child, and set him by him,

48 And said unto them, Whosoever shall receive this child in my name receiveth me; and whosoever shall receive me, receiveth him that sent me: for he that is least among you all, the same shall be great.

## REVISED VERSION.

43 boy, and gave him back to his father. And they were all astonished at the majesty of God.

But while all were marvelling at all the things which he did, he said unto his disciples, Let these words sink into your ears: for the Son of man shall be delivered up into the hands of men. But they understood not this saying, and it was concealed from them, that they should not perceive it: and they were afraid to ask him about this saying.

46 And there arose a reasoning among them, 47 which of them was the <sup>1</sup>greatest. But when Jesus saw the reasoning of their heart, he took a little child, and set him by his side, and said unto them, Whosoever shall receive this little child in my name receiveth me: and whosoever shall receive me receiveth him that sent me: for he that is <sup>2</sup>least among you all, the same is great.

<sup>1</sup>Gr. *greater*.<sup>2</sup>Gr. *lesser*.

one who will be, and is, great. Observe that Luke does not say "greatest," but only "great."

SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.—1. The glories of heaven and the miseries of hell are strangely close to each other in this world. 2. Parents in trouble about their children cannot do better than to bring them to Jesus. 3. Our faith is often too small to bring a blessing upon others or ourselves. 4. Christ rebukes, but heals. 5. He is ready to bless the young. 6. Good men may be ignorant of the spiritual power in Christ. 7. As Christ was patient with the ignorant, so his disciples should be. 8. Worldly ambition is a serious hindrance to the progress of Christ's kingdom. 9. Pride and self-conceit destroy many souls. 10. The meek will be great in God's kingdom. 11. The child-like in spirit are those whom Christ will commend.

THE SPIRIT OF CHRIST. 9: 49-62. Compare Mark 9: 38-41; also Matt. 8: 19-22.

GALILEE, A. D. 29.

There is some difficulty in settling the order of events in this section. Robinson and some other harmonists place the conversation in vs. 49-50 immediately after the rebuke of the disciples for their dispute about who should be greatest. The incident in vs. 51-56 followed somewhat later while on the way to the feast of tabernacles noticed in John 7: 2-10. The incidents in vs. 57-62 are placed much earlier, just before Jesus crossed the lake towards Gadara, where he healed the Gadarene demoniac. But the subject is further discussed under 17: 11.

**49. casting out devils [demons] in thy name** There were persons among the Jews who attempted to exorcise evil spirits by various methods, and some, like this person and the sons of Sceva in Acts 19: 13, 14, did it by using the name of Jesus. The disciples in their intolerant zeal forbade this man because he was not of their party. So Joshua forbade Eldad and Medad in Num. 11: 27-29. Moses and Jesus were more tolerant, and did not require that every one should be outwardly of the same little band with themselves, but only that they be with them in spirit and in the great end to be accomplished. He that is not against you is for you (see revised reading), does not contradict, but is the complement of the truth, "He that is not with me is against me." Matt. 12: 30. Ryle observes that this applies to our relations to other religious denominations. Churchmen should beware how they condemn dissenters, and dissenters beware how they denounce and revile churchmen. All parties should leave off contention and rejoice in any good which others do. Nor should they be jealous of the missions and churches formed by those of other denominations or by Union Evangelical efforts, nor

COMMON VERSION.

49 ¶ And John answered and said, Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name; and we forbade him, because he followeth not with us.

50 And Jesus said unto him, Forbid him not: for he that is not against us is for us.

REVISED VERSION.

49 And John answered and said, Master, we saw one casting out demons in thy name; and we forbade him, because he followeth not with us. But Jesus said unto him, Forbid him not: for he that is not against you is for you.

weaken them by planting Sabbath-schools and churches of their particular sect where those already formed are sufficient to teach the essential and saving truths of Christ. It is a wicked waste of the funds given into the Lord's treasury, thus needlessly to multiply missions, mission-schools, and churches either in heathen or in Christian lands, where the chief reason obviously is to spread some particular denominational tenet, rather than to strengthen gospel work, and primarily to advance the salvation of souls.

**51. set his face to go to Jerusalem]** As the time of his ascension drew near, for this is the reading of the old Syriac and Arabic versions, he was determined to go up to Jerusalem. This was probably the journey made to that city to attend the feast of tabernacles. John 7 : 10-14. It was not a public but a secret journey made through Samaria. Hence he sent messengers in advance to find entertainment.

**53. they did not receive him]** The Samaritans, finding that it was a Jewish party going to one of the Jewish feasts, refused to entertain Jesus and his company. The Jews had no dealings with the Samaritans; and the Samaritans naturally retaliated in the same spirit, upon all who accepted the Jewish place of worship, to the neglect of the Samaritan temple on Mt. Gerizim. The woman of Samaria showed the same spirit at the well. See John 4 : 20-26.

**54. James and John saw this]** These two disciples, who afterwards showed great moderation and love, here exhibited the fiery zeal of modern sectarianism, and like the papist and the followers of the false prophet would burn and slay with the sword all that did not agree with them and heartily support their way of worship. This may be why they were called "Sons of thunder," their destructive spirit resembling the sudden fury of the lightning. What a wonderful transformation the grace of God worked in their hearts to make them among the mildest and sweetest-tempered of men! Notice that the words "even as Elias did" are omitted in the revised reading, though they seem quite appropriate here, and are found in some of the oldest manuscripts and versions. The allusion is to the attempts of Ahaziah to capture Elijah. 2 Kings 1 : 9-15.

**55. he . . rebuked them]** Jesus taught them a spirit of tolerance. The last clause of the verse, and the first clause of v. 56 are omitted in the

## COMMON VERSION.

51 ¶ And it came to pass, when the time was come that he should be received up, he steadfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem,

52 And sent messengers before his face: and they went, and entered into a village of the Samaritans, to make ready for him.

53 And they did not receive him, because his face was as though he would go to Jerusalem.

54 And when his disciples James and John saw *this*, they said, Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did?

55 But he turned, and rebuked them, and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of.

## REVISED VERSION.

51 And it came to pass, when the days<sup>1</sup> were well-nigh come that he should be received up, he steadfastly set his face to go to Jeru-

52 salem, and sent messengers before his face: and they went, and entered into a village of the Samaritans, to make ready for him.

53 And they did not receive him, because his face was *as though he were* going to Jerusalem.

54 And when his disciples James and John saw *this*, they said, Lord, wilt thou that we bid fire to come down from heaven,

55 and consume them?<sup>2</sup> But he turned, and

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *were being fulfilled*.

<sup>2</sup> Many ancient authorities add *even as Elias did*.

revised reading. They are not found in the Sinaitic, Alexandrian or Vatican manuscripts of this Gospel; and the reading in the manuscripts which do contain these clauses varies. See margin of Revised Version. The disciples of Jesus were to learn that his spirit was not that of Elijah; not that which would burn and destroy, to make converts by fire and fagot and sword, but by forbearance and the spirit of forgiveness and of love. So they went to another, and as the Greek word implies, a village of a different character. Some suppose from the peculiar Greek word used that they went now to a Jewish and not a Samaritan village.

**57. I will follow thee]** Matthew says this man was a scribe, and records his offer before the healing of the demoniacs of Gadara. Matt. 8: 19. There is a certain kind of zeal in the proposal, but it does not sound like one who had carefully counted the cost. Perhaps the scribe looked for a life of ease and comfort in following a teacher of such power and popularity.

**58. Foxes have holes]** Notice also that this one volunteers to be a disciple; he was not called; hence the answer. (Foxes are numerous in Syria, and are not hunted as much as with us; so they are less shy of men than they are in the settled portions of Europe and America. Their holes are in secluded spots and seldom seen. But they have a place of their own in which to lodge, as Jesus had not. Many of the birds of Palestine are birds of passage, and have no nests, but there are some birds that have nests near human habitations, as the sparrow. The Greek word for "nests," however, means rather "lodging-places." Jesus had not even such a place that he called his own. So he would have the scribe consider the self-denial, and count the cost of being a disciple. If it then seemed too hard, the proposal had better be withdrawn, or not accepted.)

**60. Let the dead bury their dead]** The previous man volunteered; this person was called by the Master to be a disciple, but he excused himself. How much the man meant to include in the request to "bury my father," cannot certainly be known. Some think he wanted to remain with, and care for his father until he died. Others think he referred to the seven days lamentation before burial, and a year of mourning after it, or possibly to both

## COMMON VERSION.

56 For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them. And they went to another village.

57 ¶ And it came to pass, that, as they went in the way, a certain man said unto him, Lord, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest.

58 And Jesus said unto him, Foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.

59 And he said unto another, Follow me. But he said, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father.

60 Jesus said unto him, Let the dead bury their dead: but go thou and preach the kingdom of God.

## REVISED VERSION.

56 rebuked them.<sup>1</sup> And they went to another village.

57 And as they went in the way, a certain man said unto him, I will follow thee

58 whithersoever thou goest. And Jesus said unto him, The foxes have holes, and the birds of the heaven have<sup>2</sup> nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.<sup>4</sup>

59 And he said unto another, Follow me. But he said, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury

60 my father. But he said unto him, Leave the dead to bury their own dead; but go thou and publish abroad the kingdom of God.

<sup>1</sup> Some ancient authorities add *and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of.* Some, but fewer, add also *For the Son of man came not to destroy men's lives, but to save them.*

<sup>2</sup> Gr. *lodging-places.*

these practices. The funeral observances in the East are certainly not brief and simple like those among us. They often call for days of absence, and sometimes for many weeks, so that Christ might well rebuke an extravagant and useless custom. (But, further, the excuse indicated a divided heart and one not fully given to the Lord.) The answer clearly means, let the spiritually dead bury their physically dead. Preaching the kingdom of God is the most important work, and not to be hindered by protracted and useless customs in social life.

**61. bid them farewell]** Here is a third case. The formal customs of the East in bidding farewell were not less exacting upon one's time than those of burial. There would be days uselessly wasted in feasting and in other farewell forms that would hinder the disciple. Then the answer in v. 62, which is reported by Luke only, seems to imply a half-hearted decision similar to the previous case of the one wishing to go first and bury his father. The answer of Jesus is in the form of an Eastern proverb or axiom. The Eastern plow calls for all the strength and attention of the plowman. And in that country a man who is once a plowman must always be a plowman; it is a life-work. People do not readily change occupations as among us, particularly Syrian farmers. This illustration has special force therefore. One who started as a farmer, that is, put his hand to the plow, would be expected to continue a farmer to the end of his life. So one called as a disciple would be expected to be a disciple for life, and not waste his devotion upon other diverting things. He would not be "fit" or "well-placed," "well-disposed" for the kingdom if he turned to other things.

**SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.**—1. Christians are not to foster divisions and schisms, but union in Christian work. 2. Let us fight sin and rejoice that others do so, even though they may not adopt our methods of doing it. 3. Worldly ambition is a hindrance to spiritual progress. 4. The humble and the serving Christian is great before God. 5. Christ rebukes persecution that is shielded behind religion. 6. The voluntary follower, full of zeal, is called on first to count the cost of discipleship. 7. The called disciple is not permitted to excuse himself by needless social customs. 8. Whoever follows Christ must do so with an undivided heart. 9. We are to seek first the things of the kingdom; necessary worldly things will be added.

### THE MISSION OF THE SEVENTY. Luke 10:1-12.

GALILEE, A. D. 29.

The narrative of the Mission of the Seventy is given by Luke only. Jesus was probably at or near Capernaum. See verses 13, 15. Robinson and others place the sending out of the Seventy before the incidents in Luke 9:51-56,

#### COMMON VERSION.

61 And another also said, Lord, I will follow thee; but let me first go bid them farewell, which are at home at my house.

62 And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.

#### REVISED VERSION.

61 And another also said, I will follow thee, Lord; but first suffer me to bid farewell to 62 them that are at my house. But Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.

and therefore before Jesus left Galilee for the feast of tabernacles at Jerusalem. John 7 : 2-10. The places to which the seventy were sent are not known. They were probably in lower Galilee and along the Jordan Valley in Peræa and Judæa, and perhaps in Samaria also, through which he passed on his way to the feast.

**1. after these things]** After the general series of events narrated in the previous chapter, Jesus appointed seventy (some manuscripts read seventy-two) others besides the twelve that he had chosen to follow him, and sent them out two and two, as he had the twelve, before him to the places he intended to visit. Thus limited, the number 70 reminds us of the 70 or 72 in the Jewish Sanhedrin, and the 70 elders appointed by Moses. Num. 11 : 16. Notice also the 12 wells of water and the 70 palm trees of Elim. Ex. 15 : 27. Epiphanius, an old Christian writer, places Luke among the seventy; and tradition also names Mark, Silas, Cleopas, and the seven deacons as belonging to this band.

**2. the labourers are few]** This is the same statement that Jesus made before sending out the twelve. Matt. 9 : 37. The harvest was not scant, but the laborers were few. The prayer of the disciples then and now ought to be that the Lord of the harvest would "send forth" or literally "drive out" or "cast forth" as by violence, laborers into his harvest. These seventy likewise were sent as lambs among wolves. Notice that here the word is "lambs," while in Matt. 10 : 16 it is "sheep," but the thought is the same, only intensified here by lambs. The disciples were to go in gentleness and simplicity as lambs, and as defenceless as they, among the rough savage people who would act like wolves toward them. Clement of Rome reports a tradition that Peter asked, "How if the wolves should tear the lambs?" and Jesus replied: "The lambs need not fear the wolves when the lambs are dead," and then added the words, "fear not them that kill the body," Matt. 10 : 28.

**4. purse . . shoes . . salute no man]** See revised reading, "Carry no purse, no wallet, no shoes, and salute no man on the way." They were to go with the clothes and provisions already in hand. Compare the charge to the twelve, Luke 9 : 3. The greeting or salutation to the house was the common

## COMMON VERSION.

CHAP. X.—After these things the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face into every city and place, whither he himself would come.

2 Therefore said he unto them, The harvest truly *is* great, but the labourers *are* few : pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest.

3 Go your ways : behold, I send you forth as lambs among wolves.

4 Carry neither purse, nor scrip, nor shoes : and salute no man by the way.

5 And into whatsoever house ye enter, first say, Peace *be* to this house.

6 And if the son of peace be there, your peace shall rest upon it : if not, it shall turn to you again.

## REVISED VERSION.

10 Now after these things the Lord appointed seventy<sup>1</sup> others, and sent them two and two before his face into every city and place, whither he himself was about to

2 come. And he said unto them, The harvest is plenteous, but the labourers are few : pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest,

3 that he send forth labourers into his harvest. Go your ways : behold, I send you forth as lambs in the midst of wolves.

4 Carry no purse, no wallet, no shoes : and salute no man on the way. And into whatsoever house ye shall<sup>2</sup> enter, first say,

6 Peace *be* to this house. And if a son of peace be there, your peace shall rest upon

<sup>3</sup>him : but if not, it shall turn to you again.

<sup>1</sup> Many ancient authorities add *and two* : and so in ver. 17.

<sup>2</sup> Or, *enter first*, say

<sup>3</sup> Or, *it*

Jewish greeting. To salute one by the way after the Eastern custom would consume much time, but this greeting to a house when they entered it was brief, and required no waste of time. Hence they were not to be discourteous, nor were they to waste time; the King's business required haste. The phrase "if a son of peace" be there, is a Hebraism for "if a peaceful man" be there, he will receive you. If such an one was not there, their peace would return to them.

**7. the labourer is worthy of his hire]** The disciples, like the twelve, were to abide in one house in a town, where they had entered and been received. A proverb is cited as an argument for this course. A laborer is worthy of his hire, in spiritual things, as truly as in worldly things. Churches are not to give a grudging and niggardly support to their ministers and teachers. In all Christian work a fair provision should be made for the workers, in obedience to our Lord's command, 1 Tim. 5: 18. When Christians go forth with the simplicity and faith of the seventy, Christian communities everywhere ought to forward their labors, and provide generously for their needs.

**8. eat such things as are set before you]** Christian workers were not to be gormandizers, nor fussy about their food. Let the Pharisees be needlessly scrupulous about their eating; be not you so. They were to adapt their ways to the ordinary living of the people to whom they were sent. Healing the sick as an attestation of their message, they were to announce the kingdom of God at hand, nigh to the people. The motto of the Christian messenger is to be "I seek not yours, but you." See 2 Cor. 12: 14.

**11. the dust . . . we do wipe off against you]** The dust of Gentile places the Jew would shake off lest it defile him. The dust of those villages that rejected the gospel was shaken off as a witness against the people. The very air and earth will thus become a witness against the ungodly.

**12. more tolerable . . for Sodom]** Lot witnessed against the evil of the Sodomites, but he was a less perfect and clear witness than were the seventy in their mission to the towns of Palestine. Hence the greater the light

## COMMON VERSION.

7 And in the same house remain, eating and drinking such things as they give: for the labourer is worthy of his hire. Go not from house to house.

8 And into whatsoever city ye enter, and they receive you, eat such things as are set before you:

9 And heal the sick that are therein, and say unto them, The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you.

10 But into whatsoever city ye enter, and they receive you not, go your ways out into the streets of the same, and say,

11 Even the very dust of your city, which cleaveth on us, we do wipe off against you: notwithstanding, be ye sure of this, that the kingdom of God is come nigh unto you.

12 But I say unto you, that it shall be more tolerable in that day for Sodom, than for that city.

## REVISED VERSION.

7 And in that same house remain, eating and drinking such things as they give: for the labourer is worthy of his hire. Go not

8 from house to house. And into whatsoever city ye enter, and they receive you, eat such

9 things as are set before you: and heal the sick that are therein, and say unto them, The kingdom of God is come nigh unto

10 you. But into whatsoever city ye shall enter, and they receive you not, go out into

11 the streets thereof and say, Even the dust from your city, that cleaveth to our feet, we do wipe off against you: howbeit know this, that the kingdom of God is come nigh.

12 I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable in that day for Sodom, than for that city.

rejected, the greater the punishment. This rule holds good now in Christian lands. The many and the few stripes also suggest a similar rule.

**SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.**—1. The Lord chooses and sends his messengers. 2. They are to pray for helpers in the Lord's harvest. 3. Their work is perilous; lambs among wolves. 4. They are to be faithful and devoted to their mission. 5. They are to go forth in faith, and be content with simply needful supplies. 6. They are to preach the things of the kingdom of God. 7. Hearers reject the message of God at their peril.

**WOES AND JOYS.** 10: 13-24. Compare Matt. 11: 20-26.

GALILEE AND JUDEA (?) A. D. 29.

**13. if the mighty works had been done in Tyre and Sidon]** The town of Chorazin is also named in Matt. 11: 21. Its site was long unknown, but has been found at Keraseh, where are ruins that at a little distance look like heaps of basaltic stones. They are west of the Jordan and a few miles north of Tell Hum, and indicate that an old town once stood there. Bethsaida was at the north end of the Lake of Galilee and its site is yet unsettled. It was evidently not far from where the Jordan ran into the Lake of Galilee. Some, as Ewald, say there was but one Bethsaida situated on both sides of the Jordan; others hold that there were two, a few miles apart; one called Bethsaida Julias, east of the Jordan, the other west of the Jordan, but they do not agree where. Part place it south of Capernaum, and part north of that place. But the site of Capernaum is yet unsettled, though Tell Hum is the best supported among the sites now suggested. This passage and a similar one in Matthew prove that Jesus did many and notable miracles in Chorazin and Bethsaida. Tyre and Sidon were great commercial cities in Phœnicia on the Mediterranean Sea. Ezekiel uttered prophecies against them. Ezek. 28. Old Tyre and old Sidon are in ruins; new cities have sprung up near their old sites, but the modern ones are inferior in size and in relative importance to the ancient cities. These old heathen cities of Tyre and Sidon would have repented long ago had such works been done in them as had been done in the Jewish towns of Chorazin and Bethsaida.

**14. more tolerable . . . at [in] the judgment]** The solemn truth taught here is that all will be judged according to the spiritual light they have had. The greater the religious privileges possessed, and the greater the light resisted, the greater will be the punishment at last. Those who, like Capernaum, have had exceptional privileges, and unusual calls to the kingdom, and remarkable exhibitions of divine power and the Spirit of God and have neg-

COMMON VERSION.

13 Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works had been done in Tyre and Sidon, which have been done in you, they had a great while ago repented, sitting in sackcloth and ashes.

14 But it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the judgment, than for you.

15 And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted to heaven, shalt be thrust down to hell.

REVISED VERSION.

13 Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the <sup>1</sup>mighty works had been done in Tyre and Sidon, which were done in you, they would have repented long

14 ago, sitting in sackcloth and ashes. Howbeit it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and

15 Sidon in the judgment, than for you. And thou, Capernaum, shalt thou be exalted unto heaven? thou shalt be brought down unto

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *powers*.

lected them; shall they be exalted to heaven? Nay, they shall be brought down unto Hades. See revised reading. Instead of gaining high spiritual position, they shall fall to the lowest.

**16. that heareth you]** If these words were addressed to the seventy, as the connection implies, they were well calculated to cheer the thirty-five pairs of messengers, and to comfort them when others failed to heed their message, as Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum had failed to repent though urged by the preaching and the mighty works of their Master. The seventy were to go forth to the people, not to the lost sheep of Israel alone, as the twelve were commanded to go, but into every city and place (in Samaria, Decapolis, and Pergea) whither he himself was about to come. See revised reading. They were to disregard Pharisaic notions about eating and caste, to break through all Jewish exclusiveness, and have only one condition of acceptance and brotherhood: he that heareth you; that is, whosoever believeth in the coming kingdom of God. As he had given a model prayer, a model sermon, and a model example of home missions in sending out the twelve; so now, in sending out the seventy, he appoints a model band for home and foreign missions. The plan and methods of this mission can be as profitably studied and followed by Christians of the nineteenth, as by those of the first century.

**17. even the devils [demons] are subject unto us]** Where Jesus was when the seventy returned from their mission is uncertain. The return must have been some time after they were sent out, and it is inferred that Jesus had gone from where he was when he sent them to some other place. Robinson places their return at Jerusalem. Wherever it was, their report is full and glowing with success. The demons, which the nine at the foot of the Mount of Transfiguration could not cast out, were subject to the seventy by the power of the name of Jesus. They could command evil spirits and make them come out of persons possessed by them.

**18. I beheld Satan]** In answer Jesus says to the seventy, I beheld Satan fallen as lightning from heaven. See revised reading. That is, Satan has not the power of heaven; he is fallen from heaven as suddenly and as swiftly as lightning, I saw him fallen. You need not marvel that demons are subject to you therefore; this is the outcome of the downfall of Satan, and of the coming of the kingdom of God in the world. The language of our Lord should not be limited to the downfall of Satan's kingdom as seen in the casting out of the demons by the seventy; it refers also to the general subjugation of Satan and his followers past, present, and future. He and his are and will be subject to the power of God's kingdom, as it may please God to direct for the ultimate good of man, and for the glory of Christ.

## COMMON VERSION.

16 He that heareth you heareth me; and he that despiseth you despiseth me; and he that despiseth me despiseth him that sent me.

17 ¶ And the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name.

18 And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven.

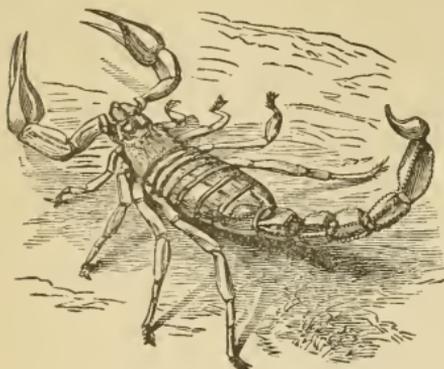
## REVISED VERSION.

16 Hades. He that heareth you heareth me; and he that rejecteth you rejecteth me; and he that rejecteth me rejecteth him that sent me.

17 And the seventy returned with joy, saying, Lord, even the demons are subject unto us in thy name. And he said unto them, I

beheld Satan fallen as lightning from

**19. power . . . serpents and scorpions]** The history of subsequent apostolic work indicates that these words were literally fulfilled. Paul shook



SCORPION OF THE EAST.

off a viper into the fire after the great shipwreck. Acts 28 : 5; compare also Mark 16 : 17, 18. They may also be understood as expressive of power to shake off the wiles and temptations of the devil, that old serpent. See Gen. 3 : 15; Rev. 20 : 2-7. Certainly the next clause, "over all the power of the enemy," refers to Satan and all opposers of the kingdom of God, whoever they are and wherever they may be found. Nothing can really "hurt" Christ's people. They may be persecuted, but their spiritual

life will be securely guarded by the Redeemer of their souls. See this thought fully stated by Paul in Rom. 8 : 27-39.

**20. rejoice not . . . but rejoice]** Do not glory in the fact that demons are subject to you, but glory because your names are recorded in heaven; enrolled there as citizens of that country and kingdom, as names were enrolled of citizens or subjects in the Roman Empire. Phil. 4 : 3; Dan. 12 : 1; Rev. 13 : 8; 20 : 12.

**21. rejoiced . . . and said]** Similar sublime words were spoken on another occasion, see Matt. 11 : 25-27. Here the thanksgiving springs from the wisdom of God the Father in hiding these things from the wise and understanding, those who fancied themselves to be so, and having revealed them to babes in wisdom and understanding. A similar thought is found in Rom. 9 : 11-17. Compare 1 Cor. 1 : 21, 26; 2 Cor. 4 : 3, 4, and also previous teachings of our Lord, see Luke 9 : 47-48; Matt. 16 : 17; 18 : 3, 4. This result was not a mere arbitrary act of God; it follows a law of mind and of truth. Those who refuse to see spiritual truth when they can see it, gradually render themselves unable to see it. Those of little spiritual apprehension, mere babes in experience, yet willing to get and use what they can, gain more and more capacity to apprehend that kind of truth. Thus it is hidden from the first and revealed unto the latter class.

## COMMON VERSION.

19 Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy; and nothing shall by any means hurt you.

20 Notwithstanding, in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven.

21 ¶ In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight.

## REVISED VERSION.

19 heaven. Behold, I have given you authority to tread upon serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall in any wise hurt you. Howbeit in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rejoice that your names are written in heaven.

21 In that same hour he rejoiced <sup>1</sup> in the Holy Spirit, and said, I <sup>2</sup> thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou didst hide these things from the wise and understanding, and didst reveal them unto babes: yea, Father; <sup>3</sup> for so it was well-

<sup>1</sup> Or, by<sup>2</sup> Or, praise<sup>3</sup> Or, that

**22. knoweth who the Son is]** Observe the revised reading "no one," not "no man," which is weaker. Jesus Christ has all power on earth and in the earth. He is Revealer, Creator, Redeemer, and will be final Judge of all mankind. Matt. 28 : 18 ; John 1 : 1-5, 41 ; 17 : 2 ; Rev. 6. These words are filled with divine authority and majesty. Ryle observes, "We read of no patriarch, or prophet, or apostle, or saint of any age, who ever used words like these. They reveal to our wondering eyes a little of the mighty majesty of our Lord's nature and person." And Whitby adds, "This is an argument for the divinity of Christ." No mere man could or would be endued with such unlimited power, and such peculiar privilege of revealing the Father. This instance, and the other similar one in Matt. 11 : 25-27, seem like a breaking through of a divine nature, veiled in human form, an isolated instance in this peculiar way, yet it must be said that in many other ways the divine nature shone through the human during the brief life and mission of Jesus.

**24. many prophets and kings]** This and v. 23 were spoken to the disciples, probably the seventy as well as the twelve. He exalts, to them and to us, the unspeakable privileges of those who are followers of Christ. The Old Testament prophets like Isaiah, and kings like David, Hezekiah, Jehoshaphat, and Josiah longed to see the fulfilment of the promise in the coming of the Messiah, and to hear the wonderful truths he would reveal, but did not see the one nor hear the other. They lived and died in the hope and faith that these things would be accomplished. We live in the full light of that kingdom already set up, and yet how little do we realize the force of these remarkable words of Jesus! How little do we appreciate their significance, or the immense depth and breadth of the privileges which the finished work of Christ brings to believers!

SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.—1. Woes will fall upon those who neglect the gospel call. 2. Those who have refused many calls will have a severer punishment than those who have received few calls to repent. 3. Christ's servants must be faithful in warning men. 4. Their message is to be received as the word of Christ. 5. Christian teachers often rejoice with wonder at the success Christ gives them. 6. They are rather to rejoice because they are citizens of heaven. 7. Truth is hidden or revealed according to the righteous laws appointed by the Father. 8. Christ Jesus has all power in the salvation of man. 9. Believers are peculiarly blessed in seeing and hearing the things of the kingdom. 10. The Old Testament saints lived in hope of a Christ to come. 11. Christians now live by faith in the finished work of Christ.

## COMMON VERSION.

22 All things are delivered to me of my Father: and no man knoweth who the Son is, but the Father; and who the Father is, but the Son, and *he* to whom the Son will reveal *him*.

23 ¶ And he turned him unto *his* disciples, and said privately, Blessed *are* the eyes which see the things that ye see:

24 For I tell you, that many prophets and kings have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen *them*: and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard *them*.

## REVISED VERSION.

22 pleasing in thy sight. All things have been delivered unto me of my Father: and no one knoweth who the Son is, save the Father; and who the Father is, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal *him*. And turning to the disciples, he said privately, Blessed *are* the eyes which see the things that ye see: for I say unto you, that many prophets and kings desired to see the things which ye see, and saw them not; and to hear the things which ye hear, and heard them not.

## THE GOOD SAMARITAN. 10 : 25-37.

JUDÆA, NEAR JERUSALEM, A. D. 29.

The question of the ensnaring lawyer, and the answers with their explanatory parable, were fitted to give truer views of God's law, further to break down Jewish exclusiveness, and to prepare the way for the acceptance of the universal brotherhood of man. Every man in Christ is a "neighbor," and to be treated with neighborly, that is, brotherly kindness. The "lawyer" here was one who explained the Jewish sacred law. He was not like our "attorney" or "counsellor," but resembled the *ulemas* and *softas* among the Moslems, the rabbis among later Jews, and doctors of theology among us. The learning of the Orientals has a narrow range. Among the Moslems a knowledge of the Koran, with or without some interpretations, constitutes a man a scholar. In the East now Christian scholars are seldom as thorough masters of the Christian Scriptures as the Moslem scholars are of the Koran, or the Jews are of the Old Testament. This lawyer knew their sacred law, and made a show of his knowledge by glibly answering the Master's question.

**25. lawyer stood up and tempted him]** He rose up to ask the question, which implies that they were in some public place of concourse and discourse or teaching. The lawyer stood up for the purpose of tempting or entrapping Jesus by a question. He addresses Jesus with affected respect, but with thinly disguised contempt for the Galilean teacher, and supercilious pride in his own superior wisdom. The question was the most important any man could ask, although the manner of the questioner seemed offensive ("Teacher" being uttered perhaps with a sneer), and indicative of little desire and no expectation of learning anything by the answer. On the question "What shall I do to inherit eternal life?" see Luke 18 : 18-23, and Acts 16 : 30, 31.

**26. What is written in the law?]** The lawyer's question implied, I know what our rabbis say that we must do to inherit eternal life, but you are a new teacher; what do you say? Jesus turns the implied thrust back upon the lawyer. In the law what is written? How do you read or understand it yourself? Notice that Jesus does not ask the lawyer what the Jewish church held, but what is written in the law, meaning the first portion of the Old Testament, the Pentateuch. Even Quesnel, a Romanist writer, says: "Jesus Christ himself refers us to the law of God, though he was truth itself. In vain do we seek after other lights and ways besides those which we find there. It is the Spirit of God who dictated the law and made it the rule of our life. It is injurious to him for us either not to study it, or to prefer the thoughts of man before it. The first question which will be put to a Christian

## COMMON VERSION.

25 ¶ And, behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?

26 He said unto him, What is written in the law? how readest thou?

## REVISED VERSION.

25 And behold, a certain lawyer stood up and tried him, saying, <sup>1</sup> Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? And he said unto him, What is written in the law? how

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *Teacher*

at the tribunal of God will be to this effect, 'What is written in the law?' Yet the Romanists condemned Luther, and now condemn others for appealing to God's word as the sole rule of Christian conduct.

**27. Thou shalt love the Lord . . and thy neighbour]** The answer of the lawyer consisted of a passage from Deut. 6 : 5 (see also 10 : 12) and Lev. 19 : 18, and it was a portion of Scripture read almost daily in the synagogue. All except the last clause is the familiar *Shema* still read in synagogue service. The lawyer had this, and no doubt other portions of their sacred law at his tongue's end.

**28. Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live]** The rich young ruler had asked the same question. The lawyer had answered correctly. Now Jesus gives another unexpected turn by saying, This do and thou shalt live. Keep this law fully; that is all God will require. Compare "If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted?" Gen. 4 : 7, and Lev. 18 : 5. This is an universal principle in God's law: you stand on the law; obey the law and live. The wily lawyer is baffled for a moment, conscious perhaps that he has not fully kept this law. For, see how a pupil of Gamaliel, another lawyer and teacher, perceives the far-reaching effect of law without grace, as shown in Rom. 3 : 20-22; 7 : 10, 18; 10 : 5; 13 : 9; and Gal. 3 : 21, 22. The retort at once raised the question, Are you doing this? Our Lord does not say, you are not doing it. He took the lawyer at his own estimate of himself, and of his ability to obey the law, and merely said, Do this, and thou shalt live. As a legalist, the lawyer was thrown back upon the law to be judged by it.

**29. to justify himself . . who is my neighbour?]** Admitting in his thought that it was hard to keep this law fully, yet lawyer-like he wants to justify himself before men, and to his own conscience, so he suggests qualifications and exceptions to the law. The Jew regarded another Jew only as his neighbor. A neighbor was one related to them by blood, or one of the same religion, see Kimchi on Ps. 15 : 3. Gentiles and Samaritans were not real "neighbors," but "dogs" (see the case of the Syrophœnician woman, Mark 7 : 27), within the meaning of the law as interpreted by Jewish rabbis. So the lawyer would fix attention on this point, excuse himself and escape condemnation, and at the same time entrap this new teacher. From time immemorial the Orientals have ever held that there was no obligation to treat members of other sects and religions with the kindness recognized to be due to those of their own religion. It is in keeping with Oriental as well as Jewish ideas, for this lawyer to prove himself religious, since they are ready

## COMMON VERSION.

27 And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself.

28 And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live.

29 But he, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbour?

## REVISED VERSION.

27 readest thou? And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God<sup>1</sup> with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; 28 and thy neighbour as thyself. And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this 29 do, and thou shalt live. But he, desiring to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who

<sup>1</sup> Gr. from.

to believe that there may be religious thieves, thugs, libertines, and rogues, just as we think there may be scientific rogues.

**30. from Jerusalem to Jericho . . . among thieves [robbers]** This road was indeed a going "down," for Jericho was about 800 feet below the Mediterranean sea, while Jerusalem was about 2500 feet above it, making a descent of 3300 feet in about sixteen to eighteen miles. This road to Jericho was through a narrow, deep ravine, with holes, caves and hiding places for robbers. Josephus tells us how insecure this route was. Herod tried to drive the robbers out. The road is still infested by them. The robbers treated the traveller roughly, robbed him, stole his garments, beat him, and left him half dead. This is a brief and graphic account that might answer for many a modern robbery in that region by Arab brigands.

**31. certain priest]** He was going down that way by coincidence, perhaps returning from his ecclesiastic duties at Jerusalem (for many priests and Levites, some say twelve thousand, resided in the vicinity of Jericho at this time). Their attention to the affairs of religion would be their excuse for not attending to the duties of humanity. A common way of getting rid of a beggar in the East is to say, "May God give to you." So the priest when he saw him might say to the wounded, robbed man, "May God attend to you," and pass by on the other side. The Levite came to the place where the poor man was, and when he saw him, he also passed by on the other side.

**33. Samaritan, as he journeyed]** The wounded man was apparently a Jew, which heightens the force of the parable, for the Jews had no dealings with the Samaritans. John 4: 9. This one Samaritan, journeying over the same route, found the robbed, wounded man, pitied him, went over to him (instead of passing on the other side as the priest and Levite had), bound up his wounds, mollifying them with a compound of oil and wine, a common medical treatment for wounds in those days (see Talmud *Jer. Sub.* 14: 3), and still accounted a very good dressing for wounds by modern Eastern physicians; then he lifted the man upon his own beast, no doubt an ass or mule, still common in that country, and brought him to an inn, and himself took care of him. The inn or khan, the caravansary, ordinarily like those

## COMMON VERSION.

30 And Jesus answering said, A certain *man* went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded *him*, and departed, leaving *him* half dead.

31 And by chance there came down a certain priest that way; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side.

32 And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked *on him*, and passed by on the other side.

33 But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was; and when he saw him, he had compassion *on him*,

34 And went to *him*, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him.

## REVISED VERSION.

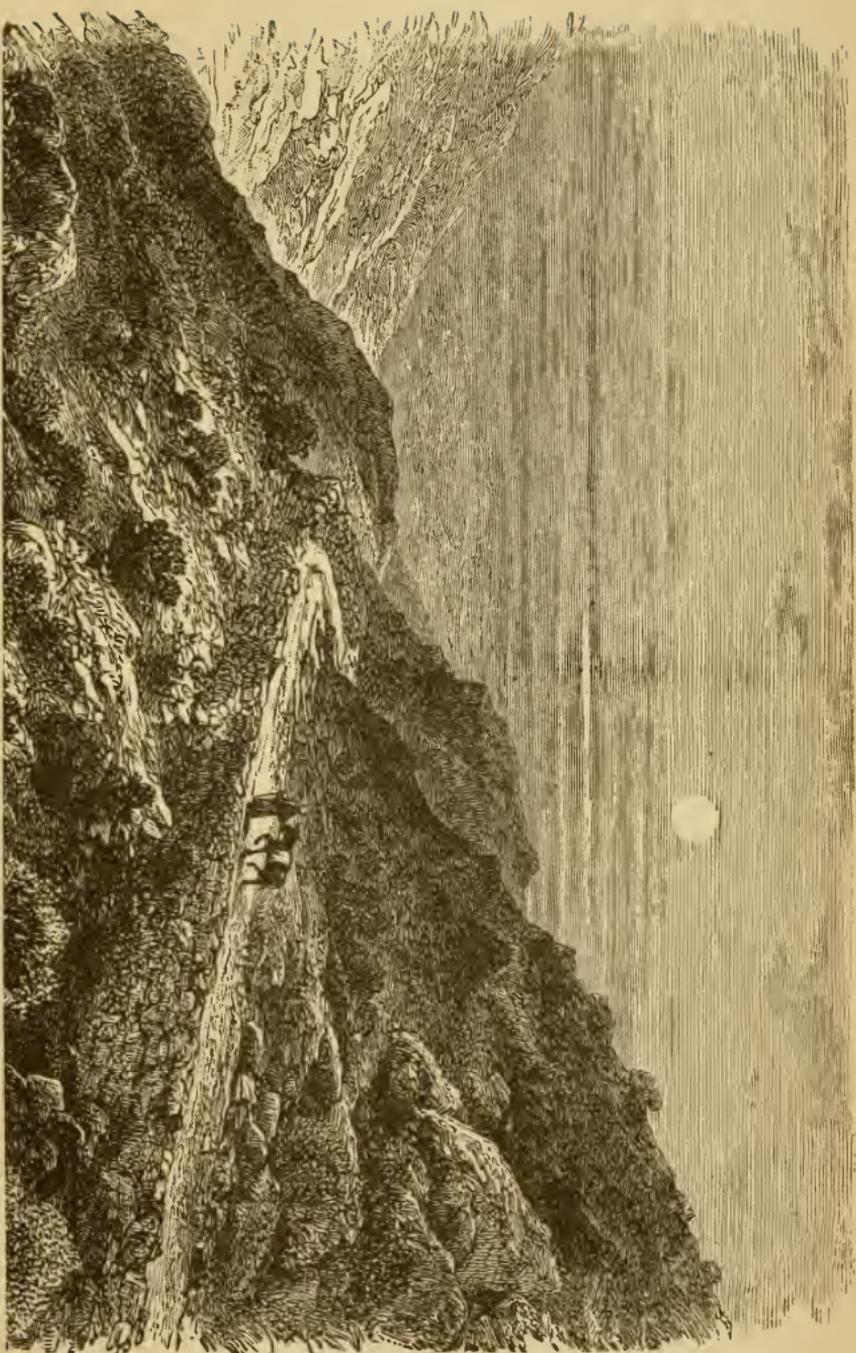
30 is my neighbour? Jesus made answer and said, A certain man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho; and he fell among robbers, who both stripped him and beat him, and departed, leaving him half dead.

31 And by chance a certain priest was going down that way: and when he saw him, he

32 passed by on the other side. And in like manner a Levite also, when he came to the place, and saw him, passed by on the other

33 side. But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he was moved with compassion,

34 and came to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring on *them* oil and wine; and he set him on his own beast, and brought him to



The road from Jerusalem to Jericho. (*After a Photograph.*)

now there, would not furnish food or conveniences as at our hotels. This khan appears to have been one, however, where the guest lodged, and obtained from the host what his own foresight had not provided. There are the ruins of an ancient khan now on the direct road from Jerusalem, about half way to Jericho.

**35. whatsoever thou spendest more . . I will repay thee]** The good Samaritan is represented as taking care of the robbed man for the night, and on the morrow he took out two pence or "shillings" as in the American revised reading, and gave them to the host. The two shillings or "denarii," were equal to two days' wages of a working man at that time, or to about thirty cents of our money. This in the East would be a liberal sum. In modern times the natives have cheerfully worked for a sum equal to one dollar a month. The Samaritan requests the host to take care of the robbed man, and promises to pay any further sum that may be spent in the care of him.

**36. neighbour unto him]** The lawyer had asked "Who is my neighbor?" Jesus now in a dexterous way turns to the lawyer as to a judge and asks, which of these three, thinkest thou, proved neighbor unto him that fell among thieves? The lawyer wanted to know who the person was that he must love as his neighbor. Jesus, by the parable and the personal question, shows him that it is the person who is in need of his love. In the parable it was a hated Samaritan who befriended a Jew.

**37. Go, and do thou likewise]** The lawyer answered with commendable directness and frankness; he that showed mercy on him proved neighbor to the man that fell among thieves. He avoided saying "Samaritan," for the Samaritan was a deeply hated race. Yet his answer condemned the Jewish priest and Levite, and the ideas of who was a neighbor prevalent among the Jewish teachers, scribes and lawyers. The lawyer wanted to justify his, and their conduct in neglecting to love any but a Jewish neighbor. Jesus accepts the lawyer's interpretation of the parable, and in a short, keen sentence applies it, "Go, and do thou likewise." Thus far the interpretation and meaning of the parable seem obvious. Is there a further allegorical meaning in it? Does the traveller represent the human race, fallen among thieves in Adam's sin; the priest and Levite failing to help, the failure of the sacrifices under the law; does the good Samaritan represent Jesus Christ; the inn, the church; the wine and oil, the blood of Christ and the grace of the Spirit; the host, the ministry, and so on? These meanings many commentators find

## COMMON VERSION.

35 And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave *them* to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him: and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee.

36 Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves?

37 And he said, He that shewed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise.

## REVISED VERSION.

35 an inn, and took care of him. And on the morrow he took out two <sup>1</sup>shillings, and gave them to the host, and said, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, I, when I come back again, will repay thee.

36 Which of these three, thinkest thou, proved neighbour unto him that fell among the rob-

37 bers? And he said, He that shewed mercy on him. And Jesus said unto him, Go, and do thou likewise.

<sup>1</sup> See marginal note on Matt. xviii: 28.

in the parable. The question is not whether the parable may or may not be used to *illustrate* these truths, but did Jesus speak the parable with this double meaning, and expect us so to understand and interpret it? Alford thinks only the superficial school of critics can deny it. But to what unwarrantable and dangerous absurdities would such a method of interpretation lead us! To maintain this meaning requires "twisting and straining" the parable in the most violent manner, as Ryle intimates. The traveller is half dead, but man is "dead" in trespasses and sins. The priest and Levite are to save man, that is, to save themselves. The inn and host were not appointed by the good Samaritan; he came to them. Then it follows that Jesus did not establish the church and the ministry; he simply brought human nature to these which he found ready to receive and care for fallen man. And thus to the end of this allegorical interpretation, the reader will stumble upon difficulties and gross absurdities, if not flat contradictions. If this is the way to get at the meaning of Scripture, then the clear and definite sense must be rejected, and the reader is to spell out, or guess at some occult meaning, with no reasonable assurance that he will ever find it. Let us reject such fancies and rest in the definite and obvious meaning of Scripture.

SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.—1. The great question: What shall I do to inherit eternal life? See Acts 16 : 30, 31. 2. What is written in God's word: how readeest thou? 3. The Scriptures are the only rule to direct us how to glorify God and enjoy him. 4. We are to love God with all our heart, soul, strength and mind, and our neighbor as ourselves. 5. Every one in need is to be treated with neighborly love. 6. Those in distress are to be cared for by our Christian love. 7. The Lord can so present the truth as to make us unwilling witnesses against ourselves. 8. Supreme love to God will beget true love to our neighbor. 9. All men, Protestant, Catholic, Greek, Moslem, heathen, and infidel are neighbors.

### SERVING AND PRAYING : 10 : 38 TO 11 : 4.

BETHANY, JUDEA, A.D. 29.

There is no reason to question the identity of this Martha and Mary with the sisters of Lazarus living in Bethany, a little village about two miles east of Jerusalem, just beyond the brow of Mt. Olivet. See John 11, and Matt. 26 : 6-13; Mark 14 : 3. The first three evangelists say little of the family at Bethany. This reserve may be due to the danger of the family from the Jews so near to Jerusalem, at this time, since they wrote earlier than John.

**38. Martha received him]** The house was at Bethany; and this visit was before the sickness and death of Lazarus. Bethany (now el'Azir'iyeh) is on the side of a hill, with a ravine running down the east side of it. The houses are poorly built of stone. There is a crusading building with a tower,

#### COMMON VERSION.

38 ¶ Now it came to pass, as they went, that he entered into a certain village: and a certain woman named Martha received him into her house.

#### REVISED VERSION.

38 Now as they went on their way, he entered into a certain village; and a certain woman named Martha received him into her

called the Castle of Lazarus, and the "house of Lazarus" is pointed out north of the tower. The tomb of Lazarus northeast of the castle has been shown since the fourth century, when a church stood over it. East of Bethany are rock-cut tombs, near the main road. The ground is rocky, but neatly terraced, and figs and olives are cultivated about the village. Jesus may have been on his way from the feast of tabernacles or of dedication at Jerusalem. See John 7: 14; 10: 22.

**39. heard his word]** Martha had a sister called Mary, who, moreover, sat at the Lord's feet (see revised reading), as a pupil or learner was then accustomed to do, and heard his words. Martha seems to have been the head of the little household; she was probably the elder of the two sisters, and some suppose that she was a widow. Mary (the Greek form of the Hebrew name Miriam) was a devoted disciple, and sought first a knowledge of the things of the kingdom of God from Jesus.

**40. Martha was cumbered]** Literally, the Greek reads "Martha was distracted [dragged in different directions] about many attentions or servings." The old Ethiopic translation renders it: "Martha labored in preparing many things for him," and an old Persic version reads: "Martha was busied in preparing food, and in making a feast," which is a good comment rather than a translation of the Greek text. And Martha having come suddenly, said: Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me alone to serve (as at the table, see Acts 6: 2): bid her therefore that she help me. The form and phrase of this request seems like one fretted with the work, and as if Martha thought, it is no use for me to bid her come, and so she appealed to the Lord to rouse her sister to a sense of duty, in helping in the preparation of a hospitable meal and reception.

**42. Mary hath chosen the good part]** Jesus kindly and calmly answered, repeating her name to make his word more tender and impressive, Martha, Martha, thou art anxious and troubled (worried) about many things; but one thing (not many things) is needful; for Mary has the good part (the Greek taken with the previous clause, "one thing" might be used to signify the choice of a dish or morsel at a meal which was picked out for an esteemed guest) that shall not be taken from her. See Matt. 6: 33. Jesus does not imply that a contemplative disciple (Mary) will be greater than a busy, active one (Martha), but he warns Martha and, through her, us against being so

## COMMON VERSION.

39 And she had a sister called Mary, which also sat at Jesus' feet, and heard his word.

40 But Martha was cumbered about much serving, and came to him, and said, Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me.

41 And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things:

42 But one thing is needful; and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her.

## REVISED VERSION.

39 house. And she had a sister called Mary, who also sat at the Lord's feet, and heard

40 his word. But Martha was <sup>1</sup>cumbered about much serving; and she came up to him, and said, Lord, dost thou not care that my sister did leave me to serve alone?

41 bid her therefore that she help me. But the Lord answered and said unto her, <sup>2</sup>Martha, Martha, thou art anxious and

42 troubled about many things: <sup>3</sup>but one thing is needful: for Mary hath chosen the good part, which shall not be taken away from her.

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *distracted*.  
hath chosen, &c.

<sup>2</sup> A few ancient authorities read *Martha, Martha, thou art troubled: Mary*

<sup>3</sup> Many ancient authorities read *but few things are needful, or one,*

troubled and absorbed with the anxious cares of this life, with what we shall eat and how we shall be clothed, as not to choose and gain the one thing needful, a title to life eternal.

CHAP. 11: 1. **as he was praying in a certain place]** This indefinite expression shows that Luke did not make a definite mark of time, but that his "order" is one of thought. Yet this may have followed close upon the visit at Bethany (10: 42), the "one of his disciples" in that case perhaps being a later one, and Jesus here repeating what had been taught the twelve, in Matt. 6: 9. The "certain place" would then be near Jerusalem. Jesus had been praying, and when he ceased, which implies some time spent in prayer, one of his disciples, probably a new one, but formerly a disciple of John the Baptist, said unto Jesus, Lord, teach us to pray, even as, or like as, John also taught his disciples. We have no record of any forms or methods of prayer which John the Baptist taught his disciples. But we know that forms of prayer were common among the Jews at that period. There are many given in the Mishna, which were, no doubt, in use orally long before the Mishna was written. The form taught by our Lord is sufficient. God wrote the ten commandments twice: Jesus gave this prayer twice.

2. **When ye pray, say]** The forms of this prayer vary in the oldest Greek manuscript copies: and the form here given is not identical in words with that given in Matt. 6: 9. If the Lord had intended his people in all ages to use this particular formula of words, we would have expected that the forms would have been made identical. Hence it is fair to infer that this is a "model" after which our prayers are to be framed, rather than a precise formula of words to be always and exactly used. Notice the variation between the common and the revised readings. Observe also that Luke gives a much briefer form than that in Matt. 6: 9-13. The three clauses omitted in the revised reading are also omitted in several ancient Greek manuscripts, as the Vatican, and Sinaitic in part, and several of the early Fathers. The common theory of critical scholars is, that these clauses were inserted by copyists from the form given by Matthew. But as Wordsworth well suggests, if the copyists inserted these three clauses from Matthew, we would naturally have expected them to have made the whole prayer conform to the copy in Matthew. This theory is therefore unsatisfactory, and we must wait for further light before a satisfactory explanation of the variations can be given. Augustine in his Confessions says of this prayer: "I prayed it, but secretly with an unrenewed heart; wished God would not hear my prayer." Prayer here begins by addressing God as Father, and asking and desiring that his

## COMMON VERSION.

CHAP. XI.—And it came to pass, that, as he was praying in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples.

2 And he said unto them, When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth.

## REVISED VERSION.

11 And it came to pass, as he was praying in a certain place, that when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, even as John also taught his 2 disciples. And he said unto them, When ye pray, say, <sup>1</sup> Father, Hallowed be thy name.

<sup>1</sup> Many ancient authorities read *Our Father, who art in heaven*. See Matt. vi. 9.

name be hallowed, made holy; that his kingdom come everywhere without limitation. The address, "Father," puts us at once in God's family. We are not orphans, but children; sons and daughters of the Lord. Gal. 3 : 26.

**3. daily bread]** The form of this clause may be suggested from the daily gift of the manna in the wilderness. Having sought first the things of the kingdom, the next petition is for bread, daily needs for the body, and daily bread for the soul may be fairly understood as included also in this clause of the prayer. For whether the Greek be rendered "our daily bread" or "our bread for the coming day," as in the margin of the Revised Version, or "bread for our subsistence," the practical meaning is nearly the same. The difference to a simple-hearted disciple will be small; in either case he looks to God for his daily needs, both physical and spiritual. Compare Jacob's prayer, "If God give me bread," Gen. 28 : 20, with the words of Jesus: "I am the bread of life." John 6 : 35. Prayer is an expression of our needs to God; it is the language of the heart, not an exhibition of the critical distinctions of the intellect.

**4. forgive us our sins: for we .. forgive]** Tyndale's version says "trespasses," and from his version through the Bishops' version this word came into the Book of Common Prayer used in the Church of England and in the Protestant Episcopal Church of America. But "trespasses" is not here in the Common nor the Revised Versions of the Bible. Notice also that in this clause the prayer teaches us to ask God to forgive us, for we ourselves also forgive every one that is indebted to us. One ground and apparently the only ground, except the mercy of God, on which we can ask to be forgiven, is that we have forgiven all, every one. The "indebted" means those owing us in an ethical, or moral and spiritual sense. He who has not himself a forgiving spirit cannot really pray this prayer. This petition implies that those seeking pardon are willing to forgive; and it is also a proof, as Augustine declares, that a perfectly sinless state is not attained in this life as the old Pelagians and some modern professors of religion assert. The absence of any reference to the work of Christ, Godet regards as a striking proof of the authenticity of this prayer. We also are to pray "lead us not into temptation." God may permit us to be tempted, but we ask not to be led into temptation, and not to be tempted above that we are able to bear. 1 Cor. 10 : 13; 2 Peter 2 : 9. Here this form of the prayer ends. But see margin of Revised Version.

Luke takes special notice of the frequent seasons of prayer in which Jesus engaged. He alone records the prayer of Christ for his murderers, and the two parables which illustrate the value and importance of importunate, per-

## COMMON VERSION.

3 Give us day by day our daily bread.

4 And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil.

## REVISED VERSION.

3 Thy kingdom come.<sup>1</sup> Give us day by day  
4 <sup>2</sup>our daily bread. And forgive us our sins;  
for we ourselves also forgive every one that  
is indebted to us. And bring us not into  
temptation.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Many ancient authorities add *Thy will be done, as in heaven, so on earth.* See Matt. vi. 10.

<sup>2</sup> Gr. *our bread for the coming day, or our needful bread.*

<sup>3</sup> Many ancient authorities add *but deliver us from the evil one (or, from evil).* See Matt. vi. 13.

severing prayer. There are nearly fifty recorded prayers, brief or extended, in the Old Testament. The substance of this model prayer of our Lord can be found in them. Jesus brought all our needs together into one simple, comprehensive, and brief prayer, adapted to all peoples and conditions, and to all the temporal and spiritual wants of the human race. A divine nature only could teach us such a prayer. God alone could tell us how we ought to pray and how he would have us pray to him.

**SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.**—1. Prayer is an expression of our helplessness. 2. It is blessed for us to entertain Christ. 3. When Christ speaks, be swift to hear. See James 1 : 19. 4. Christ rebukes fretting care in his people. 5. Spiritual food is more important than physical food. See Job 23 : 12. 6. A church full of contemplative Marys might make some mistakes as well as a church full of bustling Marthas. 7. Man, as a creature, subject, sinner, and as a pardoned, accepted child of God needs to pray. 8. Prayer should be expressive of worship, adoration, submission, dependence, repentance, supplication, love, faith, and hope. 9. The holy lives of believers glorify the name of God. 10. God's kingdom is forever and ever. See Dan. 2 : 44 ; Ps. 22 : 28 ; Rev. 21 : 22-27 ; 22 : 1-5.

**ASKING AND RECEIVING.** 11 : 5-13. Compare Matt. 7 : 7-12.

JUDEA NEAR JERUSALEM, A. D. 29.

**5. have a friend]** The friend coming at midnight would be an unusual and somewhat severe test with us. But in the East, where it is not unusual to travel by night to avoid the heat, this midnight call would not be an uncommon one. Bread in that warm climate will not keep long, and neighborly acts of this kind are almost a necessity. The Jewish custom of borrowing bread is illustrated by several passages in the Mishna, some of them relating to the methods of borrowing bread allowable on the Sabbath. See *Mish. Sabb.* 23 : 1. The "loaves" were small, more like our griddle-cakes in size and shape, hence three would be a moderate supply for one person. Some suggest that there were three for politeness ; that is, one for the guest, one for the host, and one to show abundance. The whole scene is drawn in remarkable accord with prevalent Jewish custom.

**6. I have nothing to set before him]** Eastern hospitality required prompt attention to the hunger of a guest, especially a traveller. Notice the instances in Old Testament history, of Abraham, Gen. 18 : 5-8 ; of Lot, Gen. 19 : 3 ; of Manoah, Judg. 13 : 15, 16 ; and of Saul, 1 Sam. 9 : 24.

**7. Trouble me not]** The man awakened at midnight, responds to the

**COMMON VERSION.**

5 And he said unto them, Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight, and say unto him, Friend, lend me three loaves ;

6 For a friend of mine in his journey is come to me, and I have nothing to set before him ?

7 And he from within shall answer and say, Trouble me not : the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed ; I cannot rise and give thee.

**REVISED VERSION.**

5 And he said unto them, Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight, and say to him, Friend, lend

6 me three loaves ; for a friend of mine is come to me from a journey, and I have

7 nothing to set before him ; and he from within shall answer and say, Trouble me not : the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed ; I cannot rise and give

call of his friend, in a vexed tone; do not bother me, the door is shut, and the Greek signifies, "is bolted" or barred, and my children are with me in bed, or in the sleeping place. The Greek word for bed applies to any room or place used for sleeping, as well as to a bed or couch. In Syria the whole family, father and children, would have one and the same place for sleeping. There were so many obstacles in the way; it would be so much trouble to unbar the door, and find the loaves, and it would be so likely to disturb the children, that with extreme naturalness, the friend answered that he could not.

**8. because of his importunity he will]** His friendship will not move him to grant the request, but the importunity, literally "the shamelessness" of the caller will cause him to "arise and give him as many as he needeth." The "importunity" implies that the friend keeps on calling in the face of rebuffs; as an impudent beggar might do. The allegorical interpretations of this illustration, which find a special signification in each of the details, as that the three loaves represent the trinity, the guest the heathen, the children the saints or angels now in glory, and so on, though very old, are too fanciful to be accepted. These details are the "machinery" of the illustration, the point illustrated is the importance of, and the success which follows persevering prayer. This is the lesson plainly taught. It is needless to look for other occult meanings and lessons in the details used to give effect to the main teaching. They are as feathers to the arrow.

**9. Ask . . seek . . knock]** These three ways of striving to have our wants supplied are given as further illustrations of several lines along which our spiritual needs may be urged. Not content with asking, we are to follow it by seeking and searching, see Deut. 4 : 29, and to add to that knocking. That is, when asking does not bring all that is needed, continue on seeking, as well as asking, see John 15 : 7 ; 16 : 23; and when there are obstacles as locked doors, barred gates, knock for help, that the difficulties may be removed, and a door opened for spiritual blessings and spiritual opportunities.

**11. bread . . stone . . fish . . serpent . . egg . . scorpion]** These illustrations were familiar, because drawn from home-life in Syria. The bread, or loaf of the East bore some resemblance to a flat stone, suggestive perhaps of this comparison; some fish also resembled a serpent in form, as the eel.

## COMMON VERSION.

8 I say unto you, Though he will not rise and give him, because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him as many as he needeth.

9 And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.

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

11 If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent?

## REVISED VERSION.

8 thee? I say unto you, Though he will not rise and give him, because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will arise and give him <sup>1</sup> as many as he

9 needeth. And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.

10 For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that

11 knocketh it shall be opened. And of which of you that is a father shall his son ask <sup>2</sup> a loaf, and he give him a stone? or a fish, and

<sup>1</sup> Or, whatsoever things

<sup>2</sup> Some ancient authorities omit a loaf, and he give him a stone? or.

These two illustrations are given by Matthew. The third is peculiar to Luke. The scorpion is a crab-shaped animal, and some species in the East are exceedingly poisonous. If a child ask for any form of food, an earthly father would not give him a hurtful thing in answer to his child's request. What then?

**13. If ye then, being evil, know . . . how much more]** This is no longer a comparison but a contrast. The contrast is between man and Jehovah as our Father. It may also signify the contrast between our God and the gods of the heathen. The Greek Euripides says, "Tears cannot restore the dead; nothing remains but to forget the blessings of the past, and submit to the future." Cato bitterly exclaimed, "I see no reason to trust the gods, since our enemies triumph!" Cicero regards the world as a gloomy theatre; everywhere are the altar and victim. Plutarch says, "The best the gods can give is eternal sleep." Now see what Jesus says; you who are morally evil, know how to give temporal good to your children; how much more, in contrast with you, shall your heavenly Father, who is the supreme Good, give (not merely know how to give), promptly and really give the Holy Spirit with all that gift implies—new birth, holy life, spiritual bread, Fatherly care, and final eternal bliss—to them that ask him. The only limitation in this gracious and boundless gift here is, that we "ask him." The promise here is as broad as the race of man, and as boundless as the mercy of God.

SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.—1. Perseverance in prayer brings success. 2. Difficulties should only increase our importunity in prayer. 3. God is more willing to give the Holy Spirit to those that ask him than an earthly father is to give good gifts to his children.

THE DUMB MAN; THE UNCLEAN SPIRIT. 11 : 14–28. Compare Matt. 12 : 22–45; Mark 3 : 22–30.

GALILEE, AUTUMN, A.D. 28.

The narrative of this charge against Jesus, that he cast out demons by the power of the prince of demons, instead of by the Spirit of God, Luke introduces here in connection with the mention of the gift of the Holy Spirit. Wordsworth regards this portion of Luke's narrative as a striking instance of the way in which the Holy Spirit led to the grouping of incidents and sayings according to their spiritual connection. Incidentally also this mode of writing supplies a silent proof, not only of Luke's posteriority to Matthew and Mark, but also of the divine origin of the Gospels. The time and place of these incidents are fixed by Matthew and Mark. The Spirit now deals with them through Luke, according to their inner relation to each other. But on the other hand, recent harmonists find it as difficult to disconnect this

COMMON VERSION.

12 Or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion?

13 If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children; how much more shall *your* heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?

REVISED VERSION.

12 he for a fish give him a serpent? Or *if* he shall ask an egg, will he give him a scorpion? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall *your* heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?

passage from what precedes in Luke, and to explain the dissimilarities in the narratives, as to account for the correspondences. So we cannot be certain that this is not a different occasion from that noticed in Matt. 12 : 22, though the strongest arguments still point to identity of events.

**14. casting out a devil [demon] . . dumb]** The demoniac spirit in the man seems to have made the man dumb. If this is the same case as that noticed in Matt. 12 : 22, he was blind also. When the demon was cast out by the power of Jesus, the man's powers of speech were restored to him, and the people marvelled at this power in Jesus to make evil spirits leave men.

**15. By Beelzebub]** The skeptics and rationalists of that day had their way of explaining the power of Jesus, as some have now. It was by Beelzebub, or Beelzebul as the Sinaitic and Vatican copies read. Beelzebul comes from the Aramaic, and was the name for the chief of demons; Beelzebub was a Philistine god of the flies, and this title may not unnaturally have been transferred to Satan, as Buxtorf, Lightfoot, Winer, and Robinson suggest. These Jewish rationalists charged that Jesus was in league with Satan, and had power to cast out demons because he was in this Satanic partnership.

**16. a sign from heaven]** Another class of Jewish skeptics pretended not to be satisfied with these manifestations of his power over evil spirits, but wanted to see a sign from heaven, that is, a sign in the heavens or sky, or a sign like the fire from heaven which Elijah brought down, or the pillar of cloud in the wilderness. In v. 29 we shall see how he answers this class.

**18. if Satan . . divided against himself]** Jesus first answers the charge that his power comes from Satan. A kingdom or a house divided, filled with discord, strife, dissension, and anarchy cannot stand. A kingdom is destroyed by internal civil war; "house falleth against house," is Meyer's rendering. So if I can cast out demons because I am in league with Satan, then his kingdom is divided against itself; Satan is casting out Satan; see Mark 3 : 23; how can his kingdom stand? To ask the question was the most forcible way of saying, it cannot stand. But "by whom do your sons cast them out?" v. 19. This may refer to the disciples as "sons of Jews" who had cast out demons. Or, it may refer to the pretended power of the

## COMMON VERSION.

14 ¶ And he was casting out a devil, and it was dumb. And it came to pass, when the devil was gone out, the dumb spake; and the people wondered.

15 But some of them said, He casteth out devils through Beelzebub the chief of the devils.

16 And others, tempting *him*, sought of him a sign from heaven.

17 But he, knowing their thoughts, said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and a house *divided* against a house falleth.

18 If Satan also be divided against himself, how shall his kingdom stand? because ye say that I cast out devils through Beelzebub.

## REVISED VERSION.

14 And he was casting out a demon *which was dumb*. And it came to pass, when the demon was gone out, the dumb man spake;

15 and the multitudes marvelled. But some of them said, <sup>1</sup>By Beelzebub the prince of

16 the demons casteth he out demons. And others, trying *him*, sought of him a sign

17 from heaven. But he, knowing their thoughts, said unto them, Every kingdom

divided against itself is brought to desolation; <sup>2</sup>and a house *divided* against a

18 house falleth. And if Satan also is divided against himself, how shall his kingdom stand? because ye say that I cast out

<sup>1</sup> Or, In<sup>2</sup> Or, and house falleth upon house.

Pharisees to cast out evil spirits. Such a case is given later by Luke in Acts 19:13. This was a keen and justifiable turn of the charge upon them, popularly known as *argumentum ad hominem*. Even your sons will become your judges to condemn you on the charge. Demons do not cast out demons.

**20. if I with [by] the finger of God]** If I by the finger, Spirit or power of God cast them out, then the kingdom of God has come unawares upon you. On the phrase "finger of God," compare the expression of the magicians to Pharaoh, "This is the finger of God," Ex. 8:19. The "kingdom of God" (not kingdom of heaven), is the uniform phrase used by Luke in his Gospel. Wordsworth suggests that this is because his is a Gospel for the Gentiles; he was careful not to countenance the heathen idea of a local deity. But notice in this connection that Satan is represented as a real personal being, not a mere principle of evil.

**22. when a stronger than he]** Jesus goes on with the argument in respect to his power to cast out demons. The strong one (not "man" which is not in the Greek) here is Satan, armed and in his palace, and his goods and subjects are peacefully held. When a "mightier one" (for it is the same Greek word as that used by John the Baptist in describing Jesus), see Mark 1:7; Luke 3:16, comes upon the strong one and overcomes him, and takes from him his whole armor wherein he trusted, then he divideth his spoils, won from the strong one, even Satan. In a warfare of this kind, there is no possible neutrality. He that does not join Christ against Satan is against Christ. Whoever gathereth not with him scattereth his power and influence, and so far destroys its good effects as the skeptical Pharisees were doing. This is the complement of the truth noticed in Luke 9:50. There the persons were professedly on Jesus' side, and using his name in a reverent way to work miracles. Here the persons are accusing Jesus of being in league with the devil, and gaining his power from him; they were, therefore, on the opposite side, as really as if they were in Satan's hosts, fighting against God's kingdom.

**24. unclean spirit . . out of a man]** This illustration or parable of

## COMMON VERSION.

19 And if I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your sons cast *them* out? therefore shall they be your judges.

20 But if I with the finger of God cast out devils, no doubt the kingdom of God is come upon you.

21 When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace:

22 But when a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils.

23 He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth.

24 When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest; and finding none, he saith, I will return unto my house whence I came out.

## REVISED VERSION.

19 demons <sup>1</sup>by Beelzebub. And if I <sup>1</sup>by Beelzebub cast out demons, by whom do your sons cast them out? therefore shall

20 they be your judges. But if I by the finger of God cast out demons, then is the kingdom

21 of God come upon you. When the strong *man* fully armed guardeth his own court,

22 his goods are in peace: but when a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, he taketh from him his whole armour wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils.

23 He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth.

24 The unclean spirit when <sup>2</sup>he is gone out of the man, passeth through waterless places, seeking rest; and finding none, <sup>2</sup>he saith, I will turn back unto my house whence I

<sup>1</sup> Or, in<sup>2</sup> Or, it

the unclean spirit, primarily sets forth the incorrigible state of Israel and of those who thus reject God, and are allied with Satan and demons. The Jews, according to the Mishna, supposed that unclean spirits frequented ruins and arid deserts. Compare Tobit 8 : 3. Some suppose that it is the man that seeks rest or a lodging place, and avoids human society, either from habit, or because he is temporarily abandoned by the evil spirit, and is in a maze and wanders aimlessly about. But this is contrary to the plain reading of the text. The meaning clearly is that the evil spirit wanders about and finds no rest. Then it decides to return, and taking to itself seven other evil spirits does return. This makes the illustration consistent. The evil spirit returns to its house, the human soul, and finds it swept and garnished, as a reformed yet unconverted person might be. For instances of this kind, see Simon Magus, Saul, and Balaam. On "seven" spirits, compare the case of Mary Magdalene, Luke 8 : 2; Mark 16 : 9. With brazen impudence he says, I will return to "my" house, as if it were always and truly his own.

**26. seven other spirits]** So he joineth seven (a complete number) other spirits, more evil than himself (or itself). This seems to imply that even among demons there are degrees in wickedness, as there are degrees of grace and glory in heaven. And like the legion of demons in the Gadarene demoniac, they enter in and dwell there; then the last state of that man becomes worse than the first. Any man half reformed, but not renewed by the Spirit of God, is liable to become repossessed of evil in a sevenfold degree. The Israelites were partially reformed, the demons temporarily cast out by their captivity and sore trials in the Maccabæan period, but the demon spirit had repossessed the nation so that they denied their own Messiah and crucified him. Their history illustrates the history of a soul that is not fully possessed and held by the Spirit of God.

**27. a certain woman]** Tradition says this woman was a maid-servant to Martha and Mary, named Marcella. The woman's expressions indicate that she was a mother, for she voices the motherly instincts and feelings. It is, possibly, the first intimation of what grew to be Mariolatry in the church.

**28. rather, blessed . . . they that hear the word of God]** This gentle reproof of the woman's rapturous exclamation may have been intended to repress the spirit of adoration for the Virgin Mary, which afterward sprang up in the church. Jesus does not deny the woman's words, but points

## COMMON VERSION.

25 And when he cometh, he findeth *it* swept and garnished.

26 Then goeth he, and taketh *to him* 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.

27 ¶ And it came to pass, as he spake these things, a certain woman of the company lifted up her voice, and said unto him, Blessed *is* the womb that bare thee, and the paps which thou hast sucked.

28 But he said, Yea, rather, blessed *are* they that hear the word of God, and keep it.

## REVISED VERSION.

25 came out. And when <sup>1</sup>he is come, <sup>1</sup>he

26 findeth it swept and garnished. Then goeth <sup>1</sup>he, and taketh *to him* seven other spirits more evil than <sup>2</sup>himself; and they enter in and dwell there: and the last state of that man becometh worse than the first.

27 And it came to pass, as he said these things, a certain woman out of the multitude lifted up her voice, and said unto him, Blessed is the womb that bare thee, and the breasts

28 which thou didst suck. But he said, Yea rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it.

<sup>1</sup> Cr, *it*

<sup>2</sup> Or, *itself*

out who, rather than his natural mother, are to be counted as blessed, even those who hear and keep the word, the whole counsel, commands, and will of God.

SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.—1. Obstinate unbelief is never at a loss for excuses. 2. Those who cavil at the truth are often reckless in their assertions. 3. Division brings destruction: union brings strength, and often safety. 4. It is hypocritical to condemn in others what we justify in ourselves or our friends. 5. The soul of an unconverted man is the devil's palace. 6. Christ alone can overcome the devil, and keep him out of our hearts. 7. Reformation is good, but a new heart alone gives promise of a lasting and genuine reform. 8. Pretended reform is a common road to religious apostacy. 9. Mary said, "All generations shall call me blessed," Luke 1:48. 10. Christ calls those blessed who hear and keep God's word.

AN EVIL GENERATION REPROVED. 11 : 29-41. Compare Matt. 12 : 38-45.

GALILEE? A. D. 28?

**29. when the people were gathered]** Or, "When the multitudes were gathering together," see revised reading. This is a general note only as to time. No doubt, such gatherings were frequent during Christ's ministry. Jesus now answers those noticed in v. 16, who were seeking a sign from heaven. The generation was an evil one, for it was unbelieving, and demanded unreasonable evidences in proof of Jesus' authority. They wanted a heavenly sign, but the only sign granted was that of Jonah. As he was a sign or a witness against the people of Nineveh, so Jesus and his mission and resurrection would prove to be a sign against that Jewish generation. The Ninevites repented: the Jews did not repent. But there is a further reference to the burial of Jonah in the fish, and his coming forth in three days: a symbol of the burial and resurrection of Jesus. See Matt. 12:40.

**31. queen of the south]** The queen of Sheba who visited Solomon. 1 Kings 10:1. She had faith; she was not unbelieving; for she made the long journey to hear Solomon's wisdom. But here was some thing or sign greater (not some person greater, though that was a truth), or superior to that of Jonah or of Solomon. The Greek word *πλεϊον* rendered "greater" or "more than" in the margin of the Revised Version is neuter, and hence

COMMON VERSION.

29 ¶ And when the people were gathered thick together, he began to say, This is an evil generation: they seek a sign; and there shall no sign be given it, but the sign of Jonas the prophet.

30 For as Jonas was a sign unto the Ninevites, so shall also the Son of man be to this generation.

31 The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with the men of this generation, and condemn them: for she came from the utmost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and, behold, a greater than Solomon is here.

REVISED VERSION.

29 And when the multitudes were gathering together unto him, he began to say, This generation is an evil generation: it seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it but the sign of Jonah. For even as Jonah became a sign unto the Ninevites, so shall also the Son of man be to this generation. The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with the men of this generation, and shall condemn them: for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and behold, <sup>1a</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *more than*,

naturally refers back to "sign" in v. 29. The miracles, work, and preaching of Jesus were more significant, and superior in kind and degree to those in the days of Jonah or of Solomon, when the people believed. Hence the peoples of Jonah's and Solomon's time would by their repentance and belief "stand up" as witnesses usually did, and condemn the skepticism of the Jews in the time of Christ.

**33. No man, when he hath lighted]** Notice the changes in the revised reading; "lamp" for "candle," and "cellar" for "secret place," "stand" for "candlestick," and "enter in" for "come in." The "candle" was not used in Syria, but a hand lamp, the wick being laid in, the end coming up by or through a spout-shaped orifice, and the lamp was placed upon a stand. The Greek word for "secret place" or "cellar" means any concealed place, like a vault, crypt, or covered way, or place like a cellar, a mere hole where persons would not enter. The "bushel," if it refers to the Roman "bushel," was a common household measure holding about a peck. Now the lamp of the body is thine eye; when thine eye is single (simple, straight or clear seeing, has its natural and proper powers of sight), thy whole body also is filled with light. But when the eye is evil (lacks its powers of clear and correct sight), thy body is full of darkness. Compare "thine eye be evil against thy poor brother." Deut. 15: 9. The highest success in forming achromatic lenses upon scientific principles has been to imitate the eye.

**35. the light . . be not darkness]** If the only source of light be darkness—Dr. Crosby suggests an interesting paraphrase of this text. The eye gives radiance (light) to the face and person; when the eye is dark the whole person is gloomy. So if the religion in us be one of darkness, the life will be gloomy and repellant; but if the religion in us be radiant with hope and love, the life will be brightness, as when the bright shining of a lamp gives the light. Disputing and questioning the work and authority of Christ as the Pharisees and others were doing, and demanding unreasonable signs and proofs, is like having an eye that is dark: the whole spiritual man is soon filled with evil, with deep spiritual darkness. Compare John 3: 19, with 2 Cor. 4: 4.

## COMMON VERSION.

32 The men of Nineveh shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here.

33 No man, when he hath lighted a candle, putteth it in a secret place, neither under a bushel, but on a candlestick, that they which come in may see the light.

34 The light of the body is the eye: therefore when thine eye is single, thy whole body also is full of light; but when *thine eye* is evil, thy body also is full of darkness.

35 Take heed therefore, that the light which is in thee be not darkness.

36 If thy whole body therefore be full of light, having no part dark, the whole shall be full of light, as when the bright shining of a candle doth give thee light.

## REVISED VERSION.

32 greater than Solomon is here. The men of Nineveh shall stand up in the judgement with this generation, and shall condemn it: for they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and behold, <sup>1</sup>a greater than Jonah is here.

33 No man, when he hath lighted a lamp, putteth it in a cellar, neither under the bushel, but on the stand, that they that enter in may see the light. The lamp of thy body is thine eye: when thine eye is single, thy whole body also is full of light; but when it is evil, thy body also is full of darkness.

34 Look therefore whether the light that is in thee be not darkness. If therefore thy whole body be full of light, having no part dark, it shall be wholly full of light, as when the lamp with its bright shining doth give thee light.

35 ness. Look therefore whether the light that is in thee be not darkness. If therefore thy whole body be full of light, having no part dark, it shall be wholly full of light, as when the lamp with its bright shining doth give thee light.

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *more than*.

**SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.**—1. Jesus was a sign spoken against, see Luke 2 : 34. 2. Those who sin against great light, shall be condemned by those who repented with less light. 3. Use the light you have, and you will increase your capacity for using light. 4. Christ's work and mission are so great as to leave no reasonable excuse for rejecting him. 5. Seek the spiritual light that the Holy Spirit gives.

**PHARISEES AND LAWFYERS REPROVED.** 11 : 37-54. Compare similar woes, Matt. 23 : 13-33.

GALILEE, A. D. 28.

**37. Pharisee . . to dine with him]** This Pharisee, clearly not a disciple, asked him to "breakfast" with him, see revised reading, margin. Jesus went in and reclined (as at a meal). It was a lunch or light meal less formal than a dinner. Who the Pharisee was, or why he asked Jesus, unless to cavil at his teachings and habits, the evangelist does not state.

**38. first washed]** The word for "washed" is *ἐβαπτίσθη*, also rendered "baptized." At meals, all dipped their hands into a common dish, so that washing before a meal was an act of cleanliness. But the Pharisees had turned it into a religious ceremony. The Talmud declares that eating with unwashed hands was as committing adultery. One book of Jewish ritual gives not less than 25 prayers to be used while thus ceremonially washing for a meal. This neglect of Jesus to follow their customs caused the Pharisee to marvel. He probably showed his astonishment in his countenance.

**39. outside . . inward part]** Jesus charges the Pharisees with making the outside clean; they observed with great strictness the external ceremonies of religion, but the inward part, the heart, was full of extortion and wickedness. So the Psalmist says, "Thou desirest truth in the inward parts." Ps. 51 : 6. A clean body does not make a pure heart. Piety is of the soul. God made the outside and the heart also. Bodily cleanliness is good, but soul purity is also required. You can clean the outside, and are foolish enough to act as though God could not see through it, into the wickedness hidden beneath. "Ye foolish ones," v. 40, is not the phrase or word which our Lord forbids us to use in Matt. 5 : 22.

**41. give . . alms . . things]** In the Common Version, the sense of this

COMMON VERSION.

37 ¶ And as he spake, a certain Pharisee besought him to dine with him: and he went in, and sat down to meat.

38 And when the Pharisee saw it, he marvelled that he had not first washed before dinner.

39 And the Lord said unto him, Now do ye Pharisees make clean the outside of the cup and the platter; but your inward part is full of ravening and wickedness.

40 Ye fools, did not he, that made that which is without, make that which is within also?

41 But rather give alms of such things as ye have; and, behold, all things are clean unto you.

REVISED VERSION.

37 Now as he spake, a Pharisee asketh him to <sup>1</sup>dine with him: and he went in, and

38 sat down to meat. And when the Pharisee saw it, he marvelled that he had not first

39 bathed himself before <sup>1</sup>dinner. And the Lord said unto him, Now do ye Pharisees

cleanse the outside of the cup and of the platter; but your inward part is full of ex-

40 tortion and wickedness. Ye foolish ones, did not he that made the outside make the

41 inside also? Howbeit give for alms those things which <sup>2</sup>are within; and behold, all

things are clean unto you.

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *breakfast*.

<sup>2</sup> Or, *ye can*

verse is very obscure. The revised reading lessens, but does not fully remove the obscurity. Some interpret it: give with loving hearts what is in your cups as alms, and your outside ceremonial purification will be superfluous; all things will be clean to you. The meaning may be even stronger, as turning upon the Greek word for "alms:" you Pharisees tithe mint, anise, and outward things, but if you will rather give *ἐλεημοσίην*, "mercy," "compassion" (alms from the heart), the things (the graces), that are within, even behold, all things are clean to you. Clear selfishness from you; be filled with mercy; then give that from within. This interpretation is supported by the next verse, which



RUE. (*Ruta Graveolens*. After Carruthers.) is added as a corollary to this statement. Compare the expression; "I will have mercy, and not sacrifice" (or outward offering), Matt. 9:13; 12:7, and Is. 1:11, with Micah 6:6-8. The first clause of verse 42 is abundantly illustrated by passages in the Jewish Mishna.

**43. ye love the uppermost (chief) seats]** These vain religionists loved the "chief" or "first seats" in the synagogue. These were elevated (hence "uppermost") in a semicircle at one end of the synagogue and facing the congregation. It is said that these seats were sometimes sold to those able to pay the best price for them. Spiritual pride of place, unfortunately, did not die with the old Pharisees; modern churches are often sadly crowded with it. The "greetings" in the markets, the most public places, were reverential greetings, as very holy men receive in the East. You put on such a "holy" outward demeanor, that you are like hidden graves or tombs. Men do not suspect that hidden graves are under their feet, nor do they suspect the hypocrisy and foulness hidden under your holy exterior.

**46. ye lade men with burdens]** The "lawyers," one of whom now

## COMMON VERSION.

42 But woe unto you, Pharisees! for ye tithe mint and rue and all manner of herbs, and pass over judgment and the love of God: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.

43 Woe unto you, Pharisees! for ye love the uppermost seats in the synagogues, and greetings in the markets.

44 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are as graves which appear not, and the men that walk over them are not aware of them.

45 ¶ Then answered one of the lawyers, and said unto him, Master, thus saying thou reproachest us also.

46 And he said, Woe unto you also, ye lawyers! for ye lade men with burdens grievous to be borne, and ye yourselves touch not the burdens with one of your fingers.

## REVISED VERSION.

42 But woe unto you Pharisees! for ye tithe mint and rue and every herb, and pass over justice and the love of God: but these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the

43 other undone. Woe unto you Pharisees! for ye love the chief seats in the synagogues, and the salutations in the marketplaces.

44 Woe unto you! for ye are as the tombs which appear not, and the men that walk over them know it not.

45 And one of the lawyers answering saith unto him, <sup>1</sup>Master, in saying this thou reproachest us also.

46 And he said, Woe unto you lawyers also! for ye lade men with burdens grievous to be borne, and ye yourselves touch not the burdens with one of

<sup>1</sup> Or, Teacher

feels that Christ's word reproaches, literally "insulteth" his class, were not attorneys, but interpreters of the sacred law, the "divines," the "theologians" of that day. In response Jesus does not excuse, but severely accuses this class. Their mode of interpreting the law placed many burdens grievous to be borne, because laid upon the conscience, as well as adding many outward religious requirements, from which these interpreters themselves escaped by fine spun distinctions, and casuistical exceptions. For a glimpse at these let any one read a few pages of the Talmud.

**47. ye build the sepulchres [tombs] of the prophets]** - Some understand this to be severe irony. You now pretend greatly to honor the prophets, building showy tombs for them; but your fathers killed them. Or, it is quite consistent to regard this as a continuation of the thought in v. 46. Your fathers killed the prophets, and now you build tombs not merely of stone, but also of endless burdensome traditions to bury them and their teachings out of sight. Your fathers disobeyed them and destroyed them. You carry on the work, by concealing them under your whitewash of tradition, so that men cannot recognize them, nor their teaching. "So," in this way, ye are witnesses and consent unto the works of your fathers; for they killed them, and ye literally "erect buildings," "build over" or "rebuild over" them. Poole pertinently says, "It is gross hypocrisy for men to magnify the servants of God in former ages, and in the meantime to persecute" those in the present age, holding the same truth. And Ryle adds: "it is absurd . . . to pretend admiration of dead saints, if we do not at the same time endeavor to walk in their steps."

**49. said the wisdom of God]** There is no work of this title now known, nor is there any one passage in the Old Testament containing exactly the words cited, but the substance of the citation may be found in several Old Testament texts. Some suggest that it refers to the passage in 2 Chron. 24 : 18-22 : others to the book of Proverbs, or is a reference to a former record of the declaration as in Matt. 23 : 34, 35. But it seems better and more natural to accept this as a declaration by our Lord, of what God in his wisdom had decided to do. In this sense there is no reference to a previous revealed "saying." It is a revelation now of God's wisdom in this matter.

**51. unto the blood of Zachariah]** In the absence of full historical

## COMMON VERSION.

47 Woe unto you! for ye build the sepulchres of the prophets, and your fathers killed them.

48 Truly ye bear witness that ye allow the deeds of your fathers: for they indeed killed them, and ye build their sepulchres.

49 Therefore also said the wisdom of God, I will send them prophets and apostles, and *some* of them they shall slay and persecute:

50 That the blood of all the prophets, which was shed from the foundation of the world, may be required of this generation;

51 From the blood of Abel unto the blood of Zacharias, which perished between the altar and the temple: verily I say unto you, It shall be required of this generation.

## REVISED VERSION.

47 your fingers. Woe unto you! for ye build the tombs of the prophets, and your fathers

48 killed them. So ye are witnesses and consent unto the works of your fathers: for they killed them, and ye build *their tombs*.

49 Therefore also said the wisdom of God, I will send unto them prophets and apostles; and *some* of them they shall kill and perse-

50 cute; that the blood of all the prophets, which was shed from the foundation of the world, may be required of this generation;

51 from the blood of Abel unto the blood of Zachariah, who perished between the altar and the <sup>1</sup>sanctuary: yea, I say unto you, it shall be required of this generation.

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *house*.

details, it is difficult to say definitely who this Zachariah was. It may refer to the Zechariah murdered in the days of Josiah, 2 Chron. 24 : 20; a murder which the Jews regarded as an atrocious crime. The "generation" then living, by acknowledging the acts of the fathers became sharers in their guilt and punishment. It is an established rule that those who join with others in crime, or "aid and abet" their crimes become guilty before the law.

**52. key of knowledge]** Spiritual wisdom is represented as a treasure in a room or house, on which were lock and key. The lawyers had locked the door, and either carried, that is, "kept" the key, or it may mean, they had taken it away. In either case the result was, that they did not enter themselves, and those that "were entering," desiring and trying honestly and earnestly to enter, they hindered.

**53. 54. to provoke him . . . to catch something]** The maliciousness of the scribes and Pharisees is strongly set forth in these verses. The Greek is very strong; we may render it, they terribly pressed him, enraged, and plied him with questions concerning more things, setting a trap for him, to catch (or "hunt artfully") something from his mouth.

**SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.**—1. Believers may accept hospitality from the unconverted in order to do them good. 2. Hypocrisy in religion is foolish as well as wicked. 3. Hypocrites are seldom consistent in their conduct. 4. The outward conduct is not a sure index to character. 5. Wickedness may be often concealed under a religious exterior. 6. True Christians will strive to practice what they teach. 7. It is more easy to admire dead saints than to become living ones. 8. Judgment will surely fall upon the hypocritical, and the false teachers. 9. It is a terrible sin to conceal truth, or hinder others from getting it.

### AGAINST HYPOCRISY AND FEARFULNESS. 12 : 1-12.

GALILEE (?) A.D. 28.

Since many, if not all the teachings recorded in this chapter, are to be found in different relations in other Gospels, some have suggested that Luke has here made a compilation from several discourses of our Lord spoken at different times and places. This is possible, but it is more natural to accept the obvious meaning of the statement in v. 1, which introduces the narration, and to hold that the evangelist reports the substance of the teachings upon one occasion on which Jesus spoke important truths, repeated at different

#### COMMON VERSION.

52 Woe unto you, lawyers! for ye have taken away the key of knowledge : ye entered not in yourselves, and them that were entering in ye hindered.

53 And as he said these things unto them, the scribes and the Pharisees began to urge him vehemently, and to provoke him to speak of many things :

54 Laying wait for him, and seeking to catch something out of his mouth, that they might accuse him.

#### REVISED VERSION.

52 Woe unto you lawyers! for ye took away the key of knowledge : ye entered not in yourselves, and them that were entering in ye hindered.

53 And when he was come out from thence, the scribes and the Pharisees began to <sup>1</sup>press upon him vehemently, and to pro-

54 voke him to speak of <sup>2</sup>many things; laying wait for him, to catch something out of his mouth.

<sup>1</sup> Or, set themselves vehemently against him

<sup>2</sup> Or, more

times to other persons, as any teacher might do. Any lack of unity and of logical sequence in the narrative here, may be reasonably accounted for, from the brevity and condensed form of the report, and also by the fact that it is not given as one continuous discourse, but as a series of teachings after the interlocutory method common among the Jews at that period. The chapter may be divided into at least five portions: 1) To disciples: vs. 1-12. 2) In answer to one of the company: vs. 13-21. 3) Again to his disciples: vs. 22-40. 4) In response to Peter: vs. 41-53. 5) To the people: vs. 54-59.

**1. In the mean time]** The excitement of this public attack upon Jesus by the scribes and Pharisees brought together "many thousands" literally myriads (a myriad is 10,000) of the multitude, in such a dense and excited crowd that they trode one upon another. Then Jesus "began" to say unto his disciples, an expression which usually marks the beginning of a formal discourse; first of all, beware of the leaven of the Pharisees. Beware of the "leaven," the influence of these men not only, but of their teaching and their religion, for it is hypocrisy. There is nothing covered up, whether false or true, that shall not be revealed. You must avoid hypocrisy therefore in all your teachings, for what you have said in darkness, shall be heard in the light; and what you have whispered in the ear (as some rabbis whispered their teachings in the ear of an interpreter) in your inner and most secret chamber, shall be proclaimed upon the house tops. Now in Turkey, the Moslem crier calls the people to prayer, from the house top. Your teaching and your religion as my disciples must be the opposite of that of "hypocrites" or "actors," for it will be subject to the most searching examination.

**4. my friends]** "Ye are my friends . . . Henceforth I call you not servants." John 15 : 14, 15. The furiously angry attack of the Pharisees just made seems to suggest the coming persecution of the disciples. Jesus speaks comforting words to them: "Be not afraid of them that kill the body," and can do no more. Socrates said "Slay me, they may; hurt me, they cannot. The body is not the 'me,' not the 'real being.'"

**5. Fear him, . . hath power]** Some say this means Satan, but the

## COMMON VERSION.

CHAP. XII.—In the mean time, when there were gathered together an innumerable multitude of people, insomuch that they trode one upon another, he began to say unto his disciples first of all, Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy.

2 For there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; neither hid, that shall not be known.

3 Therefore, whatsoever ye have spoken in darkness shall be heard in the light; and that which ye have spoken in the ear in closets shall be proclaimed upon the housetops.

4 And I say unto you my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do.

5 But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him.

## REVISED VERSION.

12 In the mean time, when <sup>1</sup>the many thousands of the multitude were gathered together, insomuch that they trode one upon another, he began to <sup>2</sup>say unto his disciples first of all, Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy. But there is nothing covered up, that shall not be revealed; and hid, that shall not be known. Wherefore whatsoever ye have said in the darkness shall be heard in the light; and what ye have spoken in the ear in the inner chambers shall be proclaimed <sup>4</sup>upon the housetops. And I say unto you my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that <sup>5</sup>they can do. But I will warn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him, who after he hath killed hath <sup>3</sup>power to cast into <sup>4</sup>hell; yea,

<sup>1</sup>Gr. the myriads of.

<sup>2</sup>Or, say unto his disciples, First of all beware ye

<sup>3</sup>Or, authority

<sup>4</sup>Gr. Gehenna.

Bible teaches us, to resist the devil, not to "fear him." 1 Pet. 5 : 8, 9. To "fear God" is the uniform teaching of Scripture. Only God has power to punish men for their sins. See Rev. 20, and compare Matt. 25 : 31-46.

**6. not one is forgotten]** Sparrows were and now are very abundant in Palestine. There are many species of them. The birds are caught, strung together, and sold in the markets at the exceedingly small price of five for two farthings, or about three cents of our money. Sparrows sold for less than half a cent each. The word for "farthing" here refers to the *assarion*, a coin equal to about one and a half cents of our money. In Mark 12 : 42 the widow's two mites, which made a "farthing," the word is *kodrantes*, which was equal to about three eighths of a cent. Though a sparrow was so insignificant as to be worth less than half a cent, it was not forgotten in the sight of God. He has the minutest providential care over all his creatures. His care is so minute as to number every hair of our heads. This implies special and particular providential care for each disciple. Therefore, when he cares for the sparrows, he surely will care for you, each of you my disciples "of more value than many sparrows."

**8. confess me before men]** The preceding assurance is given, because the time is at hand when disciples must confess Christ, or deny him, when confession will cost the confessor persecution and perhaps death. The Greek reading is peculiar and more emphatic than the English readings: "Every one who shall confess in me before men, even the Son of man shall confess in him before the angels of God." Compare also the revised reading in the margin. The next verse contains the obvious counterpart to this declaration, "he that denieth me in the presence of men" (notice the change in expression) "shall be denied in the presence of the angels of God." To give courage to disciples to make the confession "in the presence of men," Jesus first reminds them of God's minute care of his creatures, even of the almost worthless sparrows, and now adds the reward of such confession, and the solemn consequences of a denial of him.

**10. blasphemeth against the Holy Ghost [Spirit]** Jesus further encourages his disciples, by a promise of forgiveness, if they should speak

## COMMON VERSION.

6 Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God?

7 But even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not therefore: ye are of more value than many sparrows.

8 Also I say unto you, Whosoever shall confess me before men, him shall the Son of man also confess before the angels of God :

9 But he that denieth me before men shall be denied before the angels of God.

10 And whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but unto him that blasphemeth against the Holy Ghost it shall not be forgiven.

11 And when they bring you unto the synagogues, and unto magistrates, and powers, take ye no thought how or what thing ye shall answer, or what ye shall say :

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *in me*.

## REVISED VERSION.

6 I say unto you, Fear him. Are not five sparrows sold for two pence? and not one of them is forgotten in the sight of God.

7 But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not: ye are of more value

8 than many sparrows. And I say unto you, Every one who shall confess <sup>1</sup> me before

men, <sup>2</sup> him shall the Son of man also confess before the angels of God: but he that denieth me in the presence of men shall be denied in the presence of the angels of God.

10 And every one who shall speak a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but unto him that blasphemeth against the Holy Spirit it shall not be for-

11 given. And when they bring you before the synagogues, and the rulers, and the authorities, be not anxious how or what ye

<sup>2</sup> Gr. *in him*.

against, that is, in an hour of temptation deny him, yet speedily repent as Peter did. But if one should blaspheme against the Holy Spirit, it would not be forgiven. Precisely what is the nature of an act that would be blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, commonly called "the unpardonable sin," theological writers discuss at great length, but do not agree in their definitions of it. Clearly it was connected here in some way with the charge that Jesus worked miracles by the devil, instead of the Spirit of God. This was held to be the unpardonable sin by Athanasius, Jerome, Chrysostom, Ambrose and most of the early Christian fathers. Irenæus, however, held it to be wilful rejection of the gospel; Augustine that it was utter hardness of heart to the end of life, and Origen that it was mortal sin after baptism. Mediæval and modern writers differ still more widely in their views respecting the nature of this sin. Stier suggests that it is the wilful and persistent rejection of the testimony of the Holy Spirit in saving souls, and that it is unpardonable "not on God's account, but the creature's, who has put himself under such a ban. He remains incorrigible, and incapable of repentance." Possibly the precise nature of this sin is left under a veil, that men may avoid all known sin, and thus surely avoid committing the unpardonable one.

**12. the Holy Spirit shall teach you]** Continuing the thought of confession when under arrest, accusation and danger of condemnation, Jesus says disciples are not to be anxious (it is the same Greek word as in Matt. 6 : 34; 1 Cor. 7 : 34; and Phil. 4 : 6) what or how they shall answer, for the Holy Spirit will teach them what to say, this same Holy Spirit against whom, if one blasphemed, it would not be forgiven. He will be the divine teacher and guide to all Christian confessors, as he was to Paul before Agrippa, to Luther at Worms, to Wiclif, Huss, Latimer, Ridley, Cranmer, and the great army of martyr confessors, known and unknown to us, in all the intervening ages.

SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.—1. Believers are solemnly warned to avoid hypocrisy. 2. Pharisaism still abounds in modern forms of religion, and among all sects. 3. Believers are not to fear the power of men. 4. "Fear God and you need have no other fear." 5. God has a particular providential care over his people. 6. Confess Christ before men and he will confess you before angels; deny him, and he will deny you. 7. Sin repented of, may be forgiven: there is a sin, that "shall not be forgiven;" pray to be delivered from that and from all sin. 8. Confession of Christ may cost trial and persecution. 9. The Holy Spirit will teach disciples how and what to say in times of sudden trial.

### PARABLE OF THE RICH FOOL. 12:13-21.

GALILEE (?) OR PERŒA, A.D. 28 (?), 290.

### 13. divide the inheritance with me] The "one out of the multitude"

#### COMMON VERSION.

12 For the Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour what ye ought to say.

13 ¶ And one of the company said unto him, Master, speak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me.

#### REVISED VERSION.

12 shall answer, or what ye shall say: for the Holy Spirit shall teach you in that very hour what ye ought to say.

13 And one out of the multitude said unto him, <sup>1</sup> Master, bid my brother divide the

<sup>1</sup> Or, Teacher

who interrupted Jesus with this appeal is not named. Some suppose it was a case like that referred to in Deut. 21 : 15-17. The man probably had a just claim, or he would not have appealed to one so well known to oppose injustice as Jesus. The ordinary mode of division of inheritances among the Jews was, where there were only two sons, the eldest had two-thirds and the younger one-third, where there were five sons, the eldest had two-sixths and each of the others one-sixth for his portion. The daughters were to be provided for by husbands or by the eldest brother. See Bissell's Biblical Antiquities, p. 40. The warning is not against unrighteousness, as we would have expected it to be, if the man had been trying to gain what rightfully belonged to his brother, but is against covetousness. This spirit may be shown quite plainly, in reclaiming what is justly our own. The man appeals to Jesus respectfully as "Teacher," to bid his brother divide, implying that he regarded Jesus as having authority in civil as in spiritual matters. Jewish rabbis and priests in Syria often were called to settle matters of property. Indeed the priests there now intrude themselves into every affair of life. They have a voice in bargains, controversies, bequests, inheritances, lawsuits and every kind of quarrels. There was nothing unusual therefore, in this man's appeal to Jesus, in view of Eastern custom, nor was the appeal of itself, wrong.

**14. who made me a judge]** Jesus sternly refuses to become an arbitrator or umpire in secular matters. See Ex. 2 : 14. "Man" implying reproof, see Rom. 2 : 1, who made me a judge or a divider over you, in these worldly matters? The Jewish idea was that the Messiah would arbitrarily right all such minor wrongs. Jesus often corrected mistaken views of his mission, and while he gave rules to guide disciples in worldly matters, he declined to decide disputes or to assume authority concerning temporal things. Churches and ministers should avoid rushing into judgment upon purely worldly affairs. The temporal power assumed by the Pope has been a curse to the Roman church and to Christianity. Here, the covetous spirit of the man, even when trying to get what may have justly belonged to him, led to reproof, and warning against this sin.

**15. a man's life consisteth not]** The eager request of the man is made the occasion for warning the hearers: "keep yourselves from all covetousness," or from every kind of covetousness, even from this plausible kind, which may accompany an effort to gain what is a just right. The Greek word for "covetousness" expresses a craving for more, not because more is really needed, but from a simple desire to hoard more. The reason given for keeping from covetousness is far deeper than the commonplace truth, that a man's possessions are not his life. In Greek there are four words for "life;" two of them are used here: one refers to the natural human life (*βίος*, bi-

## COMMON VERSION.

14 And he said unto him, Man, who made me a judge or a divider over you?

15 And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.

## REVISED VERSION.

14 inheritance with me. But he said unto him, Man, who made me a judge or a di-

15 vider over you? And he said unto them, Take heed, and keep yourselves from all covetousness: <sup>1</sup>for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which

<sup>1</sup> Gr. for not in a man's abundance consisteth his life, from the things which he possesseth.

ography); the other used here refers to life in a broader sense, the true life, ζωή; and the teaching in this verse turns mainly on this distinction which the one English word "life" does not clearly express. In a man's abundance from the things which he possesseth, his lower life might be sustained, but not his true life. His true life is what he is, and consisteth not in, and is not supported by, what he has. See the reading in the margin of the Revised Version. Not by a man's possessing abundance does his true life (or, the support of it) consist. Estimate man by his character, not by his abundance. The true life is in nowise dependent on the amount of our earthly abundance. It is dependent on God's grace and will, a fact which is brought out in vs. 24-32. The world asks, what he is worth; God asks, what he is.

**16. a certain rich man]** This rich man of the parable gained his wealth honestly from the fruitfulness of his ground. His was a common, and the simplest form of industry in Syria. In pulling down his barns or store-houses, he was not directly injuring others, or doing anything sharp or mean. He did not propose a life of drunkenness, dissipation, or coarse crime. He withheld giving to the poor, as the rich young ruler was required to do, Matt. 19 : 21; Luke 18 : 22, and proposed to hoard everything for himself, and to enjoy ease, to eat, drink, and be merry; live a life of respectable comfort and pleasure. What shall I do? is the question that troubles all who have any surplus. How can I invest it? Ambrose says: "thou hast . . . the houses of the widows, the mouths of orphans and infants." But the man wanted "barns." The "barns" were Eastern "store-houses," great holes under ground, walled and lined to keep grain dry and secure from robbers. He would take down and extend the walls of his store-houses, to have room for all his grain, coin, oil, and goods. "Their inward thought is that their houses shall continue forever." Ps. 49 : 11.

**19. Soul . . . take thine ease]** The Greek word for "soul," ψυχή, is also sometimes rendered "life," see revised reading, margin, meaning the seat of the senses, desires, and affections, and sometimes the immortal nature. It seems to be used in the latter sense here. The rich man congratulates his soul on having goods for many years, and therefore need not have any care for the future, nor any thought of God's providential discipline of his creatures.

**20. But God said]** While the rich man was telling his soul of the

## COMMON VERSION.

16 And he spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully :

17 And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits ?

18 And he said, This will I do : I will pull down my barns, and build greater ; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods.

19 And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years ; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry.

20 But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee : then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided ?

## REVISED VERSION.

16 he possesseth. And he spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain

17 rich man brought forth plentifully : and he reasoned within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have not where to bestow

18 my fruits ? And he said, This will I do : I will pull down my barns, and build greater ; and there will I bestow all my corn and

19 my goods. And I will say to my <sup>1</sup> soul, <sup>1</sup> Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years ; take thine ease, eat, drink, be

20 merry. But God said unto him, Thou foolish one, this night <sup>2</sup> is thy <sup>1</sup> soul required of thee ; and the things which thou hast

1 Or, life

2 Gr. they require thy soul.

abundance stored up for years, God was at that moment saying of him, and unto him, not by special revelation perhaps, but it may be by a mortal disease: Thou foolish one, this night they require thy soul of thee (see marginal readings); And the things which thou hast prepared, whose shall they be? "He heareth up riches, and knoweth not who shall gather them." Ps. 39: 6; see also Ps. 49: 16, 17. He has earthly abundance for many years, but that night he dies. He leaves his all behind him; he has no provision for his true life.

**21. So is he that . . . is not rich toward God]** This plain and forcible application of the parable emphasizes the folly of covetousness; of heaping up for earthly life, and of forgetting God, and having no treasures for the true life. The rich man spent all his thought on goods and self. He gave nothing to the poor. The owners of millions may be paupers before God. On the other hand the gospel does not favor wastefulness, and improvidence, nor indiscriminate hurling of money or goods to an idle crowd. It forbids hoarding for selfish ends, or to gratify personal love of possession. In the apocryphal book of Ecclesiasticus, 11: 18, 19, is a striking parallel in thought: "There is that waxeth rich by his wariness and pinching . . . he saith, I have found rest, and now will eat continually of my goods, and yet he knoweth not what time shall come upon him, and that he must leave those things to others, and die."

**SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.**—1. Jesus refused the request, but offered the man something better than he asked. 2. Covetousness seeks for self, not for God and good. 3. Greedily claiming one's own may show as covetous a spirit, as to desire the possessions of another. 4. When thy goods on earth are ready to spoil, learn how to store them in heaven. 5. Grow rich toward God; though you are ever so poor in earthly treasure.

#### THE HEAVENLY FATHER'S CARE. 12: 22-34.

GALILEE (?) OF PERÆA, A.D. 28 (?), 29.

**22. he said unto his disciples]** If to delight in the hoarding of possessions, as this rich man did, is wrong, then the disciples would naturally ask, how are we to provide food and clothing? Jesus answers this: "Be not anxious for your life [or 'soul,' the same Greek word as in vs. 19, 20] what ye shall eat." Trust God for food and for clothing. Give your first thought to God's kingdom; use wisely the powers and opportunities his providence grants you, and believe that he will bless your plans and labors, by adding such temporal things as you require. The disciple is to live a life of faith. See also Ps. 55: 22. The life is more, that is of greater importance, than

#### COMMON VERSION.

21 So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.

22 ¶ And he said unto his disciples, Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat; neither for the body, what ye shall put on.

23 The life is more than meat, and the body is more than raiment.

#### REVISED VERSION.

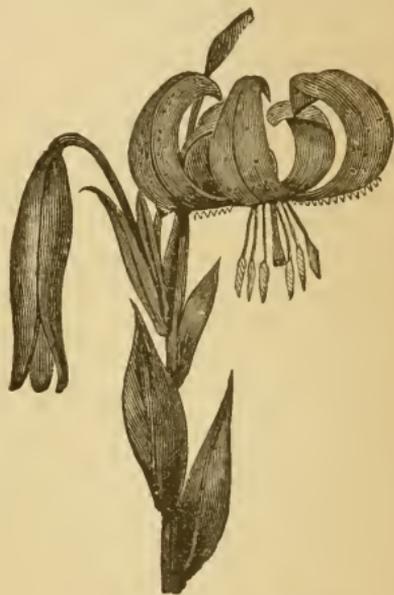
21 prepared, whose shall they be? So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.

22 And he said unto his disciples, Therefore I say unto you, Be not anxious for *your* <sup>1</sup>life, what ye shall eat; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. For the <sup>1</sup>life is more than the food, and the body than

food, and the body than raiment. Compare "greater than Solomon is here," chap. 11 : 31.

**24. the ravens . . . God feedeth them]** The raven abounds in Syria, and is frequently alluded to in Scripture. Noah sent one from the ark, Gen. 8 : 7, the ravens fed Elijah, 1 Kgs. 17 : 4-6. See also Job 38 : 41 ; Ps. 147 : 9 ; Prov. 30 : 17. They have no anxiety about barns and store-houses ; they look for food and God feedeth them. You need not worry about your food ; you are of more value than the birds. If you do worry and are troubled about it, you cannot add to your stature, or the measure of your life. If you cannot change what is comparatively of the least importance, that is, how tall or old, you shall be, then why should you worry about all these other things ? Observe that the conclusion of verse 26 is found in Luke only.

**27. the lilies . . . they toil not]** The lily group of plants is very numerous in Palestine ; 113 species are described in the English Exploration reports, of which 12 or 14 are peculiar to that country. Some of them are very brilliant in color, and very beautiful. Fuel is scarce, and coarse grass and plants are used to heat the small under-ground ovens, for baking. Yet God clothes this grass of the field in great beauty and glory as you see ; shall he not much more clothe you ? The Eastern oven is a small hole in the ground plastered inside with clay ; sometimes it is made of baked clay like unglazed earthenware.



SCARLET LILY (*Lilium Chalcedonicum*).

**29. be ye of doubtful mind]** Do not spend the most of your strength and time on what you shall eat or drink. Then adopting a sailor's phrase,

COMMON VERSION.

24 Consider the ravens : for they neither sow nor reap ; which neither have store-house nor barn ; and God feedeth them : how much more are ye better than the fowls ?

25 And which of you with taking thought can add to his stature one cubit ?

26 If ye then be not able to do that thing which is least, why take ye thought for the rest ?

27 Consider the lilies how they grow : they toil not, they spin not ; and yet I say unto you, that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.

28 If then God so clothe the grass, which is to day in the field, and to morrow is cast into the oven ; how much more will he clothe you, O ye of little faith ?

29 And seek not ye what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, neither be ye of doubtful mind,

REVISED VERSION.

24 the raiment. Consider the ravens, that they sow not, neither reap ; which have no store-chamber nor barn ; and God feedeth them : of how much more value are ye than

25 the birds ! And which of you by being anxious can add a cubit unto <sup>1</sup> the measure of his life ? If then ye are not able to do

26 even that which is least, why are ye anxious concerning the rest ? Consider the lilies, how they grow : they toil not, neither do they spin ; yet I say unto you, Even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like

28 one of these. But if God doth so clothe the grass in the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven ; how much more shall he clothe you, O ye of little faith ?

29 And seek not ye what ye shall eat, and what ye shall drink, neither be ye of doubt-

<sup>1</sup> Or, his stature

applied to pushing a ship out upon the waves, and tossed, he adds do not be in this uncertain, tossed state of mind, like a ship on the sea.

**31. seek ye]** The world seeks first and foremost these lower, less important things; you need not; your Father (reminding them that God is not only a Father, but their Father) knoweth that ye have need of these things. Hence seek ye his kingdom, and these things shall be added unto you. This is God's "promissory note" to his people.

**32. to give you the kingdom]** Disciples are not to worry about their spiritual food and support. You are a little flock, helpless in a great world; fear not. You need not, cannot earn the kingdom; God gives it to you. He feeds you, supports your life; he will also give you eternal life.

**33. sell . . give . . make . . a treasure]** Christians of the early church sold their possessions and gave to such as had need. Earthly provision-bags or purses, like the possessions, become old and worthless; but have a purse filled with faith, grace and almsgiving, a treasure in heaven, that never fails, that cannot be stolen, nor corroded with rust nor destroyed by moth. Where your chief treasure is, there your heart will be found also.

SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.—1. It is needless for believers to worry about the things of this world. 2. The worldly worry about their food, drink, and clothing. 3. The Lord knows that his people need these things. 4. He provides for the ravens: he will feed his people. 5. By worrying one cannot add to his stature or to the length of his life. 6. The lilies God arrays more gloriously than Solomon, yet they are in the field to-day and in the oven tomorrow. 7. So trust God and do not be tossed about with fretting care. 8. Seek the kingdom of God. 9. God promises to add all necessary temporal things to those who first seek him.

### THE WATCHFUL SERVANT. 12 : 35-48.

FOR TIME AND PLACE SEE PRECEDING SECTION.

**35. your loins be girded]** In the East, the long dress or robes worn by

#### COMMON VERSION.

30 For all these things do the nations of the world seek after; and your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things.

31 ¶ But rather seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you.

32 Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.

33 Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth.

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

35 Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning;

36 And ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord, when he will return from the wedding; that, when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately.

#### REVISED VERSION.

30 ful mind. For all these things do the nations of the world seek after: but your Father knoweth that ye have need of these

31 things. Howbeit seek ye <sup>1</sup>his kingdom, and these things shall be added unto you.

32 Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.

33 Sell that ye have, and give alms; make for yourselves purses which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief draweth near, neither moth

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

35 Let your loins be girded about, and your

36 lamps burning; and be ye yourselves like unto men looking for their lord, when he shall return from the marriage feast; that, when he cometh and knocketh, they may

<sup>1</sup> Many ancient authorities read *the kingdom of God*,

all classes, hinder their walking with speed, and hence the robe must be girded up about the loins, so as not to interfere with rapid motion. The lamps were to be burning, like those of a company of servants waiting for the coming of their lord from a wedding feast at night. Watching, they may be ready to open the door at his first knock.

**37. make them sit down]** By their fidelity, the servants become guests, waited upon by the lord himself. The Romans had a Saturnalia, and other Eastern nations had similar feasts, when labor, business, and courts were suspended, slaves wore a cap of freedom, and sat down to banquets in the attire of their masters, who waited upon them. There seems to be an allusion to this custom in v. 37. The disciples must have been reminded of this illustration when Jesus washed their feet. John 13 : 4.

**38. in the second watch . . . the third]** The Romans divided the night into four watches. The first watch is not named here, as it would be too early to expect one from a wedding feast in that watch. The fourth is omitted, perhaps because it was unusual for one to return so late as that watch. The teaching is, be ready whenever the Lord comes. The time of his coming is uncertain. It is unknown. The master of the house does not know what hour the robber will come, or he would watch, and not allow him to dig through the earthen cover and tiling of his roof. Compare the healing of the paralytic, Luke 5 : 19.

**40. an hour . . . ye think not]** As the coming of a thief is unexpected, so that of the Son of man will be in an hour when "ye think not." The likeness is in the sudden and unlooked-for coming and only in that. Thus disciples are to watch.

**42. faithful and wise stewards]** Peter, who was impulsive, frank, and inquisitive, asks if this parable of the householder and the unexpected

## COMMON VERSION.

37 Blessed *are* those servants, whom the lord when he cometh shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them.

38 And if he shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find *them* so, blessed are those servants.

39 And this know, that if the goodman of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched, and not have suffered his house to be broken through.

40 Be ye therefore ready also: for the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not.

41 ¶ Then Peter said unto him, Lord, speakest thou this parable unto us, or even to all?

42 And the Lord said, Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom *his* lord shall make ruler over his household, to give *them* their portion of meat in due season?

43 Blessed *is* that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing.

44 Of a truth I say unto you, that he will make him ruler over all that he hath.

## REVISED VERSION.

37 straightway open unto him. Blessed are those <sup>1</sup>servants, whom the lord when he cometh shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them sit down to meat, and shall

38 come and serve them. And if he shall come in the second watch, and if in the third, and find *them* so, blessed are those

39 *servants*. <sup>2</sup> But know this, that if the master of the house had known in what hour the thief was coming, he would have watched, and not have left his house to be

40 <sup>3</sup>broken through. Be ye also ready: for in an hour that ye think not the Son of man cometh.

41 And Peter said, Lord, speakest thou this

42 parable unto us, or even unto all? And the Lord said, Who then is <sup>4</sup>the faithful and wise steward, whom his lord shall set over his household, to give them their portion of food in due season? Blessed is that

43 <sup>5</sup>servant, whom his lord when he cometh

44 shall find so doing. Of a truth I say unto you, that he will set him over all that he

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *bondservants*.

<sup>2</sup> Or, *But this ye know*

<sup>4</sup> Or, *the faithful steward, the wise man whom &c.*

<sup>3</sup> Gr. *digged through*.

<sup>5</sup> Gr. *bondservant*.

thief was meant for the disciples only, or for all. Jesus does not directly answer the question, but adds another parable of a steward, whom his lord puts in charge of his house during a temporary absence. This was a common thing then and now in the East. Then the steward was a slave. Such a servant in charge of his lord's things would be blessed if the lord found him faithful in his duties whenever he came. His fidelity would be rewarded by making him ruler of all his possessions. See 1 Cor. 4 : 1, 2, and Luke 22 : 29, 30.

**45. delayeth his coming]** So they soon after began to say. See 2 Pet. 3 : 4, 8, 9. Later the corrupted Roman church fell into evil indulgences, and practices well prefigured by the drunken and dissolute conduct of the steward. The servants of Christ were beaten, imprisoned, burned, slain by the sword, as Savonarola, Huss, Latimer Cranmer, and the army of reformation martyrs.

**46. his portion with the unfaithful]** To this servant his lord came when not looked for. The wickedness of some of Christ's professed people will not delay his coming. They will be judged, and be appointed their portion with the unfaithful. The precise extent of the punishment prefigured here is not certain. Grotius, Beza, and many others think it is excommunication from the church and the family of disciples. From the parallel passage in Matt. 24 : 51, the judgment implied seems to be eternal, though the next two verses here point to some qualification in this connection.

**48. few stripes . . ask the more]** Every thoughtful person will give special and prayerful study to vs. 47, 48. Great privileges bring great responsibilities. If our talents increase, so does our duty to use them. The thought is similar to that in Deut. 25 : 2. Those who have great wealth, great learning, great honors, great power, have correspondingly great responsibilities, and must give the greater account at last. The punishment too, will be proportioned to the powers, gifts, opportunities, and knowledge of the offender. Baxter well says, "Great gifts are to be used with great diligence; great trusts, and powers, and charges, are rather to be feared than sought. Little do the conquerors of the world, or those that strive for church pre-

## COMMON VERSION.

45 But and if that servant say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; and shall begin to beat the menservants and maidens, and to eat and drink, and to be drunken;

46 The lord of that servant will come in a day when he looketh not for him, and at an hour when he is not aware, and will cut him in sunder, and will appoint him his portion with the unbelievers.

47 And that servant, which knew his lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes.

48 But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required; and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more.

## REVISED VERSION.

45 hath. But if that <sup>1</sup>servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; and shall begin to beat the menservants and the maidservants, and to eat and drink, and to

46 be drunken; the lord of that <sup>1</sup>servant shall come in a day when he expecteth not, and in an hour when he knoweth not, and shall

<sup>2</sup>cut him asunder, and appoint his portion 47 with the unfaithful. And that <sup>1</sup>servant, who knew his lord's will, and made not

48 ready, nor did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes; but he that knew not, and did things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. And to whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required; and to whom they commit much, of him will they ask the more.

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *bondservant*.

<sup>2</sup> Or, *severely scourge him*

ferments, believe or consider what duty, or what deep damnation they labor for."

**SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.**—1. Believers ought to be looking constantly for the coming of their Lord. 2. He will surely come unexpectedly; therefore, watch. 3. Christians are to work, to be faithful in duty, while they are watching. 4. The greater one's light, the greater the punishment if it is neglected. 5. The Lord is just in all his ways, and right in all his judgments.

**WARNING CONCERNING TRIALS. 12:49-59.**

FOR TIME AND PLACE SEE PREVIOUS SECTIONS.

**49. I am come to send fire]** Fire was a powerful purifier. See Mal. 3:2. The work and words of Christ would separate the faithful from the unfaithful, and distinguish the steward deserving to be beaten with many stripes from him who deserves few stripes. Thus, the fire would represent not only the process of purification, but also that of judgment, since the two are closely related. Accompanying these, there will be dissensions, afflictions, persecutions, and severe trials, for the gospel cannot overcome the hosts of sin without sharp contests. As these must come, Jesus exclaims, "What do I desire; if it is already kindled?" that is, let it be kindled at once; only in this way can good come. Then, as if reminded that the first struggle of Satan would be with him, he adds v. 50 referring to his eager desire for the accomplishment of his final baptism of suffering on the cross.

**51. to give peace]** Christ is the Prince of peace. But in a sinful world, a righteous king can have peace only by destroying evil. That will bring war; not because Christ and his people have the spirit of strife and war, but because the truth they urge is resisted, and made the occasion for strife, division, and fightings by others.

**53. mother against the daughter]** This purifying process of the

**COMMON VERSION.**

49 ¶ I am come to send fire on the earth; and what will I, if it be already kindled?

50 But I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!

51 Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather division:

52 For from henceforth there shall be five in one house divided, three against two, and two against three.

53 The father shall be divided against the son, and the son against the father; the mother against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother; the mother in law against her daughter in law, and the daughter in law against her mother in law.

54 ¶ And he said also to the people, When ye see a cloud rise out of the west, straightway ye say, There cometh a shower; and so it is.

55 And when ye see the south wind blow, ye say, There will be heat; and it cometh to pass.

**REVISED VERSION.**

49 I came to cast fire upon the earth; and <sup>1</sup> what do I desire, if it is already kindled?

50 But I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accom-

51 plished! Think ye that I am come to give peace in the earth? I tell you, Nay; but

52 rather division: for there shall be from henceforth five in one house divided, three

53 against two, and two against three. They shall be divided, father against son, and son

against father; mother against daughter, and daughter against her mother; mother

in law against her daughter in law, and daughter in law against her mother in law.

54 And he said to the multitudes also, When ye see a cloud rising in the west, straightway

55 ye say, There cometh a shower; and so it cometh to pass. And when ye see a south

wind blowing, ye say, There will be a <sup>2</sup> scorching heat; and it cometh to pass.

<sup>1</sup> Or, *how I would that it were already kindled!*

<sup>2</sup> Or, *hot wind*

gospel would occasion division among those bound by the closest and most sacred ties. Some in a house would accept the gospel, and some reject it. Then the division would fall between even father and son, the tender affection of mother and daughter would be broken, and so stoutly would the gospel be resisted, that angry persecutions would follow, as forcibly but sadly pictured in the graphic language of vs. 52, 53. It is not difficult to see examples of these divisions in modern times.

**56. ye can discern the face of the sky]** Or, "ye know how to interpret [or 'prove'] the face of the earth and the heaven," see revised reading. In v. 54 Jesus addresses the multitude. He points out how carefully they observe material things, as the clouds, the winds, and the rain, so that they foretell what the weather will be, but fail to observe "this time," meaning the moral and spiritual significance of the age. Why should you not do this? Why not perceive what is right without my pointing it out? The facts in the moral world are as plain as in the material heaven. Then he gives an illustration.

**58. with thine adversary]** The parable or illustration is to emphasize the question in v. 57. You ought to see what is right. When you are on the way to the magistrate with your adversary in law, one that you have wronged, it is right to become reconciled with him, lest he drag thee to the judge, and the judge give thee to the "exactor" (see margin), etc. The moral lesson is: as a wrong doer, you must be brought before God the Judge. You are on the way there now. Be reconciled to God, and get your discharge from the punishment due to you for sin. You interpret the sky rightly. The Mediterranean Sea lay to the west. A wind from that quarter would be likely to bring rain. The arid desert of Arabia lay to the south. A wind from that way would be likely to bring heat. Van Doren faced a simoon from this quarter for six hours, which burned the flesh, inflamed the face and eyes, and so prostrated him, that he did not recover from its effects for three days. The multitude to which Jesus was speaking understood these physical facts. They had the Old Testament with its prophecies concerning Messiah. The moral purifying process had begun. It concerned them. Why did they not perceive their true state? Some suppose that the adversary meant the law; the magistrate and the judge referred to God; the officer or exactor to the angels; the prison to hell, and so on. But to assign a specific

## COMMON VERSION.

56 Ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky and of the earth; but how is it that ye do not discern this time?

57 Yea, and why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right?

58 ¶ When thou goest with thine adversary to the magistrate, as thou art in the way, give diligence that thou mayest be delivered from him; lest he hale thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and the officer cast thee into prison.

59 I tell thee, thou shalt not depart thence, till thou hast paid the very last mite.

## REVISED VERSION.

56 Ye hypocrites, ye know how to <sup>1</sup>interpret the face of the earth and the heaven; but how is it that ye know not how to <sup>1</sup>in-

57 terpret this time? And why even of your-

58 selves judge ye not what is right? For as thou art going with thine adversary before the magistrate, on the way give diligence to be quit of him; lest haply he drag thee unto the judge, and the judge shall deliver thee to the <sup>2</sup>officer, and the <sup>2</sup>officer

59 shall cast thee into prison. I say unto thee, Thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou have paid the very last mite.

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *prove*.

<sup>2</sup> Gr. *exactor*.

meaning to every detail of the illustration is an unwarrantable method of interpretation. The accuser of the Jewish nation was Moses, not Jesus, and the nation was "on the way" to a judgment, and the Messiah was the only Advocate and the one who might reconcile them to God. The debtor could not get out of prison until the very last *lepton*, mite, was paid. Assuming that debt is sin, the sinner could never pay, and hence, could never get release. Thus it was understood by Theophylact: "If we shall remain in prison until we pay the uttermost farthing, and are never able to pay it, it is manifest that future punishment will be eternal."

SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.—1. Christ suffered for his people. 2. The preaching of the gospel does not bring universal peace and harmony. 3. It is the occasion of division, because its principles are resisted. 4. It is a shame for us to study intelligently the weather, and not observe the spiritual state of the age. 5. The sinner must be reconciled to God to escape final punishment.

### THE GALILEANS, AND THE BARREN FIG TREE. 13:1-9.

PERŒA (?) A. D. 29 (?)

**1. told him of the Galileans]** Similar tumults and slaughters are mentioned by Josephus. Josephus says that Archelaus slew 3000 at one passover, Antiq. 17:9, 3, and later under Cumanus, at a passover feast a seditious tumult arose in which 20,000 Jews perished. There are allusions to similar acts of Pilate by Josephus, Antiq. 18:3, but no mention has been found in secular history of the incident noticed in v. 1. The fact, however, is in keeping with what is known of Pilate's character. Some Galilean Jews had been slain while sacrificing at the temple in Jerusalem. This horrible deed was regarded, by those who reported it to Jesus, as a mark of divine vengeance for some great sin. If there was a refuge anywhere, one's life ought to be sacred and secure when at God's altar.

**2. sinners above all . . . because they]** They supposed this cruel death implied some exceptional and unusually heinous sin. The Jews believed that exceptional calamities were proofs of exceptionally great sins. A similar view was held by the disciples also in the case of the man born blind, John 9:2. The great cause of human sorrow is sin; but it does not follow that in each individual case a great calamity is caused by a special sin of the person who suffers. No person overtaken by sudden and terrible calamity is by that fact alone proven to be an exceptionally great sinner. Jesus says

#### COMMON VERSION.

**CHAP. XIII.**—There were present at that season some that told him of the Galileans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices.

2 And Jesus answering said unto them, Suppose ye that these Galileans were sinners above all the Galileans, because they suffered such things?

3 I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.

#### REVISED VERSION.

**13** Now there were some present at that very season who told him of the Galileans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their 2 sacrifices. And he answered and said unto them, Think ye that these Galileans were sinners above all the Galileans, because 3 they have suffered these things? I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all in

“Nay; but, except ye repent, ye shall all in like manner perish.” Some with Trench assume that this was literally fulfilled in the fall of Jerusalem, since numbers did perish then by violence, as those did whom Pilate slew. But to assume that the multitude in Peræa or Galilee to whom Jesus spoke the parable of the barren fig tree, did all literally perish, or that the great majority were in Jerusalem and perished with its fall, is to assume what is quite improbable. The fall occurred 40 years after the speaking of the parable, and hence most of the company must in the ordinary course of nature have died before that calamity. Nor is it likely that very many of such a company, in remote parts like Galilee and Peræa, who may have survived to that time, would be caught in Jerusalem in such a catastrophe. It is not wise therefore thus to narrow the broader spiritual lesson evidently intended, namely, all who do not repent will perish also.

**4. the tower in Siloam]** This “accident” is not elsewhere mentioned. These were Judæans who perished, an indication that judgments did not fall on Galilean Jews only. The tower was doubtless one in the hamlet of Siloam, now Silwan, across the Kedron valley a short distance from the walls of Jerusalem. The houses of the modern village are of stone and built against and among rude caves upon the precipitous side of the hill. The caves are used as stables. It would require care to make a secure foundation for a tower in such a place, or, if “Siloam” refers to the pool of Siloam, 'Ain Silwan; then it was in the valley just below the village. The “pool” was connected with the water supply of the city, and the “tower” may have been some structure built by Pilate. Compare Mark 7: 11 and Josephus, Wars 2: 9, 4.

**5. had a fig tree]** The corners of vineyards in Syria are still planted with fig trees. See Tristram, *Nat. Hist. of the Bible*, p. 352. This parable illustrates the forbearance of God with his unfruitful people, especially Israel and also the Christian Church of now. The owner had the fig tree for fruit, not for shade merely. He sought fruit and found none. God calls his people and cares for them that they may bear the fruit of good works, and the graces of a complete Christian character.

**7. three years I come]** The “dresser of the vineyard” or the vine dresser, has special care of the vines and fruit trees in Syria. The “three years” have been variously understood, to refer to three periods, as the patriarchal, the Mosaic, and the kingly; to childhood, youth, and old age; to the

## COMMON VERSION.

4 Or those eighteen, upon whom the tower in Siloam fell, and slew them, think ye that they were sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem?

5 I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.

6 ¶ He spake also this parable; A certain man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came and sought fruit thereon, and found none.

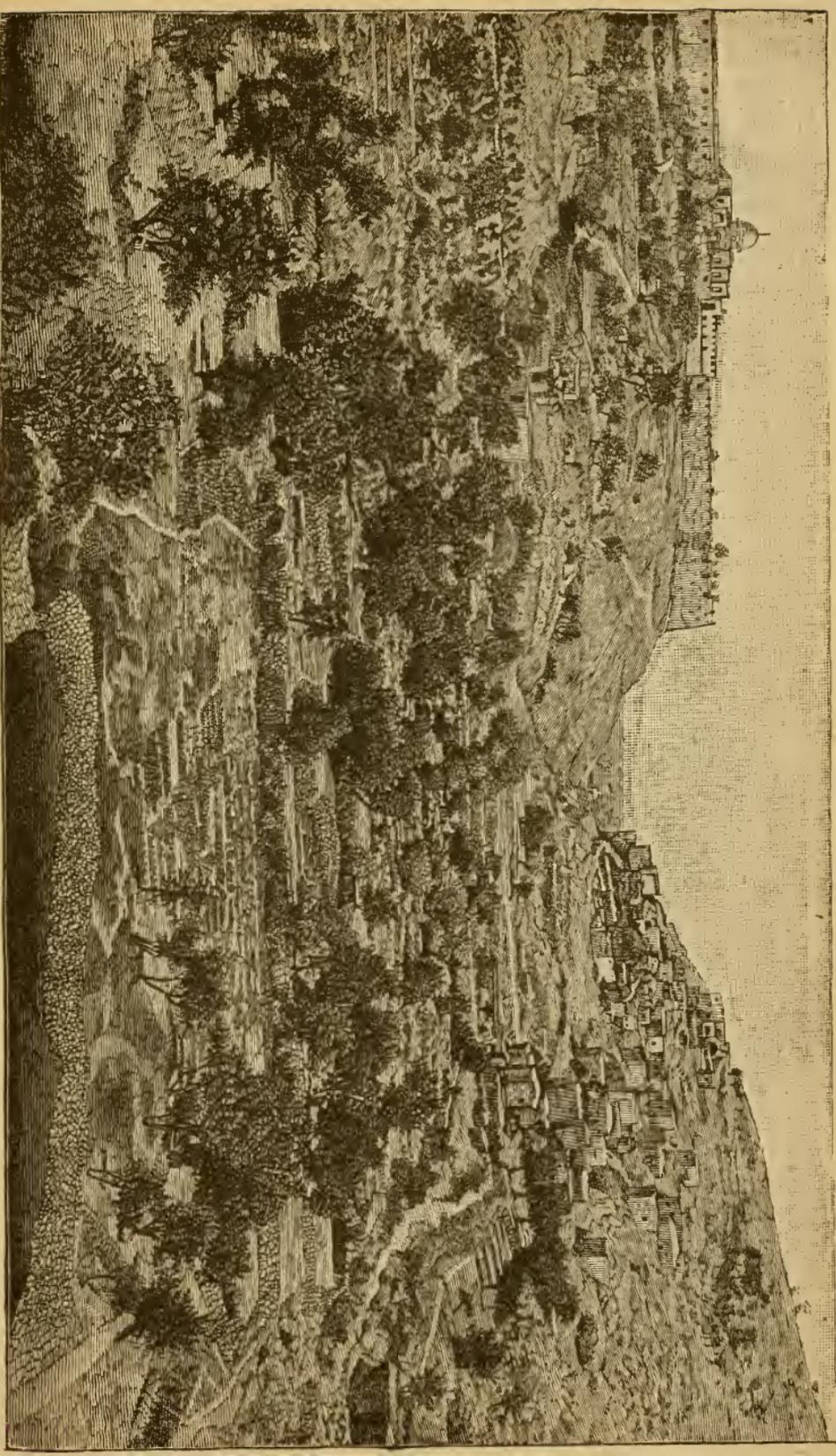
7 Then said he unto the dresser of his vineyard, Behold, these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and find none: cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground?

## REVISED VERSION.

4 like manner perish. Or those eighteen, upon whom the tower in Siloam fell, and killed them, think ye that they were <sup>1</sup> offenders above all the men that dwell in Jerusalem? I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.

6 And he spake this parable; a certain man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came seeking fruit thereon, and found 7 none. And he said unto the vinedresser, Behold, these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and find none: cut it down; why doth it also cumber the ground?

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *debtors*.



Village of Silwan (Siloam). *From a Photograph.*

The view looks westward up the valley of the Kidron; Silwan is on the right; the wall of Jerusalem on the left.

three years of our Lord's ministry; to the three official states of prophet, priest, and king; while others with greater probability regard them as the machinery of the story, and do not assign any special significance to them. "Cut it down," why should it also, it with others, cumber the ground—that is, prevent something fruitful from growing there.

**8. let it alone this year also]** The vinedresser may represent Christ the Intercessor, or with more fitness the Holy Spirit who convinceth of sin, and pleads for further forbearance. The sinner does not repent; the grace of God defers judgment; the Spirit persuades through fresh providences and calls; the Christian professor has a name only to life; he bears no fruit. The Spirit pleads with and for him, that he be not cut off. He is pruned by chastisements, stirred by providences, fed anew by divine grace, that he may bear fruit. If he bears fruit, he is saved; if not, forbearance ceases, judgment overtakes him. The parable plainly enough applied primarily to the Jewish church and people. Some suggest meanings for each detail. The vineyard represents the world or the Jewish church; the owner is God the Son; the vine dresser the Holy Spirit; so far it may be clear. But confusion is introduced when it is further suggested that the fig tree represents Jews; the three years, periods of existence in the Jewish nation, or, years of Christ's ministry, and so on. The general teaching of the parable is obvious as already stated: God's patience with an unfruitful race and the earnest efforts taken to have it bear fruit, which if unsuccessful bring judgment.

SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.—1. The good may have great calamities befall them; witness Job and Paul. 2. When calamities befall the wicked, it does not prove them to be exceptionally great sinners. 3. Unless we repent, we shall perish. 4. Those given exceptional privileges are expected to become exceptionally useful. 5. Barrenness in spiritual things brings condemnation. John 15: 2, 6. 6. Judgment may be deferred, as in the barren fig tree. 7. If the respite and the added advantages bring no fruit, then destruction surely will follow.

### THE INFIRM WOMAN; THE MUSTARD SEED, AND LEAVEN; 13: 10-21.

PERÆA (?) A. D. 29 (?).

**10. one of the synagogues]** The miracle narrated here may not unreasonably be supposed to be given as an illustration of how Jesus sought to carry out the work of the vine dresser in convincing the Jews of the truth, that they might bear fruit. This would account for its insertion in this connection. Where the synagogue was, is not certain. It may have been in some city of Galilee, or, in the valley of the Jordan, or in Peræa, which Jesus entered on leaving Galilee.

#### COMMON VERSION.

8 And he answering said unto him, Lord, let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it, and dung it:

9 And if it bear fruit, well: and if not, then after that thou shalt cut it down.

10 And he was teaching in one of the synagogues on the sabbath.

#### REVISED VERSION.

8 And he answering saith unto him, Lord, let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it, and dung it: and if it bear fruit thenceforth, well; but if not, thou shalt cut it down.

9 And he was teaching in one of the synagogues on the sabbath.

10 And he was teaching in one of the synagogues on the sabbath.

**11. spirit of infirmity]** This poor woman was afflicted and bowed together in some strange and unexplained manner, perhaps through some rheumatic affection, by the power of a "spirit of weakness" which is usually understood to mean a "demoniac spirit," and rightly so, see v. 16; although in the narrative of the cure there is no mention of casting out the "spirit" as in other similar cases. She was unable to straighten herself erect like other persons, and the reproof of the ruler in v. 14 implies that she with others, came to the synagogue to be healed. Jesus saw her, called her to him, and said, Woman, thou art unbound from thy weakness. He then laid his hands on her, perhaps to help her faith, and as the means by which the healing virtue should reach her. Compare the case of the woman with the issue of blood, who touched his garment. Luke 8 : 44-46. The cure was instantaneous and the demon gone; the woman became the child of God and glorified him.

**14. the ruler . . with indignation]** The Jewish traditional law forbade the Jewish physician from practicing his art or giving medicine on the Sabbath except in cases of life or death. The hostility to Jesus shared by this ruler, led him to take advantage of this tradition by an angry reproof of the people, meant also for Jesus. The ruler did not address Jesus directly, nor did he dare to reproach the woman, as either of these courses might have aroused the anger of the multitude against himself more than a direct reproof of them for coming to be healed on the Sabbath. For similar instances of fault finding for Sabbath healing, see Matt. 12 : 1, 10; Mark 2 : 23; Luke 6 : 1-10; John 7 : 22, 23. The ruler called it "work" to heal the infirm, or to come to the synagogue to be healed; work that was suitable and lawful for the six days only.

**15. each one of you . . loose his ox]** Jesus answers the ruler; yet not directly but indirectly, the answer being addressed to the multitude, leaving

## COMMON VERSION.

11 ¶ And, behold, there was a woman which had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, and was bowed together, and could in no wise lift up herself.

12 And when Jesus saw her, he called her to him, and said unto her, Woman, thou art loosed from thine infirmity.

13 And he laid his hands on her: and immediately she was made straight, and glorified God.

14 And the ruler of the synagogue answered with indignation, because that Jesus had healed on the sabbath day, and said unto the people, There are six days in which men ought to work: in them therefore come and be healed, and not on the sabbath day.

15 The Lord then answered him, and said, Thou hypocrite, doth not each one of you on the sabbath loose his ox or his ass from the stall, and lead him away to watering?

16 And ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the sabbath day?

## REVISED VERSION.

11 gones on the sabbath day. And behold, a woman who had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years; and she was bowed together,

12 and could in no wise lift herself up. And when Jesus saw her, he called her, and said to her. Woman, thou art loosed from thine

13 infirmity. And he laid his hands upon her: and immediately she was made straight, and

14 glorified God. And the ruler of the synagogue, being moved with indignation because Jesus had healed on the sabbath, answered and said to the multitude, There are six days in which men ought to work:

15 in them therefore come and be healed, and not on the day of the sabbath. But the Lord answered him, and said, Ye hypocrites, doth not each one of you on the sabbath loose his ox or his ass from the <sup>1</sup>stall, and

16 lead him away to watering? And ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan had bound, lo, these eighteen years, to have been loosed from

the application to be made by each one's conscience. For, he says, "Ye hypocrites" (plural, as in the revised reading), you allow the beasts of burden to be loosed from the manger to get water to drink on the Sabbath when they have been tied for a few hours only; why not allow this daughter of Abraham to be loosed from the bond of Satan, on that day, when she has been bound for 18 years? Obviously, if it was lawful to take an ox to water on the Sabbath, it ought to be lawful to rescue a child of Abraham from the power of the devil on that day. The illustration was an unanswerable argument.

**17. rejoiced for all the glorious things]** His adversaries who appear to have been numerous were put to shame before the multitude. The writer almost enables us to see the pointed fingers and the looks of contempt mingled with joy, that the multitude showed, on hearing the rebuke of Jesus. The feelings and sense of the people are usually on the side of the oppressed, the weak and the poor.

**19. a grain of mustard seed]** The parables of the mustard seed, and of the leaven are found in Matt. 13: 31-33; the former is also in Mark 4: 30-32. The object of these parables is to show the growth of the kingdom of God, v. 18. The mustard seed sets forth the outward, and the leaven the inward growth of the kingdom. There are four or five species of the mustard family, *Sinapis*, found in Palæstine, including the white mustard of Europe. Drs. Lindley and Royle propose to identify mustard here with the *Salvadora persica*, a plant now found about the Dead Sea, and in the Jordan valley. It resembles the mustard in its aromatic taste and other properties, but is not now as widespread in Palestine as mustard, which fully answers the details of the parable. The proportionate smallness of the seed, and the greatness of the herb, are well suited to illustrate the external growth of the kingdom of God. The wild mustard of Palestine, either *Sinapis alba* or *Sinapis orientalis*, grows into a large bush, in which birds can alight and lodge. Thomson saw mustard as high as the head of a rider on a horse. It is not wise in this parable, or in any other, to press the details into special significance. Trench suggests that as the mustard gives heat and vigor, and its virtues are given out when bruised, it may indicate a likeness to the crucified Redeemer; and as a seed must fall into the ground and die, John 12: 24, so by his death he brings fruit into the kingdom. These are truths, but scarcely the truths distinctly taught by this parable. For it is the kingdom itself, not Christ, that is here likened to a mustard seed. That seed illustrates how large results follow small beginnings. So the beginning of Christianity

## COMMON VERSION.

17 And when he had said these things, all his adversaries were ashamed: and all the people rejoiced for all the glorious things that were done by him.

18 ¶ Then said he, Unto what is the kingdom of God like? and whereunto shall I resemble it?

19 It is like a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and cast into his garden; and it grew, and waxed a great tree; and the fowls of the air lodged in the branches of it.

20 And again he said, Whereunto shall I liken the kingdom of God?

## REVISED VERSION.

17 this bond on the day of the sabbath? And as he said these things, all his adversaries were put to shame: and all the multitude rejoiced for all the glorious things that were done by him.

18 He said therefore, Unto what is the kingdom of God like? and whereunto shall I

19 liken it? It is like unto a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and cast into his own garden; and it grew, and became a tree; and the birds of the heaven lodged in the branches thereof. And again he said, Whereunto shall I liken the kingdom

seemed very small; only a Galilean teacher and a few fishermen, but the results were great. The birds of the air found shelter in the branching mustard tree, and multitudes find shelter and salvation in the kingdom of God.

**21. like leaven]** The kingdom is like leaven hidden in three measures of meal. The Greek word for "measure" represents the Hebrew measure seah, which was equal to about ten quarts. The "three measures" would then be thirty quarts, or nearly a bushel of meal, hence a large quantity. Leaven usually though not always represents the principle of evil, in the Scriptures. But see Lev. 23 : 17. It is difficult so to apply it here, for if our Lord had meant this, we should have expected him to say plainly here the kingdom of evil is like leaven. The natural interpretation is that it represents the inner force and unnoticed power of the kingdom of God. It shows how the gospel works to transform character and communities. The leaven was "hid" in the meal; the ordinary observer looking at the meal would not perceive it. So the germ of the kingdom of God might be hidden in a heart, in the heart of a community, but it would secretly work until the whole was changed, assimilated to its own nature. It has wonderful power to assimilate foreign materials into one consistent Christian type. Has not this been fulfilled in the great change which Christianity has wrought among the ruling nations of the world? Compare the Roman Empire and life under its domination with life in the United States, England, or Germany to-day; what a marvellous change!

SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.—1. In God's house we are in the place for receiving God's blessings. 2. The power of the devil will dwarf our spiritual nature, and that may seriously affect the health of our bodies. 3. It is right to care for and cure the sick on the Sabbath. 4. The kingdom of God had an apparently insignificant beginning in the world. 5. Its growth has been comparatively great. 6. The principle of that kingdom may be for a time hidden in a heart, and in a community. 7. It will grow though unobserved, until it works a great change.

### THE SHUT DOOR AND THE DOOMED CITY. 13 : 22-35.

PERÆA (?) A. D. 29 (?)

**22. teaching, and journeying]** This language implies the continuation of a journey already begun, rather than the starting upon a new journey. It favors the view that Jesus was in Peræa near the close of his ministry, on his way to Jerusalem.

**23. few that be saved]** The "one" who asked this question was no

#### COMMON VERSION.

21 It is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened.

22 And he went through the cities and villages, teaching, and journeying towards Jerusalem.

23 Then said one unto him, Lord, are there few that be saved? And he said unto them,

#### REVISED VERSION.

21 of God? It is like unto leaven, which a woman took and hid in three <sup>1</sup> measures of meal, till it was all leavened.

22 And he went on his way through cities and villages, teaching, and journeying on unto

23 Jerusalem. And one said unto him, Lord, are they few that are saved? And he said

<sup>1</sup> See marginal note on Matt. xiii. 33.

doubt a disciple of Jesus. What led the questioner to ask this, is not stated. It may have sprung from feeling the great difficulty of living up to the high standard Jesus required. So he asks, "are the saved few?" as it may be concisely and closely rendered. Many have asked this question in later times.

**24. Strive to enter]** Observe that our Lord does not give a direct answer. He fosters neither fondness for speculation, nor curiosity. He gives a practical exhortation, "Strive," Greek "agonize to enter." Compare the force of the same word in 1 Cor. 9 : 25, and the same word rendered "fight" in John 18 : 36, and 1 Tim. 6 : 12, and 2 Tim. 4 : 7. The Greek word is applied by secular writers to one who contended for a prize in the public games. The revisers have adopted the Greek reading *θύρας*, "door" for *πύλης*, "gate," but the sense and teaching are unchanged. Some point out a distinction between "seek" and "strive," and hold that it means those who lazily "seek" but do not earnestly "strive," that are not able to enter. The figure, in the Greek word for "strive" it must be confessed at first sight favors this view. But the next verse implies more. And if the period be left out (as in the margin, for old Greek texts had no pointing), the reason for the exhortation is clearly akin to the truth taught in the parable of the barren fig tree : the forbearance of God after a time will cease, the door will be shut. Like the foolish virgins you will be without, knocking and calling to the master of the house to open, when it is too late. You were not ready to enter ; you did not push in, like one striving to win the prize when the opportunity was offered ; you have had a fair offer of the historic and living Christ ; you neglected him ; the door is now shut.

**26. in thy presence . . . in our streets]** This language and that of v. 25 primarily applied to the Jews. They, as the children of Abraham, claimed a right to enter the kingdom. Indeed they had a saying that no child of Abraham would be excluded from heaven. That Jesus had been among them in the flesh, that they had eaten and drunk with him, that he had taught in their streets would be of no avail, when they did not enter the kingdom as he directed. All the sacraments and ordinances of the church,

## COMMON VERSION.

24 ¶ Strive to enter in at the strait gate : for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able.

25 When once the master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us ; and he shall answer and say unto you, I know you not whence ye are :

26 Then shall ye begin to say, We have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets.

27 But he shall say, I tell you, I know you not whence ye are ; depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity.

28 There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out.

## REVISED VERSION.

24 unto them, Strive to enter in by the narrow door : for many, I say unto you, shall seek

25 to enter in, and shall not be <sup>1</sup>able. When once the master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, open to us ; and he shall answer and say to you, I know you not

26 whence ye are ; then shall ye begin to say, We did eat and drink in thy presence, and

27 thou didst teach in our streets ; and he shall say, I tell you, I know not whence ye are ; depart from me, all ye workers of

28 iniquity. There shall be the weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and

<sup>1</sup> Or, able, when once

attendance upon the preaching of God's house, and being within the circle of all the influences that attend the sanctuary, the people, and Spirit of God, if one refuses or neglects to enter the kingdom and become a true disciple, will avail nothing at last, except to increase the measure of judgment. The "weeping" and "gnashing" are particularly expressive signs of disappointment, grief and rage in the East.

**29. from the East, etc.]** Compare the language in Is. 49: 12; 45: 6. The anger and fury of the Jews at the free admission of the nations to the privileges of the kingdom of God frequently overleaped all bounds. See Acts 13: 44-52; 21: 28-36; 22: 22.

**30. last . . first . . first . . last]** Many among the Gentile nations who were last to be called, were among the first to enter the kingdom, while the Jews who had the oracles of God, through whom the Messiah came, and who therefore were first in privileges, having neglected them would be last, that is, would miss the kingdom, knocking after the door was shut, v. 25.

**31. Herod will kill thee]** Notice the revised reading, "in that very hour." It was Herod Antipas who had slain John the Baptist. It cannot be inferred from this, as some do, that Jesus was in Galilee; he was in Peræa, for Peræa was also within Herod's jurisdiction. These Pharisees had perhaps themselves urged Herod to send such a message, that Jesus might be forced out of that territory, and Herod pliantly yielded, thinking it a cunning way to rid his district of the bold prophet. The Gadarenes had morally forced Jesus from their country. Herod may not have had any real intention to kill Jesus, and hence the cunning and fox-like character of the act. On his attitude toward Jesus compare his treatment of him later, Luke 23: 6-11.

**33. cannot be . . a prophet perish out of Jerusalem]** Go tell that fox, is a term alike applicable to Herod and to the Pharisees because of their wily plans respecting Jesus. It is probable that these Pharisees in this very incident were acting in the sly, fox-like character; the title fitted them also. The phrase "to-day and to-morrow and the third day" cannot be safely interpreted as meaning three literal days, or the three years of our Lord's ministry, but as an indefinite and general expression, possibly a

## COMMON VERSION.

29 And they shall come from the east, and from the west, and from the north, and from the south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God.

30 And, behold, there are last which shall be first; and there are first which shall be last.

31 ¶ The same day there came certain of the Pharisees, saying unto him, Get thee out, and depart hence; for Herod will kill thee.

32 And he said unto them, Go ye, and tell that fox, Behold, I cast out devils, and I do cures to day and to morrow, and the third day I shall be perfected.

33 Nevertheless I must walk to day, and to morrow, and the day following: for it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem.

## REVISED VERSION.

29 yourselves cast forth without. And they shall come from the east and west, and from the north and south, and shall <sup>1</sup> sit down in the kingdom of God. And be- old,

30 there are last who shall be first, and there are first who shall be last.

31 In that very hour there came cert. in Pharisees, saying to him, Get thee out, and go hence: for Herod would fain kill thee.

32 And he said unto them, Go and say to that fox, Behold, I cast out demons and perform cures to-day and to-morrow, and the third

33 day <sup>2</sup> I am perfected. Howbeit I must go on my way to-day and to-morrow, and the day following: for it cannot be that a

<sup>1</sup> Gr. recline.<sup>2</sup> Or, I end my course

proverbial one, meaning that he would be safe until his mission was fulfilled, his journey ended, and Jerusalem reached, and for the strong reason given in the last clause of v. 33. The Jewish sanhedrin which was to condemn him met only in Jerusalem. No Jew could be judicially condemned to death as a false prophet, nor could a high priest be judged except by the great sanhedrin at Jerusalem. See Mishna, Sanhedrin, 1:5; 10:4.

**34. O Jerusalem, Jerusalem]** This pathetic lamentation over Jerusalem is found in almost exactly the same words in Matt. 23:37-39. The connection in which it is here placed, leads us to suppose that it was first uttered in Peræa, and was repeated at Jerusalem during the last week before the crucifixion. Here it follows naturally after the teachings in vs. 25-30, as well as after the announcement by the Pharisees. Jerusalem was left to itself desolate, not because the Messiah was not willing and anxious to protect and save it, but because it would not allow itself to be saved. In this, Jerusalem represents the attitude and the end of every impenitent sinner. The prophecy of v. 35 last clause, was fulfilled primarily, at the triumphal entry when the people cried in exactly the same words, "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord," Matt. 21:9. What further fulfillments it may have, none can surely say.

SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.—1. Divine revelation does not attempt to satisfy our curiosity, or to answer speculative questions. 2. God's forbearance endures for a time, but will cease. 3. When the door is shut, knocking will not bring admission. 4. All hearts and times are in God's hands. 5. He can protect his servants from rulers, and all adversaries. 6. The Lord has great compassion toward sinners. 7. It is their wilful refusal that leads to their final destruction.

### HOSPITALITY: HUMILITY OF PLACE AND OF GUESTS. 14:1-14.

PERÆA, A. D. 29.

**1. he went into the house . . . Pharisees]** On a Sabbath while Jesus was in Peræa, one of the rulers of the Pharisees invited him, v. 1, to dinner. The Pharisees were accustomed to have great entertainments and social feasts on the Sabbath. Whether this leading Pharisee invited Jesus out of customary hospitality to a stranger and from pride of station, or from sinister motives is not clear, though the narrative points to the latter. A number of notable

#### COMMON VERSION.

34 O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killeth the prophets, and stoneth them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen *doth gather* her brood under her wings, and ye would not!

35 Behold, your house is left unto you desolate: and verily I say unto you, Ye shall not see me, until *the time* come when ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

**CHAP. XIV.**—And it came to pass, as he went into the house of one of the chief Pharisees to eat bread on the sabbath day, that they watched him.

#### REVISED VERSION.

34 prophet perish out of Jerusalem. O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, that killeth the prophets, and stoneth them that are sent unto her! how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen *gathereth* her own brood under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you *desolate*: and I say unto you, Ye shall not see me, until ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

**14** And it came to pass, when he went into the house of one of the rulers of the Pharisees on a sabbath to eat bread, that

Pharisees and lawyers were present, v. 3, and they "were watching him." If he should say or do anything that could be used against him, they intended to report it to the authorities. Yet Jesus accepted hospitality which took him among adversaries. He sought to do them good.

**2. which had the dropsy]** Some suppose this man was purposely placed before Jesus to lead him to heal the man on the Sabbath, so that they might accuse him. He evidently was not a guest, see v. 4, and the language implies his "unexpected" appearance. But he may have thrust himself in, as Orientals do on similar occasions, to be cured.

**3. Is it lawful]** "Jesus answering" the thoughts of those who were watching him, the lawyers and Pharisees, asks, Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath or not? Their traditional law forbid it. But they wishing to get something to accuse him, were silent. But if it were wrong they ought to have spoken, for silence was a virtual assent. So Jesus took the man, that is, either laid his hands on him, or took him aside, healed him, and "let him go," that is sent him away.

**5. Which of you]** Again he, in answer to their unspoken objections, repeats the question of a former occasion, Luke 13 : 15, in a new form. Which of you shall have an ass or an ox fallen into a well, and will not straightway draw him up on the Sabbath day? It is a curious fact that the older MSS. read, *viós*, "son," for *óvos*, "ass," a stronger expression than the text, "a son or an ox even." The conclusion was unanswerable, if you do this work without breaking the Sabbath, how much more can I heal this man by a word, and not break it? All this took place before the meal.

**7. how they chose out the chief seats]** At the feast to which they were invited, the tables were usually on three sides of a square surrounded by wide couches on which the guests reclined at full length, instead of sitting in chairs as among us. The right hand couch, the head of it, was counted the most honorable position, the rank running from that to the lowest place. When they were taking their places around the tables, the guests eagerly sought for the more honorable positions upon the couches. The parable was given to rebuke this selfish spirit of pride, and to teach Christian humility: "In honor preferring one another." Rom. 12 : 10.

## COMMON VERSION.

2 And, behold, there was a certain man before him which had the dropsy.

3 And Jesus answering spake unto the lawyers and Pharisees, saying, Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath day?

4 And they held their peace. And he took him, and healed him, and let him go;

5 And answered them, saying, Which of you shall have an ass or an ox fallen into a pit, and will not straightway pull him out on the sabbath day?

6 And they could not answer him again to these things.

7 And he put forth a parable to those which were bidden, when he marked how they chose out the chief rooms; saying unto them,

## REVISED VERSION.

2 they were watching him. And behold, there was before him a certain man who

3 had the dropsy. And Jesus answering spake unto the lawyers and Pharisees, saying, Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath, or 4 not? But they held their peace. And he took him, and healed him, and let him go.

5 And he said unto them, Which of you shall have <sup>1</sup>an ass or an ox fallen into a well, and will not straightway draw him up on a 6 sabbath day? And they could not answer again unto these things.

7 And he spake a parable unto those who were bidden, when he marked how they chose out the chief seats; saying unto them,

<sup>1</sup>Many ancient authorities read a son. See ch. xiii. 15.

**8. sit not down in the chief seat]** The Greek reads literally "recline not thou upon the first-couch." These formalities were more strict at a wedding in the East, than on a more ordinary occasion, and yet perhaps more frequently broken by the proud and bold persons seeking to exalt themselves. Jesus, knowing well the temper of the company he was dealing with, placed the reason for his rule upon the lower plane of prudence and common sense. Do not take the most honorable place, lest one more honorable than you be bidden, and you may be ordered to the place of the least honor, because all the other places by that time will have been taken, and no other but the lowest place be left for you. But if you take the place of lowest honor, which none will grasp for, then the one who bade you, coming to greet you, feeling that he cannot allow all there to infer that he counts you the least among his friends, may bid you take a more honorable place; "then shalt thou have glory in the presence of all." We must not miss the deeper spiritual significance of this parable. The saved sinner in the Father's house feels that he is richly rewarded by being invited at all, and gratefully accepts any place, even the lowest. The Father sees the case, and for Christ's sake exalts the redeemed soul to greater honor within his kingdom.

**11. exalteth himself]** The proud will be humbled, the humble exalted. This saying of our Lord has passed into a proverb. Compare also, Prov. 25: 6, 7; 29: 23, and the ambitious request of disciples, Matt. 20: 24, with Jas. 4: 6; 1 Pet. 5: 6, and notably Christ's example in washing his disciples' feet, John 13: 5.

**13. the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind]** This is a remarkable command. The ruling Pharisee had invited his friends, other Pharisees, and lawyers, and perhaps some of his relatives and rich neighbors, but if he had bidden the poor man with the dropsy, it was from a sinister motive. The proud ruler is directed not to make a feast for these well-to-do people—there

## COMMON VERSION.

8 When thou art bidden of any man to a wedding, sit not down in the highest room; lest a more honourable man than thou be bidden of him;

9 And he that bade thee and him come and say to thee, Give this man place; and thou begin with shame to take the lowest room.

10 But when thou art bidden, go and sit down in the lowest room; that when he that bade thee cometh, he may say unto thee, Friend, go up higher: then shalt thou have worship in the presence of them that sit at meat with thee.

11 For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

12 ¶ Then said he also to him that bade him, When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor thy rich neighbours; lest they also bid thee again, and a recompense be made thee.

13 But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind:

## REVISED VERSION.

8 When thou art bidden of any man to a marriage feast, <sup>1</sup> sit not down in the chief seat; lest haply a more honourable man

9 than thou be bidden of him, and he that bade thee and him shall come and say to thee, Give this man place; and then shalt thou begin with shame to take the lowest

10 place. But when thou art bidden, go and sit down in the lowest place; that when he that hath bidden thee cometh, he may say to thee, Friend, go up higher: then shalt thou have glory in the presence of all that

11 sit at meat with thee. For every one that exalteth himself shall be humbled; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

12 And he said to him also that had bidden him, When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, nor thy kinsmen, nor rich neighbours; lest haply they also bid thee again,

13 and a recompense be made thee. But when thou makest a feast, bid the poor, the

<sup>1</sup> Gr. recline not.

is no merit in that—for they may repay you by like invitations. But ask classes like those of the dropsical man. You count this feast a charitable one fitted to the Sabbath, but only by seeking the poor, the helpless, who cannot “return the invitation,” will it be truly so. The recompense will come when the just are raised and rewarded. The Lord did not surely intend to forbid common hospitality to friends or well-to-do strangers. He plainly did intend to rebuke the caste spirit which governs modern Christian society with as severe a rod of exclusiveness as ever ruled in Pharisees’ counsels. That hospitality which seeks or expects returns, and springs from mere selfishness, Jesus disowns. That which springs from another subtle form of selfishness, the desire to exalt oneself, by receiving and appearing to have the honorable as guests and familiar friends, is also forbidden. That unselfish kindness which gives without looking for a return, and to those who cannot return, with such discrimination as truly to help and not pauperize the recipients, is the course prescribed by our Lord.

SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.—1. Hospitality should spring from love, not from suspicion. 2. Christ and the Christian will be watched everywhere. 3. Silence, when one ought to speak, is a sin. 4. We ought to care for the sick as well as for dumb animals on the Sabbath. 5. Craftiness and hypocrisy are always detestable. 6. Pride of position and grasping for chief places are inconsistent with Christian humility. 7. Society brings many serious temptations. 8. Entertaining the poor and needy is true hospitality. 9. God will reward those who are kind to the poor.

### THE GREAT SUPPER. 14: 15–24.

PERÆA, A.D. 29.

*The parables*, in this and in the next two chapters, are given by Luke only. The Peræan ministry of our Lord, to which these belong, is narrated more fully by Luke than by the other evangelists. These nine parables, of the lowest place, the great supper, the tower-builder, the warring king, the lost sheep, the lost silver, the lost son, the shrewd steward, and the rich man and Lazarus (chaps. 14–16), lift the veil for a moment, giving us glimpses into the mysteries of the divine plan and purpose respecting the salvation of men. They are among the most impressive teachings in the life of the Son of God. Let us enter upon their study with reverence, humility and special prayerfulness. The parable of the Great Supper resembles that of the marriage of the king’s son in Matt. 22: 1–14, but the differences are more marked than the resemblances. In each case it was a feast; the guests were invited and neglected to come; the feast was furnished with guests from the highways. But here the resemblances end. See Matt. 22: 1–14, and People’s Commentary on Matthew, p. 216.

#### COMMON VERSION.

14 And thou shalt be blessed: for they cannot recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just.

#### REVISED VERSION.

14 maimed, the lame, the blind: and thou shalt be blessed; because they have not wherewith to recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed in the resurrection of the just.

**15. one . . said . . Blessed . . eat bread.]** The instructions about making a feast for the poor and the afflicted and inviting them rather than the rich, and the allusion to the resurrection of the just, suggested to one at the table the thought of the feast in God's kingdom, to which pardoned sinners would be invited. So he says to Jesus, "Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God." The form of the expression in view of the Jewish belief that no child of Abraham would be excluded from the feast, fairly implies that the speaker complacently assumed that he would be one of the number. But there is nothing to support the inference that the man was insincere, or that he was talking "pious cant," or making a vapid general remark. It shows rather that he had been impressed with the spiritual significance of our Lord's instructions about a feast, and though quite misapprehending the ground of the reward, was yet in a frame of mind to receive the warning which was now addressed to him in the parable.

**16. certain man made a great supper.]** In Matt. 22 : 2, it is a king who made a marriage feast for his son. Here it is some "man" like the Pharisee, and it is a "great supper" or banquet, like that at which they then were, and he "bade many," important persons as the Pharisee had done, v. 4. The first invitations are sent out in the East, usually a long time before the feast. The "great supper" here represents the feast in the kingdom of God; the gospel privileges and gifts. He who prepared it, is the Lord of all. Compare the marriage supper of the Lamb, Rev. 19 : 7-9, and the feast of fat things of Is. 25 : 6. The original bidding to the feast came through the patriarchs and prophets in the Old Testament economy. The many bidden were the scribes, Pharisees, lawyers, priests and others of the religious classes of the Jews.

**17. at supper time to say to them]** It is a common custom in oriental lands to send reminders or second invitations, oftentimes two or more after the original invitation. Here the Greek for "Supper" is *δειπνον*, which in Homer means a "breakfast," but in Attic writers the "dinner" or "supper," that is, the chief meal of the day, and hence a "feast" or "banquet," and is so used by New Testament writers. The Messiah was there, the feast ready, a reminder, and a fresh call to the feast is made exactly conforming to Eastern custom. This represents the ringing word of John the Baptist, "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand," Matt. 3 : 2; and the apostles repeated this call, as did the disciples who came after them. The "servant" represents one message of the same spirit and purport, but not necessarily by one person.

## COMMON VERSION.

15 ¶ And when one of them that sat at meat with him heard these things, he said unto him, Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God.

16 Then said he unto him, A certain man made a great supper, and bade many :

17 And sent his servant at supper time to say to them that were bidden, Come ; for all things are now ready.

## REVISED VERSION.

15 And when one of them that sat at meat with him heard these things, he said unto him, Blessed is he that shall eat bread in

16 the kingdom of God. But he said unto him, A certain man made a great supper;

17 and he bade many : and he sent forth his <sup>1</sup>servant at supper time to say to them that were bidden, Come ; for *all* things are now

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *bondservant*.

**18. all . . began to make excuse]** Or, And they all began from one and the same disposition to beg off. It is not meant that they had banded or agreed together to do this, but they all had the same mind, or desired to be excused, one giving one and another another excuse. No greater affront can be offered in Oriental society, than to accept an invitation to a feast and then ask to be excused from coming because of business or other engagements.

**first said]** The first says "I have bought a piece of ground" or "a field," as the revised reading concisely puts it; "I must needs go out and see it." In the East it is specially needful to do this with reasonable promptness to settle the boundary and possession, but customary courtesy would unhesitatingly defer such business for a feast. But he says, "I pray thee have me begged off" or "excused." Fields and possessions keep men from complying with the gospel call. Whatever may be the condition of others who can and ought to respond, you see I am obliged to ask to be excused. He wishes to be counted as a friend, but he must consult his own ease and interest about it.

**19. five yoke of oxen]** the ordinary purchase of a peasant farmer. Elisha was ploughing with twelve yoke of oxen, 1 Kgs. 19:19. "To prove" may mean to complete the bargain by testing and taking possession, a very necessary and important thing after buying, as any traveller in Syria may perceive at the present day. But even this, though not a lie nor absurd, as some suggest, was only a very thin excuse; not a proper reason for absenting himself from the feast. He and the first one knew of the time of the feast from the first invitation, and should have made their arrangements to attend.

**20. I have married a wife]** The third one having a bride, could not, because he probably would not, come. He apparently rests his excuse upon the law in Deut. 24:5, which exempted a newly married man from going to war, and from being called from home on any public business for one year. Though he could not have taken his wife with him, as Mathew Henry suggests, since ordinary oriental rules of etiquette would not allow that, he could not fairly stretch the law in Deut. 24:5, to justify his wilful absence from social feasts. The three excuses are alike flimsy and reveal an indifferent and unwilling mind. The first preferred his field; the second his merchandise, and the third his domestic and selfish ease. So men prefer these now to the gospel feast. The things preferred are not unlawful or wrong in themselves, but are wrong in causing them to reject religion, God and the gospel, as similar things often lead men to do.

## COMMON VERSION.

18 And they all with one consent began to make excuse. The first said unto him, I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it: I pray thee have me excused,

19 And another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them: I pray thee have me excused.

20 And another said, I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.

## REVISED VERSION.

18 ready. And they all with one consent began to make excuse. The first said unto him, I have bought a field, and I must needs go out and see it: I pray thee have me excused. And another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them: I pray thee have me excused. And another said, I have married a wife, and

**21. the master . . being angry]** It is the highest affront one oriental can give to another, to promise and then neglect to attend a feast. The parable states the common effect of such a refusal, "the master . . being angry." There are no words more awful in Scripture than "wrath . . from the Lord," Num. 16 : 46 ; 18 : 5. Compare "burning," Lev. 10 : 6, and Hab. 3 : 2, with "wrath of the Lamb," Rev. 6 : 16.

**bring in hither the poor]** The master orders his "servant," literally "slave," to go out quickly into the broad streets and narrow lanes of the city, and bring in, literally "lead in," bring with you "the poor and maimed, and blind and lame." The religious ruling classes of the Jews, the scribes, Pharisees, lawyers, and priests having rudely urged to be excused, the poorer classes, fishermen, publicans, the multitudes, the demoniacs, spiritually maimed, blind and lame are brought in to the gospel feast. The servant says "what thou didst command is done and yet there is room." He had "*εἰσῆγαγε*," "led in," all these are gathered, "yet there is room."

**23. Go out into the highways and hedges]** Hitherto those in the city (streets and lanes) only had been called—representing the poor of the Jews. Now the call is made to those outside along the great roads of travel, and from the "hedges" (not fence hedges, along roads, for these are not common in Syria), the bushes rather, by which weary wayfarers would sit to rest, and be shielded from the hot sun. The classes clearly represent the Gentiles, all non-Jewish peoples.

**that my house may be filled]** The order is "compel" or "constrain them to come in," see revised reading. This cannot be strained to cover the Romish idea of using sword, fagot, thumbscrew, and every form of physical torture to force persons to accept the gospel, much less to accept our form of creed and worship. A true disciple of Christ will not be made by the sword, or the threat of being bound as a heretic, nor is it in harmony with the spirit of Christ's general teachings. "Constrain" them by arguments as Pearce suggests, and by removing objections, as the want of suitable dress, or fitness. See use of the same Greek word in Matt. 14 : 22, Mark 6 : 45, Acts 28 : 19, and Gal. 6 : 12. So the Spirit constrains, compels souls, by his influence, by calamities, by the power of conscience, and above all by the "constraining" compelling love of Christ for sinners. 2 Cor. 5 : 14. Compare also the case of Lot lingering in Sodom whom the angels "laid hold upon," and "brought

## COMMON VERSION.

21 So that servant came, and shewed his lord these things. Then the master of the house being angry said to his servant, Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind.

22 And the servant said, Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room.

23 And the lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled.

## REVISED VERSION.

21 therefore I cannot come. And the <sup>1</sup>servant came, and told his lord these things. Then the master of the house being angry said to his <sup>1</sup>servant, Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor and maimed and blind and lame. And the <sup>1</sup>servant said, Lord, what thou didst command is done, and yet there

23 is room. And the Lord said unto the <sup>1</sup>servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and constrain them to come in, that my

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *bondservant*.

him forth," Gen. 19:16. The master wanted his house filled. Dr. Post says, "the immense number which an oriental house can contain will be appreciated by one who visits Damascus. In the great courts thousands could assemble, to say nothing of those who could find accommodations in the spacious rooms. The number of dependents is illustrated by that of a certain family in Damascus which is said to give charity regularly to 2000 households." The Damascene palatial house has no carpets. "Its marble halls and courts contain nothing to be stolen." "The copious streams of water from the many fountains would soon efface the stains from the marble floors, and the marble walls remain brilliant with gilt and mirrors as before."

**24. none of those . . . bidden shall taste of my supper]** The change from the singular hitherto used by the master to the plural "you" in this verse, has led many to think that Jesus puts himself in the place of the master of the feast, and speaks to the Pharisees of the feast as his supper. But this requires a forced construction not required by the narrative. Jesus did not usually thus change from the parabolic to the direct form of speech, nor do the evangelists so record the teaching, without some plain mark to indicate the change. The form "my supper" fixes it as the utterance of the master of the feast. Besides, the plural form "you" is natural enough here, since the master addresses not the servant only, but the assembled guests, the poor, and maimed, etc., who had already been led in by the servant, as v. 22 shows. But in either case the spiritual truth taught is the same. Those who despise or neglect the gospel receive the awful condemnation, "none of those" "shall taste" of it.

**SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.**—1. Mere birth or membership in the church will not admit us to the feast in God's kingdom. 2. Gospel privileges are rich, joyful, and satisfying like a feast. 3. It is a heinous sin to reject or neglect the invitations of the gospel. 4. Possessions, bargains, and pleasures are common excuses for the neglect of God's house, and of religion. 5. The greater our sense of spiritual need and helplessness, the more welcome Christ makes us. 6. God will use every wise persuasion to constrain us to come to Christ. 7. Those who wilfully refuse to come will be "excused" and excluded.

### THE COST OF DISCIPLESHIP. 14:25-35.

PERÆA, A. D. 29.

**25. great multitudes . . . he turned]** After the feast and the Sabbath, Jesus went on his journey through Peræa towards Jerusalem, great multitudes going with him. They were on their way to the yearly passover feast at Jerusalem. Jesus went before as a leader, and turned to talk with the people by the way.

#### COMMON VERSION.

24 For I say unto you, That none of those men which were bidden shall taste of my supper.

25 ¶ And there went great multitudes with him: and he turned, and said unto them,

#### REVISED VERSION.

24 house may be filled. For I say unto you, that none of those men that were bidden shall taste of my supper.

25 Now there went with him great multitudes: and he turned, and said unto them,

**26. hate not his father, and mother, etc.]** Many came to Jesus as they would to an ordinary Jewish rabbi, to learn about Jewish religious customs. They would forsake one rabbi for another on slight pretext. Jesus tells the people he does not accept disciples on such flimsy terms. They must come to love and cling to him, with such comparative strength, that natural affection of father, mother, wife, children, brother, sister, and even love of life will be "hate" in comparison. Compare the language in Rom. 9: 13, "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." See also Gen. 29: 30, 31, where the "Leah hated" is explained as meaning that she was loved less than Rachel. It implies also that relatives will become a hindrance to a disciple, his very love for these being a snare and a temptation drawing him from proper devotion to Jesus. To be Christ's disciple, one must do more than hear; he must do. He must be filled with the spirit of this divine Teacher.

**27. bear his [own] cross]** Each disciple requires discipline. Each will have a peculiar cross to bear. This is to be borne, and Jesus to be followed, in moral and spiritual character. The cross-bearing includes denial of self, and endurance of trials and persecutions for Christ's sake. Acts 5: 41; 1 Thes. 3: 4, 5; Matt. 10: 38.

**28. to build a tower]** It was common to build towers in vineyards, Is. 5: 2. They were, as now in Syria sometimes, quite pretentious, 30 feet square and 50 or 60 feet high, serving as a pleasure house, a summer retreat, and also as a shelter for the watchmen and husbandmen. To put up such a building would require a plan, and counting the cost, in a land where materials were not always near, and laborers are incompetent. If one laid the foundation and had no means to finish, on-lookers would mock him. The Greek for "mock" signifies "to sport as with a child," hence he a man "is in child's play." He fails, and then is covered with shame. So whoever will become a disciple should carefully count the self-denial, the cost. For "ye are God's husbandry, God's building." "Let each man take heed how he buildeth." 1 Cor. 3: 9, 10, revised reading. Compare "Put on the whole armour of God . . . For our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against . . . the spiritual *hosts* of wickedness. Eph. 6: 11, 12, revised reading. To build a true Christian character and life therefore, required more than to be a natural child of Abraham. It would cost self-

## COMMON VERSION.

26 If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.

27 And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple.

28 For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have *sufficient* to finish it?

29 Lest haply, after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him,

30 Saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish.

## REVISED VERSION.

26 If any man cometh unto me, and hateth not his own father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my

27 disciple. Whosoever doth not bear his own cross, and come after me, cannot be

28 my disciple. For which of you, desiring to build a tower, doth not first sit down

and count the cost, whether he have *where-*

29 *with* to complete it? Lest haply, when he

hath laid a foundation, and is not able

30 to finish, all that behold begin to mock

him, saying, This man began to build, and

denial and thought like that of building a great tower. No man can do it of himself: he needs a divine Helper to finish it.

**31. Or, what king . . . another king]** Now the simile is changed, and the parable of two kings represents another phase of the cost of becoming a disciple. This "great multitude" was on its way to Jerusalem to the pass-over. Observing this feast, in their estimation, would satisfy the law, and save them. Like the rich young ruler they would do something to merit salvation, Luke 18 : 18. But they must give up all. They had certain forces—10,000 in their estimation—the Jews having the temple, sacrifices, the ceremonial worship and legal righteousness. But these must be given up; for without self-denial, faith and grace these would not save Jew or Gentile. The "peace" desired must be made with the law through Christ alone. Some (Godet and others) say this parable means the Christian is a king warring against an enemy stronger than himself, and before defying his enemy by an open profession of the gospel, he must consider whether he is prepared for the consequences, even the giving up of life, if that be demanded. Others suggest that in the parable the king is a disciple warring against another king, that is, the leader of the hosts of sin, and he must consider the possibility of a victory against such odds, or he had better make peace with the enemy, etc. But the first view is preferable.

**33. all that he hath]** To be a disciple is no easy thing. It requires surrender of all for God. All self-righteous pretensions, clinging to feasts, altars and forms of worship, all ease and pleasure, and possessions must be at God's service. This is the cost of discipleship.

**34. if . . . salt have lost its savour]** The connection here is different from that in Matt. 5 : 13, where the same expression occurs. A similar lesson may be drawn from both, it is true. It is a good thing to be a true disciple even at this cost, but if one begins, and then does not complete the working out of his salvation, he is like salt that has lost its taste. Or, salt may here refer to the ceremonial ordinances in which the multitudes Jesus was addressing trusted. These were passing away, having fulfilled their purpose. They had lost their savor; they were useless; the only thing to be done was to cast them out. And the closing warning well befits this view. Hear and count the cost of being my disciple; it means throwing

## COMMON VERSION.

31 Or what king, going to make war against another king, sitteth not down first, and consulteth whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand?

32 Or else, while the other is yet a great way off, he sendeth an ambassador, and desireth conditions of peace.

33 So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple.

34 ¶ Salt is good: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be seasoned?

35 It is neither fit for the land, nor yet for the dunghill; but men cast it out. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

## REVISED VERSION.

31 was not able to finish. Or what king, as he goeth to encounter another king in war, will not sit down first and take counsel whether he is able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand?

32 Or else, while the other is yet a great way off, he sendeth an ambassador, and asketh conditions of peace.

33 So therefore whosoever he be of you that renounceth not all that he hath, he cannot

34 be my disciple. Salt therefore is good: but if even the salt have lost its savour,

35 wherewith shall it be seasoned? It is fit neither for the land nor for the dunghill: men cast it out. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

aside your present religious possessions, your religious ceremonial riches and ritual. Hear, and consider the losses and gains of discipleship.

SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.—1. It is no easy thing to be a disciple. 2. The cost of being a disciple is to be carefully considered. 3. To be a "Pliable" is to bring disgrace on religion and mockery on ourselves. 4. The struggle for salvation is to be severe. 5. It requires surrender of all fancied merit, and of self to God. 6. Hastily and inconsiderately rushing into discipleship is not likely to bring lasting results. Recall the seed on the rocky soil. 7. All our self-righteousness must be cast out, and we must rest on Christ only.

### THE LOST SHEEP, AND THE LOST SILVER. 15:1-10.

PERÆA, A. D. 29.

Of the five parables in this and the next chapter, the three matchless parables in this chapter present (1) the working of the love of God toward the lost, (2) the condition of the lost sinner, and (3) the joy in heaven over the saved soul. The wretched condition of the sinner is set forth by, (1) the Lost Sheep, (2) the Lost Silver, and (3) the Lost Son. These parables do not describe three kinds or classes of sinners, nor three distinct conditions of them, but rather give us three distinct views of the condition of every sinner who returns to God. The ingenious grouping of the sinners into three classes corresponding to these three parables, by Bengel and others, which was suggested also by the early Christian fathers, is more pleasing than satisfactory. The lost sheep is regarded by them as representing the stupid, bewildered sinner; the lost silver as the utterly helpless, senseless sinner, unconscious of his worth; the lost son as the voluntary, wilful, and conscious sinner. It is true some sinners may be conspicuous for stupidity, others for their utterly helpless state; and some for their wilful sinning. But in fact all sinners are spiritually stupid, for, "The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib; but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider," Is. 1:3, and in the great Messianic prophecy, it is said "All we like sheep have gone astray," Is. 53:6, hence all are helpless; dead in trespasses and sins, Eph. 2:1, and have all voluntarily forsaken God, John 5:40; Ezek. 18. Then too, the lost silver was alike unconscious and senseless of its worth after and before it was found. Yet every saved sinner is made not only conscious, but willing, in the day of God's power, Ps. 110:3. On the other hand, the sinner does not repent and return to God of himself as the prodigal did, but love and grace and the Spirit call the sinner, and help him to return. If the chief aim of the three parables is kept in mind, there will be less liability to fall into erroneous and fanciful interpretations. They were spoken in answer to the charge, "This man [Jesus] receiveth sinners." In answer to it Jesus reveals in the first two parables how God in Christ loves and goes out to search for the lost; and in the third how he welcomes the returning sinner. There are other truths taught also, but they are to be regarded as incidental to the great truth just stated. The details must not be pressed into particular significance, but used with reserve, and in subordination to the main truth obviously intended. For example, to find the Trinity represented in the

shepherd, the woman, and the father, is to read into the text what is not clearly there.

**1. all the publicans and sinners]** This event took place during the Pereaean ministry of our Lord, probably when he retired thither after raising Lazarus. These publicans were the lower and more numerous class of tax collectors, who personally gathered the taxes, "farmed out" to them by the publicans or higher class to collect. They were in as bad repute as the "sinners," for by sinners are meant those conspicuous for irreligion and ungodliness; or, as Meyer suggests, depraved characters. These classes "were drawing near unto" Jesus; see revised reading, the Greek implying that it was not a single instance, but a continued coming at this period. The great variety of sinners, the representatives of nearly every kind and class received by Jesus and his apostles, is worthy of particular notice. He offered to receive the honorable rulers, as Nicodemus; the rich ruler, Joseph of Arimathea; the poor, as Lazarus, the leper; the learned, as Luke, the physician; the soldier, as the Roman centurion; fishermen, like the sons of Zebedee; publicans, as Levi; extortioners, as Zaccheus; demoniacs, as Mary Magdalene; adulterers, as the woman of Samaria; harlots, as the woman that was a sinner; backsliders, as Peter; persecutors, as Saul; thieves, as the dying robber on the cross, and generally the maimed, the blind, the lame, and the diseased in body and mind.

**2. murmured . . receiveth]** The Pharisees and scribes literally, "kept muttering," *i. e.*, the crowd did, see Luke 19:7. The "receiving" in Greek implies cordially welcoming them, taking them to one's self, as one would a friend, and eating with them. The Pharisees were horrified at such conduct. They would not allow a publican or sinner to touch them, lest it would defile them. In their eyes this familiarity in mingling with sinners was itself a great sin. So Jesus answers this grave charge in the three parables which follow.

**4. What man of you]** compare Matt. 18:12-14. This is what you would do, is the implication, and count right in the case of one sheep that was lost, out of a flock of one hundred. By fixing the attention on one lost sheep, the teaching is more vivid, and the impression stronger than if several were specified as lost.

**ninety and nine in the wilderness]** The "wilderness" does not here mean woods or arid wastes, or even wild land, but rather open fields and green pastures with grass. Thus we read when Jesus fed the five thousand

## COMMON VERSION.

CHAP. XV.—Then drew near unto him all the publicans and sinners for to hear him.

2 And the Pharisees and scribes murmured, saying, This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them.

3 ¶ And he spake this parable unto them, saying,

4 What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it?

## REVISED VERSION.

15 Now all the publicans and sinners were drawing near unto him for to hear him.

2 And both the Pharisees and the scribes murmured, saying, This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them.

3 And he spake unto them this parable, saying, What man of you, having a hundred sheep, and having lost one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost,

in the "desert place" they were sitting "upon the green grass," Mark 6: 35, 39. The wilderness then refers to a grassy plain where the flock would find pasture, and be comparatively safe during the shepherd's search for the one lost sheep. It is in keeping also with Eastern habit to represent the shepherd himself as going on the search. Important duties are not delegated to others in Syria, when it is possible to avoid it. It is the custom in the East now to mark the sheep, but the shepherd's voice would be recognized by the lost one at once, see John 10: 4. The shepherd searches till he finds the lost one and brings it back; he finishes the work of salvation. This is proof of the love a shepherd has for a sheep. What shall God's love do for a lost soul? But clearly the details cannot be pressed even here. This represents the great love of Christ, but strong as that is, strong enough to "find," that is, to embrace every sinner, yet it does not bring every sinner back to God. It is not because of lack of love in God, but because of the obstinacy of man. The sheep may be stupid; man is stubborn in sin.

**5. on his shoulders rejoicing]** This is another fine touch illustrating the main truth emphasized in this parable, the feeling of Christ toward the sinner. He rejoices to save. He himself bears the sinner out of the maze and bewildering state into which sin has brought him, to the Father's house joyously. Many gems, seals and relics of the early church represent Christ as the Good Shepherd, bringing lost sheep home on his shoulder.

**6. calleth . . his friends and his neighbours]** This social scene of rejoicing perfectly accords with Syrian habits of life. Orientals assemble to congratulate and sympathize with each other on every unusual household event. Their visits are prolonged; men will sit all day with the afflicted now; see also Job 2: 13. "The assembly of congratulations," says Dr. Post, "was as natural to Orientals as it would be unnatural to us." It is a perfectly natural conclusion to the parable, as further illustrating the one great thought of how deep and strong is the divine love for the sinner, as expressed in the joy over his return.

**7. Joy . . in heaven over one sinner . . than over]** Notice that this verse is not a part of the parable, but is intended as a didactic answer to the Pharisees' charge, as the parable is an illustrative one. It will aid in finding a safe interpretation, to mark this distinction. Jesus declares that in heaven (among all holy beings) there shall be joy over one repenting sinner. Hence all on earth who are subjects of the kingdom of heaven should rejoice to see sinners coming to learn of the way of repentance. Pharisees and scribes then, if they were true heirs of this kingdom, should not murmur or

## COMMON VERSION.

5 And when he hath found *it*, he layeth *it* on his shoulders, rejoicing.

6 And when he cometh home, he calleth together *his* friends and neighbours, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost.

7 I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance.

## REVISED VERSION.

5 until he find it? And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing.

6 And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and his neighbours, saying unto them, Rejoice with me, for I have

7 found my sheep which was lost. I say unto you, that even so there shall be joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, *more* than over ninety and nine righteous persons, that need no repentance.

marvel, but rejoice to behold sinners drawing near and that Jesus welcomes them that he may lead them to repentance.

**ninety and nine just]** or "righteous," see revised reading. Who are these ninety and nine "*δικαίους*?" This has been variously answered. The answers may be comprised broadly in three classes: 1. That the ninety and nine righteous refer to unfallen beings, of other worlds and of heaven. This was suggested by the Christian fathers. 2. The legally, levitically, and ceremonially righteous, and those who thought themselves so; held by the majority of modern commentators. 3. The truly godly, as Old Testament and New Testament saints. The Greek word for "just" or "righteous" is used eighty times in the New Testament. It refers eighteen times to God and Christ; fourteen times to the abstract quality or condition; forty-one times to the saints mentioned in the Old and New Testament or to their character; and six times to those who trusted that they were righteous. Where not used to express righteous in the abstract, it applies either to man or to God. In no instance is it applied to unfallen beings, unless it is so applied in this verse. When applied to man, it is generally applied to those who are counted as truly godly. In the six cases where it applies to those who trusted they were righteous, that is, to persons like Pharisees, the context fairly informs the reader of this qualified meaning. The Greek word *δικαίος* "just," "righteous," therefore describes those counted truly righteous (it is so used forty-one out of the forty-seven times that it refers to created persons). It refers to those like Zacharias and Elisabeth, Luke 1:6, and the patriarchs, prophets and saints who were spoken of as truly godly. They had already passed the "change of mind" designated by *μετάνοια*, "repentance." They were already in that spiritual state or condition. They may be fairly spoken of as "righteous, that need no repentance," or as the Greek literally reads, *rather* "than ninety-nine righteous whosoever have no need of repentance." They have "no need" since they have already passed through that "change of mind." In this sense Luke describes Zacharias and Elisabeth; "they were both righteous before God," Luke 1:6, revised reading. So Simeon is called "righteous," Luke 2:25, and Cornelius, Acts 10:22 with verse 35, and Joseph of Arimathea, Luke 23:50, and even Lot, imperfect as his conduct was at times, 2 Pet. 2:7. The joy in heaven over one repenting sinner, as compared with that over ninety-nine already in the godly state, is akin to that of earthly parents over finding a long-lost child. Their joy would be greater, more demonstrative for the time, than over all their other children that had remained safe in the home. This view is not free from difficulties, but they seem fewer and less formidable than in either of the other views, and it is in accord with the direct general meaning of *δικαίος*, "righteous," as applied to men. Against applying it to those who assumed to be righteous, the self-deceived or the self-righteous, as the Pharisees, there is (1) the lack of clear marks of irony which are found in other cases. For example, "outwardly appear righteous," Matt. 23:28; "feigned themselves to be righteous," Luke 20:20, revised reading. (2) The comparatively few instances of such a use of the word righteous; and (3) the further lack of any sufficient occasion here for teaching this solemn

and awful subject with irony. Nor (4) could there be any joy in heaven over self-righteous beings. Against applying it to unfallen beings, is the want of any such application of this Greek word to such unfallen created beings elsewhere by any New Testament writer, and the further objection to a similar application of it in the elder son in the companion parable of the Prodigal Son. Then there is the added objection of regarding the "wilderness" as a figure of heaven, since the lost sheep was not taken thither, to the ninety and nine in the wilderness but borne to the shepherd's οἶκος "house," where the rejoicing was over the lost sheep and lost silver. It is true that the Pharisees counted themselves righteous. It is also true that Christ in coming to earth left the company of angels and unfallen beings in heaven. But is either of these truths directly or primarily intended to be taught in v. 7? Is the point emphasized not rather the joy over the repenting one, as illustrating God's love in Christ for the sinner?

**8. woman having ten pieces of silver]** This parable is given by Luke alone. The Greek for "pieces of silver" is one word, δραχμάς, coins, one of which was worth about 15 cts. of our money. It is equal to the Roman *denarius*, and the usual pay for a day's wages. The women of the East often wore a string of similar small silver coins around their heads or necks as an ornament. Hence one might be accidentally lost. Augustine and others trace a resemblance in the coin with its image to the human soul stamped with God's image. But against this beautiful fancy is the real fact that the Greek drachma did not bear the image of a king like the Roman denarius, but usually had the image of an owl, or tortoise, or of some goddess. Some say that the woman and the lighted candle are a figure of the church with the light of the word, or with the Holy Spirit, or it is divine wisdom searching for the lost soul. The latter does seek the sinner, but it is better not to press all the details into special significance. The main point illustrated in the parable is God seeking the lost. "The sheep can lose itself," says Dr. John Hall; the silver is lost, "as many a poor sinner, through parental neglect, through unfavourable circumstances . . . is immersed in evil from the beginning." The sheep can excite pity, the coin cannot. It is utterly senseless, dead to its own condition. Yet the owner knows the value of each, as God knows the value of a lost soul.

**sweep the house]** The house alluded to is probably the large one-roomed house of Syria. But it would have cupboards, shelves, recesses for sleeping, and mats. Not being lighted with large windows as our houses, a lighted lamp (see revised reading) would be necessary to enable the woman to see a small coin. The sweeping would likewise be needful, to brush the dust away that might have gathered over it, otherwise it would not be seen. The "sweeping" would raise a dust and commotion, as the search for lost souls

## COMMON VERSION.

8 ¶ Either what woman having ten pieces of silver, if she lose one piece, doth not light a candle, and sweep the house, and seek diligently till she find it?

## REVISED VERSION.

8 Or what woman having ten <sup>1</sup> pieces of silver, if she lose one piece, doth not light a lamp, and sweep the house, and seek dili-

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *drachma*, a coin worth about eight pence.

raised tumults and persecutions, but the sweeping and the search went on until the lost was found ; salvation finished.

**9. she calleth her neighbours]** There is a fine touch of naturalness here in the Greek, which is missed in the English versions. The woman called her *female* friends and neighbors ; an important incidental proof of the accuracy of the writer. For in Syrian society no woman would venture to call other than female friends to join her in such rejoicing. In the last clause, "I have found the piece which I had lost," the emphasis is on "lost," primarily—the lost piece. There is no emphasis to be placed on "I" in connection with "had lost," as if the woman was seriously at fault for losing it, as Trench suggests. For if the woman is a figure of the church with Christ its head as he elsewhere assumes, (for Christ as its head summons the angels to the rejoicing), then it is in fact laying the fault of the lost one to the Head of the Church.

**10. joy in the presence of the angels]** Here the comparative reference to the righteous which was in v. 7 is omitted, but we have a more specific description of the joy over the one repenting sinner. Who is it, that makes the rejoicing? Not the angels simply, for it is "in the presence of the angels." Does it mean the redeemed saints already peopling the heavenly mansions? Or, "may it mean," as Dr. John Hall suggests, "that God recognizing the value of souls saved shows his satisfaction in the presence of the angels?"

SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.—1. Sinners are drawn to Christ and welcomed when they come. 2. The moralist, "fashionable society," the self-righteous, the religious dilettante objects to sinners and "coarse people" crowding in among the "refined people" of the church. 3. God's love goes out searching for the lost sinner. 4. He loses himself as the sheep, is for a time conscious that he is wandering, then becomes hardened and as senseless as a piece of dull metal. 5. He is helpless in his lost state. 6. The love of God finds the lost. 7. The repenting sinner is joyfully brought to his Father's house. 8. There is joy in heaven over a repenting sinner. 9. Let us imitate Christ in seeking the lost, and rejoice with the angels when the lost is found.

### THE PRODIGAL SON. 15:11-24.

PERÆA, A. D. 29.

The parable of the Prodigal Son is a many-sided and the richest gem among all the parables of Scripture. It has been aptly called the pearl and crown of parables. See Trench on Parables, p. 384, and Grotius. It has been very inaptly called, "Evangelium in Evangelio," "the gospel in the gospel," since it in no manner represents the mediation or atonement of Christ, nor a pur-

#### COMMON VERSION.

9 And when she hath found it, she calleth her friends and her neighbours together, saying, Rejoice with me; for I have found the piece which I had lost.

10 Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth.

#### REVISED VERSION.

9 gently until she find it? And when she hath found it, she calleth together her friends and neighbours, saying, Rejoice with me, for I have found the piece which I had lost. Even so, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth.

chased redemption, which is the very essence of the gospel. The parable does represent the love, forgiveness and welcome which await every repenting sinner. It is the most familiar, full, instructive, finished, and irresistibly fascinating narrative in human language. The lost sheep was one out of one hundred, the lost silver was one out of ten pieces, the lost son is one of two. The sheep loses itself from stupidity, or in aimlessly feeding where the grass drew it, yet not *intending* to get lost. The silver was lost, a senseless piece of metal. The son deliberately and wilfully goes away into the far country. The parables of the sheep and silver show the love of Christ *seeking* the lost; that of the prodigal son illustrates the response to Christ's seeking love in the lost sinner's heart, and especially the welcome the sinner receives when he returns. This parable, therefore, has a very broad, almost a universal application. For, the younger son represents generally every sinner deliberately and wilfully going into sin, and who repents; as the elder son generally represents every one who strives to be moral, and legally righteous. The early Christian fathers generally after Augustine interpreted the youngest son as representing Gentiles, and the elder as the Jews, but it is almost certain that all the classes to whom the parable was spoken were Jews, and if the interpretation must be limited to so narrow a view, as applicable only to them, then the younger son is a figure of the publicans and sinners, and the elder of the scribes and Pharisees. This, however, is to confuse the applicability of the parable with its occasion, as Meyer acutely observes. To see in the "citizen" the devil, or in the "husks" secular doctrines, in the "swine" demons, in the "best robe" Christ's righteousness, in the "ring" assurance of God's forgiveness, in the "shoes" grace and guidance, in the "fatted calf" the sacrifice of Christ, or the Lord's supper, in short to see some special significance in every detail which forms the drapery of the parable, is to wander far into the fanciful, if not frivolous interpretation of scripture.

**11. two sons]** The younger, the openly and wilfully irreligious class; the elder, the professedly religious. The sinners and the Pharisees, and in the later history the Gentiles and Jews, and in modern the evangelicals and Roman Catholics, may be fitly typified by the two sons.

**12. the portion . . . that falleth]** Where there were only two sons, the portion of the younger would be according to Jewish custom one-third, and of the eldest two-thirds, see Deut. 21 : 17. The sons could not, however, legally take their portions until the father's death, except by his free gift. Here the father is represented as granting the request. To advance the younger son his portion would require an approximate estimate of the sum that would fall to him. Paying it in advance was an act of grace by the father. The request literally was "Father, give to me the portion of the

## COMMON VERSION.

11 ¶ And he said, A certain man had two sons :

12 And the younger of them said to *his* father, Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me. And he divided unto them *his* living.

## REVISED VERSION.

11 And he said, A certain man had two sons :  
12 and the younger of them said to his father,  
Father, give me the portion of <sup>1</sup>*thy* substance that falleth to me. And he divided

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *the*.

substance that falleth ;” “to me” is not expressed in the Greek, though it is implied. “So he divided to them the [not ‘his’] living.” It is curious to note the unexpected change in the word applied to the property divided. The son calls it *οὐσίας*, whatever one is, and therefore the “substance ;” in the next clause it is called *τὸν βίον* “the living,” the means on which the family lived. This has perplexed some scholars, but there is no good evidence that any real distinction in the amount of property divided is meant. The son was given his own wish, as God has given man freedom of will.

**13. gathered all together]** He did not start, or “gather” his portion at once. Yet it was “not many days after.” The progress in sin was rapid. His “portion” was apparently in “portable wealth,” not in lands, or if in lands he turned it into money and other valuables that were gathered together, and then took his journey into a far country. He determined to depart openly, and go far, beyond the home restraint. Thus the sinner wishes to be independent of God, openly sins, and tries to go into a land where God is not, and will not reach him.

**wasted his substance with riotous living]** in the “far country” away from home and God, he becomes the true “prodigal.” He “wasted,” the Greek word means “scattered widely,” and hence “squandered” or “wasted” his property, “living riotously.” The Greek for “riotously” has a peculiar force, capable of a double application to material and spiritual things. He lived “unsavingly,” saved neither his substance, his living, nor his life. He “ran through his fortune” with greater speed than he had “gathered” it. He was far from paternal and home restraint ; he gave the loose rein to all his appetites, passions and lusts. He pleased himself, had his own way : a graphic picture of every sinner away from God.

**14. he had spent all]** The pleasures of sin were for a season only, the sinful delight was short. The store soon gives out ; bankruptcy quickly comes to the sinner. He is in a land where others are wasting their substances by living riotously also. A famine is the natural consequence of thriftlessness and living wastefully, not a slight but a “mighty” famine. The famine brings general and personal want. The sinner wastes his all, there comes a mighty moral and spiritual famine to him. There is a great calamity, and no divine consolation. It was a personal feeling ; he “began to be (Greek ‘himself’) in want ;” he began to feel his poverty, his lack of home, of food, of friends. His want is moral and spiritual. The soul is famishing, the affections are starving, his inner, true self is perishing with the deepest form of hunger.

**15. joined himself to a citizen]** Or, “one of the citizens.” His case

## COMMON VERSION.

13 And not many days after the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living.

14 And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land ; and he began to be in want.

15 And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country ; and he sent him into his fields to feed swine.

## REVISED VERSION.

13 unto them his living. And not many days after the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country ; and there he wasted his substance with

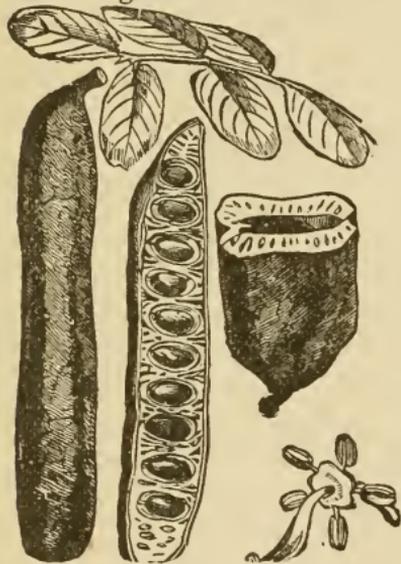
14 riotous living. And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that country ;

15 and he began to be in want. And he went and joined himself to one of the citizens of that country ; and he sent him into his fields

grew desperate. He lost all self respect, without invitation, he "joined," literally, "he clave" or "glued" himself to one of the citizens of that country. He forced himself upon him and became dependent upon him. Is there in "one of the citizens of that country" a hint of some deeper state of sin, as Trench suggests, some deeper abyss in the downward progress of souls? There are citizens of that awful country; who are they? The "citizens" are naturalized, dwellers in that far-off country. They have no expectation of return. What an awful depth of mystery and misery in sin does this open to us!

**he sent him . . . to feed swine]** Of all labor, this would be the most degrading to a Jew, Lev. 11 : 7; Is. 65 : 4. Herodotus says that swineherds were the only persons excluded from the temples of Egypt, Bk. 2 : 47. The son is now a swineherd. The sinner becomes the companion of swine, as he chooses to be swinish in his manner, conduct and tastes.

**16. filled . . . with the husks]** "He would fain have been filled," revised reading, is capable of two meanings. The usual interpretation is that he had a great desire to be filled with the husks, but, as some add, he did not get even these. The Greek, however, may mean that he was so hungry that he was eager to be filled with these husks, and implying that he did actually feed on them, as the extremely poor sometimes do now in Syria. He was "filled" but not satisfied. The "husks" were pods or fruits of the *ceratonia siliqua*, the Kharub or carob tree of Syria, known also as "St. John's bread," from the popular but erroneous tradition that John the Baptist ate them instead of locusts. The fruit pods are curved and bear some resemblance to those of the common honey locust trees. Prof. I. H. Hall says, "the beans are an article of food, not at all despised or loathsome, among the poorer classes; and from the viscous lining of the pods, a kind of dibs or molasses is made which is much used. . . . In Cyprus they



HUSKS. FRUIT OF THE CAROB TREE  
(*Ceratonia siliqua*).

are literally the food that the swine eat." The pod is about six to eight inches in length, and one inch in breadth by about a quarter of an inch thick. A single tree will sometimes produce 800 to 900 pounds of these pods. The Babylonian Talmud says that Rabbi Simeon and his son hid themselves in a cave and were miraculously fed on the fruit of the Kharub tree. Sabbath 33 : 2. In his want "no man gave unto him." No one troubled himself about him.

COMMON VERSION.

16 And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat : and no man gave unto him.

REVISED VERSION.

16 to feed swine. And he would fain <sup>1</sup> have filled his belly with <sup>2</sup> the husks that the swine did eat : and no man gave unto him.

<sup>1</sup> Many ancient authorities read *have been filled*,

<sup>2</sup> Gr. *the pods of the carob tree*.

It was a selfish country. Every one looked out for himself. The prodigal was left to help himself as best he might. The sinner finds no help nor pity from companions; those who have helped to ruin him forsake him.

**17. he came to himself]** He had been beside himself, in a crazy frenzied state of madness in sin up to this time. See Eccl. 9 : 3. Hunger and starvation brought him to his senses, as providential calamities sometimes do the sinner. He sees his true condition, in contrast with that in his father's house. This is the first step towards repentance. He wakes from his sinful insensibility. He considers the many hired servants at home, and he is a poor servant now. But they have food to spare: there is not only abundance, there is a superfluity; plenty for many more is implied. But he is servant here perhaps without any food or pay; "I perish with hunger." The Greek is strong literally, "I am utterly destroying myself here with hunger." The poet Byron in a similar life of prodigality exclaims,

"My days are in the yellow leaf,  
The flowers the fruits of love are gone;  
The worm, the canker, and the grief  
Are mine alone."

**18. I will . . . go to my father]** How brief and graphic the words. The grace and love from the father which draw the sinner are not specified, because not in the line of the main purpose of the parable. They are supplied elsewhere by our Lord with sufficient emphasis to guard us against any Pelagian error that man will and can turn to God of his own will, see John 6 : 44 and 12 : 32; or that repentance alone will reconcile us to God without a Mediator, see Heb. 10 : 19-32. The prodigal shapes his confession in his solitude. It evidently springs from the depth of his heart. His heart goes back to the loving home, and in the bitterness of his soul he still cries out: "Father," though he is no longer a "worthy son," "Father, I have sinned against heaven;" or literally "into heaven," as if his sin had piled up to heaven, and "before thee," or "in the face of thee." Thus David confessed his great sin in Ps. 51 : 4. "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done *this* evil in thy sight." The Jews also had a saying that a man may sin against earth and not against heaven, but he that speaks with an ill tongue sins against heaven and earth, as in Ps. 73 : 9.

**19. no more worthy]** A sense of sin brings a sense of unworthiness. His sense of sin has brought true humility. No longer worthy to be a son, he willingly will become a hired servant. Like the Psalmist, he "had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wicked-

## COMMON VERSION.

17 And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger!

18 I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee,

19 And am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants.

## REVISED VERSION.

17 But when he came to himself he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish

18 here with hunger! I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy

19 sight: I am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired

ness," Ps. 84: 10. He does not ask, nor expect, nor think himself worthy of, his former position; but he longs to be within the father's home and protection, and with that he will be abundantly satisfied.

**20. his father saw him]** The prodigal does not delay. There is no parleying with sin now. He arose at once and came to his father. But that father was daily, constantly waiting and watching for him. He sharply scanned every fresh, weary, wayworn, wretched traveler. His eyes were not dim when looking for the lost son. He saw him "while he was yet afar off." His fatherly compassion was moved. See Is. 65: 24. He knew the son. He ran to greet him. He fell on his neck. He kissed, literally "kissed him much." So quickly and unexpectedly had all this been done, that the son up to this time had no opportunity to make the confession he had determined to make. Now he makes it, v. 21. "Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight: I am no more worthy to be called thy son." But the warmth of his reception, the overflowing heart with which the prodigal is welcome, prevents him from distrusting the genuineness of the forgiveness and welcome by saying more. He does not add "Make me as one of thy hired servants." How could he, after such a reception!

**22. Bring forth . . robe . . ring . . shoes . . fatted calf]** The father calls to the servants in joy, "Bring forth quickly the best robe," literally "the first robe," not his former one, but the first in rank or quality, the one laid aside for a special occasion. "Put a ring on his hand," in token of his restoration to sonship, as the Roman master lifted a slave to the rank of a freeman by a similar gift. So Pharaoh put his ring on Joseph's hand. Gen. 41: 42. And the "shoes on his feet," all these being natural and significant tokens of his complete restoration. So the sinner has a robe. Zech. 3: 4; Rev. 19: 8; a sealing of the Spirit, Jer. 22: 24 with Eph. 1: 13; Gal. 4: 6. His feet are shod. Eph. 6: 15. Then the feast follows, "the fatted calf," that is, the one kept for some unexpected occasion, and now killed to introduce the joyful feast in celebration of the return of the long-lost son. For according to the Talmud "there is no mirth without eating and drinking," *Tal. Bab. Moed. 2: 1.*

**24. was lost and is found]** The prodigal had been "dead" to the home; as the sinner is dead in trespasses and sins. He was lost, wilfully

## COMMON VERSION.

20 And he arose, and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him.

21 And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son.

22 But the father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet:

23 And bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us eat, and be merry:

24 For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry.

## REVISED VERSION.

20 servants. And he arose, and came to his father. But while he was yet afar off, his father saw him, and was moved with compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and

21<sup>1</sup> kissed him. And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight: I am no more worthy to be called thy son<sup>2</sup>.

22 But the father said to his<sup>3</sup> servants, Bring forth quickly the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet: and bring the fatted calf, and kill it, and let us eat,

24 and make merry: for this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry.

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *kissed him much.*  
servants. See ver. 19.

<sup>2</sup> Some ancient authorities add *make me as one of thy hired servants.*  
<sup>3</sup> Gr. *bondservants.*

lost. His guilt therefore had been deep, deeper than that of the sheep that lost itself by a senseless wandering. There could be no question about his former sorrowful condition. But he is restored now. The home and house are filled with joy, and resound with merriment. The prodigal is not mentioned as taking active part, but he shared in it, subdued and sincerely humble, grateful, and full of joyful wonder in his heart at the welcome he receives.

THE ELDER SON. 15 : 25-32.

**25. his elder son was in the field]** On whom this son represents, see under v. 32. This son, for anything that appears in the parable, was attending to filial duties. "In the field" implies that he was there for work, or to oversee the needful work. As he drew nigh to the house he heard "music and dancing," the common accompaniments of an Eastern feast. The Greek word for music is *συμφωνία*, from which comes "symphony," implying a "concert" of perhaps vocal and instrumental music. The "*χορῶν*" (our word "choir" is from it) was originally the chorus in the Greek drama, and means "a band of dancers" in Homer and other classic writers. The musicians and dancers were often hired in the East for such occasions. The sexes do not dance together in Syria, and only women of low character dance in the presence of men. The men at feasts occupy one room and the women another. The dances common in America and Europe are a great offence in the eyes of Orientals. This incident of the feast cannot fairly be used to favor modern social dancing.

**27. Thy brother is come]** The son called one of the "bondservants" to find out the meaning of these festivities. Perhaps it may be said, that a truly filial spirit would have led him to enter at once, assuming that as his father had permitted it, there was a fitting cause for the joy. Yet his conduct was strictly natural, as human nature would be likely to act under similar circumstances. The father had allowed an exceptional and unusual thing in making the division of his property. The steady elder son might fear some other unusual thing. The servant, a slave in this instance, makes a brief but frank explanation. The joy is because "thy brother is come . . . safe and sound," that is "in good health;" he was free from any deformity of body; was not broken down by disease. This fact might typify the restored moral and spiritual condition of the repenting sinner.

**28. he was angry]** The explanation did not bring joy but anger.

COMMON VERSION.

25 Now his elder son was in the field; and as he came and drew nigh to the house, he heard music and dancing.

26 And he called one of the servants, and asked what these things meant.

27 And he said unto him, Thy brother is come; and thy father hath killed the fatted calf, because he hath received him safe and sound.

28 And he was angry, and would not go in: therefore came his father out, and entreated him.

REVISED VERSION.

25 Now his elder son was in the field; and as he came and drew nigh to the house, he heard music and dancing. And he called to him one of the <sup>1</sup>servants, and inquired

27 what these things might be. And he said unto him, Thy brother is come; and thy father hath killed the fatted calf, because

28 he hath received him safe and sound. But he was angry, and would not go in: and his

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *bondservants*.

Instead of gladly running to meet his brother, he refused to go in. He did not know, as it appears, whether his brother returned still wilful and disobedient, or repentant, nor did he seem to care much about that. He was envious and not in accord with the spirit of his father's welcome. His displeasure, which may have been partly due to the unexpected and sudden way in which the facts came to his knowledge, brought his father out to entreat or beseech, literally "to call him to his side," that is, in a friendly and confidential way.

**29. many years do I serve thee]** There is a sense of partiality in the acts under which the elder son is smarting. A somewhat similar spirit was shown by Peter: "Lo, we have left all . . . what then shall we have?" Matt. 19:27, revised reading; and more precisely by the laborers in the vineyard, "thou hast made them equal unto us, who have borne the burden of the day," Matt. 20:12. The elder son refers to his long service, his obedience, and then complains as the laborers did, of his reward. He had not been given a kid (or, Greek "kidling," a "little kid"), but "this thy son" has the fatted calf. He does not say "my brother," and he throws in a charge against the prodigal not before hinted at, who "hath devoured thy living with harlots," a charge not strictly true, for the prodigal had wasted his own portion only. The sensuality may be a true charge, for it is implied in the "riotous living" of v. 13.

**31. Son, thou art ever with me]** The father addresses him with tenderness, "Son," literally "child." He does not deny the claims of long service, and of obedience. By silence he seems to concede these two points, as the householder received the service of the laborers first employed and who had served through the entire day. But the father does answer his unreasonable complaint as to the relative amount given to the two sons. He gently reminds the elder son of his full and fair division of the property; that not only is he ever with him, but that all things of the father's are his. But there is also a deeper meaning; a calm and profound rebuke in the answer. You have never been given a little kid, but you have ever been *with me*; the comfort of my companionship, and of the home all these years; are they nothing? Then everything I have is thine, not the little kid only, but all the flocks and herds; thy brother has not made you any poorer in substance.

**32. It was meet . . . for this thy brother]** Having pointed out that the elder son's displeasure is without ground, the father asserts what could not

## COMMON VERSION.

29 And he answering said to his father, Lo, these many years do I serve thee, neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment; and yet thou never gavest me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends:

30 But as soon as this thy son was come, which hath devoured thy living with harlots, thou hast killed for him the fatted calf.

31 And he said unto him, Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine.

32 It was meet that we should make merry, and be glad: for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found.

## REVISED VERSION.

29 father came out, and intreated him. But he answered and said to his father, Lo, these many years do I serve thee, and I never transgressed a commandment of thine: and yet thou never gavest me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends:

30 but when this thy son came, who hath devoured thy living with harlots, thou

31 killedst for him the fatted calf. And he said unto him, <sup>1</sup> Son, thou art ever with me,

32 and all that is mine is thine. But it was meet to make merry and be glad: for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found.

<sup>1</sup> Gr *Child*.

be questioned by the most querulous nature. It was meet, fitting, to make merry and be glad. For this "thy brother," not "my son," but with a touch of irony he tosses back the "thy son" by saying "thy brother," yet withal would remind the elder son that the younger is still a brother, though he has sadly sinned. He was dead to our common home, but is alive; was lost to us, but is found. Here the parable ends somewhat abruptly, leaving us uninformed as to the result of the father's entreaty. Whether the elder son went in and welcomed his brother, we are not told.

Who is represented by the elder son? This has been a perplexing question ever since the days of the early Christian fathers. (1) Many following Augustine see in him the Jew. The elder son refusing to go in, is to some, a figure of the Jews refusing to enter the kingdom because the Gentiles were already accepted. But this makes the parable anticipate history and is not in accord with the occasion which called forth the parable, where those addressed were publicans and sinners, and scribes and Pharisees, all Jews. Moreover, it is contrary to the history in the Acts, that the Jews refused to enter because Gentiles were brought in. The apostolic labors not only began at Jerusalem, but continued among the Jews for a long time, with only a few sporadic exceptions. It was not until the Jews, by continued and obstinate refusal, rejected the gospel, that even Paul, the special apostle of the Gentiles, turned from the Jews to the great mission of his life, see Acts 13:45, 46. (2) Others say the elder son represents unfallen beings. But how can it be consistent with unfallen beings, to have anger, envy and murmuring against the Father? Besides, that view introduces features foreign to the main teaching of the parable and brings inextricable confusion. (3) Some again say, the Pharisees and the hypocritical. Yet how could it be truly said to the feignedly and hypocritically righteous, "all mine is thine," and "thou art ever with me?" Drummond presses these objections with great force. Such language would only mislead and be likely to deceive. "If hypocrites and self-deceivers, extortioners . . . can be addressed thus, even in the language of one parable, we may well be permitted to say . . . where is truth?" (4) Jerome and others following him have come nearer perhaps to the true meaning in saying the elder son represents the Pharisees, not as they were, but as they ought to be. This escapes the utterly inexplicable difficulties which meet those who hold that the typical Pharisee and scribe are meant: such as our Lord denounced in Matt. 23:1-15. Not wide from this is the view of Trench and many modern writers. This brings us to (5). May not the elder son justly represent the *legally righteous*? He had "served" the father many years. He had kept the commandments. So the rich young ruler sincerely declared, Luke 18:21. But neither was "perfect." They both had some "lack." See Matt. 19:20, 21. The elder son was of the class who like Peter, Matt. 19:27, looked upon the invitation to, and possession of, spiritual privileges, as of works rather than of grace, a reward rather than a gracious gift. Those who would gain the kingdom of God, by obedience to the commandments, by morality, by ceremonial and formal observances, by any kind of legal righteousness, possessing it as a reward, without the grace that is the gift of God through Christ, resemble the elder son. They have little

patience with the ignorant, wilful and reckless sinner, who breaks over all law, morality, and decent restraints. They seldom heartily welcome his return to God's house, and to Christian society. They are not hypocrites, but usually sincere, and the righteousness, so far as it goes, is to be highly commended; their censoriousness and animosity toward the outbreking sinner striving to return, must be condemned. This was the attitude of the elder son. This interpretation is not free from difficulties certainly, but they are fewer and less grave than those of others, while it gives harmony and consistency to the teaching of the entire parable, and it is in accord with the occasion which caused it to be spoken.

SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.—*The Younger Son.*—1. Man wants to be independent of God. 2. The wilful child breaks away from home restraints. 3. He wants possessions before he is entitled to them or capable of taking care of them. 4. He rushes into sinful pleasures and indulgences. 5. He wastes money, time, health, talents, and character. 6. The downward path of the wrongdoer is steep, and his descent swift. 7. Providential calamities may add to his distress. 8. He often becomes a "hanger on;" as a gambler hangs about a "poolroom," or a dissipated person about a saloon. 9. Sometimes calamities and distresses bring him to a sense of his true condition. 10. It is wise for him to return by repentance and confession to Christ. 11. Every repenting one will be gladly welcomed by the Saviour. 12. There will be joy over his repentance. 13. Christ restores the repentant without further reproof: the best is freely given.

*The Elder Son.*—1. It is foolish to be envious because others are given special favors. 2. Long service is good; but it is weakness to boast of it. 3. Obedience is our duty, it is better still to say we are unprofitable servants. 4. Salvation is not of merit, but of grace. 5. A self-righteous is an unbrotherly spirit. 6. The companionship of Christ and Christians is better than all earthly possessions and rewards. 7. Christ shares his grace and love with some very imperfect followers.

### THE SHREWD STEWARD. 16:1-18.

PERÆA, A.D. 29. Given by Luke only.

This chapter contains the teachings of Jesus in respect to the use of riches. The first parable and its lessons to the end of v. 13, were spoken to disciples; the last parable in the chapter and the preceding remarks from v. 14, were addressed to the Pharisees. The parable of the shrewd steward has given greater perplexity and been the occasion of more controversy than any other parable in the Gospels. The lord of the steward has been thought to represent God (Alford, Anselm, Lange, Trench, Ryle, Riddle, Vitranga, and many others); the devil (Olshausen), Mammon (Meyer), the Roman Emperor, or the Romans (Schleiermacher, Grossmann, etc.). The steward has likewise been taken as a representative of disciples, Pharisees, publicans, sinners, Judas Iscariot, Paul, Israel, mankind, and many more varied and diametrically opposite characters. Much of this confusion has sprung from a mistaken idea of the real teaching of the parable. Though it is not certain that this

parable was spoken immediately after, and in close connection with, that of the Prodigal Son, it is clear that the evangelist saw some close relation to the former in the instruction given in this parable. Jesus had given an example of one who had sinned by squandering his own means, and had lost his friends. He now represents one who sins by squandering another's means, yet is shrewd enough to provide himself with friends. The repenting sinner may learn how to exercise forethought and prudence, heretofore used in the ways of dishonesty, in the way of righteousness. Some if not many of the disciples to whom this parable was addressed were publicans. They needed to learn a lesson of faithfulness in handling another's things; that honesty, prudence and foresight are useful now, and that there is a right use and a wrong use of riches.

**1. said also unto . . . disciples]** The connection implies, but does not make it certain, that this parable was spoken on the same occasion as the previous one. The disciples were those following him as learners, and need not be limited to the twelve.

**certain rich man . . . steward . . . accused]** The facts are briefly, simply stated, in accord with customs prevailing then in Syria. The rich man had a "steward," Greek, a "house ruler," not a slave but a freeman, and one who was given absolute control over all his substance and affairs, subject only to the rich owner. A similar steward was Eliezer to Abraham, and Joseph to Potiphar, Gen. 24 : 2-12 ; 39 : 4. The "same was accused," not wrongfully, but as the sequel shows, rightfully accused. The word for accused is from the same Greek root, as our word for devil, the great accuser and slanderer. The charge was "that he was wasting" his lord's goods, or squandering them. It is the same word that is applied to the prodigal in 15 : 13. It does not necessarily imply that the steward was appropriating the goods to his own use, or was profiting by the waste. It was rather that negligence in caring for the property of another, which brings loss to the owner, as truly as dishonesty and secret theft. So the unfaithful steward is called to account, and given notice of his dismissal, a summary process, but true enough to life in Syria and America.

**3. What shall I do ?** The steward is at his wit's end. He cannot dig ; he has not been accustomed to work ; his frame is too soft and tender to endure it. His pride will not allow him to beg. He is quick-witted for the time ; he

## COMMON VERSION.

CHAP. XVI.—And he said also unto his disciples, There was a certain rich man, which had a steward; and the same was accused unto him that he had wasted his goods.

2 And he called him, and said unto him, How is it that I hear this of thee? give an account of thy stewardship; for thou mayest be no longer steward.

3 Then the steward said within himself, What shall I do? for my lord taketh away from me the stewardship: I cannot dig; to beg I am ashamed.

4 I am resolved what to do, that, when I am put out of the stewardship, they may receive me into their houses.

## REVISED VERSION.

16 And he said also unto the disciples, There was a certain rich man, who had a steward; and the same was accused unto 2 him that he was wasting his goods. And he called him, and said unto him, What is this that I hear of thee? render the account of thy stewardship; for thou 3 canst be no longer steward. And the steward said within himself, What shall I do, seeing that my lord taketh away the stewardship from me? I have not strength 4 to dig; to beg I am ashamed. I am resolved what to do, that, when I am put out of the stewardship, they may receive

may have had an eye to "sharp practice" in business before. Promptly, he plans a sharp scheme: "I am resolved what to do." The Greek means literally, "I know what I will do." He will use the authority of his position now, so that when out of it, some will give him hospitality. It was a thoroughly dishonest scheme, intentional now, but not essentially more dishonest towards the owner than his previous conduct, by which the goods had been squandered.

**5. his lord's debtors]** The steward called the debtors one at a time, for this reduction implies collusion between steward and debtor in the dishonest scheme. Though he was acting dishonestly, the steward was not exceeding his authority in reducing the amounts. In Syria rents are usually paid in kind; the debts may have been of this nature. He asked each debtor the amount he owed, either to get a fresh acknowledgment of the debt, or what is more likely, to impress upon him the amount of the reduction, and therefore the favor shown. This would be a ground for expecting a like favor in return.

**6. hundred measures of oil]** Or Greek "a hundred baths," the "bath" being a Hebrew measure, 1 Kgs. 7: 26; Ezek. 45: 10, equal to from five to eight gallons.\* "Take thy bill," literally "writings" or "accounts," "and sit down quickly and write fifty." It required haste, and the debtor himself making the alteration in the amount would remember the favor besides acknowledging the debt in its new form. The word used to designate the "writings," "bill," or "bond," indicates that it was some kind of parchment or papyrus paper and not wax tablets, but the Hebrew letters standing for numbers could be easily effaced or altered to signify a different amount, as those familiar with ancient manuscripts often see evidences of alterations from the first hand.



EASTERN MEASURES.

**7. hundred measures of wheat]** Or, Greek, "a hundred cors of wheat," the "cor" being another Hebrew measure equal to about eight to ten and a half bushels (in Josephus it seems larger, equal to about twelve bushels) of our measure. This second debtor is di-

## COMMON VERSION.

5 So he called every one of his lord's debtors unto him, and said unto the first, How much owest thou unto my lord?

6 He said, A hundred measures of oil. And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and sit down quickly, and write fifty.

7 Then said he to another, And how much owest thou? And he said, A hundred measures of wheat. And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and write fourscore.

## REVISED VERSION.

5 me into their houses. And calling to him each one of his lord's debtors, he said to the first, How much owest thou unto my lord? And he said, A hundred <sup>1</sup>measures of oil. And he said unto him, Take thy <sup>2</sup>bond, and sit down quickly and write fifty.

7 Then said he to another, And how much owest thou? And he said, A hundred <sup>3</sup>measures of wheat. He saith unto him,

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *baths*, the bath being a Hebrew measure. See Ezek. xlv. 10, 11, 14.

<sup>2</sup> Gr. *writings*.

<sup>3</sup> Gr. *cors*, the cor being a Hebrew measure. See Ezek. xlv. 14.

\*The rabbins make it equal to  $4\frac{1}{2}$  gallons; Josephus to  $8\frac{1}{2}$  gallons.

rected to reduce his "accounts" to fourscore, or eighty. Evidently these two instances only are given as examples of what the steward did with all the debtors called. He varied the reduction perhaps according to the disposition of the debtor, and so as to secure to himself the largest possible favor in each case.

**8. the lord commended the . . steward]** The literal reading of the Greek is, "And the lord commended the steward of unrighteousness, because he had done prudently," see margin in revised reading. The "lord" is the master of the steward, not the Lord Jesus. The steward is not commended for his dishonesty. He is *dismissed* for that, and a lesson is based on the dismissal in vs. 10-12. He is commended "because he had done wisely;" the Greek word *φρονίμως* "wisely," not meaning wisdom in a high sense, but rather forethought, "prudently" being perhaps the better English equivalent. The average Oriental is apt naturally to admire a "clever" (in the English sense), adroit or "smart" scheme, like the smart trick by which the servant tried to escape detection and make himself friends; so this worldlyling would admire or commend the shrewdness of the steward in scheming for his own advantage, even though as owner he lost by it. The worldly prudence then is the thing commended, while the dishonesty is severely punished. Some infer that the last amount charged was the correct sum owed. Whether this is so or not, there is no ground for the childish charge of the Emperor Julian that this parable favored cheating. Directly the opposite lesson is distinctly drawn from it in vs. 10-12, in addition to the fact that the steward was dismissed for cheating. And that this false lesson shall be avoided, and that the disciples may draw the single lesson to act as prudently in spiritual things as men of the world act in worldly things, it is added "for the sons of this world [or 'age'] are for their own generation wiser [Greek, literally, 'more prudent'] than the sons of the light." That is, you disciples can learn a lesson of forethought, or planning prudently in spiritual things about the future, from the prudence or forethought of worldly persons in their worldly affairs; a lesson which Evangelical Christians have been very slow to learn; or certainly not as quick to take advantage of as Roman Catholics.

**9. Make to yourselves friends . . mammon]** The revised reading removes much of the obscurity from this clause: "Make to yourselves friends by means of [or 'out of'] the mammon of unrighteousness; that, when it shall fail, they may receive you into the eternal tabernacles." That "mammon" here, as in Hebrew, usually represents wealth, and that "eternal

## COMMON VERSION.

8 And the lord commended the unjust steward, because he had done wisely: for the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light.

9 And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that, when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations.

## REVISED VERSION.

8 Take thy <sup>1</sup>bond, and write fourscore. And his lord commended <sup>2</sup>the unrighteous steward because he had done wisely: for the sons of this <sup>3</sup>world are for their own generation wiser than the sons of the light.

9 And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends <sup>4</sup>by means of the mammon of unrighteousness; that, when it shall fail, they may receive you into the eternal

<sup>1</sup> Gr. writings.<sup>2</sup> Gr. the steward of unrighteousness.<sup>3</sup> Or, age<sup>4</sup> Gr. out of.

tabernacles" refer to the heavenly home may be accepted without a question. The qualified phrase, "mammon of unrighteousness," need not mean "false wealth," although there appears to be a hint of its unsubstantial nature (see v. 11), but it refers chiefly to the use commonly made of wealth for unrighteous ends, a fact those disciples who had formerly been publicans and sinners would appreciate keenly enough. Instead of misusing wealth as the worldling does, and as the disciples did formerly, learn to use it now in making spiritual friends for yourselves, that when it shall fail (as it certainly will with this world), "they may receive [welcome] you into the eternal tabernacles." The same general truth is taught in the command, "lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven," Matt. 6:20; Luke 12:33; see also 1 Tim. 6:19.

**10. is faithful in . . . much]** It is not the amount we have, but our fidelity in the use of it, that is the test of character. That may be as truly shown with a penny or a pin, as with a princely fortune. Indeed, faithfulness "in a very little" is often the best test of character. So one may show his "unrighteous" nature in a very little thing, proving that he will be "unrighteous" also in much. With God, therefore, the test will be fidelity in whatever we have, and the reward will be in proportion to our faithfulness.

**12. give you that . . . your own]** Here comes a plain lesson suggested by the parable. If you have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, worldly riches, who will trust you with the true? The steward must first learn faithfulness in worldly things, ere he can be trusted with the true things of the kingdom of God. The disciple must learn to be faithful with another's things, or he cannot expect to be given anything of his own. This may have a wide application to worldly and to spiritual affairs. Faithfulness, rather than prudence or forethought, is here emphasized. If disciples were not faithful stewards in the things of God here below, how could they expect to become "heirs," proprietors, in the house above?

**13. can serve two masters]** Perhaps, some of the hearers were thinking within themselves: we can manage to have wealth here and treasures above too. They may have made this mistaken inference from the previous words of Jesus. This he plainly and promptly declares to be impossible. If you give yourself to the wealth of this world, you cannot give yourself to God

## COMMON VERSION.

10 He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much.

11 If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches?

12 And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man's, who shall give you that which is your own?

13 ¶ No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

## REVISED VERSION.

10 tabernacles. He that is faithful in a very little is faithful also in much: and he that is unrighteous in a very little is un-

11 righteous also in much. If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust

12 the true riches? And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another's, who will

13 give you that which is <sup>1</sup>your own? No <sup>2</sup>servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

<sup>1</sup> Some ancient authorities read *our own*.

<sup>2</sup> Gr. *household-servant*.

also. See Matt. 6 : 24. You must choose between God and mammon, for you cannot serve both.

**14. the Pharisees . . heard]** "The Pharisees, who were lovers of money," revised reading, "heard all these things, and they scoffed at him." The fact that these Pharisees were listeners, as well as the disciples of v. 1, may throw some light on the peculiar nature of the teaching of the parable. It was intended for them also. These "lovers of money" thought it ridiculous that riches were any drawback in religion. They were covetous, and religious too, in their own conceit.

**15. God knoweth your hearts]** Jesus struck at the root of the matter at once. The true estimate is not what you count yourself, nor what men esteem you to be, but what God, who knows the heart, judges you to be. Men often exalt what God abominates. Judgments of earth are often reversed in heaven.

**17. one tittle of the law to fall]** The connection appears to be, you Pharisees trust in the ceremonial law, and your faithful observance of it. But this law and the prophets were in force until John the Baptist; "from that time the gospel of the kingdom of God is preached, and every man entereth violently into it;" see revised reading. The last clause may refer to the eagerness of the publicans and sinners in coming to Christ, and to the opposition (and so violence required to overcome it) of the rulers to those who desired to enter the kingdom. Moreover, if you propose to live by the law, know that not a "tittle," a term for one of the tips or horns of a Hebrew letter, will fail; you must fulfil every point of that law. See Matt. 5 : 27-48.

**18. putteth away his wife]** This is an illustration of the way the Pharisees failed to keep the law. Their unrighteous action struck at the sanctity of the family, the foundation of all Christian society. This is a specific count in the general charge made against them in v. 15. Though they were too dulled by covetousness to appreciate the principle in v. 13 which aroused their sneers, they must perceive the stinging force of the reproof that charged them with breaking the seventh commandment. Both the great Jewish schools were notoriously lax in the matter of divorce, as Christian commonwealths still are among us.

SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.—1. There is a wicked and a wise use of wealth.

## COMMON VERSION.

14 And the Pharisees also, who were covetous, heard all these things: and they derided him.

15 And he said unto them, Ye are they which justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God.

16 The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it.

17 And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail.

18 Whosoever putteth away his wife, and marrieth another, committeth adultery: and whosoever marrieth her that is put away from her husband committeth adultery.

## REVISED VERSION.

14 And the Pharisees, who were lovers of money, heard all these things; and they

15 scoffed at him. And he said unto them, Ye are they that justify yourselves in the sight of men; but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is exalted among men is an

16 abomination in the sight of God. The law and the prophets were until John: from that time the gospel of the kingdom of God is preached, and every man entereth violent-

17 ly into it. But it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away, than for one tittle of the

18 law to fail. Every one that putteth away his wife, and marrieth another, committeth adultery: and he that marrieth one that is put away from a husband committeth adultery.

2. The Christian is to exercise prudence and forethought in spiritual things, as the worldly man uses foresight in worldly things. 3. Dishonesty in any form is despicable. 4. Making reasonable provision for the future is Christian prudence. 5. Faithfulness in very little things is a good test of character. 6. Disciples will use worldly means, and will lay up treasures in heaven. 7. It is hard for one thoroughly devoted to getting riches, truly to serve God. 8. No one can love riches supremely and love God also. 9. Men often esteem what God condemns. 10. No one can serve God with a divided heart. 11. The law of God will reign everywhere and forever. 12. The sanctity of the family is securely guarded by the law of God.

### THE RICH MAN AND LAZARUS. 16 : 19-31.

PERŒA, A. D. 29.

This parable was spoken to the Pharisees. It illustrates a wrong use of wealth, and vividly sets forth its awful consequences after death. This rich man is not represented as gaining his wealth by fraud, dishonesty or by any unrighteous methods. He is not described as vicious, a gambler, sharp speculator, adulterer, murderer, thief, extortioner, bribe-taker, or briber of others. He simply used his wealth in self-indulgence, in keeping an elegant house, in fine clothes, in sumptuous feasts, and in selfish pleasures, without regard to the comfort of others, and the poor at his door. The contrasts in this life and the future life are drawn with marvellous power, as a solemn warning to lovers of money and of pleasure.

**19. certain rich man]** No particular person is named. The rich man represents all of his class who love money, and use it for self. See v. 14 revised reading. He was clothed in purple and fine linen; these two things indicating great wealth. The "purple" signifies robes dyed this color, with a very costly Phœnician dye no longer made, but formerly prepared from the *murex*, a common sea shell, and regarded as a royal color, see Esth. 8 : 15; Dan. 5 : 7. It was the outer robe that was of the rich royal purple. The fine linen was the ancient byssus, which Pliny says was often exchanged for its weight in gold. It was of a beautiful dazzling whiteness, see Gen. 41 : 42; Rev. 19 : 8, 14, and was worn under the purple robe. Those were his usual garments. Similar gorgeous colors are still worn by the rich, and the high officials of the East. He feasted merrily and splendidly every day, for both merriment and rich fare are conveyed by the two Greek words. See margin, revised reading. He had a rich and merry banquet daily: the life of a rich epicure. He did no positive wrong to others, but he neglected to do any positive good. He carried out the purpose of the rich fool, who said to his soul, "take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry." Luke 12 : 19.

**20. a certain beggar named Lazarus]** The name of the beggar is

#### COMMON VERSION.

19 ¶ There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day :

20 And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores,

#### REVISED VERSION.

19 Now there was a certain rich man, and he was clothed in purple and fine linen, 20 <sup>1</sup>faring sumptuously every day: and a certain beggar named Lazarus was laid at his

<sup>1</sup> Or, living in mirth and splendour every day

given, and may be more than a hint as to his character. The Greek for "beggar" is usually rendered "poor" (thirty-one out of thirty-three times in the N. T.). Names had a more definite meaning in the East than among us. The name of the "rich man" would be widely known in the world, though the beggar's was comparatively unknown; but in divine annals the rich man is unnamed while the beggar is honored with a name. "The one is as it were in the book of life, the other not." His name can scarcely come from Lo-Ezer, "no help," but is from El-Azer, "whom God helps," and perhaps is intended to imply that he was not merely poor, but had faith in God, an inference which the statements in the sequel also support. He "was laid," or literally "had been cast" or "thrown down" as if too feeble or lame to come of himself, he had been cast down by others at the "gate," or splendid portals of the rich man, desiring to be fed with the crumbs that fell from the rich man's table. Whether he was so fed, is not definitely stated. The Greek leaves it uncertain, although the word for "desiring" is a strong one, and means "longing," as the prodigal "longed" to be filled with the husks. Nor is it said that the beggar was refused. A graphic picture of his helplessness, his exposure, and friendless, diseased condition is given; "even the dogs came and licked his sores," the only attention he received while at the rich man's gate.

**22. the beggar died .. the rich man also]** The poor and the rich alike die. When the beggar died, his poverty and misery ended, and his bliss began; angels bore him away to "Abraham's bosom;" a Hebrew expression used to describe the future state in paradise; the leaning on one's bosom being a special privilege of a very near friend, John 1: 18. Compare also the disciple "reclining in Jesus' bosom" at the last supper, John 13: 23, revised reading, and Numb. 11: 12; Trench, *Par.* p. 452. It may imply no more here than being with Abraham in bliss. The rich man died and was "buried"; a rich funeral pageant, splendid obsequies and eulogies may be hinted at in "was buried." His riches, merry banquets, and earthly pleasures are exchanged; and now . . . , not he, but the beggar, has comfort.

**23. being in torments]** In "hell;" the Greek word is "hades," meaning the abode of spirits, both bad and good, and including here "paradise," the place of bliss, and *gehenna*, the place of torment. The rich man, being in the latter division of "hades" in torment, sees Abraham afar off in the other division in paradise, and Lazarus in his bosom. Though this is a parable, and much of the language figurative, a real and solemn truth is intended to be taught. The veil is lifted, and we learn a truth in regard to the future

## COMMON VERSION.

21 And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores.

22 And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried;

23 And in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.

## REVISED VERSION.

21 gate, full of sores, and desiring to be fed with the *crumbs* that fell from the rich man's table; yea, even the dogs came and

22 licked his sores. And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and that he was carried away by the angels into Abraham's bosom: and the rich man also died, and was buried.

23 And in Hades he lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off,

unseen world; there is one condition of torment, and another of bliss, for mankind after death. The rich man was not in torment there simply because he was rich here, nor the poor man in bliss there simply because he was poor in this life. But see v. 25.

**24. have mercy .. send Lazarus]** The rich man was a Jew, so he says "Father Abraham," see Luke 3 : 8. This is the only prayer to saints spoken of in Scripture, and is poor encouragement for others. If the language of the request is figurative, it surely has a corresponding reality in the unseen world, and in the suffering, the "anguish" of souls after death. He does not ask that Lazarus bring him out of torment, but only for a "drop of water."

**25. remember .. thy good things]** Abraham's reply is a mild but firm refusal. "Son," or literally "child," "remember!" What a power memory must be hereafter! In thy life ( $\zeta\omega\eta$ ) thou receivedst fully thy good things; the things you chose, and counted good. You had riches; using them for your own pleasure and comfort. You cared not for the unseen world, for God, nor the good of your fellows. You did no positive good. Compare the words of the Judge to those on the left hand. Matt. 25 : 41-46.

**Lazarus .. evil things]** The poor man had evil things—suffering, discipline, in life. Chrysostom and some others say this means that Lazarus had chastisements on earth for his infirmities, and the rich man for any good in him, had good things, a full reward; but this interpretation, as Trench observes, is far-fetched. The rich man's "good things" were purple, fine linen, feasts; he chose these before eternal things. There is an awful contrast now in their respective conditions.

**26. a great gulf fixed]** This idea is not found in any classic or heathen representation of the future world, nor in the ancient Jewish writings. See, Edersheim, *Life and Times of Jesus*, vol. 2, p. 281. The latter do contain representations of conversations between the dead, and that there is a wall of partition, or a handbreadth or finger's breadth division, but nothing of the impassable gulf, as it is here represented by Christ: one that cannot be bridged or filled up, and that cannot be crossed by spirits in torment, nor by those in paradise. Those from paradise would have no reason for going

## COMMON VERSION.

24 And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.

25 But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.

26 And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that *would come* from thence.

27 Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house:

## REVISED VERSION.

24 and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am in anguish in this flame.

25 But Abraham said, <sup>1</sup>Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and Lazarus in like manner evil things: but now here he is comforted, and thou art in anguish. And <sup>2</sup>beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, that they who would pass from hence to you may not be able, and that none may

cross over from thence to us. And he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *Child*.<sup>2</sup> Or, *in all these things*

across, unless to answer some call similar to that of the rich man, and this was denied. It is difficult to see what can be wrenched out of this, to favor or comfort those who think there is a "gleam of hope" across this gulf because this was in hades, and before the final judgment. If no comfort could reach the rich man *before* the judgment and while in torment in hades, what hope could there be for him *after* judgment, and in gehenna?

**28. five brethren . . he may testify unto them]** Denied a mitigation of punishment for himself, the rich man is now represented as asking that his living brothers be warned by Lazarus. This was added to illustrate how important it was to enter the kingdom of God in this life, and to hear the true teaching of the law and the prophets, see v. 16. It is needless to inquire what prompted the second request, further than that, it may have sprung from a fear that their coming might add to his misery. It surely implied that his brethren, and by parity of reason he also, had not had sufficient warning. This is an indirect justifying of himself, and an accusation against the justice of God. Yet it was plausible; Lazarus could tell them of the awful reality of torment and of bliss. The answer is dignified and stern, "they have Moses and the prophets," that is, their writings to warn them, "let them hear [heed] them." See John 5: 45-47. If the Old Testament was sufficient, what must be said now, when men have the whole Bible?

**30. Nay . . if one . . from the dead, they will repent]** Now he flatly contradicts Abraham, and distinctly declares that further testimony will bring them to repentance. Wicked men near to death often imagine that if they had been warned more earnestly or in some supernatural way, they would have forsaken sin. This parable shows how vain are such imaginations.

**31. neither will they be persuaded]** They will not repent nor be persuaded even if one *go* to them from the dead, not merely, but even "if one *RISE* from the dead," revised reading. This was afterwards verified. A real Lazarus did rise from the dead, and the Pharisees did not believe. Jesus himself rose from the dead, and they were still unbelieving, and even angry at others who did believe. This narrative gives no countenance or encouragement to the pretensions of clairvoyants or spiritists, that any good could come of their messages, pretended or real, from the unseen world. The revelation of Moses, of the prophets, of Christ, and of his apostles, are warnings and persuasions so clear and marvellous, that if not heeded, the warning of one rising from the dead would also be useless.

SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.—1. Life is a time of probation. 2. Riches are to be used not for self, but for God and our fellow-men. 3. The unseen world

## COMMON VERSION.

28 For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment.

29 Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.

30 And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent.

31 And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.

## REVISED VERSION.

28 wouldest send him to my father's house; for I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this

29 place of torment. But Abraham saith, They have Moses and the prophets; let

30 them hear them. And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one go to them from the

31 dead, they will repent. And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, if one rise from the dead.

will reveal terrible changes. 4. The real condition of a man is known only to God. 5. Men are condemned for omitting to do good, as well as for committing evil. 6. In the unseen world there is a great and impassable gulf fixed between the evil and the good. 7. The Scriptures are sufficient to make men prudent for the life to come. 8. If they are unheeded, men would not be persuaded though one from the dead warned them. 9. Christ believed on in this life, is the only hope of the sinner.

OFFENCES : FAITH : THE UNPROFITABLE SERVANT. 17 : 1-10.

PERÆA, A. D. 29-30.

**1. It is impossible but]** The parable of the rich man and Lazarus, from its connection with the previous verses 14-18, appears to have been spoken to the Pharisees. Jesus now speaks to his disciples. The connection in the narrative here is, these Pharisees had spoken very offensively and scoffingly, see 16 : 14, and the disciples must have been troubled by it. Jesus assures them that such occasions of stumbling should come, see revised reading, and they need not be surprised, or troubled about them. It is worse even for him who is the cause of the stumbling than for those who stumble. The Greek word is *σκάνδαλον* (from which is our word "scandal"), which means a trap or trap-stick set to trip or catch one.

**2. a millstone were hanged]** In the Greek the first two verbs are in the present tense, not in the past or imperfect, as the English might be understood. Hence literally, it is profitable to him, if a millstone is hanging about his neck and he [has been] cast into the sea [the deep sea] rather than that he should scandalize [cause to stumble] one of these little ones. The "little ones" mean those young and weak in discipleship, and not alone those young in years.

**3. Take heed to yourselves]** That is, you may unwittingly or heedlessly give offence to a weak brother. So Jesus gives a particular application of the principle, "If thy brother sin, rebuke him : if he repent, forgive him." Even seven times a day do this : "seven" being a complete number, hence a general phrase meaning, as the "seventy times seven," Matt. 18 : 22, that forgiveness is ever to follow repentance.

**5. Increase our faith]** The entire body of the apostles made this

COMMON VERSION.

CHAP. XVII.—Then said he unto the disciples, It is impossible but that offences will come : but woe unto him, through whom they come !

2 It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones.

3 ¶ Take heed to yourselves : If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him ; and if he repent, forgive him.

4 And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent ; thou shalt forgive him.

5 And the apostles said unto the Lord, Increase our faith.

REVISED VERSION.

17 And he said unto his disciples, It is impossible but that occasions of stumbling should come : but woe unto him, through

2 whom they come ! It were well for him if a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were thrown into the sea, rather than that he should cause one of these little

3 ones to stumble. Take heed to yourselves : if thy brother sin, rebuke him ; and if he

4 repent, forgive him. And if he sin against thee seven times in the day, and seven times turn again to thee, saying, I repent ; thou shalt forgive him.

5 And the apostles said unto the Lord, In-

request, that is the twelve, as "apostles" is doubtless used in the narrower sense here. The word occurs eighty-one times in the New Testament, of which seventy are in the writings of Luke and Paul. "Increase," literally add to our faith, was their petition. The call to endure offences, avoid giving them, and to forgive in the way just stated, caused the apostles to make this prayer.

**6. faith as a grain of mustard seed]** If you had faith that would gain in the proportion that this seed gains, see Matt. 13 : 32, you would or might say to this sycamine tree, implying that they were in the open air, and that he pointed to the tree as he spoke. The "sycamine," that is the "black mulberry" (called *sycamena* now in Greece), and the white mulberry also are common in Syria, being cultivated to feed silk worms. The sycamore, however, is rarely found in Palestine except along the coast and in the Jordan valley, see *Pal. Survey. Fauna*, p. 411. The last clause of the verse is said to have been a proverbial expression among the Jews for doing any great work. But why should it not be taken in its literal sense here? Compare Paul's expression, "If I have all faith, so as to remove mountains," 1 Cor. 13 : 2, revised reading.

**7. having a servant]** Notice carefully the changes in the rendering and in the punctuation made in the revised reading, and the verse will not require further explanation, except to notice the connection of this parable of the unprofitable servant with the preceding teaching. Some say there is no connection. Among those who say there is one, such as Grotius, some hold that Jesus would magnify the gift of faith, and so by the parable shows how the servile Jew stands under the old covenant; and some, as Theophylact, Meyer and others, that faith will bring wonders, but men must guard against pride; this faith is simply your duty, and deserves no special reward. The picture is one familiar in that time in Syria. The bond-servant, from the field or the sheep, is to gird himself (his loose garments requiring to be girded for waiting on the table or for work) and wait on his master, and after that have his own meal. The words "I trow not" are omitted in the revised text.

**10. We are unprofitable servants]** Doing all that is commanded; all

## COMMON VERSION.

6 And the Lord said, If ye had faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye might say unto this sycamine tree, Be thou plucked up by the root, and be thou planted in the sea; and it should obey you.

7 But which of you, having a servant ploughing or feeding cattle, will say unto him by and by, when he is come from the field, Go and sit down to meat?

8 And will not rather say unto him, Make ready wherewith I may sup, and gird thyself, and serve me, till I have eaten and drunken: and afterward thou shalt eat and drink?

9 Doth he thank that servant because he did the things that were commanded him? I trow not.

10 So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all these things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do.

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *bondservant*.

## REVISED VERSION.

6 crease our faith. And the Lord said, If ye had faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye would say unto this sycamine tree, Be thou rooted up, and be thou planted in the sea;

7 and it would obey you. But who is there of you, having a <sup>1</sup>servant plowing or keeping sheep, that will say unto him, when he is come in from the field, Come straightway

8 and sit down to meat; and will not rather say unto him, Make ready wherewith I may sup, and gird thyself, and serve me, till I have eaten and drunken; and afterward

9 thou shalt eat and drink? Doth he thank the <sup>1</sup>servant because he did the things

10 that were commanded? Even so ye also, when ye shall have done all the things that are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable <sup>2</sup>servants; we have done that which it was our duty to do.

<sup>2</sup> Gr. *bondservants*.

that it is our duty to do; all that our conscience enlightened by God's word and Spirit says we ought to do, gives no ground on which to base a claim for boasting. If a servant did less than his duty, his master would suffer damage; if he do just his duty, he has caused no damage, neither has he achieved any positive surplus or profit for his master. Observe, this does not tell us what God may say to servants, but only what they are to say, and what spirit they are to have in view of their work. They may do all that is commanded, and have no works of supererogation, no claim for special reward. It does not declare that God will or will not give some special reward out of grace.

SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.—1. Avoid placing obstacles in the way of young Christians. 2. It is a great sin to hinder a soul from coming to Christ. 3. Always have a forgiving spirit. 4. Always have an humble, repenting mind. 5. Let the apostles' prayer be ours: "Lord, increase our faith." 6. Recall the wonderful power of a living faith. 7. Doing all we are commanded is no ground for pride, or for special reward.

### TEN LEPERS CLEANSED. 17:11-19.

BORDERS OF SAMARIA AND GALILEE. Jan.-Feb. A.D. 30.

The order of events in this portion of Luke's Gospel has caused much discussion. Robinson, Farrar and some others transpose the healing of the ten lepers to an earlier period, and connect it closely with Luke 9:51-56, and immediately preceding the feast at Jerusalem mentioned in John 7:10 to 8:59. They also place the events in Luke 10:17 to 11:13 immediately after the above, and hence as occurring near Jerusalem; followed by the retirement beyond Jordan and a speedy return to raise Lazarus, and a second retirement to Ephraim and thence beyond Jordan, where they place all the events (except 17:11-19) and teachings narrated in Luke 13:10 to 19:28. In this plan the journey down the Jordan would be on the Eastern or Peræan side until Jesus came near Jericho. But Riddle's revised edition of "Robinson's Harmony" treats the date and position of the healing of the ten lepers as very doubtful.

Andrews (and substantially Thomson, Tischendorf, Stroud, and Greswell, Meyer not wholly) following Luke, have this order: Jesus prepares to go to Jerusalem, and sends messengers who are rejected in a Samaritan village, Luke 9:51-56, 61, 62. The seventy are sent forth, Luke 10:1-24, and Jesus follows through Peræa toward Jerusalem, Matt. 19:1, 2; Mark 10:1. On the way he heals; gives the parable of the good Samaritan, and a form of prayer, heals a dumb demoniac, dines with a Pharisee, speaks the parable of the rich fool; then follow Luke 10:25-37, and 11:1 to 13:17, and 22:35 (omitting 18-21); he attends the feast of dedication at Jerusalem, John 10:22-42, Luke 10:38-42, retires to Bethany beyond Jordan, feasts with a chief Pharisee on the Sabbath, Luke 14:1-6, journeys on, teaching, 14:7 to 17:10; is called to Bethany, raises Lazarus, and retires to Ephraim, John 11:1-57. After a brief sojourn, Jesus starts from Ephraim towards Jerusalem for the last passover. His route is eastward along the border-line between Samaria and Galilee. On the way he heals the ten lepers, teaches by parables, going down the Jordan valley on the east (possibly the west) side of Jericho, Luke 17:11

to 19: 28; Matt. 19: 3 to 20: 34; Mark 10: 2-52. From Jericho he goes up to Bethany, is anointed, and makes his triumphal entry into Jerusalem, Luke 19: 29-48. Though the precise order of events and exact routes of Jesus are not definitely known, the facts and truths narrated have the same authority and accuracy as if these incidents were fully stated.

**11. to Jerusalem . . . Samaria and Galilee]** Or passing between the border of Samaria and Galilee, see margin of revised reading, that is, he went eastward along the line between Samaria and Galilee, perhaps past Scythopolis, where the Jordan could be crossed to reach the great route from north-eastern Galilee to Jerusalem running through Peræa, to avoid the hostile Samaritans. Josephus mentions that Galilean pilgrims to the great feasts at Jerusalem were slain by Samaritans for attempting to pass directly through Samaria. *Antq.* 20: 6, 1. See also above.



EASTERN LEPERS BEGGING BY THE WAYSIDE.

**12. lepers . . . stood afar off]** The lepers were unclean and excluded from society, Lev. 13: 46. Thus the four lepers were outside the gate of Samaria, when that city was besieged by the Syrians, 2 Kings 7: 3. There is a fine touch of truthfulness incidentally shown in the narrative, since one of the lepers was a Samaritan and nine were Jews. In health the Jews would not have associated with the Samaritan, but a common misery breaks down their pride; they become friendly as brethren in their common affliction.

**13. lifted up their voices]** To this day a similar scene may be witnessed in Palestine. Little groups of lepers now stand by the roadside, and call

COMMON VERSION.

11 ¶ And it came to pass, as he went to Jerusalem, that he passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee.

12 And as he entered into a certain village, there met him ten men that were lepers, which stood afar off:

13 And they lifted up *their voices*, and said, Jesus, Master, have mercy on us.

REVISED VERSION.

11 And it came to pass, <sup>1</sup> as they were on the way to Jerusalem, that he was passing <sup>2</sup> along the borders of Samaria and Galilee.

12 And as he entered into a certain village, there met him ten men that were lepers,

13 who stood afar off: and they lifted up their voices, saying, Jesus, Master, have mercy

<sup>1</sup> Or, as he was

<sup>2</sup> Or, through the midst of

clamorously for pity, for alms. These ten lepers had heard of Jesus, probably as a miracle worker, and appealed to him for help. By Jewish rules the lepers were not to come nearer than 100 paces, that is 300, feet.

**14. shew yourselves unto the priests]** By reading Lev. 13 and 14, it will be seen that this direction would be understood and was accepted as equivalent to saying, you are or will be clean. It has been usually assumed that they were to go to the priests at Jerusalem. Some suppose that the Samaritan went towards the temple of Gerizim. It is by no means certain, however, that the lepers understood the command to mean to go to Jerusalem. There were priests residing in great numbers at Jericho and in other parts of Judæa, and they could find priests to examine them much nearer than Jerusalem. This examination was necessary to establish their cure, Lev. 14: 2. As they went on their way, how far, is not stated, they were healed. One of the ten, who was a Samaritan, turned back, thanking God, and humbly fell prostrate at the feet of Jesus, as Orientals prostrate themselves before superiors, giving him thanks for the healing. It required some effort, some self-denial to do this. For he, like the others, would be eager to return to his friends and to society again. But gratitude, and a proper sense of the great blessing led him to return, and he carried away a greater blessing, see v. 19.

**17. where are the nine?]** They were not cleansed from the leprosy of ingratitude, as this language of Jesus fairly implies. They had bodily healing; their souls were not right toward Christ or they would have returned also. Only the "stranger," for the Samaritans were counted "strangers" or "aliens" by the Jews, had gratitude. It is a discouraging thing when blessings are received with a thankless heart. Farrar suggests that Jesus felt as if his benefits were fallen into a deep and silent grave.

**19. thy faith hath made thee whole]** Or, literally, "hath saved thee." This makes it quite sure, as Alford and Trench suggest, that this Samaritan not only had bodily healing, but spiritual cleansing also. The nine went away with only outward health; the poor Samaritan by returning carried away the richer spiritual gift of faith and salvation of soul. Appreciating the blessings we have, opens the way for greater ones.

SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.—1. The leprosy of sin keeps us far from God. 2. A sense of our misery should make us cry to God for mercy. 3. Christ

## COMMON VERSION.

14 And when he saw *them*, he said unto them, Go shew yourselves unto the priests. And it came to pass, that, as they went, they were cleansed.

15 And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God,

16 And he fell down on *his* face at his feet, giving him thanks: and he was a Samaritan.

17 And Jesus answering said, Were there not ten cleansed? but where *are* the nine?

18 There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger.

19 And he said unto him, Arise, go thy way: thy faith hath made thee whole.

## REVISED VERSION.

14 on us. And when he saw them, he said unto them, Go and shew yourselves unto the priests. And it came to pass, as they

15 went, they were cleansed. And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, with a loud voice glorifying God;

16 and he fell upon his face at his feet, giving him thanks: and he was a Samaritan.

17 And Jesus answering said, Were not the ten

18 cleansed? but where are the nine? <sup>1</sup> Were there none found that returned to give

19 glory to God, save this <sup>2</sup> stranger? And he said unto him, Arise, and go thy way: thy

faith hath <sup>3</sup> made thee whole.

<sup>1</sup> Or, *there were none found . . . save this stranger.*

<sup>2</sup> Or, *alien*

<sup>3</sup> Or, *saved thee*

sometimes chooses mysterious ways in dealing with the sinner. 4. Gratitude to God for blessings is our first duty. 5. Humility brings true thankfulness to Christ. 6. To be thankless leads to becoming graceless. 7. The humble and thankful receive additional blessings.

THE COMING OF THE SON OF MAN. 17 : 20-37.

JORDAN VALLEY, A.D. 30.

**20. when the kingdom of God]** This question by the Pharisees was asked from curiosity, and to perplex, and perhaps to entrap, Jesus, though this is doubtful. Their thought referred to an outward temporal coming, as the answer implies. It would not be with outward display, or rather in the Greek the sense is, it comes not "with close watching," that is, the signs of its coming are not external, but spiritual.

**21. the kingdom .. is within you]** This verse explains the last clause of v. 20. The kingdom is not to be seen here, or there, outwardly. The kingdom comes, and is within you. This expression has caused much needless discussion because addressed to Pharisees. They did not actually possess, or have this kingdom within them, it is said. Hence some resort to a different rendering "among you" or "the midst of you," see marginal readings, finding a grammatical warrant in Xenophon. *Anab.* 1, 10:3. But the textual rendering is the common grammatical meaning. The objection of Meyer, that it is a modern theological idea, is evidence that he missed one of the fundamental truths in the teachings of Christ; the internal and spiritual character of the kingdom of God, as distinct from a temporal one. The Romanists are given to his view, although the Vulgate may favor the opposite spiritual idea by rendering it, *intra vos est*. Jesus merely intended to tell them that they were looking at the wrong point to see the kingdom; it is not without, but within you; a general truth as to its nature, and not intended to affirm that the Pharisees had, or did not have it.

**22. unto the disciples]** He now continues the subject of his answer to the Pharisees in a conversation with his disciples. Precisely what Jesus meant by this verse, it must be confessed, is not very clear. It may refer to the coming anxiety they would have about him after the crucifixion; the whole period between the ascension and second coming of Christ, as Stella, Ryle, and others suppose, or to the time of that coming chiefly. In that period, false Christs would appear, as v. 23 implies, but the disciples are

COMMON VERSIO.

20 ¶ And when he was demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation :

21 Neither shall they say, Lo here ! or, lo there ! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you.

22 And he said unto the disciples, The days will come, when ye shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of man, and ye shall not see it.

REVISED VERSION.

20 And being asked by the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God cometh, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh

21 not with observation : neither shall they say, Lo, here ! or, There ! for lo, the kingdom of God is <sup>1</sup> within you.

22 And he said unto the disciples, The days will come, when ye shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of man, and ye shall not

<sup>1</sup> Or, *in the midst of you*

warned not to be misled by them. For the day of his manifestation would be as clear and evident as the lightning in the heavens. This time was not to come until after his trial and crucifixion; for, "first must he suffer many things, and be rejected of this generation," v. 25. Compare this passage with a later prediction in Matt. 24 : 23-41.

**26. in the days of Noah]** The "Noe" of the Common Version is the Greek form for Noah. The world will go on in "the days of the Son of man" as it goes on now, and as it did before the flood in the days of Noah. Men will not heed the spiritual signs of the times. They will be given to eating, drinking and marrying, and the common avocations of worldly people, as in Noah's and Lot's time, to buying, selling, planting, building; and the flood comes, the storm of fire and brimstone comes, and all are suddenly destroyed. "After the same manner shall it be in the day that the Son of man is revealed," v. 30. Incidentally we see here very plain evidence that Jesus accepted the Old Testament narratives of the flood, and of the destruction of Sodom as real history; not merely that they had a foundation in fact, but that the details of the narratives are true and historic facts.

**31. he .. on the housetop]** Compare the same illustration in the prophecy of the destruction of Jerusalem, Matt. 24 : 17. Its use here is another evidence that Jesus repeated similar truths and illustrations at different times and places. The reference here is distinctly to a coming of the Son of man, but whether it also refers to the destruction of Jerusalem as if that were a "coming," is not settled. The application of those several illustrations in v. 31, and v. 32, seems to be that worldly and temporal things are to be counted as of secondary value. When tribulation and persecution should come one must be prepared and ready to forsake all for Christ, without a

## COMMON VERSION.

23 And they shall say to you, See here; or, see there: go not after *them*, nor follow *them*.

24 For as the lightning, that lighteneth out of the one *part* under heaven, shineth unto the other *part* under heaven; so shall also the Son of man be in his day.

25 But first must he suffer many things, and be rejected of this generation.

26 And as it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man.

27 They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all.

28 Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded;

29 But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed *them* all.

30 Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed.

31 In that day, he which shall be upon the housetop, and his stuff in the house, let him not come down to take it away; and he that is in the field, let him likewise not return back.

32 Remember Lot's wife.

## REVISED VERSION.

23 see it. And they shall say to you, Lo, there! Lo, here! go not away, nor follow

24 after *them*: for as the lightning, when it lighteneth out of the one part under the heaven, shineth unto the other part under heaven; so shall the Son of man be<sup>1</sup> in his

25 day. But first must he suffer many things

26 and be rejected of this generation. And as it came to pass in the days of Noah, even so

27 shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. They ate, they drank, they married,

28 they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and the

29 flood came, and destroyed them all. Likewise even as it came to pass in the days of

30 Lot; they ate, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; but

31 in the day that Lot went out from Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and

32 destroyed them all: after the same manner shall it be in the day that the Son of man is

33 revealed. In that day, he who shall be on the housetop, and his goods in the house,

let him not go down to take them away; and let him that is in the field likewise

34 not return back. Remember Lot's wife.

<sup>1</sup> Some ancient authorities omit *in his day*.

longing desire to return, or to save worldly things, as Lot's wife had, when she fled from Sodom and was punished for her sin.

**33. lose his life shall preserve it]** See the similar expression in Chap. 9 : 24. Trying to gain this life, one may lose his real life, but losing it in Christ he shall preserve it. So Paul has it : " I am already being offered . . . henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness," 2 Tim. 4 : 6, 8, revised reading.

**35. Two women . . . grinding]** This illustration and that one in v. 36 (which is omitted in the Revised Version) are found in Matt. 24 : 40, 41, only their order is there reversed. That in v. 34 is peculiar to Luke. All these illustrations refer to the unexpected " coming," and to the separation which will then take place among the most intimate associates and friends. The statement in v. 34 also incidentally refers to Christ's coming as occurring in the night. " In that night there shall be two men in one bed." The women grinding at a handmill in the house, or at the door, is a common sight in Syria. They have a mill composed of two stones, one above the other, the upper having a hole in the centre, through which the grain is poured, while the upper stone is twirled upon the lower by two women sitting on opposite sides of the mill, who take hold of the handle inserted in the upper stone. Most of their grain is ground in this way.

**37. Where the body is]** The disciples asked where these pairs of persons shall be, when this separation shall be made. They have no direct answer. The coming is not fixed, either as to time or place. Perhaps this is a hint that it will not be limited either by time or by geographical conditions; so Farrar and others suggest. This indefinite answer is a proverb. Where a body or a carcass is, there the vultures will be gathered to feed on it. The reference is not to Roman eagles, and Jerusalem, or the church; nor can the " eagles" mean the saints. The " body" refers to the body of mankind " dead in trespasses," corrupt and corrupting, and the vultures to the divine judgments which will come to destroy it. Men's own decaying sinful character will call together, through the laws of the spiritual world, the forces that will punish them. As a corrupt material body attracts that which will devour it, so a corrupt moral mass will attract that which will scourge and forever eat it.

## COMMON VERSION.

33 Whosoever shall seek to save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life shall preserve it.

34 I tell you, in that night there shall be two men in one bed; the one shall be taken, and the other shall be left.

35 Two women shall be grinding together; the one shall be taken, and the other left.

36 Two men shall be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left.

37 And they answered and said unto him, Where, Lord? And he said unto them, Where-soever the body is, thither will the eagles be gathered together.

## REVISED VERSION.

33 Whosoever shall seek to gain his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose *his life*

34 shall <sup>1</sup>preserve it. I say unto you, In that night there shall be two men on one bed;

35 the one shall be taken, and the other shall be left. There shall be two women grinding together;

36 the one shall be taken, and the other shall be left.<sup>2</sup> And they answering

37 say unto him, Where, Lord? And he said unto them, Where the body is, thither will

the <sup>3</sup>eagles also be gathered together.

<sup>1</sup>Gr. *save it alive*.

<sup>2</sup>Some ancient authorities add ver. 36. *There shall be two men in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other shall be left.*

<sup>3</sup>Or, *vultures*

SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.—1. The true church of Christ is invisible. 2. Deceivers and false teachers will appear among Christians. 3. True disciples long for the coming of Christ. 4. The glories of Christ will be revealed in his day. 5. The world is heedless of coming judgments from heaven. 6. The men of this world are absorbed in the things of the world, and are blind to spiritual things. 7. He that grasps at the earth misses heaven. 8. The day of Christ will cause sudden and unexpected separations. 9. The unrepentant sinner will attract divine judgments, as a dead body draws the vultures. See Deut. 28:49.

### THE UNJUST JUDGE: THE PHARISEE AND PUBLICAN. 18:1-14.

JORDAN VALLEY, A.D. 30.

These two parables impress the importance of true prayer. The first teaches us to pray; to maintain a firm, not a fainting faith. The second teaches us the true spirit in which we are to seek God in prayer. The first is a lesson *by* contrasts; the second a lesson *of* contrasts.

**1. always to pray, and not to faint]** This means more than to have a spirit of devotion; see how Paul urged this in Eph. 6:18, and 1 Thess. 5:17. It has the added idea of actual unwearied petitions expressed in words, even when the answer does not seem to come. Prayer is the cure for fainting; for prayerlessness and faintness go together. This charge was needful in view of the announcement Jesus had made to his disciples in v. 22 of the previous chapter. The "always" is to be taken in the general sense of persevering daily in making actual petitions to God.

**2. a judge . . feared not God]** At first this comparison startles us. That the willingness of God to hear his people should be impressed by the sharp contrast of the godless judge is unusual; but when once the contrast is clearly apprehended, the lesson is very forcible. This judge was a thoroughly wicked and abandoned character; not an unusual one to be found in the East then and now. The "widow" gives a picture of helplessness in a word. "Avenge" does not mean to wreak vengeance. She seeks not for vengeance, but protection; she asks that her just claim be allowed, for this is the more precise thought in the Greek. It implies that her demand was just. The judge declines. He would not act in any case except from selfish motives. Justice was the thing he was very careful never to give without personal gain. The widow had no means with which to bribe him. But she had persistence, and she put that in use to ply the shameless, wicked judge.

#### COMMON VERSION.

CHAP XVIII.—And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint:

2 Saying, There was in a city a judge, which feared not God, neither regarded man:

3 And there was a widow in that city; and she came oft unto him, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary.

4 And he would not for a while; but afterward he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man;

#### REVISED VERSION.

18 And he spake a parable unto them to the end that they ought always to pray, and not to faint; saying, There was in a city a judge, who feared not God, and regarded not man: 3 and there was a widow in that city; and she came oft unto him, saying, <sup>1</sup> Avenge me of 4 mine adversary. And he would not for a while; but afterward he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard

<sup>1</sup> Or, *Do me justice of*: and so in ver. 5, 7, 8.

**5. lest by her continual coming]** or "lest she wear me out by her continual coming." But even this is not as strong as the Greek, literally, "lest she beat me [in the face] black and blue." The word denotes the effect of blows in the face in boxing games. The shameless judge, who had no ear or sense for justice, like a bold atheist boasted that he had no fear of God, nor regard for man, yet did have a fear that this widow, so persistent in her requests, if denied too long might come to blows with him for his shameless conduct, a thing by no means uncommon in Eastern communities when justice is perverted and denied. Or, if it be not taken in this literal sense, it may mean that the judge exaggerated her appeals into this; as some say now "she torments me to death." Thus the widow's appeal would become as the blows of a boxer, and he yielded to save himself annoyance, rather than from any real disposition to do justice.

**7. shall not God avenge his elect]** The Lord adds, "Hear what the unrighteous judge saith." If this unjust judge will answer the widow simply because of her importunity, then by contrast, shall not a righteous God avenge his chosen people, who lovingly and trustingly cry to him day and night? For observe, the contrast is not merely between an unjust judge and a holy God, but also between a persistent, even almost browbeating, suppliant (for that is what the widow is represented to be), and loving children who seek favors in reverence, in confidence, and in assurance that God will not merely do justly, but deal graciously in giving whatever they may ask, provided that in his infinite wisdom and love he deems it best for them. In their persecutions, trials, and sorrows, they will never be forgotten. He will hear and care; see the prompt response in Mark 4 : 38.

**8. shall he find faith?]** On this question compare, "Where is the promise of his coming?" 2 Pet. 3 : 3, 4; "the love of the many shall wax cold," Revised Version, Matt. 24 : 12; 2 Thess. 2 : 3. The kind of faith implied in the question is the point germane to the parable, namely, persevering faith in prayer. Hence it is not paucity of believers, but the imperfection of their faith that is meant by the question. It is not in harmony with the connection to say that it means he will not find any exercising saving faith in him, for that is not the subject of conversation here. Moreover, the article before the word faith in Greek, "the faith" (see margin of revised reading) may be assigned a peculiar force here, pointing to the particular kind of faith, mentioned just before.

## COMMON VERSION.

5 Yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me.

6 And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge saith.

7 And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them?

8 I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?

## REVISED VERSION.

5 man; yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her,<sup>1</sup> lest she<sup>2</sup> wear me out by her continual coming. And the Lord said, Hear what<sup>3</sup> the unrighteous judge saith. And shall not God avenge his elect, who cry to him day and night,<sup>4</sup> and yet he is longsuffering over them? I say unto you, that he will avenge them speedily. Howbeit when the Son of man cometh, shall he find<sup>5</sup> faith on the earth?

<sup>1</sup> Or, lest at last by her coming she wear me out  
righteousness.

<sup>4</sup> Or, and is he slow to punish on their behalf?

<sup>2</sup> Gr. bruise.

<sup>3</sup> Gr. the judge of un-

<sup>5</sup> Or, the faith

**9. trusted in themselves that they were righteous]** This designated a large class, not, however, Pharisees exclusively, as some wrongly infer. It points out all formalists and those having a self-righteous spirit: those filled with spiritual pride, and self-conceit; "a generation . . . pure in their own eyes," Prov. 30 : 12; compare also Is. 65 : 5. The East now is full of "holy men" spiritually arrogant enough "to set all others at nought;" nor is the western hemisphere free from similar self-righteous persons.

**10. Two men went up into the temple]** The temple then standing was the one rebuilt by Herod the Great upon the site of Solomon's temple, which Nebuchadnezzar destroyed. A second temple had been built by Zerubbabel and this was enlarged by Herod. It stood on a hill called Mt. Moriah, in Jerusalem, though not the highest hill in that city. The temple was the natural and fitting place for prayer, and Jesus refers to its name as "the house of prayer," Luke 19 : 46. A Pharisee and a publican are selected as types of classes that would be counted two extremes by those to whom Jesus was speaking.

**11. The Pharisee . . . prayed]** The words rendered "with himself" may imply that he stood apart by himself, or that he really prayed to himself; communing not with God but with himself. His prayer is a recital of his own goodness and good works, and a congratulation of himself that he is not wicked like others. It in fact exalts him by condemning others, and mentioning their gross sins. Others were unjust, extortioners, adulterers and publicans. All men he grouped in two classes; himself in one class, all others in the other class. He fasted twice in the week, a burden not imposed by the Mosaic law, which had only one fast in a year, Lev. 16 : 29, and in Zechariah's time only four fasts in a year were observed, Zech. 8 : 19. The Pharisees fasted on the second and fifth days of the week.

**12. tithes of all . . . I possess]** In this he returned to the vow of Jacob: "of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee," Gen. 28 : 22. The Mosaic law commanded tithes of corn, wine, oil, and cattle only, Deut. 14 : 22, 23, and did not demand tithes of minor things, as mint, anise and cummin, see Matt. 23 : 23. Thus the Pharisee claimed exceptional holiness for these acts of giving more than the law imposed. Holiness in his mind seems to be made up of these formal duties. The Talmud gives a similar prayer of a Jewish rabbi. There is no humility, no confession of sin, no petition, no request for favor, grace, divine guidance, care, or pardon to be

## COMMON VERSION.

9 And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others :

10 Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican.

11 The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men *are*, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican.

12 I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess.

## REVISED VERSION.

9 And he spake also this parable unto certain who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and set <sup>1</sup>all others at

10 nought : Two men went up into the temple to pray ; the one a Pharisee, and the other

11 a publican. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as the rest of men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican.

12 I fast twice in the week : I give tithes of

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *the rest*.

found in the Pharisee's prayer. His goodness, contrasted with that of others and with that of the publican, and his works fill up the proud man's communion with God.

**13. the publican .. smote .. his breast]** The common tax-farmer and collector is still one of those persons soundly hated in the East. The taxes are not rated as in England or America, but are bought up from the government for a sum; and the buyer and his agents are allowed to squeeze as large a margin of profit as they can from the peasants and poor people. These profits are shared usually with the military and civil officers, so that it is for the latter's interest to aid the tax-collectors, and work against any individual who might appeal to the courts for justice, or for redress from extortionate claims. The Romans had a similar harsh and objectionable system of farming the taxes in our Lord's day, and this added to the hatred of the publicans among the Jews, a hatred which sprang from the constant reminder that they were a subject nation. Smiting the breast was a common Eastern mode of expressing deep grief, see Nahum 2:7; Jer. 31:19; Luke 23:48. So the publican beat his breast, as if the sin was at his heart, but makes his prayer very brief; it has but one petition, yet that was the most important one for fallen man to utter, the A B C of the Christian life: "God be merciful to me the sinner." It asks for grace; for God to be appeased, or propitiated toward the sinner.

**14. justified rather than the other]** He went to his house with a sense of pardon, "justified," counted as just because of his repentance, and forgiven for all his offences, hence "justified" is used in the sense of "forgiven." The comparison "rather than the other" is only a comparison in form, not in fact. The other was not "justified."

The tithes he ought to have given; and to have shown true humility and justice, judgment and mercy also, see Matt. 23:23. He had exalted himself, but in due time he would be humbled. The latter having humbled himself, in due time would be exalted.

SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.—1. Prayer is the Christian's strength. 2. Perseverance in prayer is the Christian's privilege. 3. Delay to answer prayer is not denial. 4. God may delay answers for our good. 5. The unjust may deny the helpless; but the just One always hears the faithful heart. 6. To brag of our good works is not to pray. 7. To boast how much better we are than others is no part of prayer. 8. In the sight of a holy God all are sinners, and need to cry for mercy. 9. Whoever exalts himself shows that he is not worthy to be exalted.

## COMMON VERSION.

13 And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as *his* eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.

14 I tell you, this man went down to his house justified *rather* than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased: and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

<sup>1</sup> Or, *be propitiated*

## REVISED VERSION.

13 all that I get. But the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote his breast, saying, God, <sup>1</sup> be merciful to me <sup>2</sup> a sinner.

14 I say unto you. This man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be humbled; but he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

<sup>2</sup> Or, *the sinner*

“Two went to pray : or rather say,  
 One went to brag, the other to pray ;  
 One stands up close, and treads on high,  
 Where the other dares not send his eye ;  
 One nearer to the altar trod,  
 The other to the altar’s God.”—*Crashaw.*

LITTLE CHILDREN: THE RICH RULER. 18 : 15-30. Compare Matt. 19 : 13-30 ; Mark 10 : 13-31.

JORDAN VALLEY, A. D. 30.

**15. they brought unto him]** Matthew and Mark notice this, or a similar instance when young children were brought to Jesus. Luke uses a different word from the other writers to designate the children. His word commonly means “babes,” as in the revised reading. The mothers would be the persons naturally bringing those so young as to be called babes. They desired a blessing upon the children. The common custom of bringing children to a distinguished rabbi to be blessed is mentioned in the Talmud. The disciples did not wish to have their Master troubled with babes. Some of the rabbis taught that children perished like brutes.

**16. little children to come unto me]** Jesus gave a special invitation to young children. Bring the children to Jesus. He welcomed them ; for they are usually meek, guileless, hopeful, trustful, and teachable. Of this character were all true disciples. If one did not receive the truths of the kingdom of God in this spirit, he would not get into the kingdom. Compare Matt. 18 : 3 ; 19 : 14.

**18. a certain ruler]** Luke’s account of the interview with the rich young ruler is less full than that of Matthew or of Mark, and adds no new details, except that he was a “ruler,” meaning probably of a synagogue. It is not very probable that he was one of the great sanhedrin. Whether he belonged to the Pharisees or to the Sadducees, is not stated.

**Good Master, what shall I do]** Literally, “Good Teacher,” a title by

COMMON VERSION.

15 And they brought unto him also infants, that he would touch them : but when *his* disciples saw *it*, they rebuked them.

16 But Jesus called them *unto him*, and said, Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not : for of such is the kingdom of God.

17 Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child shall in no wise enter therein.

18 And a certain ruler asked him, saying, Good Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?

19 And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? none is good, save one, *that is*, God.

20 Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Honour thy father and thy mother.

REVISED VERSION.

15 And they were bringing unto him also their babes, that he should touch them : but when the disciples saw it, they rebuked

16 them. But Jesus called them unto him, saying, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not : for <sup>1</sup> to such

17 belongeth the kingdom of God. Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall in no wise enter therein.

18 And a certain ruler asked him, saying, Good <sup>2</sup> Master, what shall I do to inherit

19 eternal life? And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? none is good.

20 save one, *even* God. Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Honour thy father and mother.

<sup>1</sup> Or, of such is.

<sup>2</sup> Or, Teacher.

no means implying divinity or flattery as some assert, but simply a respect and confidence of a different kind from that usually given to the perfunctory rabbis of that day. Whitby says, "Thinkest thou there is anything in me more than human, or that the Father dwelleth in me? This thou oughtest to believe if thou conceivest the title 'good' doth truly belong to me, seeing there is none good but one, that is God." The title may have been given somewhat thoughtlessly. Jesus calls the young ruler's attention to the meaning his words really imply, first to make him consider his words, and next to introduce his answer to the question. The young man came rushing to him ("running," Mark 10:17), and in a dashing, impulsive way, presented his question. The words in v. 19 were well suited to remind him that such a question ought to be thoughtfully asked, and with some deeper consciousness of its meaning. If man could be "good" you need not ask your question. He was then reminded of five commandments in the second table of the law; those relating to our duty to man.

**21. All these have I]** The Talmud mentions one rabbi who, when dying, said to the angel of death, "Go fetch me the book of the law, and see whether there is anything in it which I have not kept."

**22. sell all that thou hast]** One thing thou lackest yet. The heart to give up all for eternal life was the great lack in this young man. This was the fatal lack in Ananias, Acts 5:4. Ananias was not forced to sell or to give all. But he was required to be sincere and honest, and also to hold all his possessions subject to the Lord and for his use. The twelve had left all for Christ, Luke 5:11; 12:33 with 18:28. The follower of Christ is to distribute treasures in this world; his treasure is in heaven. Moreover, by giving the earthly possessions intrusted to him as God's steward in the true spirit of love, he will lay up treasures in heaven.

**23. sorrowful; for he was very rich]** This test was a personal one; it revealed the spiritual condition of the rich young ruler, a condition of which even he was unconscious. By it, all disciples were taught the general lesson of duty to give to the poor, and not to set the heart on riches. Jesus also taught them that whatever earthly possession, honor, pleasure, or even pride in religion they had, would in like manner hinder them from gaining eternal life, unless they were ready to surrender these at Christ's call.

**25. easier for a camel.. than for a rich man]** Jesus saw the

## COMMON VERSION.

21 And he said, All these have I kept from my youth up.

22 Now when Jesus heard these things, he said unto him, Yet lackest thou one thing: sell all that thou hast, and distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, follow me.

23 And when he heard this, he was very sorrowful: for he was very rich.

24 And when Jesus saw that he was very sorrowful, he said, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!

25 For it is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.

## REVISED VERSION.

21 And he said, All these things have I observed from my youth up. And when

Jesus heard it, he said unto him, One thing thou lackest yet: sell all that thou hast, and distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, follow

me. But when he heard these things, he became exceeding sorrowful; for he was

24 very rich. And Jesus seeing him said, How hardly shall they that have riches

25 enter into the kingdom of God! For it is easier for a camel to enter in through a needle's eye, than for a rich man to enter

disease of the ruler and offered a remedy exactly suited to the case. The remedy seemed too severe to the rich young man, and he went away sorrowful; the record does not inform us that he ever returned. He appears to have clung to his riches, and to have lost eternal life. Seeing him as he went away sorrowing, led Jesus to speak of the great difficulty of those having riches to enter the kingdom. He adopts a common Jewish proverb to impress that difficulty more deeply upon the minds of the disciples. It is better to accept the proverb in its literal sense, than to attempt to explain away its force by reading "cable" for "camel," which has no warrant in any Greek text, or by making it refer to a small gate or door within the large gate of the city, said to be called "needle's eye." The Talmud had a similar proverb, and Jesus evidently intended to show that it was a human impossibility, see v. 27. The hearers, evidently understanding it literally, exclaimed, "Then who can be saved?" revised reading. It was the language of despair.

**27. possible with God]** Jesus accepts their understanding of the proverb in its application to the salvation of the rich, by saying "things which are impossible [as this is] with men, are possible with God." The rich alike with the poor, must be saved by the power of God. No man, however rich or moral and righteous in his outward life and in his own esteem, can be saved except by the power and grace of God. And Jesus here emphasizes this truth in its application to those who have great riches, lest they should be unwilling to use them for God and humanity as this young ruler was, in the face of his good account of himself before the law. He could not be saved by the law; grace must save him, or he must be lost.

**28. we have left]** Mark the change in the revised reading. For "all," it has "our own" or "our own homes" in the margin, though Matthew and Mark read "all." Peter speaks for himself and the other disciples, and the ellipsis here is supplied in Matt. 19 : 27, "What then shall we have?" Peter still was but one step beyond the spirit of the rich young ruler. He too would receive a reward for what he had done. His one step was his willingness to surrender his possessions, boats, nets, fishing, and home; not much, some would say, but they were his "all." Yet he had the "legal" spirit of exchanging them for "so much," some definite sum, rather than trusting to the grace of the Master. See the parable of the laborers in the vineyard,

## COMMON VERSION.

26 And they that heard *it* said, Who then can be saved?

27 And he said, The things which are impossible with men are possible with God.

28 Then Peter said, Lo, we have left all, and followed thee.

29 And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or parents, or brethren, or wife, or children, for the kingdom of God's sake,

30 Who shall not receive manifold more in this present time, and in the world to come life everlasting.

## REVISED VERSION.

26 into the kingdom of God. And they that 27 heard it said, Then who can be saved? But he said, The things which are impossible

28 with men are possible with God. And Peter said, Lo, we have left <sup>1</sup>our own, and fol-

29 lowed thee. And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath

left house, or wife, or brethren, or parents, or children, for the kingdom of God's sake,

30 who shall not receive manifold more in this time, and in the <sup>2</sup>world to come eternal life.

<sup>1</sup> Or, *our own homes*

<sup>2</sup> Or, *age*

Matt. 20:1-16. Yet before Jesus pointed out the unwisdom of Peter and others in this matter by the parable, he assured them of the manifold reward that the self-denying disciple would receive in this life, and in the world to come eternal life.

**SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.**—1. Those whom Christ blesses naturally desire similar blessings for their children. 2. The young are sometimes hindered in their coming to Christ by those who ought to help them. 3. Jesus welcomes little children, and wishes them to come to him. 4. All must enter the kingdom in the humble teachable spirit of a child. 5. The rich and the rulers need assurance of eternal life to give them peace in this life. 6. It is commendable to keep the commandments. 7. Christ loved the young ruler; he loves all who are seeking him. 8. True love to God will show itself in a willingness to give as he may grant the ability and opportunity. 9. The twelve had little of this world, and parted with it to follow Christ: the rich young ruler had great possessions, and he kept them but lost Christ. 10. Grace and glory hereafter, comfort of soul and blessings here, are the reward of those who give up all for Christ.

**THE COMING CROSS: THE BLIND MAN OF JERICHO.** 18:31-43. Compare Matt. 20:17-19; 29-34; Mark 10:32-34; 46-52.

VALLEY OF THE JORDAN, A. D. 30.

Mark's account of these incidents is more full than that of other evangelists. Luke specially states that "all the things" written in the "prophets" shall be accomplished, and adds that the disciples did not understand the things he said, v. 34. The variations in the account of the healing of the blind man will be noticed below.

**31. all [the] things that are written** The twelve were taken apart by the road, see Matt. 20:17, and privately informed of the coming crisis and crucifixion. All these things were foretold through the prophets. See Ps. 22 and 45; Is. 50 and 53; Dan. 9:26, and many other passages. Jesus explains that he is to be delivered to the Gentiles, to be mocked, spit upon, scourged, killed. Notice the particulars that are given, showing how fully Jesus knew all the details of his coming trial. But he ends with a note of victory: "the third day he shall rise again." It was not all dark; there was sunrise after the

COMMON VERSION.

31 ¶ Then he took *unto him* the twelve, and said unto them, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of man shall be accomplished.

32 For he shall be delivered unto the Gentiles, and shall be mocked, and spitefully entreated, and spitted on:

33 And they shall scourge *him*, and put him to death; and the third day he shall rise again.

34 And they understood none of these things: and this saying was hid from them, neither knew they the things which were spoken.

REVISED VERSION.

31 And he took unto him the twelve, and said unto them, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and all the things that are written through the prophets shall be accomplished

32 unto the Son of man. For he shall be delivered up unto the Gentiles, and shall be mocked, and shamefully entreated, and spit upon:

33 and they shall scourge and kill him:

34 and the third day he shall rise again. And they understood none of these things; and this saying was hid from them, and they perceived not the things that were said.

night of darkness and of storm. But the apostles understood none of these things. The saying was hid from them; not forcibly withheld, but in their dullness of spiritual sight, they did not know the prophecies so as to recognize the necessity of all this suffering of Christ for us. Their ideas were Jewish, and of a temporal reign; and they could not think the suffering needful. It was revealed to two disciples after his resurrection, in burning words. Luke 24 : 32.

**35. nigh unto Jericho]** An account of this miracle is given by each of the three evangelists. The accounts vary in the details, and are difficult to harmonize as fragmentary narratives usually are. Matthew mentions two blind men that were healed; Mark and Luke mention only one. If there were two, surely there was one, and an added detail does not imply contradiction. Matthew and Mark appear to connect the miracle with Jesus and his disciples as they "went out from Jericho." This variation is more difficult than the other, for it is an *apparent* contradiction, but it may be apparent only, for there are many ways of removing it. Of the dozen or more suggested, a few more prominent ones only can be given here: 1. That there were three persons and two miracles at different times (Augustine, Chemnitius, Barradius, Stella, Lightfoot, Gill, Kitto, Tischendorf, Neander, Wiseler, Ebrard, Gresswell, etc.); 2. That "nigh" is used in the general sense of "to be in the vicinity of," and not necessarily "coming to" the city (Grotius, Doddridge, Scott, Robinson, Le Clerc, Owen, etc.); 3. That there were two Jerichos in existence, one on the old site, and a new city a short distance from the old one (McKnight, Farrar, etc.); 4. That one called to him as Jesus entered, but was not healed until Jesus departed, when he was joined by another, and Luke connects the healing with the first request (Stier, Trench, Calvin, Bengel, Ellicott, Lange, Hall, Poole, Jansenius, Maldonatus, Wordsworth, etc.); 5. That we know too little of the details to be able to reconcile these notes of time; fuller knowledge would show their consistency (Edersheim, J. Brown, and substantially also, Alford, Olshausen, Chrysostom, Meyer, Plumtre, De Wette, etc.). Suggestions 1, 4, and 5, are more probable than the others. It is quite evident that the information given is too meagre to enable us to offer a satisfactory solution, but our ignorance is not to be treated as proof that the accounts are contradictory. Where there are so many possible solutions, it would be very unscientific and unscholarly to assume that they are not reconcilable. We can surely say there was no collusion between these writers, and here is strong evidence of the independence of their narratives. The quick ear of the blind beggar caught the sound of the multitude, and not slow to use the tongue, he calls to know what it meant.

**37. Jesus of Nazareth passeth by]** The blind would know who it

## COMMON VERSION.

35 ¶ And it came to pass, that as he was come nigh unto Jericho, a certain blind man sat by the way side begging :

36 And hearing the multitude pass by, he asked what it meant.

37 And they told him, that Jesus of Nazareth passeth by.

## REVISED VERSION.

35 And it came to pass, as he drew nigh unto Jericho, a certain blind man sat by

36 the way side begging : and hearing a multitude going by, he inquired what this meant.

37 And they told him, that Jesus of Nazareth

was by this title. It is remarkable, however, that he does not use it in his cry for mercy, but says "Son of David." Who taught him to say this? Chrysostom and Augustine suggest with much force that the Lord gave light and sight to the blind. Did he understand that Jesus was the Messiah? When rebuked, as noisy, blind beggars now often are in this same region, he cried the louder, "Son of David, have mercy on me."

**40. Jesus stood and . . . asked him]** Jesus had a quick ear for the cry of suffering humanity, as he has now for that of his true people. When the blind man was led near to him, Jesus asked, "What wilt thou?" "Sight," was the blind man's cry, and Jesus responded with promptness, dignity, and love: "Receive thy sight." The ground of the healing is stated. "Thy faith hath made thee whole," or "hath saved thee." Compare Eph. 2:8. Jesus does not pray that the blind man shall be healed. He speaks the word as at creation, and the blind has sight. Compare "Let there be light," Gen. 1:3. It was creative power. Longfellow has wrought the scene into a poem closing with the beautiful lesson:

"Ye that have eyes, yet cannot see,  
In darkness and in misery,  
Recall those mighty voices three:"  
*Ἰησοῦ ἐλέησόν με!*  
*Θάρσει ἔγειραι, ὕπαγε!*  
*Ἡ πίστις σου σέσωκέ σε!*

**43. immediately he received his sight]** After his blindness was removed, Jesus was the first object he saw. The healing was a miracle beyond dispute, for sight came at once. This man, no longer tied by his blindness to one spot, followed Jesus, giving glory to God for his healing. The multitude seeing the wonderful miracle, joined the blind in praising God. A few might cavil, others might sneer, but the blind man and the multitude unite in testifying to the power and grace of God.

**SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.**—1. Jesus is the hope of the blind in body and soul. 2. When Jesus passes by let those blinded by sin cry to him. 3. Jesus

## COMMON VERSION.

38 And he cried, saying, Jesus, *thou* Son of David, have mercy on me.

39 And they which went before rebuked him, that he should hold his peace: but he cried so much the more, *Thou* Son of David, have mercy on me.

40 And Jesus stood, and commanded him to be brought unto him: and when he was come near, he asked him,

41 Saying, What wilt thou that I shall do unto thee? And he said, Lord, that I may receive my sight.

42 And Jesus said unto him, Receive thy sight: thy faith hath saved thee.

43 And immediately he received his sight, and followed him, glorifying God: and all the people, when they saw *it*, gave praise unto God.

## REVISED VERSION.

38 passeth by. And he cried, saying, Jesus, 39 thou son of David, have mercy on me. And

they that went before rebuked him, that he should hold his peace: but he cried out the more a great deal, Thou son of David, have

40 mercy on me. And Jesus stood, and commanded him to be brought unto him: and when he was come near, he asked him,

41 What wilt thou that I should do unto thee? And he said, Lord, that I may receive my

42 sight. And Jesus said unto him, Receive thy sight: thy faith hath <sup>1</sup>made thee

43 whole. And immediately he received his sight, and followed him, glorifying God: and all the people, when they saw *it*, gave praise unto God.

<sup>1</sup> Or, saved thee.

creates light for eyes, and eyes for light. 4. It was good for the man to be blind, for this caused him to see Jesus. 5. The worldly crowd keep the sinner from Jesus. 6. Jesus has mercy on the blinded sinner who seeks him. 7. Never forget to praise God for his blessings.

### ZACCHÆUS THE PUBLICAN. 19:1-10.

NEAR JERICHO, A.D. 30.

This incident and the so-called parable of the pounds (*minæ*), are given only by Luke. While "the poor have the gospel preached to them," Matt. 11:5; it is also true that Jesus gave many lessons and invitations specially intended for the rich. Luke records a greater number of these instances than other evangelists. In various ways, by parable, by warning, and by example, Jesus brought the claims of his kingdom to the attention of persons of wealth. Luke narrates the parable of the Rich Fool hoarding his goods, 12:16-20; the chief Pharisee's feast, 14:1-14; the parable of the younger son who wasted his wealth in riotous living, 15:11-24; of the rich man's steward, 16:1-8; of the rich man clothed in purple and fine linen and feasting sumptuously every day, neglecting Lazarus and the poor, 16:19-31; of the rich young man who sought eternal life, 18:18-24; of Zacchæus the rich publican, 19:1-10; of the rich men casting into the Lord's treasury, with the poor widow, 21:1-4; of Joseph of Arimathea, who provided a tomb and burial for Jesus, fulfilling the prophecy, "he made his grave with the rich," and he begged Jesus' body of Pilate, 23:50-53.

**1. entered . . . through Jericho]** or literally "and having entered into, he was passing through Jericho." Luke is consistent here with his former statement in 18:35. Jericho was a city of prehistoric interest: captured by Joshua, and a curse pronounced upon any one who should rebuild it, Josh. 6:20-26, which curse fell upon Hiel, 530 years later, 1 Kgs. 16:34; the center of a school for the prophets, one of whom, Elisha, cured its bitter brackish waters, 2 Kgs. 2:19-22; reoccupied after the captivity, given by Antony to Cleopatra, who sold it to Herod by whom it was enlarged and made his winter residence, the home of many Jewish priests, the "city of roses," of palm trees, the "paradise of God." Enjoying a semi-tropical climate on a beautiful and fertile plain, it was in many ways the most attractive town in the Jordan Valley. In the time of our Lord the old site had gone into decay and a new and prosperous city had sprung up about a mile or so south-east on the same green and flower-covered oasis upon which the old city stood. Not far away was the famous fountain of Elisha and other springs, while grapes in abundance, and of large size, besides many other fruits were found there almost the entire year round. The city is now in ruins: a few miserable adobe huts, a ruined castle, and until lately a solitary palm tree (now gone) are all that is left to mark the site of this once rich city.

COMMON VERSION.

REVISED VERSION.

CHAP. XIX.—And *Jesus* entered and passed through Jericho. 19 And he entered and was passing through

2. **Zacchæus . . . publican . . . rich]** This name is Jewish, meaning pure, and is found in the Old Testament as Zaccai, Ezra 2: 9. He was a "chief publican," a general collector of the district of Jericho perhaps, where a large revenue was derived from the balsam, balsam-honey, and dates, which were produced in abundance in this region. In this tax-collecting business, specially hated by the Jews, we infer that Zacchæus had grown rich. Whether his riches were honestly or dishonestly gained is not definitely stated. If he had been exceptionally criminal and extortionate, the sacred writer, following the usual custom, would have been expected to inform the reader of it. That he had not wholly withstood the temptations incident to his calling is implied in his vow to make restitution in v. 8.

3. **sought to see Jesus]** Zacchæus had heard no doubt of the kindness Jesus had shown to the publicans, and of his great fame. Prompted by a mixed motive of curiosity and of admiration for so great a person, he tried to see Jesus, but the crowd was so dense that Zacchæus, small in stature, could not see him, though not too small for Jesus to see. Other persons as remarkable as Zacchæus were little in stature, as Plato, Paul, and the English poet Pope. The crowd often hide Christ from the soul.

4. **climbed up into a sycamore tree]** Having run on into the front of or before the crowd, he climbed up into a "sycomore," or Egyptian fig-tree, to see him. The tree is not the same as the sycamine or mulberry in 17: 6, nor as our American sycamore, but is the *ficus sycomorus*, a common tree now in the Jordan Valley and on the Syrian coast. See *Pal. Memor. Flora*. p. 411. Prof. Post, of Beirut, says "the tree is found in the public squares and by the road sides of Syrian cities. A gigantic one overshadows the chief entrance of Damascus. Its broad spreading and low branches make it a peculiarly easy tree to climb." Regardless of the sneers of others, or of fashionable dignity and propriety, Zacchæus climbed the "sycomore" as Jesus was to pass that way. From v. 1 (see revised



EGYPTIAN FIG.

## COMMON VERSION.

2 And, behold, *there was* a man named Zacchæus, which was the chief among the publicans, and he was rich.

3 And he sought to see Jesus who he was; and could not for the press, because he was little of stature.

4 And he ran before, and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see him; for he was to pass that way.

## REVISED VERSION.

2 Jericho. And behold, a man called by name Zacchæus; and he was a chief publican, and

3 he was rich. And he sought to see Jesus who he was; and could not for the crowd,

4 because he was little of stature. And he ran on before, and climbed up into a sycomore tree to see him; for he was to pass

reading) it is fair to infer that the tree was in Jericho, perhaps by the market-place or open square.

**5. I must abide at thy house]** And as he came to the place, Jesus having looked up, said to him, Zacchæus, haste, come down, for to-day at thy house I must abide. He that could see and call Nathanael by name *under a fig-tree*, John 1:48, could see and know Zacchæus *in a fig-tree*. He invites himself as a guest to abide, *μείνω*, which implies a stay of some time, as over night or longer. This is the only instance noted in the gospels, when Jesus invited himself to be a guest with another. Blessed is any man in whose house Jesus chooses to abide! Tradition now points out a house on the plains of Jericho called the house of Zacchæus, but of course tradition here is wrong. The house is unknown.

**6. received him joyfully]** What a change this must have wrought in the mind of Zacchæus! The rulers of the Jews treated him with disdain. His wealth did not introduce him into their society. He was greeted in "good society" of his time with coldness, scorn and insults. But the greatest of all comes to his house as a guest. Zacchæus receives him joyfully, not in pride, but with a rightful appreciation of the character of his guest, as we shall soon see.

"There is a class in the United States [and England]," says John Hall, "whom for a different reason we call publicans, shut out from the means of grace by a sentiment concerning them known to be in force in the churches. How are they to be reached? How their wives and children? . . . Intercourse with them would occasion 'murmuring' among many good people. In our Lord's case the attendant crowd was quite scandalized by our Lord's course." This, as every other class, is to be reached, by loving their souls, and feeling and showing affection for them. We can love them while we hate their works. They "all," the crowd (not, however, including the disciples, for there was a Matthew the publican among them) murmured (the Greek word imitates the grumbling, guttural sound of their voices), "he is gone in to lodge with a man that is a sinner." Jesus braves the national feeling against publicans to correct it.

**8. half of my goods I give to the poor]** Here a rich publican voluntarily gives up half of his goods for the poor. A striking contrast to the rich young ruler who sought eternal life, but would not give his possessions to the

## COMMON VERSION.

5 And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up, and saw him, and said unto him, Zacchæus, make haste, and come down; for to day I must abide at thy house.

6 And he made haste, and came down, and received him joyfully.

7 And when they saw it, they all murmured, saying, That he was gone to be guest with a man that is a sinner.

8 And Zacchæus stood, and said unto the Lord; Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore *him* fourfold.

## REVISED VERSION.

5 that way. And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up, and said unto him, Zacchæus, make haste, and come down; for

6 to-day I must abide at thy house. And he made haste, and came down, and received

7 him joyfully. And when they saw it, they all murmured, saying, He is gone in to lodge

8 with a man that is a sinner. And Zacchæus stood, and said unto the Lord, Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have wrongfully exacted

ought of any man, I restore fourfold.

poor! Luke 18 : 18-23. Zacchæus bravely stood forth before Jesus and made this sacrifice willingly. "I give them now." He does not wait till death, and bequeath them to the poor. To will property for Christian objects is well, but it is not the highest type of Christian benevolence. Old Basil sternly says of it, "brave piety that hoards till death compels a will; then ink and paper do it all! It is death, not you, that gives it."

**restore . . fourfold]** Zacchæus is not only an example of noble Christian giving, he is also a fine example of Christian restitution. One is as much needed in this nineteenth century as the other. "If I have wrongfully exacted aught of any man, I restore fourfold." Some, as Meyer and Olshausen, hold that this now includes the consciousness of unworthiness and his determination to make abundant compensation for his former guilt; in short, that it is a form of self-confessed dishonesty. Others think it implies unimpeachable integrity. It has also been held to be declarative, that it was his habit to restore fourfold. None of these views seem to be grounded upon the best principles of interpretation. The last view is not grammatically tenable, for it is the precise form of a vow, "I give," "I restore," relating to a present purpose and act. Of the other two views, the first is nearer in accord with the natural meaning of the text and context. Yet placing restitution after giving half of his goods to the poor fairly implies that much of his wealth has been gained honestly, so far as his own conscience could decide. The Mosaic laws required only a fifth besides the principal, where the person confessed his wrong and voluntarily offered restitution, Num. 5 : 7. "If the theft be certainly found in his hands alive," of cattle or sheep, he must restore double, Ex. 22 : 4. If he has killed the animals, he must restore fivefold for an ox, and fourfold for a sheep, Ex. 22 : 1. Zacchæus set for himself the severer rule of the law as to restitution. What a marvellous change such a conversion of every person in a community would make! A change that would reach the pocket and cause full restitution for all gains from cheating, overreaching, sharp trading; of restitution for slander of good name; for depreciation of character, of work; and a willingness to do well when the ability or opportunity was wanting! This act of Zacchæus inspires confidence in the genuineness of his conversion. Who will follow his example? The common version has, "taken by false accusation," which is substantially the same in meaning as the revised reading. The root of the Greek word is also the root of our English word "sycophant." It was originally applied in Athens to those who informed against persons that illegally exported figs. Hence the root word from which "sycophant" is derived meant a "fig informer," and thence any person who gave false or frivolous information against another.

**9. salvation come to this house]** How strongly this contrasts with the announcement after the rich young ruler went away sorrowing! The Holy Spirit seemed to have caused these two cases of rich men to be recorded

## COMMON VERSION.

9 And Jesus said unto him, This day is salvation come to this house, forasmuch as he also is a son of Abraham.

## REVISED VERSION.

9 And Jesus said unto him, To-day is salvation come to this house, forasmuch as he

near together, that none might be wholly discouraged by the discourse on the danger and hindrance of riches, and that some rich ones might be led to imitate Zacchæus in having salvation come to their souls. The last clause implies that Zacchæus was a Jew, a natural son of Abraham, and also a true spiritual son. He was a lost son, as v. 10 implies, but now found and saved. The lost, Jesus came to seek, see Matt. 10: 6; 15: 24; Luke 15: 1-32.

SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.—1. Any one, however small, who sincerely seeks Jesus may find him. 2. All should use every opportunity to see and know Jesus. 3. Put yourself in the way of the means of grace, and grace will come to you. 4. When we seek Christ, he will be found to have sought us. 5. Let Christ abide in your house. 6. Determine to be a true disciple at any cost. 7. Make restitution to any that you have wronged. 8. Give to the poor and to Christian causes, while you are alive and in good health; then you will secure your gifts against being lessened and wasted in lawsuits and strifes after you are gone. 9. Christ seeks and saves the lost: all impenitent sinners are lost.

#### PARABLE OF THE MINÆ OR POUNDS. 19: 11-27.

AT OR NEAR JERICHO, A.D. 30.

This parable of the Minæ, related by Luke only, closely resembles that of the talents, Matt. 25: 14-30. Calvin and a few others treat them as identical. The differences are wide and marked. In the talents: 1, it is a man; 2, all his property is intrusted to all his servants; 3, different sums are intrusted to each, according to his ability; 4, a large sum, talents (about \$1000), to each one; 5, the reward is in kind—many things; 6, the one thriftless servant is deprived of his trust and also punished; 7, there are no citizens. In the parable of the Minæ: 1, it is a nobleman going for a kingdom; 2, he intrusts ten minæ only to ten of his servants; 3, to each one the same sum; 4, a small sum, about \$16, to each; 5, the reward is not in kind; “servants” are made “rulers” over cities; 6, the thriftless servant is deprived of his trust, but no other punishment added; 7, citizens rebel; 8, send a message after the nobleman; 9, the rebel “enemies” are slain. The lesson of that is “watch,” for the return will be unexpected; of this, wait patiently, for the kingdom of God will not immediately appear. This parable was probably spoken at Jericho to the disciples and crowd about the house of Zacchæus. The other was spoken on Olivet a week later, to four disciples alone.

11. nigh to Jerusalem and . . . the kingdom] Jericho was only about fifteen to eighteen miles from Jerusalem. Crowds were going up with Jesus to the passover. Many supposed he would soon declare himself the

#### COMMON VERSION.

10 For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.

11 And as they heard these things, he added and spake a parable, because he was nigh to Jerusalem, and because they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear.

#### REVISED VERSION.

10 also is a son of Abraham. For the Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost.

11 And as they heard these things, he added and spake a parable, because he was nigh to Jerusalem, and because they supposed that the kingdom of God was immediately to ap-

Messiah and visibly set up the kingdom. To correct their mistakes and to teach patient waiting and that their future duty was waiting and working, not ruling as attendants on a king or in a court, he spoke a parable.

**12. certain nobleman . . . to receive . . . a kingdom]** The chief facts in the parable may be said to have a basis in the actual history of those times. The "nobleman" seeks a kingdom in a far country. Thus Herod the Great went to Rome to be made king; and Archelaus also. The latter received a kingdom, but not the title of king. The Jews sent an embassy to oppose his appointment, as the citizens are said to have done in the parable. The "nobleman," however, here represents Christ leaving at the ascension to receive the spiritual kingdom, and to return for a reckoning, or the judgment.

**13. ten servants . . . ten pounds]** "Ten servants of his," but not all his numerous retinue of servants. The Greek word for "pounds" means, not the Hebrew *Mina*, equal to 100 shekels, but probably the Attic mina, which was equal to 100 drachmas, or over £3 of English money (see margin), and worth from \$16 to \$18. The English "pounds" is so misleading as to the amount, that it would have been better to have transferred the word *minæ* to the English text. Each servant was intrusted with a mina, and commanded to "occupy," in the old English sense of "trade" or "do business" with it, until the nobleman's return.

**14. citizens hated him, and sent]** This is a feature not in the parable of the talents. The Jews had actually sent such an embassy after Archelaus to Rome. It signifies first the feeling of the Jews towards Jesus, see John 19 : 12, 15, 21; and more broadly the spirit of all impenitent persons towards Christ as a spiritual King. The Jewish rulers rejected Jesus as their Messiah; the godless reject him as their King. See Rom. 8 : 7.

**15. having received the kingdom]** The opposition and rebellion of the citizens (compare the "citizen" in the parable of the prodigal son, Luke 15 : 15) proved futile. The nobleman received the kingdom. Christ shall have his kingdom. Wicked men and devils cannot defeat his purpose. On his return he calls the servants to give to him an account of their work.

**16. thy pound . . . ten pounds]** The first servant modestly says, "thy

## COMMON VERSION.

12 He said therefore, A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return.

13 And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come.

14 But his citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, We will not have this man to reign over us.

15 And it came to pass, that when he was returned, having received the kingdom, then he commanded these servants to be called unto him, to whom he had given the money, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading.

16 Then came the first, saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained ten pounds.

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *bondservants*.

<sup>2</sup> *Mina*, here translated a pound, is equal to one hundred drachmas. See ch. xv. 8.

## REVISED VERSION.

12 pear. He said therefore, A certain nobleman went into a far country, to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return.

13 And he called ten <sup>1</sup> servants of his, and gave them ten <sup>2</sup> pounds, and said unto them, Trade ye

14 *herewith* till I come. But his citizens hated him, and sent an embassy after him, saying, We will not that this man reign over

15 us. And it came to pass, when he was come back again, having received the kingdom, that he commanded these <sup>1</sup> servants, unto whom he had given the money, to be called to him, that he might know what they had

16 gained by trading. And the first came before him, saying, Lord, thy pound hath

mina," not my industry, my shrewdness, my faithfulness, but "thy mina" has gained ten more. In the talents the servant said "I have gained," Matt. 25: 20. In spiritual gains, both are true, for believers are co-workers with God. He gives salvation, opportunities, grace; believers accept and use the gifts of his grace. Compare 1 Cor. 3: 9; 15: 10 with Phil. 2: 12, 13. This servant had increased his pound 1000 per cent. How rich may be the gains in grace and truth, even in the ordinary and common gifts offered to all alike!

**17. faithful in a very little, have thou authority]** The ground of the reward is not the amount the servant gained, but his faithfulness "in a very little." For his fidelity in this little as a servant, he is exalted to authority over cities. The world's measure of worth is the amount of success; God's measure is fidelity. The duties and cares of this life often seem insignificant, and useless drudgery, but they are tests of character. They are a good measure of fidelity. The great souls in God's sight are not always those of great talents, but of great fidelity in little things. The reward of the first two servants was proportioned to their respective fidelity as proved by their respective gains on exactly the same sum. One was given authority over "ten cities;" the other, without the special commendation, "well done," and etc., though that may be implied, is granted authority over "five cities."

**20. another came . . . here is thy pound]** The third case is the lazy, idle servant, bringing "thy pound" laid up in a "napkin," or cloth commonly used for hiding away money. He claimed credit for honesty in not stealing or losing the mina, and for returning it safely to his master. But he had not been faithful in obeying his master's charge: "Trade ye *here-with* till I come." See v. 13, revised reading. He clearly felt guilty, for he proceeds to make a lame excuse. He impudently throws the blame of his indolence upon his master, as sinners throw the blame for their sin upon God, and upon his severity in exacting righteousness, resistance to sin, watching, waiting, and working in his kingdom. So the servant professes to have

## COMMON VERSION.

17 And he said unto him, Well, thou good servant: because thou hast been faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities.

18 And the second came, saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained five pounds.

19 And he said likewise to him, Be thou also over five cities.

20 And another came, saying, Lord, behold, *here is* thy pound, which I have kept laid up in a napkin:

21 For I feared thee, because thou art an austere man: thou takest up that thou layedst not down, and reapest that thou didst not sow.

22 And he saith unto him, Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, *thou* wicked servant. Thou knewest that I was an austere man, taking up that I laid not down, and reaping that I did not sow:

## REVISED VERSION.

17 made ten pounds more. And he said unto him, Well done, thou good <sup>1</sup>servant: because thou wast found faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities.

18 And the second came, saying, Thy pound,

19 Lord, hath made five pounds. And he said unto him also, Be thou also over five cities.

20 And <sup>2</sup>another came, saying, Lord, behold, *here is* thy pound, which I kept laid up in

21 a napkin: for I feared thee, because thou art an austere man: thou takest up that thou layedst not down, and reapest that

22 thou didst not sow. He saith unto him, Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, thou wicked <sup>1</sup>servant. Thou knewest that I am an austere man, taking up that I laid not down, and reaping that I did not sow;

<sup>1</sup> Gr. bondservant.<sup>2</sup> Gr. the other.

“feared” the austerity, and as he thinks, unjust methods of his master, as stated in v. 21.

**23. Wherefore . . . not]** The servant’s confession condemns him, as wanting in common prudence. For if he thought his master to be such a person as he describes, ordinary sense and foresight would have dictated another course pointed out plainly by the master, that is, giving the money to the “bank,” that it might be returned with the usual increase. The Greek word for “bank” means literally a “table” or “bench,” used by money-changers in those times. Prof. Post says that banks, in our sense, were unknown in Syria then, as they are now in all Asiatic countries not under European influence. The exchangers or money-lenders are abundant, but not incorporated or under government inspection. They now give from eight to twelve per cent., and take from twelve to fifty, according to the security offered. The interest is counted in with the principal in advance, and a promise to pay given covering both. In Moslem communities this is done to dodge the rule forbidding all taking of interest. In Christ’s day the Greeks and Romans also had exchangers and money-lenders, who conducted business on a “bench” or “table,” and when they failed to meet their promises, their bench or table was broken in pieces. Hence our term “bank” and “broken bank.”

**24. Take . . . the pound . . . give it]** The lazy, idle servant had the mina intrusted to him, taken away. Gaining nothing, one loses all in spiritual things. The master, now a king, commands the money to be given “unto him that hath ten pounds.” There is a startling principle wrapped up in this command.

The thriftless poor will grow poorer, while the thrifty rich will grow richer. This law, which we see prevailing in the financial world, seems here to be recognized as true also in the spiritual world. It is widely different, however, from the perverted form in which this law is often stated, “the poor are growing poorer, and the rich are growing richer;” that is, absolutely and irrespective of their industry, thrift, good habits, and fidelity. That is conspicuously untrue. There are thousands of rich persons in America to-day, who landed on its shores, or began life here poor, forced to win their daily bread by running on errands or by the day’s work. The soul that is given grace must use that grace or lose it. See Rev. 2:5. The principle is definitely stated in v. 26, lest any reader should miss the true application.

## COMMON VERSION.

23 Wherefore then gavest not thou my money into the bank, that at my coming I might have required mine own with usury?

24 And he said unto them that stood by, Take from him the pound, and give it to him that hath ten pounds.

25 (And they said unto him, Lord, he hath ten pounds.)

26 For I say unto you, That unto every one which hath shall be given; and from him that hath not, even that he hath shall be taken away from him.

## REVISED VERSION.

23 then wherefore gavest thou not my money into the bank, and <sup>1</sup>I at my coming should have required it with interest?

24 And he said unto them that stood by, Take away from him the pound, and give it unto him that hath the ten pounds. And they said unto him, Lord, he hath ten pounds.

26 I say unto you, that unto every one that hath shall be given; but from him that hath not, even that which he hath shall be

<sup>1</sup> Or, *I should have gone and required*

**27. mine enemies . . slay them]** The nobleman speaking as a king, and having judged the ten servants, now turns his attention to the "citizens" of v. 14. He calls them "enemies." Their act was rebellion, and he treats them as rebels, for they were guilty of treason against his government. So he commands them to be slain in his presence, after the custom of Eastern rulers of that time. The Jewish nation was destroyed. Those who refuse voluntarily to submit to Christ, will be overcome at last by force; the wrath of the Lamb, Rev. 6:16. The application of the parable is in the main obvious. Its spiritual lessons may be summed up thus: the nobleman represents Christ; the going away, his ascension into heaven; receiving a kingdom, his enthronement as King of saints; the ten servants, Christ's disciples and followers; the money, forgiveness, grace and the Spirit given to all alike; the return, Christ's final coming to judge saints and the world; the profitless servants, professed and false disciples, like Judas among the twelve; the citizens, his enemies, represent primarily the Jewish people, and generally all impenitent sinners. The parable also teaches that the disciples were not to expect the second coming of Christ immediately; and were to be working with fidelity while watching and waiting; that the reward would be proportioned to the thrift and fidelity of each disciple; even where the gifts and opportunities were the same, the unfaithful disciple would lose all; and the rebellious and impenitent will be finally destroyed.

THE KINGLY ENTRY INTO JERUSALEM. 19:28-40. Compare Matt. 21:1-11; Mark 11:1-10; John 12:12-19.

JERICO TO JERUSALEM, A.D. 30.

**28. he went . . up to Jerusalem]** Having left Jericho, Jesus as a leader went on before the disciples and the multitude going up to Jerusalem. It was an ascent all the way; a steep one some of the way. Jericho was about eighteen miles by the winding road from Jerusalem, and the top of Olivet is 3,500 feet higher than Jericho.

**29. nigh . . Bethphage and Bethany]** The site of Bethany (house of dates) is fixed on the eastern slope of Olivet, about two miles from Jerusalem. It is over 400 feet lower than the summit of Olivet, and about 300 feet lower than Zion in Jerusalem. The site of Bethphage (house of unripe figs) is unsettled. It has been placed in nearly every direction from Bethany. Origen, Jerome, Reland and Robinson place it east of Bethany; Calmet, Wieseler, Lange and Hug, west of Bethany; others place it north of Bethany. Trelawney Saunders, in the latest map issued by the Palestine Fund, places it

COMMON VERSION.

27 But those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me.

28 ¶ And when he had thus spoken, he went before, ascending up to Jerusalem.

29 And it came to pass, when he was come nigh to Bethphage and Bethany, at the mount called the *mount of Olives*, he sent two of his disciples,

REVISED VERSION.

27 taken away from him. Howbeit these mine enemies, who would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me.

28 And when he had thus spoken, he went on before, going up to Jerusalem.

29 And it came to pass, when he drew nigh unto Bethphage and Bethany, at the mount that is called Olivet, he sent two of the dis-

northwest of Bethany, near the summit of Olivet. If Jesus entered Jerusalem by the southern road around the brow of Olivet, this location would suit the description: "the village over against you," v. 30. Between the accounts of vs. 28 and 29 we may suppose the supper and anointing at Bethany took place, Matt. 26:6-13; Mark 14:3-9; John, 12:1-9. Jesus probably reached Bethany on Friday, Nisan 8, March 30, A.D. 30, before sunset. After the supper that night and the rest on the Sabbath (our Saturday), the next morning the kingly entry would be made, that is, after the Jewish Sabbath and on the first day of the week (Palm Sunday). Tradition says one of the two disciples was Peter.

**30. ye shall find a colt]** This entry of Jesus into Jerusalem is narrated by all the four evangelists. More minute directions where to find the colt are given in Mark. Darius, in battle with the Scythians, rode on an ass. David directed Solomon on his coronation day to ride upon an ass, 1 Kings 1:33. So also Abraham, Moses' sons and Jair's sons rode upon these beasts, Gen. 22:3; Ex. 4:20; Jud. 10:4. Probably the owners of the beasts to whom Jesus sent were open or secret friends. So the answer he sent was satisfactory.

**35. set Jesus thereon]** They lifted Jesus upon the beast. Bengel says, Persian kings did not mount themselves, but were lifted upon their beasts. The people paid royal honor to Jesus by these acts.

**36. spread their clothes [garments] in the way]** These were marks of highest honor paid to royal persons. Similar honors have been paid to popular officers in Syria in modern times.

**38. Blessed . . the King]** One path from Bethany to Jerusalem leads over the very summit of Olivet; another runs around the southern shoulder

## COMMON VERSION.

30 Saying, Go ye into the village over against you; in the which at your entering ye shall find a colt tied, whereon yet never man sat: loose him, and bring him hither.

31 And if any man ask you, Why do ye loose him? thus shall ye say unto him, Because the Lord hath need of him.

32 And they that were sent went their way, and found even as he had said unto them.

33 And as they were loosing the colt, the owners thereof said unto them, Why loose ye the colt?

34 And they said, The Lord hath need of him.

35 And they brought him to Jesus: and they cast their garments upon the colt, and they set Jesus thereon.

36 And as he went, they spread their clothes in the way.

37 And when he was come nigh, even now at the descent of the mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works that they had seen;

38 Saying, Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord: peace in heaven, and glory in the highest.

## REVISED VERSION.

30 ciples, saying, Go your way into the village over against you; in the which as ye enter ye shall find a colt tied, whereon no man ever yet sat: loose him, and bring him.

31 And if any one ask you, Why do ye loose him? thus shall ye say, The Lord hath need

32 of him. And they that were sent went away, and found even as he had said unto

33 them. And as they were loosing the colt, the owners thereof said unto them,

34 Why loose ye the colt? And they said,

35 The Lord hath need of him. And they brought him to Jesus: and they threw their

36 garments upon the colt, and set Jesus

37 thereon. And as he went, they spread

38 their garments in the way. And as he was now drawing nigh, even at the descent of the

mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise

God with a loud voice for all the <sup>1</sup>mighty

works which they had seen; saying, Blessed is the King that cometh in the

name of the Lord: peace in heaven, and

<sup>1</sup> Gr. powers.

of the mountain. This one Jesus probably followed. At the descent from the summit the city of Jerusalem bursts suddenly into view. The crowd of disciples began to chant with a loud voice a part of the great Hallel, Pss. 113-118.

**39. the Pharisees . . said . . rebuke thy disciples]** The Pharisees seem to have understood the chant as a recognition of Jesus as their Messiah, and hence their boldness in appealing to Jesus himself to rebuke them. The answer is in the words of a common proverb, based perhaps on Hab. 2: 11: "The stone shall cry out of the wall."

**SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.**—1. Jesus went forward willingly to suffer for us: he led the company going to the great passover. 2. The kingly entry led the people to know of Christ and to think of him. 3. He has power over all creatures and over men's hearts. 4. He knows where to find instruments suited to do his work. 5. Praise God for his wonderful works; for his wonderful salvation. 6. Some will refuse to recognize Jesus as King. 7. The heavens declare the glory of God; man redeemed ought not to be silent.

#### OVERLOOKING JERUSALEM: IN THE TEMPLE. 19: 41-48.

OLIVET AND JERUSALEM. Palm Sunday, April 2, A. D. 30.

Compare Matt. 23: 37, 38; Luke 13: 34, 35, on the lament over Jerusalem. On this cleansing of the temple, compare Matt. 21: 12, 13; Mark 11: 15-20, with the first cleansing, John 2: 13-17.

**41. he beheld the city, and wept over it]** And as he drew nigh, beholding the city he wept aloud over it, saying, "If thou hadst known." Stanley has a fine description of the city as seen from the Bethany road: on surmounting the ridge where the descent toward Jerusalem begins, the first view is caught of the south-eastern corner of the city. The road descends a slight declivity, and the glimpse of the city is again withdrawn behind the intervening ridge of Olivet. A few moments and the path mounts again; it climbs a rugged ascent, it reaches a ledge of smooth rock, and in an instant the whole city bursts into view.

Josephus also gives us a glowing description of how the temple looked about the time of our Lord: "the outward face of the temple in its front wanted nothing that was likely to surprise either men's minds or their eyes; for it was covered all over with plates of gold of great weight, and, at the first rising of the sun, reflected back a very fiery splendor, and made those who forced themselves to look upon it to turn their eyes away, just as they would have done at the sun's own rays. But this temple appeared to strangers

#### COMMON VERSION.

39 And some of the Pharisees from among the multitude said unto him, Master, rebuke thy disciples.

40 And he answered and said unto them, I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out.

41 ¶ And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it,

#### REVISED VERSION.

39 glory in the highest. And some of the Pharisees from the multitude said unto  
40 him, <sup>1</sup>Master, rebuke thy disciples. And he answered and said, I tell you that, if these shall hold their peace, the stones will cry out.

41 And when he drew nigh, he saw the city

when they were coming to it at a distance, like a mountain covered with snow: for as to those parts of it that were not gilt, they were exceeding white," *War*. 5:5, 6. We cannot wonder, when Jesus beheld this magnificent city, the pride of every Jew, and knew the calamities soon to come upon it, that he should weep aloud over it. The Greek word for "wept" means more than silently shedding tears as at the grave of Lazarus, *John* 11:35. It signifies outward expressions of grief.

**42. thou hadst known]** The burden of the lament is, that the city neglected its spiritual calls to grace and repentance. The last part of its name, Salem, in Hebrew means "peace," but it could now have no peace. Enemies were soon to come, and cast up a palisade of earth, or a bank about it, as an army did in laying siege to a city, so that no inhabitants could escape. Walls would be dashed down, and its people within it. All this came true in the terrible fall of Jerusalem, when attacked by the Roman army led by Titus. He intended to spare the temple, but it was set on fire, in the face of his express commands to spare it. It is said 3,000,000 of Jews were crowded into the city. The terrors of the siege are depicted by Josephus, who lived at that time. See *War*, Bk. 6, chaps. 9, 10, and Bk. 7:1.

**44. thou knewest not the time of thy visitation.** Refers to past offers of mercy, when God as the loving overseer invited her to repentance. The Greek word for "visitation" is ἐπισκοπή, from the same root as our word episcopacy, and usually means an inspection, or looking over, such as a guardian or overseer would give. On the attempts to rebuild the temple, see Milman's Gibbon's Roman Empire, II. 309.

**45. cast out them that sold]** In the courts of the temple were those who exchanged money to accommodate pilgrims, that they might buy animals to be offered in sacrifice, and pay the temple tax which must be paid in the Jewish shekel, and not in Roman or foreign coin. These traders had built up a scandalous traffic, similar, no doubt, to that which prevails at Easter and at other feasts held in Jerusalem, under the Roman and Greek

## COMMON VERSION.

42 Saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes.

43 For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side,

44 And shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation.

45 And he went into the temple, and began to cast out them that sold therein, and them that bought;

46 Saying unto them, It is written, My house is the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves.

<sup>1</sup> O that thou hadst known.  
authorities read *thy peace*.

<sup>2</sup> Some ancient authorities read *thy day*.  
<sup>4</sup> Gr. *palisade*.

## REVISED VERSION.

42 and wept over it, saying, <sup>1</sup>If thou hadst known in this <sup>2</sup>day, even thou, the things which belong unto <sup>3</sup>peace! but now they <sup>43</sup>are hid from thine eyes. For the days shall

come upon thee, when thine enemies shall cast up a <sup>4</sup>bank about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, <sup>44</sup>and shall dash thee to the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation.

<sup>45</sup>And he entered into the temple, and began to cast out them that sold, saying unto them, It is written, And my house shall be a house of prayer: but ye have made it a den of robbers.

<sup>3</sup>Some ancient

ecclesiastics of our day. This cleansing was upon the day after the kingly entry, see Mark 11: 11, 12, 15.

**47. daily in the temple]** Of his teaching in the temple, Luke proceeds to give a partial account in chap. 20 to 21: 4; see also Matt. 21 to 23.

**48. the people were very attentive]** or the people all hung upon him, listening. Trapp says, "Christ drew the people after him by the golden chain of his heavenly eloquence." The throng of people prevented his enemies from taking him.

SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.—1. Christ has great compassion towards sinners. 2. Do Christ's tears measure the depth of the sinner's misery? 3. Sinners are often wilfully ignorant of the calls of the Lord. 4. Wilful neglect of God's mercies may cause him to withdraw them. 5. Punishment delayed does not indicate punishment remitted. 6. Delayed punishment may prove severe. 7. God's house is to be a sanctuary of prayer, not a place for trading in temporal or spiritual offices and benefices. 8. Christ teaches openly, when enemies seek to destroy him. 9. The people are to listen attentively, when the gospel is proclaimed.

CHRIST'S AUTHORITY. 20: 1-8. Compare Matt. 21: 23-27; Mark 11: 27-33.

JERUSALEM, Tuesday, April 4, A. D. 30.

**1. on one of those days]** The days he was teaching in the temple are meant. See Luke 19: 47. It was on the third day of the week (Tuesday) and perhaps the next day. The chief priests and others came upon him suddenly, demanding his authority for his acts. They referred to the casting out of traders from the temple, as narrated in the former chapter. "Who is he that gave thee this authority?" as if they had said, "Who is the one so presumptuous as to authorize you to meddle with the affairs of the temple?"

**4. The baptism of John, was it from heaven]** This question was a more direct answer to their question than the hasty reader would think. It was equivalent to asking, Was the Baptist a prophet or a hypocrite? If a prophet, then his testimony to Jesus, as the Coming One, that is, the Messiah,

COMMON VERSION.

47 And he taught daily in the temple. But the chief priests and the scribes and the chief of the people sought to destroy him.

48 And could not find what they might do: for all the people were very attentive to hear him.

CHAP. XX.—And it came to pass, that on one of those days, as he taught the people in the temple, and preached the gospel, the chief priests and the scribes came upon him with the elders,

2 And spake unto him, saying, Tell us, by what authority doest thou these things? or who is he that gave thee this authority?

3 And he answered and said unto them, I will also ask you one thing; and answer me:

4 The baptism of John, was it from heaven, or of men?

REVISED VERSION.

47 And he was teaching daily in the temple. But the chief priests and the scribes and the principal men of the people sought to destroy him; and they could not find what they might do; for the people all hung upon him, listening.

20 And it came to pass, on one of the days, as he was teaching the people in the temple, and preaching the gospel, there came upon him the chief priests and the scribes with the 2 elders; and they spake, saying unto him, Tell us: By what authority doest thou these things? or who is he that gave thee this 3 authority? And he answered and said unto them, I also will ask you a <sup>1</sup> question; and 4 tell me: The baptism of John, was it from

ought to be conclusive even with these carping questioners. Hence Jesus' question was virtually a direct answer to theirs as to the source of his authority. The scribes clearly saw the drift of the question and were perplexed. They carefully "calculated" the effect of their reply. If they answered, "From heaven," then the question would come, "Why did ye not believe him?" and believe his testimony about Jesus? If they answered, "Of men," as they wanted to do, the people would stone them to death, for that is the meaning of the strong Greek word. At the feast full of religious fervor, the Galilean pilgrims were not the persons to allow their convictions to be outraged by a denial of John the Baptist as a prophet. The chief priests and scribes were afraid to answer as they wished to do, and so preferred to say, We know not from whence the Baptist's work came.

8. **Neither tell I you]** They had stated a falsehood; they were seeking not the truth, but to get ground for a charge against Jesus. As a direct answer would neither have convinced nor quieted them, Jesus answered by another question calculated to reveal their plot. As they declined to answer his question, which, in fact, would include an answer to their own questions, he declined to answer them further. His question implied, You cannot deny John's testimony concerning me as the Messiah. It is unwise to answer when the questioner is incapable of understanding what he asks. Where he asks from malice, he does not merit an answer.

SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.—1. Christ's works and teachings reveal his authority. 2. Cavillers often ask, not wishing to find the truth. 3. They pervert the knowledge they have. 4. Those who pervert the knowledge of Christ they already have are not likely to gain more knowledge. 5. Wilful unbelievers refuse to confess the truth and to acknowledge their sins.

HUSBANDMEN IN THE VINEYARD : TRIBUTE TO CÆSAR. 20 : 9-26. Compare Matt. 21 : 33-46 ; 22 : 15-22 ; Mark 12 : 1-17.

JERUSALEM, Tuesday, April 4, A.D. 30.

9. **began . . to speak to the people]** After the refusal of the chief priests and scribes to answer his question about John's baptism, Jesus began to speak in parables, giving : 1, that of the two sons, Matt. 21 : 28-32 ; 2, this of the wicked husbandmen ; 3, the marriage of the king's son, Matt. 22 : 1-14, which were followed by the questions about tribute to Cæsar. Luke says he

COMMON VERSION.

5 And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; he will say, Why then believed ye him not?

6 But and if we say, Of men; all the people will stone us: for they be persuaded that John was a prophet.

7 And they answered, that they could not tell whence *it* was.

8 And Jesus said unto them, Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things.

9 Then began he to speak to the people this parable; A certain man planted a vineyard, and let it forth to husbandmen, and went into a far country for a long time.

REVISED VERSION.

5 heaven, or from men? And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; he will say, Why did ye not

6 believe him? But if we shall say, From men; all the people will stone us: for they are persuaded that John was a prophet.

7 And they answered, that they knew not

8 whence *it* was. And Jesus said unto them, Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things.

9 And he began to speak unto the people this parable: A man planted a vineyard, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into

addressed the people, Matthew and Mark imply that he spake to the rulers ; both were present, hence one writer adds what another omits, and both are correct.

**10. a servant . . that they should give him]** The "man" was a "householder," Matt. 21 : 33. He not only "planted" the vineyard, but fitted it up with a "hedge," a "wine-press" and a "tower," as Matthew and Mark tell us. He then let it to "husbandmen" and went to another country, "for a long time," Luke says. In the season he sends a servant for his portion of the fruit. There were two or three ways of letting land in the East: the owner might fit the land, furnish implements and seed and take his rent in products; or he might ask a money rent; or he might furnish the ground fitted, as in this case, and give a long lease, payable in a definite amount of produce, whether harvests were good or bad. The latter mode seems to be implied in this parable. "At the season" probably means at the yearly harvest time for grapes, though it may refer also to the law, which required payment of fruit of a vineyard some years after it was planted. The husbandmen beat the servant and sent him away empty.

**13. I will send my beloved son]** With great forbearance the owner sent three times, his servants receiving increasing indignities each time. Lastly he sends his "beloved son;" perhaps "they will reverence him."

**14. the heir: let us kill him]** The sight of the son only increased the hate and wickedness of the husbandmen. They conferred together, decided to kill the "heir" and seize his inheritance, as if the owner were dead and the son had come as heir to claim the fruit and his right to the vineyard. This attempt to seize a property and defeat the rights of the true heir was not an uncommon event in the East. So they caught the son, cast him out of the vineyard and killed him.

**16. destroy those husbandmen]** The application is simple, but

## COMMON VERSION.

10 And at the season he sent a servant to the husbandmen, that they should give him of the fruit of the vineyard: but the husbandmen beat him, and sent him away empty.

11 And again he sent another servant: and they beat him also, and entreated him shamefully, and sent him away empty.

12 And again he sent a third: and they wounded him also, and cast him out.

13 Then said the lord of the vineyard, What shall I do? I will send my beloved son: it may be they will reverence him when they see him.

14 But when the husbandmen saw him, they reasoned among themselves, saying, This is the heir: come, let us kill him, that the inheritance may be ours.

15 So they cast him out of the vineyard, and killed him. What therefore shall the lord of the vineyard do unto them?

16 He shall come and destroy these husbandmen, and shall give the vineyard to others. And when they heard it, they said, God forbid.

## REVISED VERSION.

10 another country for a long time. And at

the season he sent unto the husbandmen a<sup>1</sup> servant, that they should give him of the fruit of the vineyard: but the husbandmen

11 beat him and sent him away empty. And he sent yet another<sup>1</sup> servant: and him also they beat, and handled him shamefully,

12 and sent him away empty. And he sent yet a third: and him also they wounded,

13 and cast him forth. And the lord of the vineyard said, What shall I do? I will send my beloved son: it may be they will

14 reverence him. But when the husbandmen saw him, they reasoned one with another, saying, This is the heir: let us kill

him, that the inheritance may be ours.

15 And they cast him forth out of the vineyard, and killed him. What therefore will the lord of the vineyard do unto them?

16 He will come and destroy these husbandmen, and will give the vineyard unto others.

And when they heard it, they said<sup>2</sup> God

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *boudservant*.

<sup>2</sup> Gr. *Be it not so*.

pointed. What, therefore, will the lord of the vineyard do unto them? He will come, after having exhausted all efforts through others to gain his rights, and destroy those husbandmen, and will give the vineyard unto others. The interpretation is plain: the man or householder represents God; the vineyard is his kingdom on the earth; the husbandmen represent the Jewish rulers, including also the Jewish nation; fruit represents repentance, righteousness and obedience that God required; the successive servants, the prophets and messengers to John the Baptist. See 1 Kings 18 : 13; 22 : 24-27; 2 Kings 6 : 31; 21 : 16; Jer. 20 : 1, 2; 37 : 15; some of whom were slain; the "beloved son" is Jesus Christ, rejected of the rulers and condemned and crucified; the coming of the lord of the vineyard represents the coming of God in judgment to destroy Jerusalem and the Jewish nation, and the giving his vineyard to others, the calling of the Gentiles. The patience and forbearance of the owner signify God's long suffering of the Jewish rulers and nation, and may also typify his patience with sinners now. The husbandmen had so long and successfully resisted the claims of the owner of the vineyard that they began to regard themselves as the possessors, not the tenants, as men long in rebellion against God boast that they are independent of him. Those that heard and saw the meaning of the parable said literally, "Let it not be." There is no word here in Greek for "God," and hence the "God forbid" of the English versions is a paraphrase, not a strict rendering of the Greek.

**17. The stone . . . rejected . . . the head]** The reference is to the Messianic prophecy in Ps. 118 : 22, 23; compare Is. 28 : 16, and Acts 4 : 11; 1 Pet. 2 : 7. The stone alluded to is one at the corner of a foundation wall in a building. The image of the vineyard is dropped. The builders now take the place of the husbandmen. This is to represent more fully the purpose of God fulfilled in his Son's becoming heir of all things, which the parable of the vineyard could not do, since the owner's son, the heir, was killed by the husbandmen. This stone represents Jesus Christ, who, though rejected by the builders, would have the chief place in God's building.

**18. shall be broken]** There are two classes represented: 1, those who would fall on the stone, that is, those offended at Jesus because of his low estate, or for other reasons; 2, those on whom the stone would fall, that is, those who wilfully continue to oppose Christ, until his judgment should fall on them, as upon Jerusalem, and all the impenitent, see Dan. 2 : 35. Some refer the first to the Jewish nation broken because it rejected Christ, yet to be restored, Jer. 31 : 10; and the second to the Gentiles, who shall finally reject Christ, and be condemned at his second coming. This seems possible, but less satisfactory than the former interpretation.

COMMON VERSION.

17 And he beheld them, and said, What is this then that is written, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner?

18 Whosoever shall fall upon that stone shall be broken, but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder.

REVISED VERSION.

17 forbid. But he looked upon them, and said, What then is this that is written,

The stone which the builders rejected,  
The same was made the head of the corner?

18 Every one that falleth on that stone shall be broken to pieces; but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will scatter him as dust.

**19. this parable against them]** This clearly shows how the hearers understood the aim of this parable of the husbandmen. It convicted and angered the Jewish rulers who saw that it meant their destruction, and that of the Jewish theocracy. The people, however, appear to have been won by Jesus, and the rulers feared to lay hands on him, lest the people should mob them.

**20. sent forth spies]** These "spies" were Herodians and certain Pharisees, who pretended to be righteous. Having failed to find accusations to bring him before ecclesiastical authority, they now try to get a cause for bringing him before the Roman civil power. So these spies come with bland, flattering speech as in v. 21, saying what they did not believe, though they spoke the truth about Jesus with a malicious purpose.

**22. lawful for us to give tribute unto Cæsar]** The plot was a very cunning one. If he said, yes, then he would appear to deny his people, and his Messiahship; and the nationalist party, then strong at Jerusalem, would be angered at him. If he said, no, it was civil rebellion, the Roman power would be upon him at once, and he would perish at their hands.

**24. Shew me a penny]** or "a denarius." Jesus saw their deep plot, their craftiness. He asks them to bring a "denarius." With delight they show him the hated Roman coin, with the image of Tiberius, and promptly tell him that Cæsar's image and title are on the coin. Neither Herod nor Herod Antipas issued such a coin. It must have been a foreign, that is, a Roman coin, or an exceptional one struck by Philip the tetrarch. Later in the time of Vespasian,



DENARIUS, ROMAN PENNY OF TIBERIUS.

[On one side is a portrait of Tiberius, with the inscription, *Ti. Cæsar Divi. Aug. F. Augustus* (Tiberius Cæsar Augustus, son of the divine Augustus). On the other side is a female figure and the inscription, *Pontif. Maxim.* (Pontifex Maximus).]

a coin was struck in Palestine bearing the Emperor's image.

#### COMMON VERSION.

19 ¶ And the chief priests and the scribes the same hour sought to lay hands on him; and they feared the people: for they perceived that he had spoken this parable against them.

20 And they watched *him*, and sent forth spies, which should feign themselves just men, that they might take hold of his words, that so they might deliver him unto the power and authority of the governor.

21 And they asked him, saying, Master, we know that thou sayest and teachest rightly, neither acceptest thou the person of *any*, but teachest the way of God truly:

22 Is it lawful for us to give tribute unto Cæsar, or no?

23 But he perceived their craftiness, and said unto them, Why tempt ye me?

24 Shew me a penny. Whose image and superscription hath it? They answered and said, Cæsar's.

#### REVISED VERSION.

19 And the scribes and the chief priests sought to lay hands on him in that very hour; and they feared the people: for they perceived that he spake this parable against

20 them. And they watched him, and sent forth spies, who feigned themselves to be righteous, that they might take hold of his speech, so as to deliver him up to the <sup>1</sup> rule

21 and to the authority of the governor. And they asked him, saying, <sup>2</sup> Master, we know that thou sayest and teachest rightly, and acceptest not the person of *any*, but of a

22 truth teachest the way of God: Is it lawful for us to give tribute unto Cæsar, or not?

23 But he perceived their craftiness, and said

24 unto them, Shew me a <sup>3</sup> denarius. Whose image and superscription hath it? And

<sup>1</sup> Or, ruling power

<sup>2</sup> Or, Teacher

<sup>3</sup> See marginal note on Matt. xviii. 28.

**25. render unto Cæsar . . and unto God]** "Give up then the things of Cæsar to Cæsar, and the things of God to God," is the literal form of his remarkable answer. It was not an evasion, but the profoundest answer, settling a principle underlying the question, not only for the Jews and Cæsar, but for all Christians and secular power. There is to be no conflict between divine and any civil authority. The Christian may render dues to the civil power, and also to the divine. To decide what things are properly Cæsar's, and what are the things of God, is difficult at times. The Roman Catholics press their religious demands to such an extent as to subvert all civil government, or make it second to the papacy; on the other hand, the civil power sometimes destroys all freedom of worship. "Politics and religion neither include, nor yet exclude each other," observes Edersheim, "they are side by side in different domains. The state is divinely sanctioned and religion is divinely sanctioned, and both are equally the ordinance of God." See Rom. 13 : 6, 7. The spies were defeated; marvelling at his answer they were silent.

**SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.**—1. The husbandmen show us how men deal with God. 2. The vineyard fitted up, shows us how rich blessings God intrusts to his people. 3. The coming of servants shows us how patiently God pleads and bears with rebellious men. 4. The shameful treatment of the servants, and killing the son show how men treat God, and his only Son. 5. The return of the owner shows the severity of God's judgment upon the unfaithful. 6. The spies show the hypocrisy of some professed religionists in opposing Christ. 7. His answer shows his wisdom, and our relation to divine and to civil authority.

**SADDUCEES AND RESURRECTION : CHRIST DAVID'S SON? 20:27-47.**

Compare Matt. 22 : 23-33, 41-46; Mark 12 : 18-27, 35-37.

JERUSALEM, Tuesday, April 4, A. D. 30.

**27. certain of the Sadducees]** The Sadducees held the high-priesthood and controlled the Sanhedrin at the time, though probably the Sadducees were not as numerous as the Pharisees. They were the aristocracy, highest in social position, and inclined to make politics their religion. Their origin is obscure. The Talmudists derived the name from Zadok or Sadok, a disciple of Antigonus, about 300 B.C.; others, from Zadok the high priest in the time of Solomon, and a few derive the name from tsaddik, "righteous." The last theory claims support from the supposed difficulty of deriving Sadducee from tsadog (Zadok), though the linguistic objection lies with equal force against deriving it from tsaddik (righteous), and that title is a misfit for

**COMMON VERSION.**

25 And he said unto them, Render therefore unto Cæsar the things which be Cæsar's, and unto God the things which be God's.

26 And they could not take hold of his words before the people: and they marvelled at his answer, and held their peace.

27 ¶ Then came to him certain of the Sadducees, which deny that there is any resurrection; and they asked him,

**REVISED VERSION.**

25 they said, Cæsar's. And he said unto them, Then render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that

26 are God's. And they were not able to take hold of the saying before the people; and they marvelled at his answer, and held their peace.

27 And there came to him certain of the Sadducees, they that say there is no resur-

the Sadducees who were the political, while the Pharisees were more properly the religious party. Edersheim, strongly favoring it, concludes it is only a theory "which offers most probability," while Broadus' assertion that the derivation of Sadducee from Zadok "is now almost universally rejected" is unwarranted. Not only Geiger, and Schuerer, but able scholars like Haus-rath, Grimm, Thayer, Bissell, and a host of others still hold that Sadducee is most likely derived from Zadok. See Bissell's *Biblical Antiquities*, p. 385, and Thayer's *Grimm's Greek Lexicon*.

**28. Master, Moses wrote]** The Sadducees, denying the resurrection and the existence of angel or spirit, proposed to reduce the doctrine to an absurdity by a practical example. So they state a possible case under the law of Levirate marriage. Deut. 25 : 5-9. A man was forbidden to marry his wife's sister during the life of his wife. Lev. 18 : 18. If the man died childless, then his brother was asked to marry the widow and raise children to perpetuate the man's name and family. On this law the Sadducees frame a supposed case of seven brothers marrying in succession the same woman and all dying without children, and at last the woman died. Whose wife would the woman be in the resurrection?

**35. neither marry, nor are given in marriage]** In this life marriage is provided to keep the race from dying out; but in the next world or life, where they cannot die any more, there will be no need for renewing successive generations, and therefore no need for marriage. They will be like angels; sons of God, and sons of the resurrection.

**37. the dead are raised]** Jesus had removed the difficulty presented by the Sadducees. He now advances to a positive proof of the doctrine they

## COMMON VERSION.

28 Saying, Master, Moses wrote unto us, If any man's brother die, having a wife, and he die without children, that his brother should take his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother.

29 There were therefore seven brethren : and the first took a wife, and died without children.

30 And the second took her to wife, and he died childless.

31 And the third took her ; and in like manner the seven also : and they left no children, and died.

32 Last of all the woman died also.

33 Therefore in the resurrection whose wife of them is she? for seven had her to wife.

34 And Jesus answering said unto them, The children of this world marry, and are given in marriage :

35 But they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage :

36 Neither can they die any more : for they are equal unto the angels ; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection.

37 Now that the dead are raised, even Moses shewed at the bush, when he calleth the Lord the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.

## REVISED VERSION.

28 rection ; and they asked him, saying, <sup>1</sup> Master, Moses wrote unto us, that if a man's brother die, having a wife, and he be childless, his brother should take the wife, and

29 raise up seed unto his brother. There were therefore seven brethren : and the first took

30 a wife, and died childless ; and the second ;

31 and the third took her ; and likewise the

32 seven also left no children, and died. Af-

33 terwards the woman also died. In the resurrection therefore whose wife of them shall

34 she be ? for the seven had her to wife. And Jesus said unto them, The sons of this

35 <sup>2</sup> world marry, and are given in marriage ;

36 but they that are accounted worthy to attain to that <sup>2</sup> world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given

37 in marriage : for neither can they die any more : for they are equal unto the angels ;

and are sons of God, being sons of the resurrection. But that the dead are raised, even Moses shewed, in *the place concerning*

the Bush, when he calleth the Lord the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and

denied. Even Moses, to whom the Sadducees appealed, showed their error in the passage concerning the Bush, that is in Ex. 3, when he calleth the Lord the God of Abraham, etc. Ex. 3 : 6. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob died about two centuries before Moses saw the burning bush, yet God was then their God, "for all live unto him;" that is, those even that are dead to us, are living in God's sight. This may have a double meaning: 1. No one is dead to God. The "maid is sleeping," Lazarus sleepeth soon to be awaked, and thus all are but sleeping, soon to be awaked at the great resurrection. 2. No one really dies: the body dies, but the person ever lives as really before God as when in the body. Man is not annihilated; he became a living soul, Gen. 2 : 7, and will not cease to exist, not even the wicked. Compare the expression, "Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." Mark 9 : 48.

**39. the scribes . . said . . well said]** The scribes were apparently of the Pharisees' party, and rejoiced over the discomfiture of their rivals, and openly commended Jesus for his wise answer. The "they" that durst not ask him any question must refer back to the Sadducees, for we are told in Matt. 22 : 34 and Mark 12 : 28 that after this, one of the Pharisees, a lawyer, who was also a scribe, asked, which is the great, or first, commandment?

**41. How say . . Christ is David's son ?]** The scribes were rejoicing over the defeat of the Sadducees, and the self-confident lawyer had been wisely answered. The Pharisees, scribes and lawyers proudly thought they understood the Scriptures and believed them. Jesus now turns the questioning upon them to show them how little and imperfect their knowledge was. He also intended to give them true ideas in regard to the Messiah. If David calleth Christ, Lord, how is he David's son? The Jews accepted Psalm 110, which Jesus quoted, as a Messianic prophecy, but it was strange to the Eastern mind for a father to call his son "Lord." The question could only be answered by accepting the Son of David as divine as well as human, God and man.

**46. desire to walk in long robes]** Turning to his disciples, he warned

## COMMON VERSION.

38 For he is not a God of the dead, but of the living : for all live unto him.

39 ¶ Then certain of the scribes answering said, Master, thou hast well said.

40 And after that they durst not ask him any question at all.

41 And he said unto them, How say they that Christ is David's son ?

42 And David himself saith in the book of Psalms, The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand,

43 Till I make thine enemies thy footstool.

44 David therefore calleth him Lord, how is he then his son ?

45 ¶ Then in the audience of all the people he said unto his disciples,

46 Beware of the scribes, which desire to walk in long robes, and love greetings in the markets, and the highest seats in the synagogues, and the chief rooms at feasts;

## REVISED VERSION.

38 the God of Jacob. Now he is not the God of the dead, but of the living : for all live

39 unto him. And certain of the scribes answering said, <sup>1</sup> Master, thou hast well said.

40 For they durst not any more ask him any question.

41 And he said unto them, How say they

42 that the Christ is David's son? For David

himself saith in the book of Psalms,

The Lord said unto my Lord,

Sit thou on my right hand,

43 Till I make thine enemies the foot-

stool of thy feet.

44 David therefore calleth him Lord, and how

is he his son ?

45 And in the hearing of all the people he said unto his disciples, Beware of the scribes,

who desire to walk in long robes, and love salutations in the market-places, and chief

seats in the synagogues, and chief places at

them, in the hearing of all the people, against the scribes who "desire to walk in long robes," that is, in robes having long, showy fringes, see Numb. 15: 38-40; who love profuse greetings and honors in the market-places, the public squares, and the chief reclining places at feasts, indicating a selfish, ambitious spirit.

**47. devour widows' houses]** The Pharisees had unlimited freedom in women's apartments, according to Josephus, *Ant.* 17: 2, 4. This charge may imply that they wasted the property of widows under pretense of honestly caring for it. Or, it may mean, in view of Josephus' statement, that they destroyed the widows' homes by debauching their character. While doing this evil they made long prayers openly, for a pretense to cover up their true character. Therefore their condemnation would be greater for their hypocrisy.

**SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.**—1. Materialism is an old form of unbelief. 2. Christ dealt with it in his day. 3. Its supporters had specious arguments then, which they tried to base on Scripture. 4. Jesus declared their ignorance of the truth. 5. Saints in the future life will be like angels. 6. All men are existing in God's sight. 7. The divine nature of Christ is declared in the Psalms. 8. Christ refers to a psalm as giving David words, and referring to the Messiah. 9. Pretense, sham, selfish ambition, and spiritual pride are highly displeasing to the Lord.

**THE WIDOW'S MITES: OVERTHROW OF THE TEMPLE.** 21: 1-9. Compare Mark 12: 41-44, and Matt. 24, Mark 13.

JERUSALEM, TUESDAY, April 4, A.D. 30.

**1. saw the rich . . . casting . . . into the treasury]** Or, "he having looked up, saw them that were casting into the treasury their gifts;" they were rich. See Mark 12: 41. Jesus was sitting in the temple opposite the treasury and in sight of it. He may have been on the steps leading from the porches into the temple, or within the gate. There were in Christ's day thirteen trumpet-shaped chests under the colonnade by the court of the women (see Josephus, *Wars*, 6: 5, Traill's Ed.), similar to the one placed in the entrance by Jehoiada, 2 Kings 12: 9, and marked for specific objects; for example, two for the half shekel tax, one for women to give the equivalent of turtle doves, and another for the equivalent of young pigeons. Some suppose that these turtle doves or pigeons were not actually offered by Mary, the mother of Jesus, but that it was usual to compound these offerings in money given into the treasury, and that daily or at stated periods this money was taken out and a corresponding number of doves or pigeons offered. Besides the chests marked for legal offerings, several were marked for voluntary gifts.

COMMON VERSION.

47 Which devour widows' houses, and for a shew make long prayers: the same shall receive greater damnation.

**C**HAP. XXI.—And he looked up, and saw the rich men casting their gifts into the treasury.

REVISED VERSION.

47 feasts; who devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayers: these shall receive greater condemnation.

**1** And he looked up, <sup>1</sup> and saw the rich men that were casting their gifts into the

<sup>1</sup> Or, and saw them that . . . treasury, and they were rich.

The "chambers" of the treasury, Neh. 10 : 38, may have been in the court of the women also. This court was so called, not because it was for women exclusively, but because women could not go farther into the temple, except for sacrifice. From the mode of marking the chests, as well as from the dress and appearance of the givers, one could distinguish the circumstances of the givers and the gifts. The amount of the gifts put into the treasury may be inferred by the 2000 talents that Josephus says were there when plundered by Pompey and Crassus. Compare *Ant.* 14 : 4, 4, *Wars*, I. 7 : 6 ; 8 : 8.

**2. poor widow . . two mites]** She put in two λεπτά, the lepton being the smallest copper or brass coin, and equal to a κοδράντης, or the smallest farthing, about three-eighths of a cent. The rabbins did not allow persons to give less than two of these coins.

**3. cast in more than they all]** Ambrose remarks, "one coin out of a little, is better than a treasure out of much : it is not considered how much is given, but how much is left behind." God judges not by the quantity, but the quality of the gift. Not the amount of the gift, but the amount of the self-denial and consecration it represents gives value to it, as Jesus explains in v. 4. The Greek word for "living" βίος means either all she had saved out of her scanty living, or all she had to live upon for that day. Those who give "mites" now out of their superfluity are not imitating the poor widow, nor are such gifts charity in any true sense, for it has been well said, "the essence of charity is self-denial."



A FARTHING—TWO MITES.

**5. the temple . . goodly stones]** This was the temple enlarged by Herod, and outwardly held to rival in magnificence the temple of Solomon. For a good description of it, see Bissell's *Biblical Antiquities*, pp. 304-310. The "goodly" stones may refer to the beauty of the columns, cappings and beveled foundation stones, or it may apply to their size, of which Josephus says there were solid marble blocks of immense size, 25 cubits long, 12 wide, and 8 cubits high, a cubit being 20 to 22 inches. Stones 40 feet long, and weighing over one hundred tons have been uncovered in the ruins of this temple.

**6. not be left one stone upon another]** This was literally fulfilled

## COMMON VERSION.

2 And he saw also a certain poor widow casting in thither two mites.

3 And he said, Of a truth I say unto you, that this poor widow hath cast in more than they all :

4 For all these have of their abundance cast in unto the offerings of God : but she of her penury hath cast in all the living that she had.

5 ¶ And as some spake of the temple, how it was adorned with goodly stones and gifts, he said,

6 As for these things which ye behold, the days will come, in the which there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.

## REVISED VERSION.

2 treasury. And he saw a certain poor widow casting in thither two mites. And he said, Of a truth I say unto you, This poor widow cast in more than they all : for all these did of their superfluity cast in unto the gifts : but she of her want did cast in all the living that she had.

5 And as some spake of the temple, how it was adorned with goodly stones and offerings, he said, As for these things which ye behold, the days will come, in which there shall not be left here one stone upon another.

in the face of Titus' command to save the temple. The grandeur and massiveness of the structure so amazed him, that Josephus says he confessed its conquest could only have been made by the will of God. *Bell. Jud.* 6 : 9 ; 1.

**7-9. when . . what . . sign]** From Mark 13 : 3 and Matt. 24 : 3 we learn that these questions were asked by four disciples while sitting upon the Mount of Olives overlooking the temple. Compare also Luke 21 : 37, 38. Luke gives only a small portion of the answers. He reports the warning against being deceived by false Christs, several of whom appeared before the fall of Jerusalem ; and against being terrified by wars and tumults, which must and did come before the overthrow of the temple and of Jerusalem. Upwards of fifty false Christs appeared before the fall of Jerusalem. The end is not "by and by," is an old English expression meaning it is not immediately ; see revised reading.

**SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.**—1. The poor as well as the rich are to give to the Lord. 2. The gifts of the poor may be of greater value in God's sight, than even the munificent gifts of the rich. 3. Every one should give according to his ability, with a willing mind. 4. The sanctuary is glorious from the presence of God, and of consecrated worshippers. 5. Church buildings should be in keeping with the homes of the worshippers. 6. Fine houses and a mean church are unworthy of a Christian community, and not an honor to God. 7. Christians are not to be led away by false teachers.

**TRIALS AND PERSECUTIONS.** 21 : 10-19. Compare Matt. 24 : 7-14 ; Mark 13 : 8-13.

MT. OF OLIVES, Tuesday, April 4, A. D. 30.

This is a part of the great prediction, which Jesus made to four disciples on the Mt. of Olives, more fully narrated by Matthew. See People's Commentary on Matthew, pp. 235-237. Many suppose this passage admits of a twofold interpretation, applying it first to the overthrow of Jerusalem, and the Jewish nation, and second, to the second coming of Christ and to the end of the world.

**10. kingdom against kingdom]** This verse describes a time of war and insurrections. The first may refer to wars between people of different blood : the last to petty strifes between inferior rulers, indicating the universal spread of strife and war. At Cæsarea 20,000 Jews were slain by the Syrians.

COMMON VERSION.

7 And they asked him, saying, Master, but when shall these things be? and what sign will there be when these things shall come to pass?

8 And he said, Take heed that ye be not deceived: for many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ: and the time draweth near: go ye not therefore after them.

9 But when ye shall hear of wars and commotions, be not terrified: for these things must first come to pass; but the end is not by and by.

10 Then said he unto them, Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom:

REVISED VERSION.

7 other, that shall not be thrown down. And they asked him, saying, <sup>1</sup> Master, when therefore shall these things be? and what shall be the sign when these things are

8 about to come to pass? And he said, Take heed that ye be not led astray: for many shall come in my name, saying, I am he: and, The time is at hand: go ye not after

9 them. And when ye shall hear of wars and tumults, be not terrified: for these things must needs come to pass first; but the end is not immediately.

10 Then said he unto them, Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against king-

**11. earthquakes . . famines . . pestilences . . signs]** Many earthquakes about this period are recorded in secular history : in Crete, A.D. 51, Phrygia, 53, Camponia, 58, Laodicea, 60, Pompeii, 63, Jerusalem, 67. Famines and pestilences are also mentioned, some of them of singular severity. Josephus describes famines and great signs accompanying the fall of Jerusalem. The signs were a flaming sword seen over the city, a comet, a light, chariots, and armed troops in the sky, and noises in the temple. *Jud. Bell.* Bks. 5, 6. Tacitus also gives in substance a similar account ; on famines, see Acts 11 : 28.

**12. before all these]** Persecutions to Christians came before the fall of Jerusalem, as Luke tells us in Acts 7 : 59, 60 ; 8 : 1-4 ; 12 : 1-3 ; 14 : 5 ; 21 : 32-34.

**15. I will give you . . wisdom]** The apostles and early Christians would be unexpectedly arrested, and put upon trial ; the laws were severe ; the forms of justice irregular, and wanting in equity and fairness ; the church young ; and these were special reasons for the exceptional powers of defence bestowed upon them. They were to be witnesses for a new faith, hitherto unknown and obscure. Therefore, when arrested, they were not to worry about the form of defence they were to make. They need not "practice," recite, or "say over," the form of defence, as the ancient rhetorician did, nor need they meditate what they would say or do, under certain danger. For the Greek word *προμελετᾶν* is to be taken in its broadest, and not simply in its narrower technical sense, as the context shows. That their witness might be stronger in these times of trials, Christ promises special gifts of speech and wisdom that the enemies will not be able to withstand or gainsay, see Acts 4 : 14 ; 6 : 10.

**17. hated of all men for my]** Betrayed by family friends, and even put to death, the disciples would be hated, not because they were hateful, or wicked, but because, and simply because they were Christians. See Acts 24 : 5 ; 1 Pet. 4 : 14.

**18. not a hair of your head]** Either, not without God's notice and

## COMMON VERSION.

11 And great earthquakes shall be in divers places, and famines, and pestilences ; and fearful sights and great signs shall there be from heaven.

12 But before all these, they shall lay their hands on you, and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues, and into prisons, being brought before kings and rulers for my name's sake.

13 And it shall turn to you for a testimony.

14 Settle it therefore in your hearts, not to meditate before what ye shall answer :

15 For I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist.

16 And ye shall be betrayed both by parents, and brethren, and kinsfolks, and friends ; and some of you shall they cause to be put to death.

17 And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake.

18 But there shall not a hair of your head perish.

## REVISED VERSION.

11 dom : and there shall be great earthquakes, and in divers places famines and pestilences ; and there shall be terrors and great signs from heaven. But before all these things, they shall lay their hands on you, and shall persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues and prisons, <sup>1</sup> bringing you before kings and governors for my name's sake. It shall turn unto you for a testimony. Settle it therefore in your hearts, not to meditate beforehand how to answer : for I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to withstand or to gainsay. But ye shall be delivered up even by parents, and brethren, and kinsfolk, and friends ; and some of you <sup>2</sup> shall they cause to be put to death. And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake. And not a hair of your head shall

<sup>1</sup> Gr. you being brought.

<sup>2</sup> Or, shall they put to death

reward, nor before its time, as Bengel suggests; or it is figurative, meaning that nothing of a spiritual character shall perish; not a hair of your head shall perish without your heavenly Father's notice. Every one will serve God's great purpose in this world. Compare Matt. 10: 29, 30.

**19. your patience]** By enduring to the end ye shall be saved; ye shall win your souls. See Mark 13: 13.

**SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.**—1. God overrules wars and strifes for the establishment of his kingdom. 2. God appoints signs of coming judgment. 3. The trials of Christians prove their belief in Christ. 4. Worldly wisdom and foresight avail nothing in a Christian's defence, without God's blessing. 5. Christ will save those who suffer for his sake.

**OVERTHROW OF JERUSALEM, AND THE SIGNS.** 21: 20-28. Compare Matt. 24: 15-21. Mark 13: 14-27.

MOUNT OF OLIVES, Tuesday, April 4, A.D. 30

**20. Jerusalem compassed with armies]** This came to pass about forty years later. Read the graphic description of it by Josephus; *Bell. Jud.* 5: 2, 6 and 12. This was to be a sign of her coming desolation.

**21. depart out]** Many Christians, from this warning, fled to the little town of Pella and escaped the siege of Jerusalem. All were warned to get out, and stay out of Jerusalem, when the armies came about her. The days of retributive justice had come upon her. Pity those who had young babes, for it would be hard for them to escape.

**24. fall by . . the sword, and . . captive]** Josephus says that 1,100,000 Jews perished in the war and siege, and 97,000 were sent into captivity. *Bell. Jud.* 6: 9. Titus had an army of 30,000; the Jews had about 24,000 soldiers, and Titus had a medal struck in honor of the conquest. "Until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled" refers to the time appointed to the nations for the fulfillment of divine judgments. Some refer it to the period of rule by the Gentiles; or, to the conversion of the Gentiles, as under Constantine, but these views are less in accord with the context, and with the rules of strict interpretation.

COMMON VERSION.

19 In your patience possess ye your souls.

20 And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh.

21 Then let them which are in Judea flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto.

22 For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled.

23 But woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck, in those days! for there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people.

24 And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled

REVISED VERSION

19 perish. In your <sup>1</sup>patience ye shall win your <sup>2</sup>souls.

20 But when ye see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that her desolation is at

21 hand. Then let them that are in Judea flee unto the mountains; and let them that are in the midst of her depart out; and let not them that are in the country enter

22 therein. For these are days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be

23 fulfilled. Woe unto them that are with child and to them that give suck in those days! for there shall be great distress upon the <sup>3</sup>land, and wrath unto this people.

24 And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led captive into all the nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be

<sup>1</sup> Or, steadfastness

<sup>2</sup> Or, lives

<sup>3</sup> Or, earth

**25. in perplexity for the roaring]** as in the revised reading. This verse is a graphic picture of the distress which God's judgments would bring upon the people. It is useless to attempt to fix the meaning of each detail of the picture. See Ps. 46 : 4 ; Rev. 17 : 15.

**28. then look up]** After all these distresses and tribulations, then they shall see the coming of the Son of man. There will be a long series of events between the fall of Jerusalem and the final coming of Christ. Hope is to inspire the disciples as the end draws nigh ; then cometh their redemption. All these words were intended to comfort the disciples to whom they were spoken, and to give hopefulness to those who should follow them, in enduring tribulations. See Matt. 24 : 31 ; Rom. 8 : 19-23 ; Rev. 14 : 14.

**SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.**—1. "As in mercy, so in judgment, when God begins, he will make an end."—Henry. 2. Christians are to separate from the wicked, or they may share in their temporal judgments. 3. God tempers judgment with mercy. 4. Those who fear God need not fear his judgments. 5. Hope and redemption are the inheritance of the saints.

**WATCHING FOR THE END.** 21 : 29-33. Compare Matt. 24 : 32-42 ; Mark 13 : 26-37.

MOUNT OF OLIVES AND JERUSALEM, Tuesday, April 4, A. D. 30.

**29. the fig tree]** The fig tree and other trees put forth their buds as summer draws nigh. In the northern portions of America, the melting of the snow is the great mark of the approach of summer, but in lands like Palestine usually without snow, budding of the trees would be the significant sign. So these periods of distress and tribulation were signs of the end.

**32. This generation shall not pass]** This period of Messianic revelation and judgment will be ushered in by these various signs during this generation. On the meaning of generation, see Rice's Commentary on Matthew, p. 244.

COMMON VERSION.

25 ¶ And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars ; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity ; the sea and the waves roaring ;

26 Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth : for the powers of heaven shall be shaken.

27 And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.

28 And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads ; for your redemption draweth nigh.

29 And he spake to them a parable : Behold the fig tree, and all the trees ;

30 When they now shoot forth, ye see and know of your own selves that summer is now nigh at hand.

31 So likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand.

32 Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away, till all be fulfilled.

REVISED VERSION.

25 fulfilled. And there shall be signs in sun and moon and stars ; and upon the earth distress of nations, in perplexity for the

26 roaring of the sea and the billows ; men<sup>1</sup> fainting for fear, and for expectation of the things which are coming on<sup>2</sup> the world :

27 for the powers of the heavens shall be

28 shaken. And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. But when these things begin

to come to pass, look up, and lift up your heads ; because your redemption draweth

nigh.

29 And he spake to them a parable : Behold

30 the fig tree, and all the trees : when they now shoot forth, ye see it and know of your own selves that the summer is now nigh.

31 Even so ye also, when ye see these things coming to pass, know ye that the kingdom

32 of God is nigh. Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away, till all

<sup>1</sup> Or, *expiring*

<sup>2</sup> Gr. *the inhabited earth.*

**33. my words shall not]** Everything on earth and in the sky is changing. Change characterizes temporal things; they are passing away. Christ's words are eternal: truth is eternal. His words will all be fulfilled. They will outlast the world and the visible heavens.

**34. overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness]** These words refer not merely to gross sins, such as gluttony, and intemperance, but to all excess in eating, drinking, or cares in temporal things, and all undue lading of the heart with things that hinder our spiritual life. "Surfeiting" is a medical word: it is in keeping with the warning against all forms of sensuality and worldliness. Compare 1 Thess. 5:3. God's judgment comes unlooked for, "suddenly," as a trap or "snare" upon the careless.

**36. Watch ye]** "At every season," under every condition, crisis or emergency of life, watch against self-indulgence; in prosperity against ease and security; in trial against burdensome cares. Then you may be made to stand (*σταθῆναι* is in the passive voice). We are not worthy to stand, nor can we prevail ourselves, but we can be made to stand through our faith in Christ; or it may be rendered, "ye may prevail to escape . . . and be set before the Son of man," that is, by the angels, see Matt. 24:31.

**37. night he went out . . . in the mount]** Literally "he was by the days in the temple teaching, but by nights going out he lodged [in the open air] in the mount called Olives." This verse states his general habit during that week. After cleansing the temple, Matthew says he lodged at Bethany that night, Matt. 21:17. So also Mark 11:11. Of the other days, Mark says "every evening" or "whenever evening came, he went forth out of the city," Mark 11:19. The Greek word for "abode" or "lodged" here used by Luke means primarily to lodge in the open air. Three nights of the passion week, that is, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, Jesus and his disciples may have "lodged" in some place on the slope of Olivet, possibly in the garden of Gethsemane. Hence Judas would know where to find him, on the night of the betrayal. John also expressly says, "Jesus oftentimes resorted thither with his disciples," John 18:2. It would be no unusual thing for persons in that climate to sleep out of doors wrapped in an outer cloak, dur-

## COMMON VERSION.

33 Heaven and earth shall pass away; but my words shall not pass away.

34 ¶ And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares.

35 For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth.

36 Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.

37 And in the daytime he was teaching in the temple; and at night he went out, and abode in the mount that is called *the mount of Olives*.

38 And all the people came early in the morning to him in the temple, for to hear him.

## REVISED VERSION.

33 things be accomplished. Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away.

34 But take heed to yourselves, lest haply your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and that day come on you suddenly as a snare: 35 for so shall it come upon all them that

36 dwell on the face of all the earth. But watch ye at every season, making supplication, that ye may prevail to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.

37 And every day he was teaching in the temple; and every night he went out, and lodged in the mount that is called Olivet.

38 And all the people came early in the morning to him in the temple, to hear him.

ing that season (April) of the year. The people still crowded into the temple early in the morning, eager to hear him.

**SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.**—1. Christians should observe the signs of spiritual changes as carefully as worldly persons do those of the seasons. 2. Every word of God is sure to be fulfilled. 3. To be self-confident is to be insecure. 4. The changes and judgments from God come suddenly and unlooked for, upon the worldly. 5. Watchful Christians may escape.

**THE PASSOVER PREPARED.** 22 : 1-13. Compare Matt. 26 ; Mark 14 ; John 13.

JERUSALEM, Thursday, April 6, A. D. 30.

**1. of unleavened bread]** Luke omits the supper and anointing at Bethany. He gives a similar anointing at an earlier time, chap. 7 : 36-50, but this can scarcely be the reason for omitting one so entirely distinct as the anointing at Bethany. The feast of unleavened bread lasted a week : strictly the passover was the 15th of Nisan, the great day of the feast, but the name was loosely applied to the entire feast. Luke explains for his Gentile readers that the feast of unleavened bread was called or known to them as the passover.

**2. they feared the people]** The rulers sought to put Jesus to death, but "not on a feast day" for the popular feeling strongly supported Jesus, and the rulers feared a tumult of the people. So Herod feared to destroy John the Baptist.

**3. Satan into Judas]** In stating that Satan tempted and influenced Judas, Luke agrees with John, though John speaks of it at a later period, after the "sop" at the supper. The devil may have "entered" into him twice, that is, twice tempted him to his wicked work. It cannot be understood as an ordinary demoniacal possession. Judas must have given himself up to evil to such an extent that the devil overcame him by temptation.

**4. communed with the chief priests and captains]** The "captains" were in charge of the temple, see v. 52, and Acts 4 : 1. It was their duty to maintain order in the temple, especially during the feasts, when crowds would be present. Judas sought them and the chief priests, to propose his plan for betraying Jesus secretly into their hands.

**5. were glad . . . covenanted to give him money]** The chief priests

COMMON VERSION.

CHAP. XXII.—Now the feast of unleavened bread drew nigh, which is called the passover.

2 And the chief priests and scribes sought how they might kill him ; for they feared the people.

3 ¶ Then entered Satan into Judas surnamed Iscariot, being of the number of the twelve.

4 And he went his way, and communed with the chief priests and captains, how he might betray him unto them.

5 And they were glad, and covenanted to give him money.

REVISED VERSION.

22 Now the feast of unleavened bread drew nigh, which is called the Passover. And the chief priests and the scribes sought how they might put him to death ; for they feared the people.

3 And Satan entered into Judas who was called Iscariot, being of the number of the twelve. And he went away, and communed with the chief priests and captains, how he might deliver him unto them. And they were glad, and covenanted to give him

gladly offered a bribe; and became a party to the bribery and corruption along with Judas. Avarice was his vice: he loved money; the devil used this key to his heart to destroy him. The amount Luke does not state, since it would be of less interest to Gentile than to Jewish readers.

**6. he . . sought opportunity]** There are five steps in the corrupt bargain: 1, Judas sought them; 2, offered to betray his Master; 3, they gladly made a bargain with him for money; 4, he consented to the bargain; 5, he sought to fulfill his wicked pledge. He tried to betray Jesus in the absence of the multitude, or "without tumult;" from which this appears to have been a part of the bargain.

**7. day of unleavened bread]** This language implies that our Lord did not anticipate the passover (as Farrar and others say), but celebrated it upon the usual day. The lamb must be sacrificed upon that day "between the evenings." Deut. 16 : 5, 6. On that day all leaven was carefully removed from every Jewish house. The entire account in Luke, as well as in Matthew and Mark, indicate in fact, that our Lord kept the passover on the right day and hour. Whether irregularities had crept into Jewish usage, in this, as in other observances, we are not informed. The statement in John 18 : 28, that the Jews on the following morning "entered not into the palace, that they might not be defiled, but might eat the passover," certainly *implies* that they had not eaten it. But this defilement would last to sunset only, and they could not eat the passover until after sunset; so this only shifts but does not remove the difficulty. See Bissell's *Biblical Antiquities*, pp. 264-266. Why they delayed it, we are not informed. The question has caused prolonged discussion ever since the days of Chrysostom and the early Christian Fathers. Its full treatment belongs properly to a commentary on John.

**8. sent Peter and John]** Luke alone gives us the names of the disciples who prepared the passover. They were to secure the room, the lamb, the bitter herbs, the wine, and whatever else would be required. These two leaders of the apostolic band were fitting persons for this important work. It is not likely they alone were selected, that the place of its celebration might be kept a secret from Judas (a view expressed in my *Commentary on Matthew*, but which a re-examination has led me to regard as unsatisfactory), since he was present at the feast with the others. The question in v. 9 agrees with the statement in Matt. 26 : 17; Mark 14 : 12. Luke gives the conversation more fully than the others.

**10. a man meet you, bearing a pitcher of water]** These specific

## COMMON VERSION.

6 And he promised, and sought opportunity to betray him unto them in the absence of the multitude.

7 ¶ Then came the day of unleavened bread, when the passover must be killed.

8 And he sent Peter and John, saying, Go and prepare us the passover, that we may eat.

9 And they said unto him, Where wilt thou that we prepare?

10 And he said unto them, Behold, when ye are entered into the city, there shall a man meet you, bearing a pitcher of water; follow him into the house where he entereth in.

## REVISED VERSION.

6 money. And he consented, and sought opportunity to deliver him unto them <sup>1</sup> in the absence of the multitude

7 And the day of unleavened bread came, on which the passover must be sacrificed.

8 And he sent Peter and John, saying, Go and make ready for us the passover, that

9 we may eat. And they said unto him,

10 Where wilt thou that we make ready? And he said unto them, Behold, when ye are entered into the city, there shall meet you a man bearing a pitcher of water; follow him into the house whereinto he goeth.

<sup>1</sup> Or, *without tumult*

things would enable Peter and John to find the room without trouble. It is unusual for a man to carry water in Syria. That is the work of woman. This was therefore a peculiar mark. Then water was carried sometimes in leathern bottles. This man would have an *earthen* pitcher (for this is the meaning of the Greek word), another not very common mode of carrying water. Bringing water was at this time a necessary part of the preparation for the passover feast. This "man," probably a slave, the two disciples were to follow to the house "whereinto he goeth." They would enter the central court, not the rooms of the house, and then make their errand known. An entrance thus far into an Eastern house was not an intrusion.

**11. Where is the guest-chamber]** Having followed him into the house, they were to say to the householder, "The Teacher saith unto thee, Where is the guest-chamber [the same word as for an inn, or lodging room] where I shall eat the passover with my disciples?" Whether, as seems probable, the householder was a disciple of Jesus, or whether he was divinely moved to grant the request, we are not informed. It was customary for Jews to be very hospitable, and according to the Talmud they would not let rooms for hire at this feast; but the message implies some knowledge of the "Teacher" or "Master" by the person to whom it was sent. The house was perhaps near what is now known as St. Stephen's gate.

**12. a large upper room furnished]** This was not the room for which they were to ask. They asked for a small chamber out from the lower court. They were offered a large upper parlor, as we might call it, "furnished," literally "spread," usually meaning, spread with reclining couches and rugs. They found all these things as Jesus had said unto them, and there they made ready. The needful things as already stated were, the lamb, the wine, bitter herbs, and unleavened bread. It probably included a removal of all leaven, if that had not been done.

SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.—1. Those high in office in state and church may fall into very grievous sin. 2. There was a traitor among the twelve apostles; how many betrayers of Christ may there be in the whole church! 3. A professed disciple and the leaders in the Jewish church were parties to bribery; a sorrowful warning to Christians now. 4. Money was the instrument of this, and of many great sins. 5. The Lord knows where to find messengers and means for whatever he plans to do.

THE PASSOVER AND THE LORD'S SUPPER. 22 : 14-23. Compare Matt. 26 : 20-29; Mark 14 : 17-25; John 13 : 1-38.

JERUSALEM, Thursday, April 6, A. D. 30.

It is somewhat remarkable that Luke alone records the strife of the disci-

COMMON VERSION.

11 And ye shall say unto the goodman of the house, The Master saith unto thee, Where is the guestchamber, where I shall eat the passover with my disciples?

12 And he shall shew you a large upper room furnished: there make ready.

13 And they went, and found as he had said unto them: and they made ready the passover.

REVISED VERSION.

11 And ye shall say unto the goodman of the house, The <sup>2</sup> Master saith unto thee, Where is the guest-chamber, where I shall eat the passover with my disciples? And he will shew you a large upper room furnished: 13 there make ready. And they went, and found as he had said unto them: and they made ready the passover.

ples at the passover table, and the charge to buy a sword. John alone records the feet-washing, and the charge to Judas, but omits the institution of the Lord's supper, though he alone gives the long discourse of Jesus before leaving the upper room.

**14. when the hour was come]** What hour? Unquestionably the usual hour for eating the passover meal. This is another definite indication that Jesus kept the true passover. See v. 7. Then "he sat down," literally "fell back" or "reclined," and the apostles with him. They did not sit on chairs, or benches, as the celebrated painting of Leonardo Da Vinci represents them as doing. The early custom was to stand, but this had been long departed from. "With desire I have desired" is a Hebraism meaning with a strong desire. "This passover" points to this as the *last* regular passover, not to it as if an irregular one.

**16. I will not . . . eat . . . until it be fulfilled]** Some suppose this means that he would not eat of this passover, and therefore that this meal he was eating was not the true passover. But if this strained interpretation is to hold, then it may with equal force be held to mean that after it is fulfilled, Jesus will eat of this particular passover, which reduces the sense to an absurdity. The obvious sense is, that Jesus will not hereafter eat of the passover at all, for it is to cease. Notice the expression in v. 18, and compare a similar Hebraistic expression in 1 Sam. 15: 35. Meyer holds that Luke here represents our Lord as refusing to drink the wine, yet he concedes this to be improbable. This view is not only groundless but untenable, as a careful comparison of vs. 16 and 18 will obviously show.

**17. a cup . . . divide it among yourselves]** Notice the revised reading. The "cup" here named, probably was the "third cup" in the Jewish feast, called the cup of blessing. This was drunk after the lamb was eaten. The "cup" in v. 20, the actual cup at the institution of the Lord's supper, was the fourth cup. After receiving the first of these cups, a blessing was pronounced. Various forms of blessings are found in the Mishna. In v. 18 we find a repetition of the declaration of v. 16, only in a more definite form; "from henceforth," that is, after this celebration of the passover.

**19. took bread]** Or, "he took a loaf," and again having given thanks,

## COMMON VERSION.

14 And when the hour was come, he sat down, and the twelve apostles with him.

15 And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer:

16 For I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God.

17 And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide it among yourselves:

18 For I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come.

19 ¶ And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me.

## REVISED VERSION.

14 And when the hour was come, he sat down, and the apostles with him. And he

said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer:

16 for I say unto you, I shall not eat it, until

17 it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God. And he received a cup, and when he had given

thanks, he said, Take this, and divide it among yourselves: for I say unto you, I shall

not drink from henceforth of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come.

19 And he took <sup>1</sup> bread, and when he had given

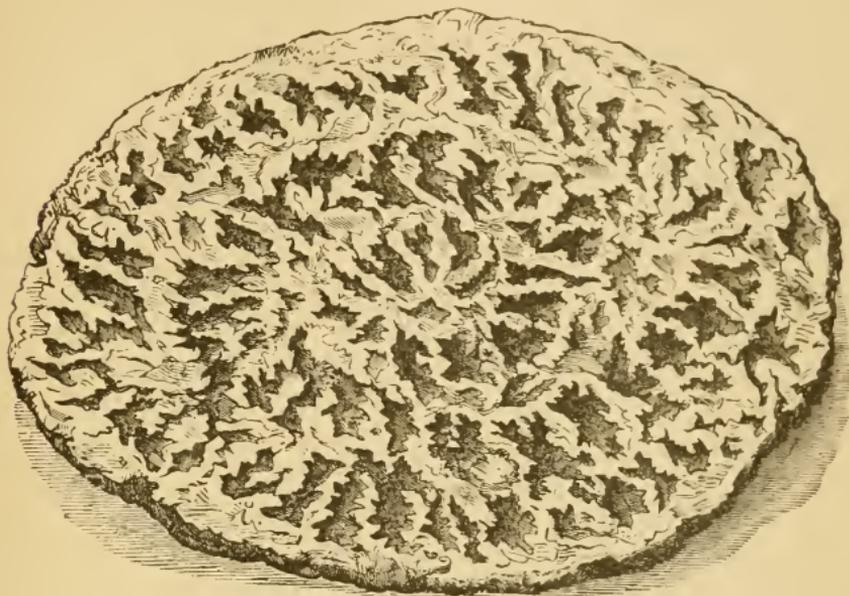
thanks, he brake it, and gave to them, saying, This is my body<sup>2</sup> which is given for

<sup>1</sup> Or, a loaf

<sup>2</sup> Some ancient authorities omit *which is given for you . . . which is poured out*

for you.

he brake the loaf, and gave unto the disciples, saying, "This is my body." The fierce controversy which has raged over this phrase is a forcible illustration of the foolishness of sectarianism. In Hebrew, Chaldaic, and Aramaic there is no synonym for "signify." So we read in Gen. 41 : 26, "The seven



PASSOVER LOAF, OR CAKE.

good kine *are* seven years." The coupling word "is" would not probably be used by our Lord. See Edersheim, *Life of Jesus*, Vol. 2, pp. 511, 512. As to the nature and conditions of this ordinance, the various churches of Christendom are widely divided in opinion; see my *Commentary on Matthew*, p. 271.

**21. of him that betrayeth me]** If this fact is here in its true order, we must surely conclude that Judas was present at the institution of the Lord's Supper, as well as at the beginning of the passover. And this view was held by many of the early Christian fathers. Edersheim, Geikie, Robinson and many writers hold that Judas left the company after receiving the sop, and quite early in the meal, hence before the institution of the supper. See this question discussed in my *Commentary on Mark*, p. 171. The strife clearly took place earlier in the meal, and it seems natural to suppose that Luke puts the remark about the traitor in connection with the strife, by the law of association. See Matt. 26 : 21-25; Mark 14 : 18-21; John 13 : 21-26.

## COMMON VERSION.

20 Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup *is* the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you.

21 ¶ But, behold, the hand of him that betrayeth me *is* with me on the table.

## REVISED VERSION.

20 you : this do in remembrance of me. And the cup in like manner after supper, saying, This cup is the new covenant in my blood, *even* that which is poured out for you.

21 But behold, the hand of him that betrayeth

**22. as it was [hath been] determined]** All this was according to the purpose of God. Compare Acts 2 : 23, "him, being delivered up by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God," see revised reading. And yet the Jews, "By the hand of lawless men did crucify and slay." The purpose of God in nowise diminished the sin and guilt of those who put Jesus to death.

**23. which of them it was]** The anxious, surprised, and troubled faces of the disciples, we seem to see; for they appear not to have suspected Judas. The brevity of this allusion to the traitor, seems to favor the inference that Luke adds these facts to his account to complete his sketch of these events, but without intending to fix their chronological order.

SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.—1. The Lord gives his people outward and sensible signs and ordinances to aid in his worship. 2. He would have us commemorate great events in the history of our redemption. 3. Christ will have his people remember him. 4. We are to remember his finished work for us. 5. His sacrifice was to put away our sins. 6. He warns us to beware of the temptation to betray or deny him. 7. The warning ought to cause us continual searching of heart.

WARNING TO DISCIPLES AND TO PETER. 22 : 24-38. Compare Matt. 26 : 20-36; Mark 14 : 17-31.

JERUSALEM, Thursday, April 6, A. D. 30.

The order of events here is not clear, and harmonists are not agreed in regard to it. Combining all the narratives, it seems reasonable to believe that the strife about who should be the greatest occurred early in the passover feast, and was followed by the feet-washing, as a rebuke to their pride. Then the traitor was pointed out, given the sop, and he withdrew. The institution of the supper was followed by the warning to Peter, and by the long discourse recorded in John 14 to 16. The contention of the disciples at the passover is narrated by Luke only, as also the notice of the swords. But a similar strife is narrated at an earlier period by the first three evangelists, Matt. 18 : 1; Mark 9 : 34; Luke 9 : 46.

**24. which of them . . . greatest]** Notice the revised reading, "there arose also a contention among them, which of them was accounted to be greatest." The old ambition for place and preferment broke out anew. For the former instance, see references above. This was probably occasioned by securing places on the couches at the table. John appears to have had a place next to Jesus. Peter was perhaps opposite, at the head of another couch. How the others were placed is wholly unknown.

#### COMMON VERSION.

22 And truly the Son of man goeth, as it was determined : but woe unto that man by whom he is betrayed !

23 And they began to inquire among themselves, which of them it was that should do this thing.

24 ¶ And there was also a strife among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest.

#### REVISED VERSION.

22 me is with me on the table. For the Son of man indeed goeth, as it hath been determined : but woe unto that man through whom he is betrayed ! And they began to question among themselves, which of them it was that should do this thing.

24 And there arose also a contention among them, which of them was accounted to be

**25. lordship over them]** For a similar rebuke, see Matt. 20 : 25, 26. The title "benefactor" was one that heathen monarchs loved to assume. One of the Ptolemies of Egypt had this title. Tertullus thus flattered Felix, Acts 24 : 2. Disciples are not to have this pride of place and of authority. Their glory is that they serve their brethren. That is the kind of greatness to be sought.

**27. I am . . as he that serveth]** Among you, he is the greatest that sitteth at meat; but by washing your feet I have become among you as one that does menial service: learn this lesson of service from me! Compare Phil. 2 : 7. The "temptations," or "trials," of v. 28, refer not so much to the special temptation of the devil after baptism, which was before his disciples were with him, as to his whole ministry and his bearing with the unbelief of the Jews.

**29. I appoint unto you a kingdom]** That is, a kingdom which you must attain through trials and service, even as my Father appointed unto me. You are to be kings in due time, but serving and trial must precede that. See 2 Tim. 2 : 12.

**30. sit on thrones]** A similar figure to that of eating is found in Rev. 19 : 7-9, in the marriage supper of the Lamb. On thrones judging, has been variously interpreted to mean: 1, that all would be judged by the doctrines the apostles preached; 2, that the apostles would condemn the Jews, as the Ninevites and the queen of Sheba would; 3, that they shall be co-judges with Christ; 4, that they shall be pre-eminent after the second coming of Christ, and the restoration of the Jews. Paul has a similar thought, "Know ye not that the saints shall judge the world?" and "angels?" 1 Cor. 6 : 2, 3.

**31. Simon . . Satan . . sift you]** Christ has his fan to separate wheat from chaff; Satan has his sieve to toss, shake and prove the saints by trials. The devil seeks to destroy believers. In the Greek the word for "you" is plural in fact as well as form, and therefore may apply to all the disciples. But Simon is solemnly addressed and warned, perhaps because he was foremost in

## COMMON VERSION.

25 And he said unto them, The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors.

26 But ye shall not be so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve.

27 For whether is greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? is not he that sitteth at meat? but I am among you as he that serveth.

28 Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations.

29 And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me;

30 That ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

31 ¶ And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat:

## REVISED VERSION.

25 <sup>1</sup>greatest. And he said unto them, The kings of the Gentiles have lordship over them; and they that have authority over

26 them are called Benefactors. But ye shall not be so: but he that is the greater among you, let him become as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve.

27 For whether is greater, he that <sup>2</sup>sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? is not he that <sup>2</sup>sitteth at meat? but I am in the midst of

28 you as he that serveth. But ye are they that have continued with me in my trials;

29 and <sup>3</sup>I appoint unto you a kingdom, even

30 as my Father appointed unto me, that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom; and ye shall sit on thrones judging

31 the twelve tribes of Israel. Simon, Simon, behold, Satan <sup>4</sup>asked to have you, that he

<sup>1</sup> Gr. greater. <sup>2</sup> Gr. reclineth. <sup>3</sup> Or, I appoint unto you, even as my Father appointed unto me a kingdom, that ye may eat and drink, &c.

<sup>4</sup> Or, obtained you by asking

the strife. Instead of indicating any special sanctity in Peter or any pre-eminence, except in danger from the devil overcoming him, it shows the opposite. Well may every believer tremble, and cry out for the Lord to plead that the devil prevail not. When Peter had fully "turned again"—see revised reading—recovered from his fall, then his work would be to "stablish" or "strengthen" his brethren.

**33. I am ready]** Confident Peter little knew his own heart, or the power and the wiles of the devil. He could now face prison and death for his Master. A few hours later he could not face the taunts of a house-maid without denying his Lord!

**34. I tell thee, Peter]** It amazes us, as we read this distinct and terrible warning, that Peter was off his guard in less than twenty-four hours after this! But how often does one go from the heights of spiritual enjoyment and ecstasy to the depths of the valley of humiliation. Peter is a type of multitudes of believers in this respect.

**35. lacked ye anything]** As the time of want and trial is soon to come, Jesus would prepare them for it by reminding them of the providential way in which everything needful was provided for them, when they were sent out on a mission two by two, without purse, wallet or shoes. They wanted nothing. But now a time of severe trial was at hand.

**36. sell . . and buy a sword]** The revised reading is more satisfactory in this verse, which is confessedly difficult, whether it be taken literally or figuratively. Indeed to take it literally brings up so many hard questions, that few have the hardihood so to interpret it. The thought seems to be: you had better provide for defence against other enemies, than to have this unseemly strife among yourselves. The time is at hand now, when you must guide and defend yourselves without my visible presence and leadership. You must part with everything for self-defence. Make provision now for this, by securing every reasonable means of self-defence.

**38. two swords . . enough]** The disciples failed to see the force of his

## COMMON VERSION.

32 But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.

33 And he said unto him, Lord, I am ready to go with thee, both into prison, and to death.

34 And he said, I tell thee, Peter, the cock shall not crow this day, before that thou shalt thrice deny that thou knowest me.

35 And he said unto them, When I sent you without purse, and scrip, and shoes, lacked ye any thing? And they said, Nothing.

36 Then said he unto them, But now, he that hath a purse, let him take it, and likewise his scrip: and he that hath no sword, let him sell his garment, and buy one.

37 For I say unto you, that this that is written must yet be accomplished in me, And he was reckoned among the transgressors: for the things concerning me have an end.

38 And they said, Lord, behold, here are two swords. And he said unto them, It is enough.

## REVISED VERSION.

32 might sift you as wheat: but I made supplication for thee, that thy faith fail not: and do thou, when once thou hast turned

33 again, stablish thy brethren. And he said unto him, Lord, with thee I am ready to go

34 both to prison and to death. And he said, I tell thee, Peter, the cock shall not crow this day, until thou shalt thrice deny that thou knowest me.

35 And he said unto them, When I sent you forth without purse, and wallet, and shoes, lacked ye any thing? And they said, Noth-

36 ing. And he said unto them, But now, he that hath a purse, let him take it, and likewise a wallet: <sup>1</sup> and he that hath none, let him sell

37 his cloke, and buy a sword. For I say unto you, that this which is written must be fulfilled in me, And he was reckoned with transgressors: for that which concerneth

38 me hath <sup>2</sup> fulfilment. And they said, Lord, behold, here are two swords. And he said unto them, It is enough.

<sup>1</sup> Or, and he that hath no sword, let him sell his cloke and buy one.

<sup>2</sup> Gr. end.

instruction or prediction about himself and them. Although this was the third or fourth time he had made the announcement, they were still dull at heart. The response of Jesus, "It is enough," seems to refer to this dullness of apprehension, rather than to the swords. He was wearied with teaching and by the thought of Judas' base betrayal, and the burden of his coming suffering.

**SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.**—1. Pride and love of pre-eminence are old sins. 2. But true eminence comes through humble, faithful service. 3. Fidelity is commended by the Master. 4. The promise of suffering is blended with the promise of great honor. 5. The devil is a real enemy to our souls. 6. Christ's intercession for each saint is his hope. 7. The strong ought to help the weak in faith. 8. The Christian is to provide wisely against coming evils. 9. Christ finishes the work of salvation.

**IN GETHSEMANE.** 22 : 39-53. Compare Matt. 26 : 36-46; Mark 14 : 26-42; John 18 : 1-11.

GETHSEMANE, NEAR JERUSALEM, Thursday, April 6, A.D. 30.

Jesus was now entering into the greatest conflict, so far as we know, that the universe has ever known. It was the magnificent and awful contest of the powers of hell with the powers of heaven. By prayer, Jesus would put himself into more immediate communion with the Father, as the best preparation for the conflict. He therefore sought his accustomed place of retirement in the field or garden of Gethsemane. As we stand now in the shadow of this great and terrible spiritual struggle, this anguish of soul, let it be with uncovered head and reverent spirit. Shall the way to heaven for the human race be opened in the face of ages of sin, and the hosts of Satan, or, shall it be forever closed? What the victory cost, we may now see.

**39. he came out, and went]** From the upper room he passed out of the city, across the Kedron, unto the Mount of Olives, "as his custom was," see revised reading and compare Luke 21 : 37. From these two passages, it is fair to infer that Jesus had spent his nights in this place, owing perhaps to the crowded state of the city during the passover. Judas knew the place, John 18 : 2, and guided the band of officers to it.

**40. at the place]** It was at or near the garden called Gethsemane. The Latins have fixed the spot since the fourth century, a few hundred feet east from the city. The small garden enclosure is now surrounded by a low wall. Eight old olive trees, propped up with stones, are in the garden. All the trees about Jerusalem were cut down by order of Titus, but the olive trees may have sprung from the roots of the more ancient ones, for these are said to have been standing at the time of the Saracenic conquest of Jerusalem, A.D. 636. Jesus had the eleven with him, and he urged them to pray "that ye

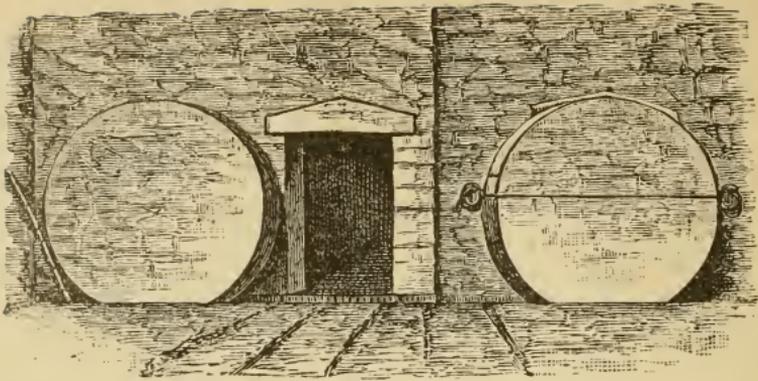
COMMON VERSION.

39 ¶ And he came out, and went, as he was wont, to the mount of Olives; and his disciples also followed him.

40 And when he was at the place, he said unto them, Pray that ye enter not into temptation.

REVISED VERSION.

39 And he came out, and went, as his custom was, unto the mount of Olives; and the disciples also followed him. And when he was at the place, he said unto them, Pray



Tomb open and closed.



Gethsemane, and olive trees. (After a Photograph.)

enter not into temptation." Ryle thoughtfully observes: "To be assaulted by temptation is one thing, but to enter into it is quite another." The one is a painful thing, the other is a sin. So long as the devil is free, and man in the body, so long there will be temptation.

**42. remove this cup from me]** Entering Gethsemane, he left eight of the band of disciples. With three, whom Trench calls "the flower and crown of the apostolic band," Jesus went on, but was soon parted from them, retiring into the deeper shades of the garden. In was in the time of the full moon; clear and light except in the shadows of the thick olives. Then he "kneeled" or "fell on his face," Matt. 26:39, and prayed "remove this cup;" the cup signifying the great sorrow. In the East each guest was given a particular cup, and its contents expressed the respect of the host for the guest. So the cup signifies the portion assigned to one, whether of pleasure or of trial. This prayer shows that the will of Jesus was in harmony with the will of the Father; they are one. But his human nature naturally shrank from the terrible pain and death. The divine and human in one person is a mysterious fact, but a mystery deeper in degree only than the mystery of human life; a soul, a thinking mind in a material body. Jesus lovingly submitted to the Father's will in this awful trial.

**44. as it were great drops of blood]** The two facts in vs. 43, 44, that an angel appeared to Jesus in the agony, and that his anguish wrung from him a bloody sweat, are stated by Luke only. In some early copies of this Gospel these verses are omitted, probably because the copyists thought them not befitting the Lord's divine nature, or, that they might favor the Arian views of Christ's nature. But the evidence of their genuineness is too strong to be overcome. Cases of great mental anguish, causing drops of blood to ooze from the body like sweat, are known to medical authorities. This agony of Jesus is inexplicable on the theory that he feared death, or that his suffering and mental anguish were solely on his own account. It is explicable on the theory that he "bore our sins;" that he who knew no sin was made sin for us; that the world's guilt lay upon him. See Is. 53:5; 2 Cor. 5:21; 1 Pet. 2:24.

**45. them sleeping for sorrow]** Luke alone tells us the cause of the disciples being asleep. This is a common effect of great and prolonged grief; the strongest human frame will be overcome, and fall asleep, under the strain. It is a gracious provision of nature; without it, the brittle thread of life would

## COMMON VERSION.

41 And he was withdrawn from them about a stone's cast, and kneeled down, and prayed,

42 Saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless, not my will, but thine, be done.

43 And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him.

44 And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.

45 And when he rose up from prayer, and was come to his disciples, he found them sleeping for sorrow,

## REVISED VERSION.

41 that ye enter not into temptation. And he was parted from them about a stone's cast;

42 and he kneeled down and prayed, saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but

43 thine, be done. <sup>1</sup> And there appeared unto him an angel from heaven, strengthening

44 him. And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat became as it were great drops of blood falling down upon

45 the ground. And when he rose up from his prayer, he came unto the disciples, and

<sup>1</sup> Many ancient authorities omit ver. 43, 44.

snap. Again Jesus commands them to pray, lest they enter into temptation. Bengel shrewdly remarks that rising and standing up is a good posture for overcoming drowsiness in prayer. Jesus perhaps heard the tramp of the coming band with Judas, and hence warned the disciples, since sleep now would be impossible for any of them.

**47. behold, a multitude, and . . . Judas]** This multitude was composed of the Jewish guard, some soldiers, probably from the castle of Antonia under the Roman chiliarch, and priests and elders. There is an undertone of sorrow and horror in the expression that Judas, "one of the twelve," came to betray the Master in this base manner, and with a mock kiss of friendship; especially does this appear in the pathetic reproof Jesus gave in v. 48. The disciples seeing "the thing about to take place," for this is the force of the Greek, asked "shall we smite with the sword?" and did not wait for an answer.

**50. one . . . cut off his right ear]** Though all the evangelists relate this incident, John alone says the disciple was Peter, and that Malchus was the servant whose ear was cut off. When the first three wrote, perhaps it would have unduly exposed Peter to have named him, but when John wrote, Peter had doubtless already suffered death, so that no harm would follow from giving the name. Peter no doubt struck a lusty blow intended to cleave the head of the man, but for some reason, perhaps the darkness, missed his aim, and only struck off an ear.

**51. Suffer ye thus far]** This, if addressed to the captors, might mean: allow the disciples to go away; permit me to heal the man. If said to the disciples it was to restrain them, and implied: let them take me, and do not resist them. If Luke's account alone were followed, the former might be accepted as the meaning. But comparing the account of Matthew and John with this of Luke, the latter view, that it was addressed to the disciples, seems to be the more tenable interpretation. For Jesus to plead with his enemies to free his arms a moment, that he might heal the wounded man, as Alford, Farrar, and some others suggest, is not in accord with his stern reproof in vs. 52, 53, nor with his usual mode of dealing with them; see also Matt. 26 : 52, 53. He could have healed the ear without the touch, and the decided reproof of the disciples for the rashness of this act closely following the act, in-

## COMMON VERSION.

46 And said unto them, Why sleep ye? rise and pray, lest ye enter into temptation.

47 ¶ And while he yet spake, behold a multitude, and he that was called Judas, one of the twelve, went before them, and drew near unto Jesus to kiss him.

48 But Jesus said unto him, Judas, betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss?

49 When they which were about him saw what would follow, they said unto him, Lord, shall we smite with the sword?

50 ¶ And one of them smote the servant of the high priest, and cut off his right ear.

51 And Jesus answered and said, Suffer ye thus far. And he touched his ear, and healed him.

## REVISED VERSION.

46 found them sleeping for sorrow, and said unto them, Why sleep ye? rise and pray, that ye enter not into temptation.

47 While he yet spake, behold, a multitude, and he that was called Judas, one of the twelve, went before them; and he drew

48 near unto Jesus to kiss him. But Jesus said unto him, Judas, betrayest thou the

49 Son of man with a kiss? And when they that were about him saw what would follow, they said, Lord, shall we smite with

50 the sword? And a certain one of them smote the <sup>1</sup>servant of the high priest, and

51 struck off his right ear. But Jesus answered and said, Suffer ye thus far. And

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *bondservant*.

dicates that all this conversation was addressed to them. He healed the ear of the enemy without being asked to do it, and, so far as stated, without any faith or thanks of the healed person.

**52. Jesus said unto the chief priests]** Jesus now reproaches the chief priests and Jewish officers for their cowardice, in thus secretly and basely dogging his footsteps to arrest him by night like a common robber, or brigand. If they really believed him to be a very bad man, why did they not take him when he was daily teaching in the temple? But he tells them the reason: this is the hour of your victory, and of the power of the prince of darkness, implying that they were co-operating with the devil and his powers in this act, whether they intended to form such a league or not. They regarded Jesus as so notable a prisoner, that the chief priests in person had accompanied the guard out of the city, to be present at the arrest.

**SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.**—1. Prayer is the best preparation for trial. 2. The anguish of Christ was caused by our sin. 3. Angels are always ready to succor tried believers. 4. To profess friendship for while we betray Christ, is the basest treachery. 5. Christ teaches us to suffer wrong, rather than to do wrong. 6. Injustice and cowardice are characteristic of the world in dealing with Christ. 7. The devil and his servants may overpower the good for a time.

**PETER'S DENIALS: JESUS BEFORE THE HIGH PRIESTS AND COUNCIL. 22: 54-71.** Compare Matt. 26: 57-75; Mark 14: 53-72; John 18: 13-27.

JERUSALEM, Thursday night and Friday morning, April 6 and 7, A.D. 30.

The order of events in this part of the history is not clear. Some find it so difficult that they give up all attempts to make it out. Meyer says of the accounts of Matthew and Mark as compared with Luke, "the two narratives cannot be reconciled," but he gives the preference to Luke where he agrees with John, since Luke regarded Annas as high priest. See Acts 4: 6. It is scarcely necessary to say in opposition to this, that our ignorance of a way of reconciliation is no proof that facts cannot be reconciled. Moreover there are ways of reconciliation discoverable that are reasonable and consistent, even from the brief statement of facts we have. If the details were more fully given, we may therefore be sure, the order would be clear. Luke does not narrate the first examination, but relates Peter's denials. It is usually assumed that the high priest of v. 54 refers to Caiaphas, but this is far from certain. In Acts 4: 6, Luke calls "Annas the high priest," naming him just

COMMON VERSION.

52 Then Jesus said unto the chief priests, and captains of the temple, and the elders, which were come to him, Be ye come out, as against a thief, with swords and staves?

53 When I was daily with you in the temple, ye stretched forth no hands against me: but this is your hour, and the power of darkness.

REVISED VERSION.

52 he touched his ear, and healed him. And Jesus said unto the chief priests, and captains of the temple, and elders, that were come against him, Are ye come out, as against a robber, with swords and staves?

53 When I was daily with you in the temple, ye stretched not forth your hands against me: but this is your hour, and the power of darkness.

before Caiaphas. It is therefore possible, if not probable, that Luke refers to Annas in v. 54. This order of events then is reasonably satisfactory : Jesus is led before Annas, who sends him to Caiaphas, where he is examined before an informal meeting of the council at night. While these examinations are progressing before Annas and Caiaphas, Peter denies his Master. Early in the morning, a more formal meeting of the council is called ; Jesus is again examined and condemned. He is led before Pilate. Meanwhile Judas seeing the result of his act, hurls the money back to the priests in the temple. Pilate sends Jesus to Herod, who sends him back to Pilate, and the Roman trial proceeds. Barabbas is preferred to Christ ; Pilate's wife sends a message ; Jesus is scourged, and shown to the crowd, who cry "crucify ;" Pilate yields and delivers Jesus to be crucified.

**54. led him . . into the high priest's house]** Literally "and having seized, they led, and led him away into the house of the high priest." Who



TRADITIONAL SITE OF PALACE OF CAIAPHAS. (FROM A PHOTOGRAPH.)

is meant by "high priest?" Caiaphas is the common, but by no means surely the correct answer. Nor is it certain that all the denials by Peter took place at Caiaphas' palace, unless indeed it is assumed with Farrar, that Caia-

COMMON VERSION.

54 ¶ Then took they him, and led *him*, and brought him into the high priest's house. And Peter followed afar off.

55 And when they had kindled a fire in the midst of the hall, and were set down together, Peter sat down among them.

REVISED VERSION.

54 And they seized him, and led him *away*, and brought him into the high priest's house. But Peter followed afar off. And when they had kindled a fire in the midst of the court, and had sat down together,

phas and Annas occupied the same building; for Luke (3:2) specially names both Annas and Caiaphas as high priests, and places Annas first; and again in Acts 4:6, calls Annas high priest, and does not give that title to Caiaphas, although he names him in the same sentence. Taking these with the definite statement of John 18:13, it is more probable that Luke here refers to Annas as the high priest, as Meyer holds. Observe also that Luke gives no account of an earlier examination before the high priest (either Annas or Caiaphas), but only of Peter's denials, and the mockery of the officers, vs. 56-65. The high priest's palace was between the upper city and the Temple. To this palace Peter followed "afar off." His fellow-disciple, John, went into the palace with Jesus and the guard, for he was known to the high priest. Peter lingered without, but John spoke to the maid at the door, and Peter also was admitted. John 18:15, 16. Peter still lingered in the court of the palace by a fire, probably made upon a brazier.

**56. a certain maid . . . said]** This maid appears to have been the one who let him in. John 18:17. She looked at him steadily or closely by the firelight, and then no doubt with some scorn said, literally, "And this (man) was with him." But Peter snappishly denied it, "Woman, I know him not." This is the first denial.

**58. Man, I am not]** This is part of the second denial. Luke mentions another man as charging that Peter was of the company of Jesus. Matthew and Mark mention a maid, while John says, "they said." Peter had gone from the light toward the gate or entrance. Matt. 26:71. It is easy to see how all these accounts are true; that a maid, a man, and others of the crowd in the palace court joined in the charge almost at the same time. This would be a natural thing at such a time. Again Peter firmly denied the charge.

**59. he is a Galilæan]** This is the third charge and denial. Luke alone gives us a definite note of time, "about one hour." Matthew and Mark tell us that several again joined in the charge. Luke says "another" man, while John definitely states that it was one of the high priest's servants, and a relative of Malchus, whose ear Peter cut off, that made the charge. Here again it is plain that several set on Peter at once. Some said, thou art a Galilæan; others added, your speech betrayeth you. The peculiarities of the Galilæan dialect are shown and examples given by Friedleib, and by Buxtorf in his *Lexicon of Chaldee and of the Talmud*. And finally the high priest's servant

## COMMON VERSION.

56 But a certain maid beheld him as he sat by the fire, and earnestly looked upon him, and said, This man was also with him.

57 And he denied him, saying, Woman, I know him not.

58 And after a little while another saw him, and said, Thou art also of them. And Peter said, Man, I am not.

59 And about the space of one hour after another confidently affirmed, saying, Of a truth this fellow also was with him; for he is a Galilæan.

60 And Peter said, Man, I know not what thou sayest. And immediately, while he yet spake, the cock crew.

## REVISED VERSION.

56 Peter sat in the midst of them. And a certain maid seeing him as he sat in the light of the fire, and looking steadfastly upon him,

57 said, This man also was with him. But he denied, saying, Woman, I know him not.

58 And after a little while another saw him, and said, Thou also art one of them. But

59 Peter said, Man, I am not. And after the space of about one hour another confidently affirmed, saying, Of a truth this man also was

60 with him: for he is a Galilæan. But Peter said, Man, I know not what thou sayest.

And immediately, while he yet spake, the

boldly puts the matter beyond question by asking, "Did I not see thee in the garden with him?" Poor Peter, thus assailed by the whole crowd in the chill night, was irritated beyond measure, lost his sense, his temper, and the command of his tongue. He began to curse and to swear, Matt. 26: 74, and flatly denied that he even knew Jesus. As he was speaking, the cock crew.

**61. the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter]** What a look of sorrow and pain it must have been! Jesus may have been suffering insults and cruel mockings from his enemies at that moment, in a room looking out upon the court. Or, it may have been as they were leading Jesus from one part of the palace to another during the preliminary examinations, and his appearance was the occasion of the third charge and denial by Peter, which the Lord overheard. How that look must have pierced Peter's heart! "Peter remembered the word of the Lord;" that look suddenly recalled that terrible warning word. That awful prophecy was fulfilled; what should Peter do? What could he do but rush from the place of his fall, and "weep aloud" (for this is the force of the Greek), and bitterly, over his awful sin!

**63. mocked him, and smote [beat] him]** While Peter was shamefully denying his Master in the court yard, the night examination of Jesus before the high priest went on, and the guards were permitted to mock, beat, blindfold, smite, and revile the Son of God, in mockery calling on him blindfolded to tell who struck him.

**66. led him into their council]** This was a formal meeting of the Sanhedrin, early in the morning. There had been a smaller meeting in the night. The Sanhedrin formerly met in the hall Gazith, the hall of square stones, in the temple area, but its meeting had been removed to another, the hall of purchase, on the east of the temple court. It is probable, however, that this meeting was in the high priest's palace. Now the judgment is to be formally made. Luke's account is brief; few details are given. His Gentile readers would not be interested in the details of the proceedings in a Jewish council. So he gives the conclusion. This is important, for it shows who Jesus, in that trying hour, confessed and claimed himself to be.

**67. Art thou the Christ?]** Better, "If thou art the Christ, tell us."

## COMMON VERSION.

61 And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice.

62 And Peter went out, and wept bitterly.

63 ¶ And the men that held Jesus mocked him, and smote him.

64 And when they had blindfolded him, they struck him on the face, and asked him, saying, Prophecy, who is it that smote thee?

65 And many other things blasphemously spake they against him.

66 ¶ And as soon as it was day, the elders of the people and the chief priests and the scribes came together, and led him into their council, saying,

67 Art thou the Christ? tell us. And he said unto them, If I tell you, ye will not believe:

## REVISED VERSION.

61 cock crew. And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how that he said unto him, Before the cock crow this day, thou shalt deny me thrice. And he went out, and wept bitterly.

63 And the men that held <sup>1</sup>Jesus mocked him, and beat him. And they blindfolded him, and asked him, saying, Prophecy: who is he that struck thee? And many other things spake they against him, reviling him.

66 And as soon as it was day, the assembly of the elders of the people was gathered together, both chief priests and scribes; and they led him away into their council, saying,

67 If thou art the Christ, tell us. But he said unto them, If I tell you, ye will not believe:

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *him*.

Their appeal was intended to force Jesus to criminate himself, in their judgment. For, they would not believe that he was the Messiah. Indeed, they were ready to condemn him for blasphemy at once, if he told them the truth. This is what he said to them: If I say I am the Christ, ye will not believe me, and if I ask you questions about the Messiah, to show my confession true, you will not answer. The clause "nor let me go" is omitted in the best Greek texts.

**69. the right hand of . . God]** This is a Messianic prediction from Dan. 7 : 9-14, and Ps. 110 : 1. The Jewish rulers would understand the reference. But it did not wholly serve their purpose.

**70. Art thou then the Son of God ?]** Claiming to be the Son of man was not technically blasphemy before the law. Claiming to be the Son of God was blasphemy, unless the claim was true. The council assumed that Jesus' claim could not be true. So they condemned him. Their formal sentence is not reported by Luke, but is stated by Matthew and Mark.

SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.—1. To follow Christ "afar off" is next to a fall from Christ. 2. To be derided and scorned for belonging to an unpopular company is hard to bear. 3. Whoever is sure he is right, let him stand boldly in his place. George Herbert says, "Sins make all equal whom they find together." 4. There is grace in a look, even when it reproves. 5. Christ suffered great indignities in silence. 6. He declared himself to be the Son of God. 7. The rulers rejected him: will we also?

BEFORE PILATE AND HEROD. 23 : 1-12. Compare Matt. 27 : 11-14; Mark 15 : 2-5; John 18 : 28-38.

JERUSALEM, Friday, April 7, A.D. 30.

In the narrative of the trial of Jesus before Pilate, Luke alone relates that Pilate "sent him up" to Herod, who sent Jesus back mockingly arrayed in a gorgeous robe. The judgment hall of Pilate was probably in Herod's palace on the west side of the city, near the tower of Hippicus and the present Jaffa gate, or in the fortress of Antonia on the eastern side, and at the northwest corner of the temple area. It is inferred from Josephus and Philo that the Roman procurators heard cases at Herod's palace, but some recent investigations seem to indicate that Pilate may have been at Antonia. If he was at Herod's palace, the traditional Via Dolorosa must be given up as untenable. If he was at Antonia, the Via Dolorosa would still be a circuitous and improbable route out of the city, unless Calvary be placed near the traditional

COMMON VERSION.

68 And if I also ask *you*, ye will not answer me, nor let *me* go

69 Hereafter shall the Son of man sit on the right hand of the power of God.

70 Then said they all, Art thou then the Son of God? And he said unto them, Ye say that I am.

71 And they said, What need we any further witness? for we ourselves have heard of his own mouth.

REVISED VERSION.

68 lieve : and if I ask *you*, ye will not answer.

69 But from henceforth shall the Son of man be seated at the right hand of the power of

70 God. And they all said, Art thou then the Son of God? And he said unto them, <sup>1</sup>Ye

71 say *it*, for I am. And they said, What further need have we of witness? for we ourselves have heard from his own mouth.

<sup>1</sup> Or, *Ye say that I am.*

church of the Holy Sepulchre. But late excavations showing the course of the second wall, render it almost certain that the site of this church was within the city at that time, though some advocates of the traditional site strongly dissent from this conclusion, and still maintain that the second wall made a sharp turn sufficient to exclude the present Holy Sepulchre. Unless the second wall made an unexplained curve, the site of the Holy Sepulchre cannot be the true place of Calvary, for the crucifixion was within the city. Herod Antipas would be likely to occupy the Old Asmonæan palace, during his visit to Jerusalem. This palace was across the Tyropæon on the slope of Zion, south-west of the temple and of the fortress of Antonia. It was a walk of a few minutes only across the Tyropæon bridge, south-west from Antonia to the Asmonæan palace, and about the same distance south-east from Herod's palace to it.

**1. led him unto Pilate]** This language implies an impetuous act. The Sanhedrin, the whole company, sprang up, and brought Jesus before Pilate, the Roman procurator. See Luke 3: 1. When Pilate was appointed, one of his first acts was to bring the silver eagles of the Roman legions to Jerusalem, and to use money from the temple treasury for secular objects, which greatly enraged the Jews. He sent soldiers with concealed daggers among the enraged crowd, and they assassinated great numbers of citizens. He was in a quarrel with the Jews, with the Samaritans, with Herod, and altogether his rule was no gain to Rome, and no credit to himself.

**2. forbidding . . . tribute to Cæsar]** The Jewish rulers were well aware that a charge of a new teaching in religion would receive no attention from the Roman Pilate. It must be an offence against the Romans. So they charged Jesus with forbidding to give tribute to Cæsar. How false this charge was may be seen by referring to Luke 20: 21-25; "render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's."

**saying that he himself is Christ a king]** It must have been exceedingly humiliating for the Jewish leaders to be compelled to bring such a charge before a Roman ruler. But finding that Pilate would not accept their general sweeping charge that he was a malefactor, but required a definite accusation, with specific allegations, they were compelled to frame one that would be a capital crime. So their humiliation before the hated Roman power was complete. They must publicly disown a Jew who claimed to be their Messiah, and confess that one truly holding that place was in their opinion in rebellion against Cæsar. Pilate then examined Jesus pri-

## COMMON VERSION.

CHAP. XXIII.—And the whole multitude of them arose, and led him unto Pilate.

2 And 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.

3 And Pilate asked him, saying, Art thou the King of the Jews? And he answered him and said, Thou sayest it.

4 Then said Pilate to the chief priests and to the people, I find no fault in this man.

## REVISED VERSION.

23 And the whole company of them rose up, and brought him before Pilate. And they began to accuse him, saying, We found this man perverting our nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Cæsar, and saying

3 that he himself is Christ a king. And Pilate asked him, saying, Art thou the King of the Jews? And he answered him and

4 said, Thou sayest. And Pilate said unto the chief priests and the multitudes, I find

vately on this charge. For a full account, see John 18 : 33-38. The result was, Pilate reported that he found no fault in him.

**5. stirreth up the people . . from Galilee]** Pilate's statement aroused the passions of the Jewish rulers, and they became more urgent, after the usual manner of a violent eastern mob. They meant Pilate to understand that the teaching of Jesus was seditious, exciting the people to revolt, a charge which Roman governors were usually not slow to mark and repress. Further to stir up Pilate they mentioned Galilee, with whose Roman ruler Pilate had a quarrel. But the Jews missed their mark.

**7. he sent him to Herod]** Pilate caught at the word Galilee, and learning that Jesus was of that region, he thought it would be an easy way to be rid of this troublesome case to send it to Herod. If Herod was at the Asmonæan palace it would "be up" as the Greek *ἀνέπεμψεν*, implies, either from the fortress of Antonia or from Herod's new palace. The same word is used in v. 11, however, where it must mean "sent back." This was more easy now, since Herod was in Jerusalem at this time, perhaps attending the feast. He would naturally be at the Asmonæan palace as stated above.

**8. Herod . . was . . glad]** Herod's gladness sprang chiefly from curiosity. He wanted to witness some wonders, some miracles. He lived a luxurious, dissolute life; yet may not have been utterly devoid of a sense to appreciate better things; purity, truth and righteousness, though too weak to practise them. He questioned Jesus, but most likely only to satisfy his curiosity. When the rulers told him Herod will kill thee, Jesus had said, "Go ye, and tell that fox," Luke 13 : 32. Now silence was truly golden.

**10. chief priests and scribes stood]** Perhaps some of the same ones were here, passionately accusing Jesus, who had in pretended kindness warned him against Herod. They were now very much afraid that Herod could not be persuaded to kill Jesus, which they had reported he would do.

**11. Herod . . mocked him]** Herod treated the case as a personal dif-

## COMMON VERSION.

5 And they were the more fierce, saying, He stirreth up the people, teaching throughout all Jewry, beginning from Galilee to this place.

6 When Pilate heard of Galilee, he asked whether the man were a Galilean.

7 And as soon as he knew that he belonged unto Herod's jurisdiction, he sent him to Herod, who himself also was at Jerusalem at that time.

8 ¶ And when Herod saw Jesus, he was exceeding glad: for he was desirous to see him of a long season, because he had heard many things of him; and he hoped to have seen some miracle done by him.

9 Then he questioned with him in many words; but he answered him nothing.

10 And the chief priests and scribes stood and vehemently accused him.

11 And Herod with his men of war set him at nought, and mocked him, and arrayed him in a gorgeous robe, and sent him again to Pilate

## REVISED VERSION.

5 no fault in this man. But they were the more urgent, saying, He stirreth up the people, teaching throughout all Judæa, and beginning from Galilee even unto this place.

6 But when Pilate heard it, he asked whether the man were a Galilean. And when he knew that he was of Herod's jurisdiction, he sent him unto Herod, who himself also was at Jerusalem in these days.

8 Now when Herod saw Jesus, he was exceeding glad: for he was of a long time desirous to see him, because he had heard concerning him; and he hoped to see some

9 <sup>1</sup> miracle done by him. And he questioned him in many words; but he answered him

10 nothing. And the chief priests and the scribes stood, vehemently accusing him.

11 And Herod with his soldiers set him at nought, and mocked him, and arraying

him in gorgeous apparel sent him back to

<sup>1</sup> Gr. sign.

ference or quarrel of the Jewish rulers over some religious questions, and paid little attention to the accusers, while he mocked and ridiculed the accused. Remanding the case to Pilate in this mocking way, was an implied declaration of the innocence of the accused. See v. 15.

**12. Herod and Pilate . . friends]** The cause of the enmity between Pilate and Herod is unknown. It probably arose from some encroachment of Pilate upon the jurisdiction of Herod, see Luke 13 : 1, and this concession restored friendly relations. Herod seems to have regarded the case of Jesus as beneath his judicial notice, and Pilate wished to escape judging the case. Yet the apostolic company later declared: "against thy holy Servant Jesus, . . . both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered together," Acts 4 : 27, implying a concert of opposition, a fact which Alford seems to have overlooked. See *Greek Test.*: I. p. 654.

SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.—1. Zeal for a religious sect is apt to be the most intolerant and unreasonable of all passions. 2. Bigots and sectarians are apt to make extravagant and misleading statements to support their cause. 3. When priests, the leaders of the Jewish church, are a party to bribery, and perjury, what shall the common people do? 4. Envy and jealousy may cause disciples to deny Christ. 5. Curiosity makes some delight to attend church. 6. Some go away to ridicule and deride the messenger and the worship of Christ. 7. The wicked become friendly in opposing Christ.

JESUS CONDEMNED. 23 : 13-26. Compare Matt. 27 : 15-30; Mark 15 : 6-19; John 18 : 39 to 19 : 16.

PILATE'S JUDGMENT HALL, JERUSALEM, Friday, April 7, A.D. 30.

**13, 14. Pilate . . said unto them]** When Herod sent Jesus back, Pilate wished to make a formal declaration of his judgment of the case. He therefore called the Jewish rulers and the people, that the proceeding might be public, as the Roman custom required. Your charge is that this man "perverteth the people," that is, inciteth them to insurrection. I have examined him, and find him innocent of the things you charge against him. Herod, to whom I sent you with the prisoner, finds no fault in him. The man has done nothing worthy of death; see revised reading. He does not say, "nothing worthy of death is done unto him," that is, by Herod, as the Common Version reads, but "nothing worthy of death hath been done by

COMMON VERSION.

12 ¶ And the same day Pilate and Herod were made friends together; for before they were at enmity between themselves.

13 ¶ And Pilate, when he had called together the chief priests and the rulers and the people,

14 Said unto them, Ye have brought this man unto me, as one that perverteth the people; and, behold, I, having examined him before you, have found no fault in this man touching those things whereof ye accuse him:

15 No, nor yet Herod: for I sent you to him; and, lo, nothing worthy of death is done unto him.

REVISED VERSION.

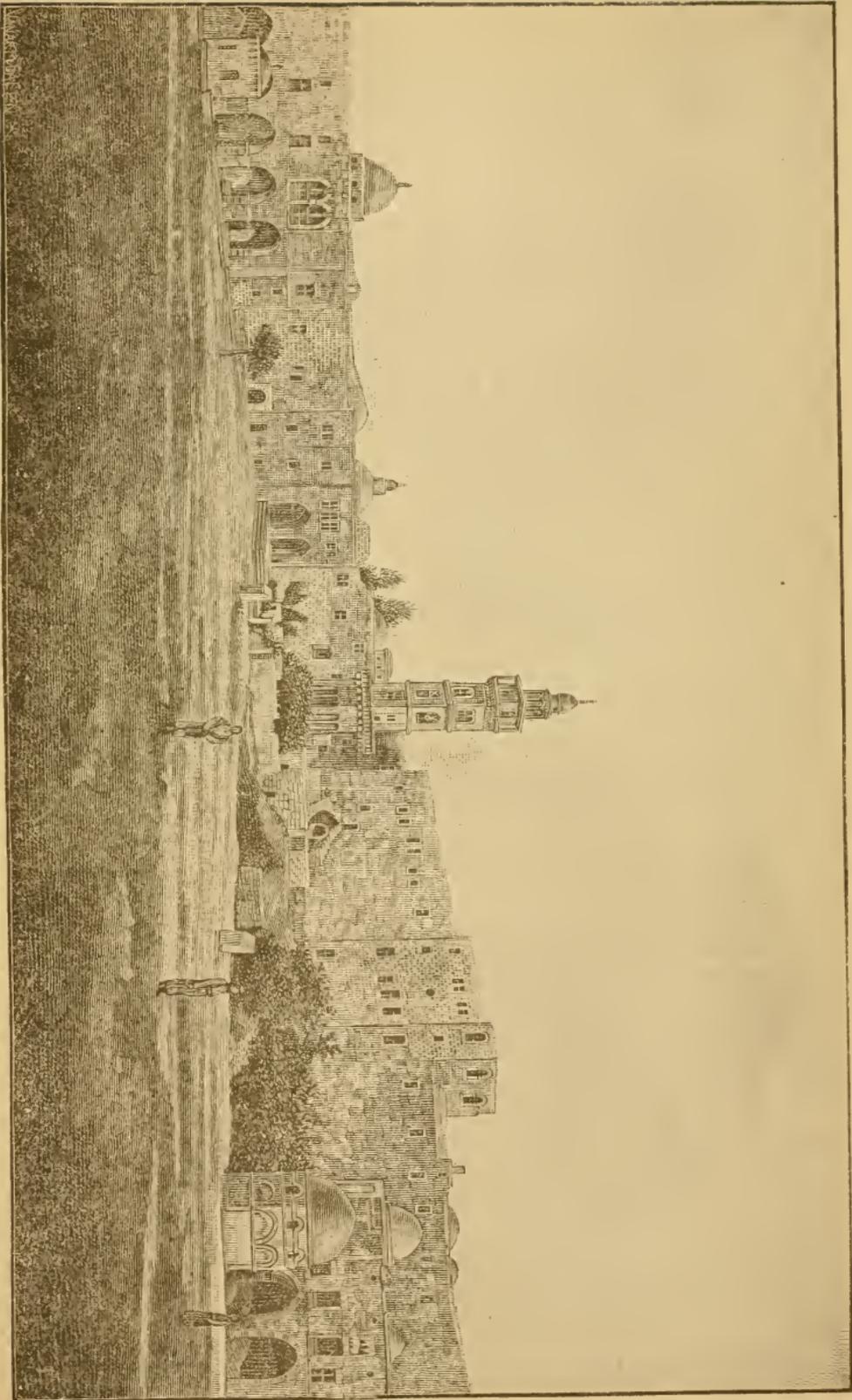
12 Pilate. And Herod and Pilate became friends with each other that very day: for before they were at enmity between themselves.

13 And Pilate called together the chief priests and the rulers and the people, and

14 said unto them, Ye brought unto me this man, as one that perverteth the people: and behold, I, having examined him before you, found no fault in this man touching

15 these things whereof ye accuse him: no, nor yet Herod: for<sup>1</sup> he sent him back unto us; and behold, nothing worthy of death

<sup>1</sup> Many ancient authorities read *I sent you to him.*



\* Traditional Palace of Pilate. (After a Photograph.)

him." It is a remarkable fact that Pilate, Herod, Pilate's wife, Judas, the thief on the cross, and the Roman centurion who had charge of the crucifixion, unite in testifying to the faultless character of Jesus.

**16. chastise him, and release him]** But if Jesus was innocent, as Pilate had just declared him to be, why "chastise" or scourge him? If Jesus had been a Roman citizen it would have been contrary to law to scourge him. Pilate's legal investigation, his recognition of Herod's right over a Galilean, his declaration of the innocence of the prisoner, were just and manly acts. Why not release Jesus? He feared to provoke the angry, turbulent Jews, and hoped they would yield if the prisoner was subjected to the horrible scourging. Pilate was weak; he knew, and they knew, that an accusation was hanging over his head at Rome; see Josephus. *Jud. War*, 2. 9:4; *Ant.* 18. 4:2. His weakness and vacillation proved his ruin, and led to a victory for the Jews. Verse 17 is omitted in the best Greek texts (except the Sinaitic), and is not in the Revised Version. It was a custom long established, and had gained almost the force of law, that one accused person should be released during the feast. Whatever "necessity" existed sprang from custom.

**18. release unto us Barabbas]** The word "release" of Pilate in v. 16 led to the colloquy about the one to be released at the feast, according to the custom. This is given in *Matt.* 27:15-20. The priests and people called out, "Away with this man, and release unto us Barabbas." Barabbas probably belonged to a fanatical band of Jewish patriots called Zealots. His name, *Bar-abbas*, means "son of a father," or *Bar-rabbas*, may mean son of a Rabbi (Ewald). If this rendering is correct, he or his father may have belonged to the class of rulers who sought his release.

**20. Pilate . . . to release Jesus]** Pilate, like most weak men, was evidently superstitious, as the tone of his wife's message implies. *Matt.* 27:19; see also 27:24. He therefore desired to release Jesus. Moreover, it cannot be denied that he had some sense of justice left, and some desire to act justly in this case. His weakness had been discovered in the offer to "chastise"

## COMMON VERSION.

16 I will therefore chastise him, and release him.

17 (For of necessity he must release one unto them at the feast.)

18 And they cried out all at once, saying, Away with this man, and release unto us Barabbas:

19 (Who for a certain sedition made in the city, and for murder, was cast into prison.)

20 Pilate therefore, willing to release Jesus, spake again to them.

21 But they cried, saying, Crucify him, crucify him.

22 And he said unto them the third time, Why, what evil hath he done? I have found no cause of death in him: I will therefore chastise him, and let him go.

23 And they were instant with loud voices, requiring that he might be crucified: and the voices of them and of the chief priests prevailed.

## REVISED VERSION.

16 hath been done by him. I will therefore

18 chastise him, and release him.<sup>1</sup> But they cried out all together, saying, Away with this man, and release unto us Barabbas:

19 one who for a certain insurrection made in the city, and for murder, was cast into

20 prison. And Pilate spake unto them again,

21 desiring to release Jesus; but they shouted,

22 saying, Crucify, crucify him. And he said unto them the third time, Why, what evil

hath this man done? I have found no cause of death in him: I will therefore

23 chastise him and release him. But they were urgent with loud voices, asking that he might be crucified. And their voices

<sup>1</sup> Many ancient authorities insert ver. 17. Now he must needs release unto them at the feast one prisoner. Others add the same words after ver. 19.

the prisoner. The priests and the crowd were keen to work upon his fears. Their clamors increased in volume and vehemence. *Vox populi* is not always, indeed, not often, *Vox dei*, but often *Vox diaboli*. Their vociferous cries, "Crucify, crucify him," were so great that Pilate's call, "Why, what evil hath this man done?" was completely overpowered. In their unreasoning yells and passionate calls there was one keen, bitter thrust at Pilate that must have startled him: "If thou release this man, thou art not Cæsar's friend." John 19 : 12, Revised Version. The chief priests and rulers prevailed. Pilate in weakness yielded.

**24. Pilate gave sentence]** What a bitter mockery of justice in this sentence! He gave sentence, not according to the guilt of the prisoner, not by the testimony, but "that what they asked for should be done." They, the angry, plotting, malicious enemies of Jesus, had their judgment upon him granted, and a murderer was released, at their demand, in place of an innocent person. They exchanged the Messiah, the Saviour of the world, for a seditious murderer!

**26. laid hold upon one Simon]** Jesus had suffered from loss of sleep, from the awful agony in Gethsemane, from the taunts, beatings and buffetings of the soldiers, and lastly, from the horrible scourging, and must have been weak from loss of blood. It was a Roman custom that a criminal should bear his own cross to the place of execution. The cross consisted of two pieces of wood, of considerable weight. The soldiers perhaps feared that Jesus would faint and die on the way to Calvary. They met this Simon of Cyrene, a city of northern Africa, perhaps a Jew attending the passover, possibly a disciple also, and they forced him to bear the cross. There is no historic foundation for the monkish invention of stations on the *Via Crucis*, "way to the cross," nor indeed for the tradition which identifies the *Via Dolorosa* in Jerusalem as the street along which Jesus was led to Calvary. Though the cross is seldom cheerfully borne, no higher honor could be laid upon a man than to have laid upon him the cross of the Son of God.

**SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.**—1. The wily Herod and the weak Pilate declared Jesus innocent. 2. A just judge will make no concessions to wicked and reckless accusers. 3. Yielding an inch to wrong-doers will embolden them to demand an ell. 4. A great crowd is fickle, crying "Hosanna" to-day, and "Crucify" to-morrow. 5. Whoever gives his heart to sin prefers, not alone a Barabbas, but a devil to Christ. 6. Beware of a zeal for a religious sect that blinds one to the truth. 7. Who will cheerfully bear a cross for Christ?

## COMMON VERSION.

24 And Pilate gave sentence that it should be as they required.

25 And he released unto them him that for sedition and murder was cast into prison, whom they had desired; but he delivered Jesus to their will.

26 And as they led him away, they laid hold upon one Simon, a Cyrenian, coming out of the country, and on him they laid the cross, that he might bear it after Jesus.

## REVISED VERSION.

24 prevailed. And Pilate gave sentence that 25 what they asked for should be done. And he released him that for insurrection and murder had been cast into prison, whom they asked for; but Jesus he delivered up to their will.

26 And when they led him away, they laid hold upon one Simon of Cyrene, coming from the country, and laid on him the cross, to bear it after Jesus.

THE CRUCIFIXION. 23 : 27-43. Compare Matt. 27 : 33-44; Mark 15 : 22-32; John 19 : 17-27.

JERUSALEM, Friday, April 7, A. D. 30.

**27. bewailed and lamented him]** There was a great multitude of people and of women, who bewailed and lamented him, and who therefore were not of the company that shouted "Crucify, crucify him," v. 21. Aside from the seizure of Simon and compelling him to bear the cross for Jesus, the fact of the company which "bewailed," literally "beat themselves," and "lamented," literally "wept aloud" for him, is the only other incident recorded during the procession to the place of crucifixion.

**28. Daughters of Jerusalem . . weep for yourselves]** This implies that the women were not from Galilee, but of Jerusalem. They were soon to suffer untold evils themselves, and in a tender, loving manner Jesus foretells these sufferings. Going to a glorious victory through death, not for himself, but for others, they need not weep for him. They should rather weep for themselves and their children. So great would be the trials, women would bless those who never had children. No stronger figure than this of the greatness of a calamity could be drawn for the Jewish mind, for children were their delight, and to have no children was regarded as a special curse or judgment of Jehovah.

**30. Fall on us; and to the hills, Cover us]** The terror and fear would cause such awful suffering that they would prefer sudden and instant death, by earthquake, or the toppling over of mountains and hills, to the prolonged and excruciating agony. How true this became within forty years, we know from subsequent history. For its fulfilment read Josephus' account of the siege of Jerusalem. *Jew. War*, 6 : 9. 4. He describes a frenzied mother who cooked her own child, and saved half of the horrible meal for those who broke into her home daily, and robbed her of what scanty food had been left to her. *Jew. War*, 6 : 3. 4. Jesus adds a common proverb to convey more vividly the awful character of their coming sufferings, "if they do these things in the green tree;" that is, if they put an innocent and righteous person to such suffering, what must be the awful sufferings that shall come to the unfaithful and fruitless generation!

COMMON VERSION.

27 ¶ And there followed him a great company of people, and of women, which also bewailed and lamented him.

28 But Jesus turning unto them said, Daughters of Jerusalem, Weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children.

29 For, behold, the days are coming, in the which they shall say, Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bare, and the paps which never gave suck.

30 Then shall they begin to say to the mountains, Fall on us; and to the hills, Cover us.

31 For if they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?

REVISED VERSION.

27 And there followed him a great multitude of the people, and of women who bewailed

28 and lamented him. But Jesus turning unto them said, Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves,

29 and for your children. For behold, the days are coming, in which they shall say, Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bare, and the breasts that never gave

30 suck. Then shall they begin to say to the mountains, Fall on us; and to the hills,

31 Cover us. For if they do these things in the green tree, what shall be done in the dry?

**32. two . . malefactors]** That is, "two evil doers," but of what crimes they were guilty Luke does not say, but Matthew and Mark state that they were robbers. It has been conjectured that they belonged to the band of Barabbas. This, though not improbable, can be regarded as a conjecture only.

**33. the place which is called Calvary]** Or, more accurately, "the place which is called The skull." The Hebrew name is Gulgoleth, the Greek Kranion, the Latin Calvarium, the English The Skull, so named from the shape of the mound or rise of ground. The word "Calvary" in the Common English Version is not a translation from the Greek, but a word transferred from the Latin Vulgate Version. The place was outside the walls of the city. The traditional place is the site of the Holy Sepulchre, which is within the walls of the city, and excavations made in 1885-86 and repeatedly examined by Dr. Merrill render it almost certain that this site was within the city walls in the time of Christ. The story of the discovery of this site by miracle, which led Helena to build the first church over it, is one that arouses distrust of the identification, and the arguments built up in support of it as the site, are chiefly specious and wholly unsatisfactory. The true site is far more likely to be found at the north side of the city near the Grotto of Jeremiah; see Rice's "Commentary on Matthew," pp. 292, 304-306.

**crucified him]** Among the Jews there were four modes of executing criminals—beheading, strangulation, burning and stoning. The criminal was usually undressed near the place of his execution, but his person never indecently exposed. Three kinds of crosses were in use, but the form used here would probably be the ordinary Latin cross. This is the view of Justin Martyr, Irenæus and others who lived near the time. It would be about eight or nine o'clock on Friday morning. A common method of crucifixion was to lay the short cross-piece of the cross upon the ground, place the sufferer upon it, bind his outstretched arms to it firmly, and then (in Rome) a strong, sharp nail was driven through the right hand and then through the left hand, nailing them to the wood. Then by ropes, or ladders, the sufferer was drawn up, and the cross-piece bound or nailed to the longer upright piece which had already been fixed in the ground. The feet were then drawn down and fastened to the upright piece of the cross a short distance (perhaps a foot) above the ground, and the feet were often nailed to the cross also. The Jews were accustomed to give a potion of strong wine and myrrh to those who were to be executed, to lessen the sense of pain. An association of women in Jerusalem furnished this merciful provision for sufferers.

## COMMON VERSION.

32 And there were also two others, malefactors, led with him to be put to death.

33 And when they were come to the place, which is called Calvary, there they crucified him, and the malefactors, one on the right hand, and the other on the left.

## REVISED VERSION.

32 And there were also two others, malefactors, led with him to be put to death.

33 And when they came unto the place which is called <sup>1</sup>The skull, there they crucified him, and the malefactors, one on the

<sup>1</sup> According to the Latin, *Calvary*, which has the same meaning.

**34. Father, forgive them]** How touching here is this word "Father!" The Son of God, disowned and an orphan on earth! There were seven words or utterances from the cross:

1. "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do," Luke 23 : 34.
2. "To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise," Luke 23 : 43.
3. "Woman, behold thy son! . . . Behold thy mother!" John 19 : 26, 27.
4. "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Matt. 27 : 46; Mark 15 : 34.
5. "I thirst," John 19 : 28.
6. "It is finished," John 19 : 30.
7. "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit," Luke 23 : 46.

Three of these "words" are given by Luke only. Jesus prayed for the forgiveness of his enemies. These included not merely the Roman soldiers who unfeelingly and harshly executed the sentence, but also the Jews who maliciously worked for his condemnation. Compare Peter's words at the Pentecost, "in ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers." Acts 3 : 17, revised reading. For a more full description of the division of the garments by the soldiers, read John 19 : 23, 24.

**36. soldiers also mocked him]** The people stood beholding the awful scene. Luke notices these as not apparently sharing in the scoffs of the rulers. The narratives by Matthew and Mark mention some that passed by wagging their heads, who did not belong to the chief priests, scribes, and elders; see Matt. 27 : 39-41; Mark 15 : 29-31; and who therefore must have been lawyers, or some of the people. Both statements describe a natural scene; some people joining with the rulers and soldiers in scoffing; others looking on in silence and sorrow. The Roman soldiers, rough, cruel, inured to war and bloodshed, were appointed to watch until the sufferer died. With such an example of scoffing set by the priests and scribes, it is not remarkable that they joined in the derision. They mockingly held up their cups or vessels full of sour wine, sportively offering them to the sufferer, and then snatching them away, and quaffing the drink themselves. They had suffered

## COMMON VERSION.

34 ¶ Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. And they parted his raiment, and cast lots.

35 And the people stood beholding. And the rulers also with them derided him, saying, He saved others; let him save himself, if he be Christ, the chosen of God.

36 And the soldiers also mocked him, coming to him, and offering him vinegar,

37 And saying, If thou be the King of the Jews, save thyself.

38 And a superscription also was written over him in letters of Greek, and Latin, and Hebrew, THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS.

39 ¶ And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us.

## REVISED VERSION.

34 right hand and the other on the left. <sup>1</sup>And Jesus said, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. And parting his

35 garments among them, they cast lots. And the people stood beholding. And the rulers also scoffed at him, saying, He saved others; let him save himself, if this is the Christ of

36 God, his chosen. And the soldiers also mocked him, coming to him, offering him

37 vinegar, and saying, If thou art the King

38 of the Jews, save thyself. And there was also a superscription over him, THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS.

39 And one of the malefactors that were hanged railed on him, saying, Art not thou

<sup>1</sup> Some ancient authorities omit *And Jesus said, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.*

from the insurrectionary spirit of the Jews, no doubt, and now visited their retaliations upon Jesus, whom Pilate in the superscription on the cross, called "The King of the Jews." This title was written in three languages: Hebrew, Latin and Greek, a fact we learn from John alone; for, the clause in the common version of v. 38 in letters of Greek, and Latin, and Hebrew, is not sustained by the best Greek text, see revised reading, though it is of undoubted genuineness in John 19 : 20. The Hebrew was the sacred language and the later Hebrew dialect, that is, the Aramaic, was the speech of the common people; the Latin was the official language of power; the Greek, the universal language of culture and of literature.

**40. the other . . . Dost not thou fear God]** One of the "malefactors," that is "evil doers," or more accurately, "robbers," joined in the scoffing. He was evidently a Jew, for he said, "Art not thou the Christ? save thyself and us," which shows that he understood the Jewish views about the Messiah. The other robber, whom tradition calls Dysmas, rebuking his fellow, said, "Dost thou not even fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation?" Then he confesses his sin and the justice of his punishment, but defends Jesus: "this man hath done nothing amiss."

**42. remember me]** The penitent robber having: 1, confessed his sins; 2, reproved his companion; 3, defended Jesus; now gets courage to pray to Jesus; 4, "remember me when thou comest in thy kingdom." He had some outward knowledge of Jesus and his claim; how he gained it, we know not. He also had an inward knowledge of Christ, taught by the Spirit.

**43. To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise]** The grace and power of Jesus to save appear on the cross. The penitent robber need not wait until Christ cometh in his kingdom. He will be to-day with Christ, not in purgatory but in Paradise. Paradise is a word probably of Persian origin, meaning originally a garden park or pleasure ground, and by the Jews used to designate that portion of the spirit world which was the abode of the pious, and also of the highest heaven. For usages of the word in Scripture, see 2 Cor. 12 : 2, 4; Rev. 2 : 7, with Gen. 13 : 10; Ezek. 28 : 13; 31 : 8. Matthew and Mark say generally that the priests, scribes, soldiers and robbers scoffed at Jesus. They do not mention the penitence of one of the robbers. Omission is not an error. The variation may be reasonably accounted for by the general character of the statement of the first two evangelists, or by the natural supposition that both scoffed at first, but that one repented from a sense of guilt, and moved

## COMMON VERSION.

40 But the other answering rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation?

41 And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss.

42 And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom.

43 And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise.

## REVISED VERSION.

40 the Christ? save thyself and us. But the other answered, and rebuking him said, Dost thou not even fear God, seeing thou art in the

41 same condemnation? And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds:

42 but this man hath done nothing amiss. And he said, Jesus, remember me when thou

43 comest <sup>1</sup>in thy kingdom. And he said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise.

<sup>1</sup> Some ancient authorities read *into thy kingdom*.

by the divine prayer of Jesus for the forgiveness of his enemies. Richard Baxter says, "True conversion is never too late to obtain mercy and salvation. True repentance and faith, however late, will have its fruits."

SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.—1. When faith truly sees Christ crucified it weeps for itself rather than for him. 2. When dear ones die in faith, they are perfected in holiness; we need not weep for them, but for ourselves, still in a world of sin, sorrow and snares. How revolting is sin, in view of the cross! 3. How awful is the justice of God, in the light of the sufferings of the Son of God! 4. How hard are hearts that can scoff at a crucified Christ! 5. Christ prayed for his murderers. 6. True penitents confess the justice of their punishment and the greatness of their sin. 7. Great sinners, if true penitents, may receive pardon, and a place in Paradise through Christ.

DARKNESS, DEATH AND BURIAL. 23 : 44-56. Compare Matt. 27 : 45-66 ; Mark 15 : 33-47 ; John 19 : 28-42.

JERUSALEM, Friday, April 7, A. D. 30.

**44. darkness over all the earth]** Or, "over the whole land," as in the revised text, a general phrase common to the Oriental mind, and meaning all the land of Judæa, Palestine, or perhaps Syria. Some make it cover all the earth upon which the sun was shining. See a similar expression, but in different words, in Luke 2 : 1. It began at the "sixth hour," that is, at twelve o'clock, and lasted until three o'clock in the afternoon. The heavy embroidered veil which separated the Holy from the Most Holy Place in the sanctuary of the temple was rent from the top to the bottom. This signified that a new, a "living way," was consecrated, whereby all believers might come into the presence of God. It may also have indicated the departure of the presence of God from the temple, now to be deserted, as the old Jewish sacrificial worship was to be superseded by a Christian and more fully spiritual service. The supposed mention of the darkness by the two heathen historians Phlegon and Thallus is too indefinite to be of value. The general references to the signs of the destruction of the temple by Josephus and Jerome are definite and may include this of the veil.

**46. Jesus . . said, Father, into thy hands]** For the other words from the cross, see under v. 34. The physical suffering of Jesus is apt to be dwelt upon by the common mind as if that were the chief pain, yet the mental grief and the agony of soul far outweighed the physical torture of crucifixion, ter-

COMMON VERSION.

44 And it was about the sixth hour, and there was a darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour.

45 And the sun was darkened, and the veil of the temple was rent in the midst.

46 ¶ And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost.

REVISED VERSION.

44 And it was now about the sixth hour, and a darkness came over the whole<sup>1</sup> land until

45 the ninth hour,<sup>2</sup> the sun's light failing: and the veil of the<sup>3</sup> temple was rent in the

46 midst. <sup>4</sup>And Jesus, crying with a loud voice, said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said this, he

<sup>1</sup> Or, earth

<sup>2</sup> Gr. the sun failing.

<sup>3</sup> Or, sanctuary.

<sup>4</sup> Or, And when Jesus had cried

with a loud voice, he said

rible as that was. It was this bitter loneliness, this heavy burden of a great heart aching, and tortured in bearing our sins, that caused the loud outcries of the Son of God on the cross. These last words have a touching tenderness, "Father," into thy hands I intrust or commit my spirit. The Greek *παραιθεμαι* means "to place down with any one," "to intrust," or "commit to one's charge," and is stronger than "commend" of the English version. Compare Ps. 31 : 5. These words were among the dying utterances of Polycarp, Augustine, Bernard, Huss, Luther, and Melancthon, though some seem to have followed Stephen's words, "receive my spirit." The evangelists do not say Jesus died, but he "breathed forth" his life. He met death, not death him: he gave up his life as he willed to do.

**47. the centurion . . . glorified God]** Luke mentions several centurions who were good men. 7 : 2 ; 23 : 47 ; Acts 10 : 1 ; 22 : 26 ; 27 : 43. He felt that Jesus was a righteous man when he saw the forgiving, loving spirit. Later, when the earthquake followed, he exclaimed, "this was the Son of God." Matt. 27 : 54.

**48. returned smiting their breasts]** This is better than the Common Version. The people had been urged on to their course by the priests, and some appear to have held back. Now seeing the remarkable character of the sufferer they are troubled and leave the scene smiting their breasts, as Eastern people usually do to express extreme grief or mental anguish. The Christ died of a broken heart in the spiritual, as well as in the physical sense, probably of rupture of the heart. All his "acquaintance," literally "all knowers of him," that is, all who knew him, and the women also who had followed him from Galilee, stood afar off, probably from fear of being arrested, seeing these things. They were competent witnesses of these facts, and many of them afterwards testified to their truth.

**50. Joseph . . . a councillor, a good man]** This Joseph was a member of the Sanhedrin, a good, just, and rich man, see Matt. 27 : 57 ; Mark 15 : 43, and had not consented to the condemnation of Jesus. He alone is named as not agreeing to the verdict, but from what followed it is fair to infer that Nicodemus also if present must have voted against the deed. See John 19 : 39. Joseph was of Arimathea, the site of which is not definitely known, but it is probably at Er Ram, about six miles north of Jerusalem. Luke here

## COMMON VERSION.

47 Now when the centurion saw what was done, he glorified God, saying, Certainly this was a righteous man.

48 And all the people that came together to that sight, beholding the things which were done, smote their breasts, and returned.

49 And all his acquaintance, and the women that followed him from Galilee, stood afar off, beholding these things.

50 ¶ And, behold, there was a man named Joseph, a counsellor; and he was a good man, and a just :

51 (The same had not consented to the counsel and deed of them :) he was of Arimathea, a city of the Jews; who also himself waited for the kingdom of God.

## REVISED VERSION.

47 gave up the ghost. And when the centurion saw what was done, he glorified God, saying, Certainly this was a righteous man.

48 And all the multitudes that came together to this sight, when they beheld the things that were done, returned smiting their

49 breasts. And all his acquaintance, and the women that followed with him from Galilee, stood afar off, seeing these things.

50 And behold, a man named Joseph, who was a councillor, a good man and a right-

51 eous (he had not consented to their counsel and deed), a man of Arimathea, a city of the Jews, who was looking for the kingdom of

shows Joseph's belief in Jesus by saying he "was looking for the kingdom of God." John says more definitely that he was a disciple, "but secretly for fear of the Jews."

**52. This man went to Pilate]** This boldness was remarkable, for such a request was attended with peril. That Pilate should grant it without a bribe is even more surprising; but it is quite likely he knew Joseph's wealth and social position, and as he had most reluctantly yielded consent to the condemnation of Jesus, he may have thought to conciliate the friends of Jesus by this act. The official examination of the body made by Pilate's orders to be sure of death, before granting the request, is reported by Mark, 15 : 44.

**53. wrapped it in a linen cloth and laid]** Joseph aided by Nicodemus and no doubt by servants, took down the body, wrapped it in fine linen or fine muslin (for the Greek word applies to either), hastily embalmed it with spices, John 19 : 40, and placed it in a new tomb hewn out of a rock which was in a garden at the place of the crucifixion. The entrance to a tomb would be through a low narrow door, leading into a room several feet square, beyond which there would be *loculi* or niches for the bodies, one body in each niche, sometimes several bodies being thus placed one above another in the same room. Going out they would roll the great stone as usual before the entrance to close it.

**54. the preparation, and the sabbath drew on]** The day before the Sabbath was called the day of preparation. This means it was the sixth day of the week, corresponding to our Friday. The Sabbath "drew on," or literally "began to dawn," meaning the evening light of the Sabbath, not the morning; it was the dawn at sunset, for the Sabbath began at sunset. The women of Galilee beheld where, and how the body of Jesus was laid in the tomb. They were loving disciples and friends.

**56. rested . . according to the commandment]** The spices and perfumes to complete the proper embalming of the body were bought and prepared, but owing to the late hour, laid aside until after the Sabbath. They rested on that day according to the Mosaic command. The teachings of Jesus made them careful observers of the moral law, including that of the Sabbath.

SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.—1. Darkness is a symbol of sin; this darkness, of the terrible blackness of the sin which Christ died to remove. 2. By

## COMMON VERSION.

52 This *man* went unto Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus.

53 And he took it down, and wrapped it in linen, and laid it in a sepulchre that was hewn in stone, wherein never man before was laid.

54 And that day was the preparation, and the sabbath drew on.

55 And the women also, which came with him from Galilee, followed after, and beheld the sepulchre, and how his body was laid.

56 And they returned, and prepared spices and ointments; and rested the sabbath day according to the commandment.

## REVISED VERSION.

52 God: this man went to Pilate, and asked for the body of Jesus. And he took it down,

53 and wrapped it in a linen cloth, and laid him in a tomb that was hewn in stone,

54 where never man had yet lain. And it was the day of the Preparation, and the sab-

55 bath <sup>1</sup> drew on. And the women, that had come with him out of Galilee, followed

56 after, and beheld the tomb, and how his body was laid. And they returned, and

prepared spices and ointments.

<sup>1</sup> Gr. began to dawn.

his death Jesus gained the victory over both death and sin. 3. Miracles in nature and of grace testify to the power of Christ's work for sinners. 4. A view of Christ on the cross gives us a truer impression of the magnitude of our sins. 5. The disciple facing death is given great boldness and courage. 6. Heathen rulers and soldiers are deeply impressed by the marvellous character and death of Jesus: witness Napoleon's testimony to the Christ. 7. Love casts out fear: and has supreme care for Christ.

THE RESURRECTION. 24 : 1-12. Compare Matt. 28 : 1-15 ; Mark 16 : 1-16 ; John 20 : 1-18.

JERUSALEM, Sunday, April 9, A. D. 30.

The miracle of the resurrection is one easily capable of proof. The miraculous birth of Jesus on the other hand was a fact, very difficult, if not incapable of proof, but to establish the fact of the resurrection removes many skeptical objections to that of the birth, and is strong presumptive evidence in support of it. It must not be overlooked that the apostles were not looking for the resurrection of Jesus. They had failed to be impressed by the Scripture predictions, and by the more definite ones of Jesus himself, in respect to his death and resurrection. They were indeed incredulous, and decidedly unbelieving, at first, as to the resurrection. They refused to credit the testimony of witnesses, and gradually and reluctantly were compelled to believe by the accumulation of facts, and by their own senses of sight, hearing, and touch, that Jesus had actually risen.

**1. first day of the week]** That is, Sunday; the Jewish Sabbath had passed. These women mentioned in v. 55 of the last chapter came "at early dawn," meaning early in the morning, with the spices for further perfuming the body. The clause, "certain others with them," is omitted in the revised text. It would require some faith and courage for women to visit a tomb so early, and when enemies would be watching them. Joseph and Nicodemus had used an hundred pounds of myrrh and aloes upon the body, John 19 : 39, but probably they hastily did their work, and the friends intended to complete it after the Sabbath. This company of women found the sealed stone rolled away (how it was rolled away we learn from Matt. 28 : 2-4), and "they entered in, and found not the body of the Lord Jesus." After, but not before Jesus' resurrection, Luke calls him "the Lord Jesus."

**4. perplexed . . two men stood by them]** This unlooked-for absence

COMMON VERSION.

CHAP. XXIV.—Now upon the first *day* of the week, very early in the morning, they came unto the sepulchre, bringing the spices which they had prepared, and certain *others* with them.

2 And they found the stone rolled away from the sepulchre.

3 And they entered in, and found not the body of the Lord Jesus.

4 And it came to pass, as they were much perplexed thereabout, behold, two men stood by them in shining garments :

REVISED VERSION.

24 And on the sabbath they rested according to the commandment. But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they came unto the tomb, bringing the spices which they 2 had prepared. And they found the stone 3 rolled away from the tomb. And they entered in, and found not the body <sup>1</sup> of the 4 Lord Jesus. And it came to pass, while they were perplexed thereabout, behold, two men stood by them in dazzling apparel:

<sup>1</sup> Some ancient authorities omit of the Lord Jesus.

of the body "perplexed" (literally "to be without means," "to be at a loss," about a thing) the women, and two men stood by them in garments flashing as the lightning. They are spoken of as men, since their appearance to the women was in human form. Matthew and Mark mention one angel who rolled away the stone and sat upon it. There is no discrepancy. Luke's "two men . . . in dazzling apparel" may surely include the one angel of the others, if they allude to the same visit to the tomb, which is by no means certain. Again angelic beings appear to have the power to become visible and invisible at will. Lessing says: "Cold-discrepancy-mongers, do ye not see that the evangelists do not count the angels? There were not two angels only, there were two millions of them. They appeared not always one and the same, not always the same two; sometimes this one appeared, sometimes that; sometimes on this place, sometimes on that; sometimes alone, sometimes in company; sometimes they said this, sometimes they said that." The whole region about the tomb may have been swarming with an invisible host of angels.

**5. Why seek ye the living among the dead]** Frightened by the sudden appearance of the forms in shining garments, they fell upon their faces in awe. The shining ones not brusquely, but tenderly we may believe, asked "Why seek ye the living," or "the living one" (but not here "who is the life") "among the dead?"

**6. is risen: remember . . . in Galilee]** The empty tomb; the earthquake; the soldiers on guard falling at the sight; the stone rolled away: the orderly folded napkin, were added evidences of the resurrection. The Scriptural testimony is abundant, see Acts 1 : 22; 2 : 31; 4 : 2; 17 : 18; Rom. 6 : 5; 1 Cor. 15 : 1-42; 1 Pet. 1 : 3; "alive for evermore," Rev. 1 : 18. The message to them is "remember how he spake unto you when he was yet in Galilee," Matt. 17 : 23; see also Luke 18 : 33; John 11 : 25. To these Galileans such a message would be peculiarly fitting. And that the women in their affrighted and excited state should not mistake their meaning, the shining ones cite the saying referred to: Luke adds, they, that is, the women, remembered his words, these particular words in respect to his rising again.

**9. told all these things]** This company returned from the tomb to the city, a short walk of 15 to 20 minutes, and reported all that they had seen

## COMMON VERSION.

5 And as they were afraid, and bowed down *their* faces to the earth, they said unto them, Why seek ye the living among the dead?

6 He is not here, but is risen: remember how he spake unto you when he was yet in Galilee,

7 Saying, The Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again.

8 And they remembered his words,

9 And returned from the sepulchre, and told all these things unto the eleven, and to all the rest.

## REVISED VERSION.

5 and as they were affrighted, and bowed down their faces to the earth, they said unto them, Why seek ye <sup>1</sup>the living among

6 the dead? <sup>2</sup>He is not here, but is risen: remember how he spake unto you when he

7 was yet in Galilee, saying that the Son of man must be delivered up into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third

8 day rise again. And they remembered his

9 words, and returned <sup>3</sup>from the tomb, and told all these things to the eleven, and to

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *him that liveth.*

<sup>2</sup> Some ancient authorities omit *He is not here, but is risen.*

<sup>3</sup> Some ancient authorities omit *from the tomb.*

<sup>3</sup> Some

and heard at the tomb to the eleven, and the other disciples in Jerusalem. It is probable from Matt. 28 : 8, and John 20 : 2, that Mary Magdalene went from the tomb before this company, and had told Peter of the rolling away of the stone, and of the angel. This company lingered, went into the tomb, and so had other facts to report besides those known to Mary Magdalene.

**10. Mary Magdalene, and Joanna, and Mary]** On Mary Magdalene and Joanna, see Luke 8 : 2, 3. This verse shows that, as said above, Mary Magdalene was of the company, but when she saw the stone rolled away ran to tell Peter, while the others remained to look into the empty tomb. Both parties told these things, of which Luke reports only a general summary to the apostles.

**11. their words . . as idle]** The apostles were incredulous: the story of these women seemed like "idle words" (the Greek is quite emphatic, "tattling words"), nonsensical talk, which they treated not only with unbelief, but positively *disbelieved* it; see revised reading.

**12. Peter . . ran . . stooping . . looking . . seeth]** Notice the definite and graphic mention of his successive acts well brought out in the revised reading. He ran in his eagerness to see the grounds for the women's report, "stooping," to see in, for the entrance was low, "he seeth the linen cloths by themselves," indicating that the body had not been stolen, and that there was deliberation and care in the leaving. Now Peter also was full of surprise. He was perplexed, as the women had been, at all these things.

SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.—1. The Lord is risen: the great historic fact of the gospel. 2. The disciples did not believe the first reports of the resurrection. 3. They were not therefore looking for it, nor easily persuaded to believe it. 4. They were slow to accept it. 5. The accumulation of proofs forced conviction upon their minds. 6. It is the burden of apostolic preaching that Christ died for our sins, and rose again for our justification. 7. Angels, believers, the Holy Spirit, the continued miracles of conversion of sinners, all witness to the resurrection of Jesus.

### THE WALK TO EMMAUS. 24 : 13-35.

JERUSALEM AND VICINITY, Sunday, April 9, A.D. 30.

**13. two of them . . to a village . . Emmaus]** This account is given

#### COMMON VERSION.

10 It was Mary Magdalene, and Joanna, and Mary the mother of James, and other women that were with them, which told these things unto the apostles.

11 And their words seemed to them as idle tales, and they believed them not.

12 Then arose Peter, and ran unto the sepulchre; and stooping down, he beheld the linen clothes laid by themselves, and departed, wondering in himself at that which was come to pass.

13 ¶ And, behold, two of them went that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was from Jerusalem about threescore furlongs.

<sup>1</sup> Some ancient authorities omit ver. 12.

#### REVISED VERSION.

10 all the rest. Now they were Mary Magdalene, and Joanna, and Mary the mother of James: and the other women with them

11 told these things unto the apostles. And these words appeared in their sight as idle

12 talk; and they disbelieved them. <sup>1</sup> But Peter arose, and ran unto the tomb; and stooping and looking in, he seeth the linen cloths by themselves; and he <sup>2</sup> departed to his home, wondering at that which was come to pass.

13 And behold, two of them were going that very day to a village named Emmaus, which was threescore furlongs from Jerusalem.

<sup>2</sup> Or, departed, wondering with himself

by Luke only. Lightfoot supposes one was Peter, and Matthew Henry supposes they were going to Galilee; but neither supposition is probable. The two were not of the apostles, for it is said the two disciples found the eleven at Jerusalem, v. 53 (Judas being absent, and also Thomas). One is called Cleopas, contracted from Cleopatros, and not the same name as Clopas, John 19: 25; perhaps the other was Luke. It was the same day, that is, the first day or Sunday. Emmaus was sixty stadia (called "furlongs" in English versions) from Jerusalem. A stadium had 620 Roman feet, equal to about 607 feet of our measure. Hence sixty stadia would be equal to about seven miles. Emmaus has not been certainly identified. Up to the thirteenth century tradition fixed its site at Nicopolis, now 'Amwas, about 160 stadia from Jerusalem. This is too far to be consistent with the facts even if the reading 160 stadia of the Sinaitic MS. could be sustained. In the fourteenth century a tradition placed it at Kubeibeh, about seven miles north-west of Jerusalem. The origin of this tradition is unknown, but the identification is stoutly advocated by Zschokke of Jerusalem, yet the name is against it. Kulonieh, and Hanmosah, about three miles from Kulonieh, have been suggested. The probable site is Khamasa (*Kh. El Khamaseh*), five miles west of Bethlehem. It is a ruined village on the slope of a ridge, while there is a spring of clear water and also a pool in the valley, under a low precipice of a rock. *Pal. Memoirs*, Vol. III., pp. 38, 39.

**14. of all these things]** They were "communing" (it is the same word here as in v. 15, see revised reading) and were sad; see v. 17. That is, they were conferring together, not in animated "talk" or conversation, but in a thoughtful, interrupted conference, one suggesting one fact or point, and another proposing another, comparing their views, and conjectures as to the meaning of the facts.

**16. their eyes were holden]** Jesus joined them, but was not recognized. He had not been recognized by Mary Magdalene in the morning until he spoke her name, probably in peculiarly familiar tones. The disciples on the Lake of Galilee did not at first recognize him. The reason the two here did not recognize him was partly because he appeared in another form, that is, a form different from usual, as Mark says, Mark 16: 12. He asks the question of v. 17 as a kind and gentle person would who wanted to sympathize with or comfort those who had some bad news, not fully understood. The revised reading, "And they stood still, looking sad," is based on a Greek text different from that of the Common Version, but the reading is disputed, and a

## COMMON VERSION.

14 And they talked together of all these things which had happened.

15 And it came to pass, that, while they communed *together* and reasoned, Jesus himself drew near, and went with them.

16 But their eyes were holden that they should not know him.

17 And he said unto them, What manner of communications *are* these that ye have one to another, as ye walk, and are sad?

## REVISED VERSION.

14 And they communed with each other of all these things which had happened. And it

came to pass, while they communed and questioned together, that Jesus himself

16 drew near, and went with them. But their eyes were holden that they should not know

17 him. And he said unto them, <sup>1</sup>What communications are these that ye have one with another, as ye walk? And they

<sup>1</sup>Gr. *What words are these that ye exchange one with another.*

shorter reading favored, by many, "as ye walk [being] sad?" The common text may be rendered as two questions, "as ye walk? and why are ye sad?" The variation is of small importance. It would be discourteous in the East to pass even a perfect stranger without saluting, and to overtake him on the road and not to join him would be an exception to the usages of the race and country. The question therefore could not be regarded as intrusive, or unwelcome, as western custom would be likely to look at it.

**18. Cleopas, answering said]** As to Cleopas, see above under v. 13. He asked, "Dost thou alone sojourn," etc.; see revised reading. The question is one of surprise that a foreigner could lodge even alone in Jerusalem and not know the things which had come to pass. It does not mean, "Have you just come to Jerusalem," or "Art thou only a lodger," but is more explicit: "Dost thou lodge alone," and knowest not these things.

**19. What things?]** Jesus at once puts the main question as to facts, not as a confession of ignorance, nor as a necessary implication that he did not know, but to induce the heavy heart to express its grief. So Cleopas and his companion pour out their griefs and anguish of heart. Jesus of Nazareth was to them a mighty prophet, having the power of God with him "mighty in deed and word before [the face of] God, and all the people;" see John 12: 17. Then they repeat the story of his condemnation and crucifixion.

**21. he . . . should redeem Israel]** See revised reading. They doubtless referred primarily to a temporal deliverance, but to the Jewish mind this meant a spiritual deliverance also, though not of the precise character which it now means to us. This "is the third day," as if something remarkable had been predicted but only half understood for that day. It looks like an indistinct recollection of our Lord's word about rising again. Compare the ruler's statement to Pilate, Matt. 27: 63-66.

**23. they . . . said that he was alive]** They then state the report of the women, the vision of angels, and their testimony that Jesus was alive. Lastly,

## COMMON VERSION.

18 And the one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answering said unto him, Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which are come to pass there in these days?

19 And he said unto them, What things? And they said unto him, Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people:

20 And how the chief priests and our rulers delivered him to be condemned to death, and have crucified him.

21 But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel: and beside all this, to day is the third day since these things were done.

22 Yea, and certain women also of our company made us astonished, which were early at the sepulchre;

23 And when they found not his body, they came, saying, that they had also seen a vision of angels, which said that he was alive.

## REVISED VERSION.

18 stood still, looking sad. And one of them, named Cleopas, answering said unto him, <sup>1</sup> Dost thou alone sojourn in Jerusalem and not know the things which are come to pass there in these days? And he said unto them, What things? And they said unto him, The things concerning Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people: and how the chief priests and our rulers delivered him up to be condemned to death, and crucified him. But we hoped that it was he that should redeem Israel. Yea and beside all this, it is now the third day since these things came to pass. Moreover certain women of our company amazed us, having been early at the tomb; and when they found not his body, they came, saying, that they had also seen a vision of

<sup>1</sup> Or, *Dost thou sojourn alone in Jerusalem, and knowest thou not the things*

they gave the added testimony of the men, who confirmed the report of the women, saw the empty tomb, but did not see Jesus, nor the angels.

**25. slow of heart to believe]** Then Jesus, as a stranger, began his reply: "O foolish men," that is, lacking thought or understanding, and slow "to believe;" how slow, or sluggish, we see by reading all the Gospels. They did not see this fact about Christ's sufferings even after the event until the connection was pointed out to them. The walk to Emmaus and the conversation definitely present Jesus of Nazareth as the Messiah of prophecy. The risen Lord links the two together, and shows them it behoved Christ to suffer, and to enter into his glory. These facts ought not to surprise any one who had read the Old Testament Messianic predictions.

**27. he interpreted . . in all the scriptures]** As in the revised reading. The Old Testament Scriptures from Moses on contained testimony to Christ. What all those passages were we do not know. Some of the following we may believe were among the Scriptures he interpreted: the promise to Eve, to Abraham, Gen. 3: 15; 22: 18; the passover lamb, Ex. 12; the brazen serpent, Num. 21: 9; the prophet Moses promised, Deut. 18: 15; the smitten rock, sceptre and the star, Num. 20: 11; 24: 17; see 1 Cor. 10: 4; he should be hated and persecuted, Ps. 22: 6; 35: 7, 12; 109: 2; Isa. 49: 7; 53: 3; Jews and Gentiles would unite to destroy him, Ps. 2: 1; 22: 1-18; 41: 5; be betrayed and sold for thirty pieces of silver, Zech. 11: 12; Ps. 41: 9; forsaken by disciples, Zech. 13: 7; falsely accused, Ps. 27: 12; 35: 11; 109: 2; silent under the accusations, Ps. 38: 13; Isa. 53: 7; insulted, spit upon and scourged, Ps. 35: 15, 21; Isa. 50: 6; be crucified, Ps. 22: 14, 16; offered gall and vinegar, Ps. 69: 21; his garments be divided by lot, Ps. 22: 18; be mocked by enemies, Ps. 22: 7, 8; 109: 25; his hands, feet and side pierced, Ps. 22: 16; Zech. 12: 10; 13: 6; be patient and die with evil doers, Isa. 53: 7, 9, 12; pray for his enemies, Ps. 109: 4; have no bone broken, Ps. 34: 20; his death attested by earthquakes and darkness, Zech. 14: 4, 6; Amos 5: 20; 8: 9; be buried with the rich, Isa. 53: 9; would rise again, Ps. 16: 10; 30: 3; 41: 10; 118: 17; Hosea 6: 2; ascend to heaven to sit on the right hand of God, Ps. 16: 11; 24: 7; 68: 18; 110: 1; 118: 19; have an everlasting dominion, Ps. 72: 8; Isa. 9: 7; Dan. 7: 14; his glory be everlasting, Ps. 110: 4; Isa. 9: 7. He is Immanuel, Isa. 7: 14; the Good Shepherd, Isa. 40: 10, 11; the Sufferer

## COMMON VERSION.

24 And certain of them which were with us went to the sepulchre, and found it even so as the women had said: but him they saw not.

25 Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken:

26 Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?

27 And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.

28 And they drew nigh unto the village, whither they went: and he made as though he would have gone further.

## REVISED VERSION.

24 angels, who said that he was alive. And certain of them that were with us went to the tomb, and found it even so as the women

25 had said; but him they saw not. And he said unto them, O foolish men, and slow of heart to believe<sup>1</sup> in all that the prophets have

26 spoken! Behoved it not the Christ to suffer these things, and to enter into his glory?

27 And beginning from Moses and from all the prophets, he interpreted to them in all the scriptures the things concerning

28 himself. And they drew nigh unto the village, whither they were going: and he

<sup>1</sup> Or, after

for us, Isa. 50 : 6 ; 53 : 4, 5 ; the Sun of Righteousness, Mal. 4 : 2 ; and Abel, Melchizedek, Noah, Isaac, Joseph, Moses, Joshua, David, Jonah, and over forty other persons or things are mentioned as types of Christ. Davison has shown that every prophet except Nahum, Jonah and Habakkuk has some distinct reference to Christ. And Jonah is used as a type and sign of Christ, by Christ himself. But no doubt there were many things concerning himself then which modern scholars have failed as yet to discover. The Scriptures are full of him. Yet the "scribes" who copied them and the "lawyers" who interpreted them both missed seeing the connection between the facts of the life of Jesus and the predictions concerning the Messiah. Indeed, the disciples themselves for a long time only half understood the mission of Christ from the predictions.

**29. constrained him . . . Abide with us]** Meanwhile they drew near to Emmaus. Jesus did not say he would go on, but was simply passing on, as any traveller would, yet willing and wishing to be invited. He no doubt would have gone on if they had not invited him to stop. There was no dissimulation in this ; it was similar to the question, "What things?" They urged him to lodge with them. This was true Eastern hospitality. So he accepted the invitation, and the risen Jesus became their guest, welcomed though yet unknown to the house and the inmates.

**30. he took bread, and blessed it, and brake]** They had taken a long walk ; to prepare an evening meal would be natural and hospitable. "And it came to pass, when he had sat down with them," see revised reading, or more literally, "And it came to pass in his reclining with them." They "reclined" on couches, and did not "sit" at their meal. And "meat" in old English is a general word for any food, thence for a meal. He took the bread, or the Greek may be rendered, "Having taken the loaf, he blessed, and having broken he gave to them." There is no word in the Greek here for "it," and no warrant for reading "blessed it." Jesus gave thanks, spoke his praise to God the Father, as at the institution of the Lord's Supper. In the account of that supper it is not said that Jesus blessed the bread, nor is it so said here, although both the English versions give this rendering. Coverdale's and the Genevan Versions correctly omit the "it" and read "gave thanks." This was not a celebration of the Lord's Supper, as some, not all Romanist writers, say, for only the eleven were present at the institution of that ordinance three days before ; hence these two would not see in their evening meal any repetition of that scene.

"Ere yet they brought their journey to an end  
A stranger joined them, courteous as a friend,

## COMMON VERSION.

29 But they constrained him, saying, Abide with us ; for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent. And he went in to tarry with them.

30 And it came to pass, as he sat at meat with them, he took bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them.

## REVISED VERSION.

29 made as though he would go further. And they constrained him, saying, Abide with us : for it is toward evening, and the day is now far spent. And he went in to abide with

30 them. And it came to pass, when he had sat down with them to meat, he took the <sup>1</sup> bread and blessed ; and breaking it he gave

<sup>1</sup> Or, loaf

And asked them with a kind, engaging air,  
 What their affliction was, and begged a share . .  
 He blessed the bread, but vanished at the word,  
 And left them both exclaiming, 'Twas the Lord!"—*Cowper.*

**31. their eyes were opened]** This is in contrast with "their eyes were holden" of v. 16; they now were enabled to see and recognize Jesus. They had often seen him at a meal; his conversation by the way, this act of "grace at the meal," and most of all, the spiritual revelation of Jesus to them, led them to know their Lord. "And he vanished out of their sight," literally "became invisible from them," implying a sudden and mysterious act: he ceased to be seen of them.

**32. he opened to us the Scriptures]** Spiritually the Bible is a closed book to us until Christ by his communion through the Holy Spirit open the truths to us. If Jesus Christ is our companion in the journey of life our hearts will be glowing with love and with inspiration from his presence, and the power of the word of God. Ps. 39 : 3. They were three or four hours on the road, perhaps.

**SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.**—1. Jesus often communes with his disciples. 2. Their eyes and hearts are sometimes too dull to perceive his presence. 3. He instructs and leads them to a joyful recognition of himself. 4. He reveals himself to disciples when about their daily duties. 5. Being hospitable to a stranger may bring us into communion with Christ. 6. Salvation through Christ is to be accepted on proper evidence. 7. A proper examination of Scripture might reveal this evidence. 8. Christ fulfils Scripture; Scripture testifies of Christ. 9. That life journey is a safe one which has Christ for a companion.

#### PROOFS OF THE RESURRECTION. 24 : 33-43.

JERUSALEM, Sunday, April 9, A.D. 30.

**33. they . . returned to Jerusalem]** The disciples were now full of amazement and joy. "They rose up that very hour," hastily and without delay, and returned to Jerusalem in the evening, a journey of two hours or less even on a hasty walk. It must have been about nine o'clock when they reached the city. How they could get through the gates at this hour we are

#### COMMON VERSION.

31 And their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight.

32 And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the Scriptures?

33 And they rose up the same hour, and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven gathered together, and them that were with them.

34 Saying, The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon.

35 And they told what things were done in the way, and how he was known of them in breaking of bread.

#### REVISED VERSION.

31 to them. And their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of 32 their sight. And they said one to another, Was not our heart burning within us, while he spake to us in the way, while he opened 33 to us the scriptures? And they rose up that very hour, and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven gathered together, and 34 them that were with them, saying, The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to 35 Simon. And they rehearsed the things that happened in the way, and how he was known of them in the breaking of the bread.

left to conjecture. Perhaps during the feast the gates were not closed until late, if at all during the night. They "found the eleven gathered together;" hence these two were not of the eleven. John says "the doors were shut" for fear of the Jews. John 20 : 19. There were other disciples with the eleven. The two entered, but their message was anticipated by the company, who joyfully exclaimed, "The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon;" an appearance mentioned elsewhere, in 1 Cor. 15 : 5 only. His appearance now seems to have more deeply impressed the eleven than the other appearances on the morning of that day to the women. Then the two from Emmaus added their testimony, v. 35, telling how Jesus had joined them on their way, and was recognized by them in breaking the bread. Yet some still doubted, Mark 16 : 13.

**36. himself stood in the midst of them]** There are three accounts of this sudden appearance of Jesus among the eleven. Mark says they were reclining at a meal. Hence the two from Emmaus must have arrived not very late, but comparatively early in the evening. John adds that they had the doors shut for fear of the Jews, and that Thomas was not with the eleven. John 20 : 19, 24. His appearance was mysterious, for the narratives imply that no one knew how he entered. Without any intimation of his coming, he suddenly stood among them, and they heard his voice, so natural, and his greeting, so familiar, that they would have recognized him and known him from millions of others. Luke gives the evidence of the reality of this appearance with the precision of a physician, and clearly distinguishes it from a vision or immaterial spiritual form. In this respect it is one of the strongest proofs of the resurrection of Jesus. The disciples were terrified and affrighted by the suddenness of his appearance; his mysterious entrance through closed doors must have contributed to their fright, and the natural tones of his voice and the manner of his salutation added to it. They thought the appearance that of a ghost or spirit. He had appeared to them on the Sea of Galilee early in his ministry, when they thought him a spirit, or apparition. Matt. 14 : 26.

**38. Why are ye troubled?]** They were in perplexity, hesitating to believe that he had risen, and yet unable to resist the testimony of others, and the evidences of their own senses. They were slow to accept the proofs of his resurrection, and are reprov'd for their unbelief. They had "reasonings" in their hearts about the matter; in fact were trying to do what some rationalistic writers have done in modern times—discover some explanation of the facts without accepting the obvious one, of a real and material resurrection

## COMMON VERSION.

36 ¶ And as they thus spake, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you.

37 But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit.

38 And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts?

## REVISED VERSION.

36 And as they spake these things, he himself stood in the midst of them,<sup>1</sup> and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. But they

were terrified and affrighted, and supposed

38 that they beheld a spirit. And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and wherefore

<sup>1</sup> Some ancient authorities omit *and saith unto them, Peace be unto you.*

of his body. The disciples were not successful on that line, nor have modern imitators of their unbelief achieved success.

**39. a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me]** This body was real and material; it had flesh and bones. It could not then have been a "spiritual body," nor that body with which he entered into heaven, for "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God." 1 Cor. 15 : 50. For, to infer from this that his body had no "blood" is not warranted by the text in v. 39. The whole tenor of the narrative is against such an inference. How such a material body of flesh and blood could pass through closed doors, become visible and invisible, be transported suddenly from one place to another, is a mystery and a miracle, but no greater mystery or miracle than the resurrection of a body after death. Moreover, that they might have incontestable proofs of his resurrection, he showed them his hands and his feet pierced with the cruel nails. And lest they might be deceived by the one sense of sight, he calls on them to "handle" him, that is, to use another sense, of touch, to convince them. They had used the sense of hearing—they knew that voice. Here were three senses appealed to in proof of his real presence, the reality of his resurrection.

**43. he . . did eat before them]** They were full of joy and yet of doubt and disbelief; see revised reading, v. 41. The voice they knew; the form they recognized; but it was all strange, unexpected, too good to be true: their faith lingered, halted—how could this glorious reappearance be real? Yet real it was. It was no dream, no conjuring of a worried brain, no fancy of a grieved mind, no hallucination; they must believe, although so difficult to be convinced. While in this state of mind Jesus asks for food. So they gave him "a piece of a broiled fish." This he eats before them, further to prove that he was in his ordinary and former human body. Having thus minutely described this bodily appearance of Jesus after his resurrection, Luke passes over the other appearances, and gives his farewell words and final appearance at his ascension.

SUGGESTIVE APPLICATIONS.—1. The resurrection of Jesus is a historical fact. 2. It was a fact capable of proof; the evidences of it were such at the time as to convince disciples, who were not ready to believe it. 3. Among those reporting the evidence is a physician, who accepted the proofs and fully believed the facts. 4. These proofs were thus carefully reported that we might be convinced. 5. Jesus appeared to every outward sense possible,

## COMMON VERSION.

39 Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see: for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have.

40 And when he had thus spoken, he shewed them *his* hands and *his* feet.

41 And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, he said unto them, Have ye here any meat?

42 And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of a honeycomb.

43 And he took *it*, and did eat before them.

<sup>2</sup> Some ancient authorities omit ver. 40.

## REVISED VERSION.

39 do questionings arise in your heart? See my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye behold me having.

40 <sup>1</sup> And when he had said this, he shewed

41 them his hands and his feet. And while they still disbelieved for joy, and wondered, he said unto them, Have ye here anything

42 to eat? And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish.<sup>2</sup> And he took it, and did eat before them.

<sup>2</sup> Many ancient authorities add *and a honeycomb*.

sight, hearing and touch, in proof of this reality of his resurrection. 6. The apostles believed and preached the doctrine of the resurrection, and rested all their hope of salvation upon the truthfulness of this one fact. 1 Cor. 15 : 12-18. 7. How precious this truth ought to be to his people! How the hope of a resurrection through Christ ought to inspire them to a life of godliness and consecration!

THE LORD'S PARTING WORDS. 24 : 44-53. Compare Mark 16 : 14, 19, 20; John 20 and 21; 1 Cor. 15 : 4-8; Acts 1 : 7-12.

JERUSALEM and MT. OLIVET, Sunday, April 9, and Thursday, May 18, A.D. 30.

Luke now hastens to the close of his narrative, and hence omits other appearances of Jesus during the forty days after his resurrection. These he refers to in the book of Acts. That he was not aware of any Galilæan appearance of the Lord, "when he wrote the Gospel, and corrects this deficiency in Acts," as Meyer and Alford suppose, is pure assumption. He does not give any hint in Acts that his former account needed correction, but rather assumes that it was a complete narrative according to his original purpose. See Acts 1 : 1-5. He begins the second narrative where the first ended, plainly connecting the two, with no evidence of a conscious error or mistake, or an omission, from ignorance or otherwise. It is equally gratuitous to suppose an earlier and a later tradition, and that Luke followed the former in his Gospel and adopted the latter in the Acts. There is no proof that there were such conflicting traditions accepted by Christians in apostolic times. The vs. 44-49 are an epitome or summary of what Jesus taught the disciples between his resurrection and ascension, as Alford rightly conceives. Notice vs. 45 and 46, especially as compared with vs. 25-27. And vs. 50-53 give a brief account, not of what he said at the ascension, for no words of Jesus are there given, but of the fact of the ascension. Keeping this analysis clearly in mind while studying this passage, will prevent some mistakes of interpretation, and remove the necessity for answering many groundless conjectures.

**44. These are my words]** The Greek word here rendered "And" does not necessarily imply close connection such as to compel us to hold that what is here reported was said on the evening mentioned in vs. 13, 33, but only a general continuation of the account and a brief statement of what Jesus said, it might be at different times, before his ascension. This is the substance of his farewell conversation with his disciples.

**while I was yet with you]** This is a peculiar expression, and should be thoughtfully considered. It implies that after the resurrection, Jesus was not with his disciples in the same sense that he had been before the crucifixion. Then he permanently and visibly abode among them. Now his abode with them was exceptional, occasional, not permanent; death had separated him

## COMMON VERSION.

44 And he said unto them, These *are* the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me.

## REVISED VERSION.

44 And he said unto them, These are my words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, how that all things must needs be fulfilled, which are written in the law of Moses, and the prophets, and the

from them in his earlier form, and the old association was not fully restored by the resurrection. It could be restored fully only after they too had passed through death.

**the law of Moses . . the prophets . . the psalms]** The reference here is to the entire Old Testament, under the three divisions into which the Hebrews commonly divided it. The law of Moses comprised the first five books; the prophets included our books of Joshua, Judges, 1 and 2 Samuel, 1 and 2 Kings, three of the greater prophets (Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel), and the twelve minor prophets; the Psalms included the poetical and all the other Old Testament books sometimes called "the Scriptures." John 5:39. Besides the Psalms, this group contained Job, Proverbs, Song of Solomon, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, Esther, Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah and 1 and 2 Chronicles. Hence, when Jesus declared that "all things must needs be fulfilled which are written in the law of Moses, and the prophets, and the psalms, concerning me," the disciples would understand that he meant all that was said of him in the entire Old Testament.

**45. that they might understand the Scriptures]** Jesus opened their mind. That he gave them some unusual power to perceive the truths of the "Scriptures" (used here in the broader sense of all the Hebrew sacred writings) is the fair force of these words. They had been slow, and dull in understanding these truths hitherto; now their minds were quickened: the Holy Spirit afterward brought these teachings to their remembrance. The particular truth impressed was the necessity for Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead, that there might be remission of sin.

**47. be preached . . all the nations]** Observe the revised reading in this verse. The Jehovistic religion is not any longer to be confined to the Jewish nation. All nations are to share it. This command will not be fulfilled while one nation is without the Gospel. It implies that every nation needs it as much as ours does. Observe also the margin of the revised reading, which places the period after "nations," and then reads "Beginning from Jerusalem, ye are witnesses of these things." This makes both these sentences stronger than the old punctuation. The English reader will need to be reminded that the old Greek manuscripts of the Gospels were without our punctuation marks, being written in continuous lines, without spaces between the words. The punctuation is a comparatively modern addition. The early disciples were "witnesses," and so often suffered for their testimony that the same Greek word, *μάρτυρες*, later meant "martyrs" as well as "witnesses."

## COMMON VERSION.

45 Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures.

46 And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day:

47 And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

48 And ye are witnesses of these things.

<sup>1</sup>Some ancient authorities read *unto*.

## REVISED VERSION.

45 psalms, concerning me. Then opened he their mind, that they might understand the

46 scriptures; and he said unto them, Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer, and rise again from the dead the third day;

47 and that repentance<sup>1</sup> and remission of sins should be preached in his name unto all

48 the<sup>2</sup> nations, beginning from Jerusalem. Ye

<sup>2</sup>Or, *nations*. *Beginning from Jerusalem, ye are witnesses*

**49. the promise of my Father]** This clearly refers to the Holy Spirit, promised by the Father, Isa. 44 : 3 ; Joel 2 : 28 ; Zech. 12 : 10 ; Ezek. 36 : 27, and whom Jesus would send ; for the repeated teachings on this subject, see John 14 : 16, 17, 26 ; 15 : 26 ; 16 : 7-15. Until he, the Comforter, the Holy Spirit, should thus clothe them with power, Jesus directs them to remain in Jerusalem ; see revised reading.

**50. led them out]** The risen Lord goes before them as the living Shepherd and Leader until he reached a point upon the Mount of Olives, which was over against or opposite Bethany (revised reading) ; that is, Bethany was in sight, and, as the language would imply, over beyond them. The ascension must then have been on the eastern slope near the top of the mount, and not from the central summit, where tradition places it, and where a church was built to commemorate the event. Luke having given the substance of his post-resurrection teachings, and of his parting words, now simply and briefly describes the ascension. Jesus lifted up his hands in the usual high priestly mode of bestowing a blessing, see Lev. 9 : 22, and while he was blessing his assembled disciples he parted from them, and was carried up into heaven. There is a simplicity and dignity about this narrative that mark it as truthful and inspired. There is no speculation about how the body of Jesus could go up, but simply "he parted from them."

**52. returned to Jerusalem with great joy]** The repeated appearances for forty days since his resurrection had comforted their hearts, cleared their spiritual vision, re-established and confirmed their faith, corrected their former misapprehensions and their lack of understanding of the Scriptures and of Christ's mission. Therefore, seeing in the crucified but now risen and ascended Jesus, the Christ, the long expected Messiah, they worship him and return to Jerusalem full of joy.

**53. continually in the temple]** They loved God's sanctuary, and spent their time praising and blessing God in his holy house. Thus Luke ends his Gospel as he begins it, by a scene in the temple at Jerusalem. The courts of God's house were the resort for all pious and devout souls, and the apostles for a long time after, were "every day in the temple," and there and at home "ceased not to teach and to preach Jesus as the Christ." Acts 5 : 42, revised reading.

## COMMON VERSION.

49 ¶ And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you : but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.

50 ¶ And he led them out as far as to Bethany, and he lifted up his hands, and blessed them.

51 And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven.

52 And they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy :

53 And were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God. Amen.

<sup>1</sup> Some ancient authorities omit *and was carried up into heaven.*

## REVISED VERSION.

49 are witnesses of these things. And behold, I send forth the promise of my Father upon you : but tarry ye in the city, until ye be clothed with power from on high.

50 And he led them out until *they were* over against Bethany : and he lifted up his 51 hands, and blessed them. And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he parted from them, <sup>1</sup> and was carried up into heaven.

52 And they <sup>2</sup> worshipped him, and returned to 53 Jerusalem with great joy : and were continually in the temple, blessing God.

<sup>2</sup> Some ancient authorities



# INDEX.

[The subjects are in alphabetical order, except the sub-topics under Jesus Healings, Parables, etc., which are given in the order of the narrative, to enable the reader readily to see the order of the events.]

- Adultery, law against, 233  
Alabaster vase (cut), 122.  
Angel Gabriel sent to Zacharias, 25.  
    to Mary, 30.  
    announcing Jesus' birth, 46.  
    strengthening Jesus, 293.  
Angels carrying Lazarus, 235.  
    disciples confessed or denied before, 184.  
    in the tomb, 313.  
    joy among, 216.  
    men in heaven like unto, 274.  
Anna, the prophetess, 53.  
Annas, high-priest, 61.  
Anointing of Jesus, 122.  
Apostles, blessed by Jesus, 325.  
    called by Jesus, 101.  
    false ambition of, 101, 288.  
    meaning of their names, 103.  
    sent as missionaries, 140.  
Appearances of Jesus, 315, 321.  
Aramaic phrases in Luke, 15.  
Aretas, 67.  
Aretas' daughter, 67.  
Ascension of Jesus, 323.  
Augustus Cæsar, 43.  
    coin of (cut), 43.  
Author of the third Gospel, 5.  
Axe, eastern (cut), 63.  
Baptism of Jesus, 67.  
    of John, from heaven, 268.  
Barabbas released, 305.  
Basilides, letter to, 6.  
Baskets, eastern, 144.  
Baur quoted, 10.  
Beam and mote, parable of, 109.  
Beelzebub, chief of devils, 174.  
Bengel quoted, 13, etc.  
Bethlehem described, 45.  
    view of, 47.  
Bethany, site of, 264.  
Bethphage, 264.  
Betrothal, Jewish, 29.  
Bethsaida, 158.  
Biblical facts regarding Luke, 8.  
Birth of Jesus, 43.  
Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, 184.  
Bleek quoted, 10, etc.  
Blind leading the blind, 108.  
Blind man of Jericho, 254.  
Brethren and sisters of Jesus, 130.  
Cæsar, tribute to, 272.  
Cæsarea Philippi, 147.  
Caiaphas, high-priest, 61.  
Capernaum, site of, 158.  
    healings in, 81.  
    woe upon, 158.  
Caravansary, eastern (cut), 45.  
Centurions mentioned by Luke, 311.  
Centurion's servant healed, 110.  
Cerdo, 8.  
Chief priests arresting Jesus, 295.  
Child demoniac healed, 149.  
    taught by, 151.  
Child-naming, Jewish, 38, 50.  
Children, playing, 119.  
    presentation of, Jewish, 51.  
    received by Jesus, 250.  
Chorazin, woe upon, 158.  
Christ. See Jesus.  
    scriptural testimony to, 318.  
Christian Fathers, testimony of, 6.  
Circumcision of Jesus, 50.  
    Jewish, 50.  
Clark quoted, 17.  
Clement of Alexandria, 7.  
    of Rome, 8.  
Cleopas, 317.  
Coin, the lost, 218.  
Collegium archiatrorum, 9.  
Coming, second, of Jesus, 243.  
Condemning forbidden, 107.  
Corner-stone, Jesus the, 271.  
Creditor and the two debtors, 123.  
Cross-bearing, 146, 305.  
Crucifixion, 306.  
Cyprian of Carthage, testimony of, 6.  
Cyrene in Africa, 305.  
Cyrenius, governor of Syria, 43.  
Dancing, eastern, 225.  
Darkness, power of, 295.  
    over all the earth, 310.  
Date of Luke's Gospel, 10.  
David, Jesus, son of, 31, 68.  
Davidson quoted, 11.  
Debtors, two, parable of, 123.  
Delitzsch quoted, 13.  
Demoniac of Gadara, 132.  
Demoniacal possessions, 82.  
Denarius, Roman coin, 272.  
Denial, Peter's, 295.  
Desert place, 143.  
Devil tempting Jesus, 71.  
Dionysius of Alexandria, test. of, 6.  
Dods quoted, 11.  
Drachma, Greek silver coin, 218.  
Dropsy cured, 205.

- Ear of the servant healed, 294.  
 Earth, house built on, 110.  
 Eating, the risen Lord, 322.  
 Education, Jewish, 55.  
 Eichhorn quoted, 13.  
 Elijah at the transfiguration, 148.  
     referred to by the Lord, 80.  
 Elisabeth, wife of Zacharias, 23.  
 Elisha referred to by the Lord, 80.  
 End of the world, 243.  
 Enemy, power of, 160.  
     to be loved, 106.  
 Entry into Jerusalem, 264.  
 Eusebins quoted, 6.  
 Ewald quoted, 11.  
  
 Farthing, Assarion, 184.  
     two mites (cut), 277.  
 Fasting, 96.  
 Fathers, Christian, testimony of, 6.  
 Feasit, of unleavened bread, 283.  
 Fig-tree, parable of, 196.  
     Egyptian (cut), 257.  
 Finger of God, 175.  
 Fishes, miraculous draught of, 85.  
 Fishing, Jewish method of, 86.  
 Five thousand fed, 142.  
 Flasks of ointment, 122.  
 Florinus, letter to, 7.  
 Fool, the rich, 185.  
 Forerunner announced, 25.  
 Forgiving of sin, 238.  
 Fragment, Muratorian, 7.  
  
 Gabriel, angel, 27.  
 Gadara, people of, 136.  
     ruins of (cut), 134.  
 Gadarene demoniac, 132.  
 Galilee, 30.  
     boat on sea of (cut), 86.  
 Galilean dialect, 297.  
     ministry, 18, 73.  
 Gardiner, Prof. F., quoted, 11.  
 Garments, old, and bottles, 96.  
 Gennesareth, lake of, 85.  
 Gergesenes, 133.  
 Gethsemane, 291.  
     Garden of (cut), 292.  
 Godet quoted, 9.  
 Gospel of Luke. See Luke.  
 Gospels, order of, 6.  
     synoptic, 13.  
 Great supper, 207.  
 Grotius quoted, 13.  
 Guest-chamber, 285.  
  
 Hannah. See Anna.  
 Hand, the withered, healed, 99.  
 Healings :  
     in Capernaum, 81.  
     the leper, 89.  
     the paralytic, 91.  
     the withered hand, 99.  
     the centurion's servant, 110.  
     the Gadarene demoniac, 132.  
     the woman with an issue of blood, 138.  
     the demoniac child, 149.  
     the infirm woman, 198.  
     the dropsical man, 205.  
     the ten lepers, 240.  
     the blind of Jericho, 254.  
     the ear of the servant, 294.  
  
 Herod the Great, 23.  
     coin of (cut), 23.  
     Antipas, 23, 61.  
     Philip, 23, 61.  
 Herodias, 61.  
 Hilgenfeld quoted, 11.  
 Hitzig quoted, 11.  
 Holy Ghost, blaspheming against, 184.  
     in bodily form, 68.  
 Holtzmann quoted, 11, ff.  
 Horn, sign of power, 40.  
     head-ornament (cut), 40.  
 House, staircase of an eastern (cut), 92.  
 Hug quoted, 11.  
 Husbandmen, the wicked, 269.  
 Husks (cut), 222.  
 Hypocrisy reproached, 182.  
  
 Importunity in prayer, 246.  
 Incense, offering of, 24.  
 Infirmary, spirit of, 198.  
 Inn, eastern, 164.  
 Interest, eastern, 123.  
 Irenæus, testimony of, 7.  
 Iscariot. See Judas.  
 Issue of blood, 138.  
  
 Jairus' daughter raised, 137.  
 James and John, 153.  
 Jericho described, 256.  
     blind man of, 254.  
 Jerome, testimony of, 6.  
 Jerusalem, daughters of, 306.  
     dying place of prophets, 203.  
     entry into, 264.  
     fall of, 266.  
     road to from Jericho (cut), 165.  
     wept over, 266.  
 Jesus, meaning of the name, 31.  
     Son of the Most High, 31.  
     Son of David, 31, 68.  
     brethren and sisters of, 130.  
     announced by Gabriel, 30.  
     birth of, 43.  
     circumcision of, 50.  
     presentation of, 51.  
     twelve years old, 55.  
     baptized, 67.  
     tempted, 70.  
     rejected at Nazareth, 73.  
     calling the apostles, 102.  
     preaching on the mountain, 103.  
     anointed by a sinner, 122.  
     sending out the twelve, 140.  
     foretelling his suffering, 145.  
     transfigured, 147.  
     sending out the seventy, 155.  
     teaching how to pray, 169.  
     foretelling his second coming, 213.  
     his suffering foretold again, 253.  
     entering into Jerusalem, 264.  
     foretelling the end of the world, 281.  
     eating the Passover meal, 285.  
     praying in Gethsemane, 291.  
     betrayed by Judas, 294.  
     denied by Peter, 295.  
     judged by the Sanhedrin, 298.  
     before Pilate and Herod, 299.  
     crucified, 306.  
     his last words, 308.  
     dead, 311.  
     risen, 313.

- Jesus, appearing on the way to Emmaus, 315.  
 appearing to Simon, 321.  
 appearing to the eleven, 321.  
 parting from disciples, 323.
- Joanna, Chuza's wife, 127.
- John the Baptist announced, 25.  
 birth of, 37.  
 preaching, 60.  
 baptizing, 62.  
 sent to prison, 67.  
 sending to Jesus, 117.  
 spoken of by Jesus, 118.  
 beheaded, 141.
- Jonah, a sign, 177.
- Jordan, country about, 62.
- Joseph, Mary's husband, 44.  
 of Arimathæa, 311.
- Josephus, Jewish historian, quoted, 43, ff.
- Judas Iscariot:  
 one of the twelve, 102.  
 entered by Satan, 283.  
 communing with the chief priests, 283.  
 warned by Jesus, 288.  
 betraying Jesus with a kiss, 294.
- Judge, the unjust, 246.
- Judging forbidden, 107.
- Judgment, final, 282.
- Justin the Martyr, 8, ff.
- Keim quoted, 13.
- Key of knowledge, 182.
- King, the warring, the parable of, 213.
- Kingdom of Christ, 309.  
 of God, 84.
- King of Jews, Jesus, 300.
- Kingly entry into Jerusalem, 264.
- Kiss of Judas, 294.
- Kissing, eastern salutation, 124.
- Köstlin quoted, 13.
- Lachmann quoted, 13.
- Lambs among wolves, 156.
- Last words of Christ, 308.
- Lawyers, Jewish, 180.  
 reproached by Jesus, 180.
- Lazarus and the rich man, 234.
- Leaven of Pharisees, 183.
- Legion of devils, 135.
- Leper cured, 89.
- Lepers, ten, cleansed, 240.
- Lepers, begging (cut), 241.
- Leprosy in Palestine, 90.
- Lessing quoted, 13.
- Levi's call, 95.
- Lily, scarlet (cut), 189.
- Logia, old gospel, 13.
- Lord's Supper, 285.
- Lowest place, parable about, 205.
- Luke, a physician, 9.  
 friend of Paul, 9.  
 fellow-laborer with Paul, 9.  
 journeying with Paul, 9.  
 in Rome, 9.  
 rest of his life unknown, 10.
- Luke, Gospel according to, 5.  
 Aramaic phrases in, 15.  
 author of, 5.  
 composition of, 10.  
 contents of, 18.  
 date of, 10.  
 facts stated in, 8.  
 introduction to, 5.
- Luke, Gospel of, language of, 12.  
 oldest copies extant, 5.  
 oldest versions, 5.  
 parables only found in, 17.  
 peculiarities of, 17.  
 place of its composition, 11.  
 sources of, 12.  
 style, 12.  
 testimony, historical, 11.
- Machærus, 67, 115.
- Magdala, 126.
- Magdalene, 126.  
 tradition about, 125.
- Marcion, Gospel of, 8.
- Martha, sister of Lazarus, 167.
- Mary, sister of Lazarus, 168.  
 Magdalene, qu. v.  
 Joseph's betrothed, 29.  
 cousin of Elisabeth, 32.  
 song of, 35.  
 mother of Jesus, 44.
- Matthew's Logia, 13.
- Measures, eastern (cut), 213.
- Meyer quoted, 9, etc.
- Ministering women, 127.
- Ministry of Jesus, Galilæan, 18.  
 Peræan, 18.  
 closing events of, 18.
- Miracles, casting out the dumb devil, 173.  
 draught of fishes, 85.  
 feeding of the five thousand, 143.  
 raising Jairus's daughter, 137.  
 the widow's son, 113.  
 stilling the storm, 131.
- Mission of the twelve, 140.  
 seventy, 155.
- Mountain, preaching on the, 103.
- Muratorian Fragment, 7.
- Mustard seed, parable of, 200.
- Mystery of God's kingdom, 129.
- Nain, 113, 115.
- Nazareth, city of Jesus, 74.  
 modern, 74.  
 view of, 30.
- Nazirite, 26.
- Nets, Jewish, 86.
- New Testament, 287.
- Offences, 238.
- Offerings, 276.
- Office of priests in Jerusalem, 24.
- Oil and wine, 164.
- Old garments and bottles, 96.
- Oldest copies of New Testament, 5.
- Oldest Versions of New Testament, 5.
- Olives, Mount of, 264.
- Origen, testimony of, 6.
- Oven, eastern, 18, 19.
- Overbeck quoted, 13.
- Parables, old garment and bottles, 96.  
 blind leading the blind, 108.  
 mote and beam, 109.  
 house built on rock, } 110.  
                                   on earth, }  
 playing, children, 119.  
 two debtors, 123.  
 the sower, 126.  
 the good Samaritan, 162.  
 the rich fool, 185.

- Parables, the fig tree, 195.  
   the mustard seed, 200.  
   the leaven, 201.  
   the lowest place, 205.  
   the great supper, 207.  
   building of a tower, 212.  
   the warring king, 213.  
   the lost sheep, 214.  
     coin, 218.  
   the prodigal son, 219.  
   the shrewd steward, 228.  
   the rich man and Lazarus, 234.  
   the unprofitable servants, 239.  
   the unjust judge, 246.  
   the Pharisee and publican, 248.  
   the ten pounds, 260.  
   the wicked husbandmen, 269.  
 Parables recorded by Luke only, 17.  
 Paralytic healed, 91.  
 Passover loaf (cut), 287.  
   meal, prepared, 283.  
   time of, 286.  
 Peculiarities in Luke's Gospel, 17.  
   Synoptical Gospels, 16.  
 Persecution foretold, 278.  
 Peter called by Jesus, 88.  
   confessing Christ, 145.  
   warned by Jesus, 290.  
   denying Jesus, 295.  
   running to the tomb, 315.  
 Peter's mother-in-law cured, 83.  
 Pharisee and publican, 248.  
 Pharisees characterized, 179.  
   woe upon, 179.  
 Philip, apostle, 102.  
   tetrarch, 23.  
 Pigeon, the (cut), 51.  
 Pilate, Pontius, 60.  
   traditional palace of (cut), 303.  
 Playing children, parable, 119.  
 Polycarp, testimony of, 7, 8.  
 Possessions, demoniacal, 82.  
 Pounds, ten, parable, 260.  
 Praying taught by Jesus, 169.  
 Presentation of Christ, 51.  
   Jewish children, 51.  
 Priests ministering in Jerusalem, 24.  
 Prodigal son, parable of, 219.  
 Publicans and Sinners, 215.  
  
 Raising of Jairus' daughter, 137.  
   the widow's son, 113.  
 Reclining at meals, 121.  
 Repentance, 195.  
 Remission of sins, 125.  
 Resurrection of Jesus, 313.  
 Return of the seventy, 159.  
 Reuss quoted, 10.  
 Rich ruler, 250.  
 Rich fool, 185.  
 Rich hardly entering kingdom, 251.  
 Rich man and Lazarus, 234.  
 Ritschl quoted, 13.  
 Rulers, Jewish, 137.  
 Rue, eastern (cut), 180.  
  
 Sabbath, Jewish, 98.  
   Lord of, 99.  
 Sadducees described, 273.  
   meaning of name, 273.  
   silenced, 274.  
 Samaria, 153.  
  
 Samaritan, the good, 162.  
 Samaritan leper, 240.  
 Sandals, eastern, 66, 124.  
 Sanhedrin, Jewish, 300.  
 Schaff quoted, 11.  
 Scorpions, eastern (cut), 160.  
 Scribes, 95.  
 Scripture, 324.  
   testimony of, to Christ, 318.  
 Second coming foretold, 243.  
 Serpents, 160.  
 Servants, unprofitable, 239.  
 Seventy sent out, 155.  
 Sheba, queen of, 177.  
 Sheep, the lost, 214.  
 Sidon and Tyre, 158.  
 Sign of Jonah, 177.  
 Siloam, tower in, 195.  
 Silwan (cut), 197.  
 Simeon, prophecy of, 52.  
 Simon. See Peter.  
   of Cyrene, 305.  
   the Pharisee, 121.  
 Simon Zelotes, 103.  
 Sin, remission of, 125.  
   the unpardonable, 184.  
 Sinners and publicans, 215.  
 Son of David, 31, 68.  
   of man, 99.  
   the Most High, 31.  
   the prodigal, parable, 219.  
 Song of Mary, 35.  
   Simeon, 52.  
   Zacharias, 39.  
 Sower, parable of, 126.  
 Spirit, the Holy. See Ghost.  
   of infirmity, 198.  
   unclean, 82.  
 Steward, the shrewd, 228.  
 Stone rolled away, 313.  
 Stoning, Jewish, 307.  
 Storm stilled, 131.  
 Superscription on the cross, 309.  
 Supper, the great, 207.  
   the Lord's, 286.  
 Suffering foretold, 145, 253.  
 Swine entered in by devils, 135.  
 Synagogue, Jewish meeting-house, 74.  
   ruins of, 75.  
   rulers of, 137.  
   service in, 77.  
 Synoptical Gospels, agreements of, 16.  
   peculiarities of, 16.  
   theories about, 13.  
   vocabulary of, 15.  
  
 Tablets, writing, 38.  
 Talents, parable of, 260.  
 Tales, idle, 315.  
 Tatian, gospel harmony, 8.  
 Taxes, Jewish, 215.  
 Tax-gatherers. See Publicans.  
 Tell Hum. See Capernaum.  
 Temple cleansed, 267.  
   described by Josephus, 266.  
   destruction foretold, 267.  
   offerings in, 276.  
 Temptation of Jesus, 70.  
 Tertullian, testimony of, 7.  
 Testament, New, 287.  
 Theophilus, 22.  
 Thiersch quoted, 13.

- Thirty pieces of silver, 233.  
 Tiberius Cæsar (cut), 60.  
 Tomb of Jesus, 312.  
 Tombs, Jewish, 312.  
     illustration of, 292.  
 Tower, parable of, 212.  
     in Siloam, 195.  
     in vineyards, 269.  
 Transfiguration, 147.  
 Tribute to Cæsar, 272.  
 Turtle-doves, 51.  
 Twelve, the. See Apostles.  
 Tyre and Sidon, 158.
- Unclean spirit, 82.  
 Unjust judge, 246.  
 Unprofitable servants, 229.  
 Upper room, 285.
- Veil of the temple, 310.  
 Valleys filled, 62.  
 Vase, alabaster, 122.  
 Versions, oldest, of the New Testament, 5.  
 Vine, fruit of, 286.  
 Vinegar, 308.  
 Vineyard, towers in, 269.  
     wicked husbandmen of, 269.  
 Vipers, generation of, 63.  
 Virgin Mary. See Mary.  
 Vision of Zacharias, 28.  
     of angels, 317.  
 Visitation, time of, 267.
- Vocabulary of Synoptic Gospels, 15.  
 Voice from heaven, 68.  
 Volkmar, 13.  
 Vulture, 245.
- Warring king, parable of, 213.  
 Washing, Jewish, 179.  
 Watches, night divided into, 191.  
 Watching, 148.  
 We-parts in the Acts, 9.  
 Weiss quoted, 13, etc.  
 Weisse quoted, 13.  
 Westcott quoted, 6.  
 Wetstein quoted, 13.  
 Widow's mites, 277.  
     son raised, 137.  
 Wilderness of Judæa, 62.  
 Wisdom of God, 181.  
 Withered hand cured, 99.  
 Woes upon Pharisees, 179.  
     cities, 158.  
 Woman with issue of blood, 137.  
     with spirit of infirmity, 198.  
 Women ministering unto Jesus, 127.  
     at the tomb, 315.  
 Words, last, of Jesus, 308.  
 World, children of, 231.
- Zacchæus, 256.  
 Zacharias, the priest, 23.  
     the prophet, 187.  
 Zelotes, Simon, 103.  
 Zeller quoted, 13.





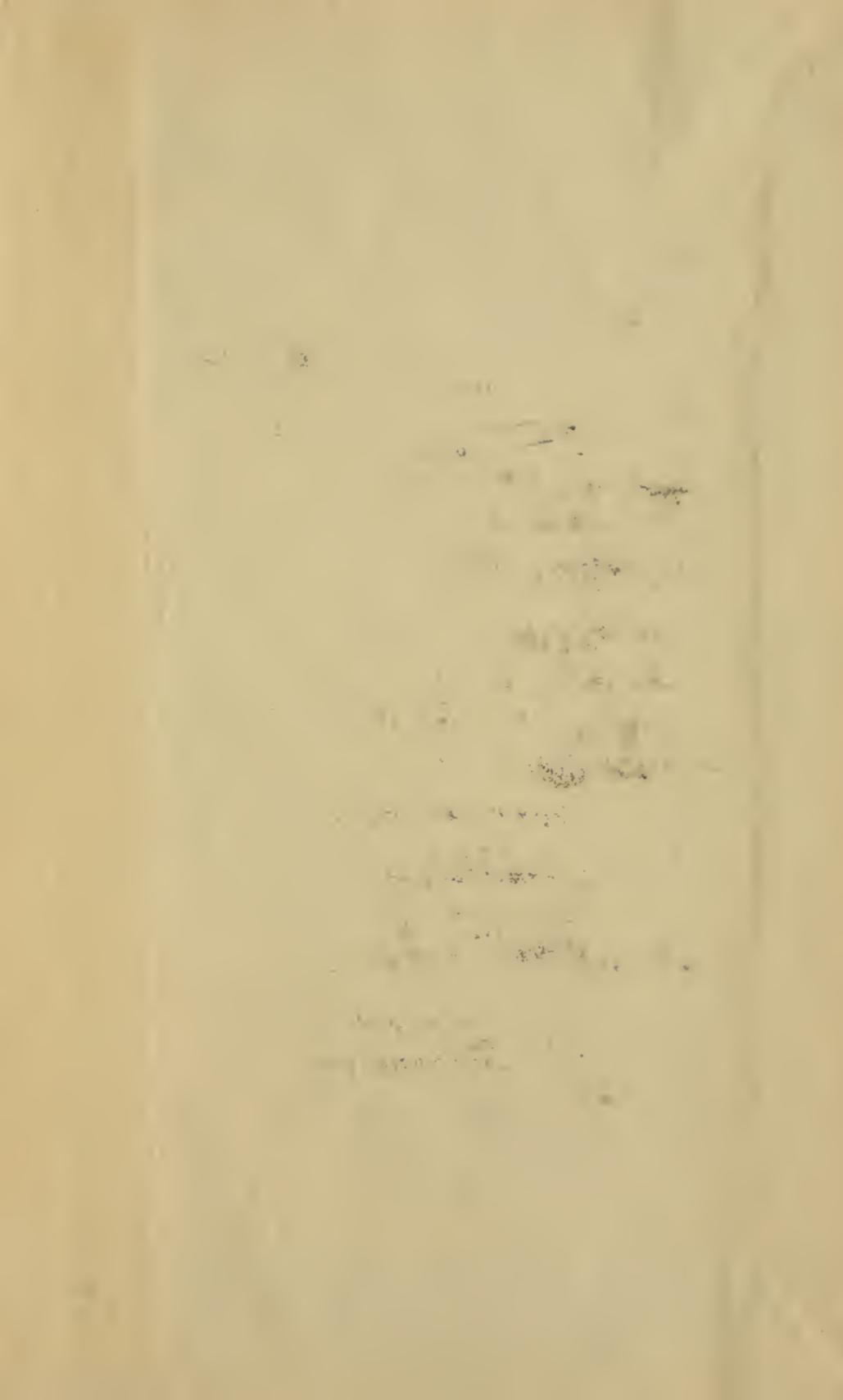




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